Taming the Reciting Voice: *Satsumabiwa* Text-scores and their Roles in Transmission and Performance

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In the history of Japanese music, in which the great majority of genres involve song or melodic recitation, there have been few attempts to precisely represent the vocal element in graphic form. Notations that specify instrumental performance in minute detail abound, but with the exception of *shōmyō* (Buddhist chant) and the vocal repertories of *gagaku* (ensemble music of the Imperial court and some high ecclesiastical institutions), most inscriptions of the vocal part take the form of text-scores, that is, inscriptions of text with some associated shorthand symbols for musical patterns. In the *katarimono* (narrative recitation) traditions, the quantity and specificity of the symbols written beside the columns of text vary with each genre, and moreover, reflect the particular and historically contingent norms of transmission and performance that have had a bearing on the uses to which text-scores are put. While it would seem logical for there to be a correlation between the quantity and kinds of musical representation of the vocal line and the degree of freedom afforded performers to make each rendition musically different, the existence of highly specific text-scores should by no means always be taken as evidence that a performance tradition placed strong constraints on the reciting voice, and that the text-score itself therefore held the status of a *daihon* (a score memorised or used in performance). Any text-score must be considered as a document produced by an individual performer-teacher, and the representative status of the notational record therein can only be assessed in light of other evidence about the circumstances of the document's production and circulation among performers of the tradition in question.

In this article I will discuss means for representing the vocal element in several kinds of text-scores produced by performers of *Satsumabiwa,* a narrative tradition of regional origin that found nationwide popularity in the early decades of the twentieth century, and which continues to be practised by a smaller number of musicians today. Some of these scores encode information about vocal performance at a level of detail rarely seen in Japanese historical music sources— detail that reflects a minority of early twentieth-century *Satsumabiwa* players'

interest in musical theory and acquaintance with the 'digital' encoding of musical information in Western notation. As such they represent attempts to discipline the close detail of vocal performance that are exceptional in the tradition.

Kindai biwagaku [Modern Biwa Music] of the Early Twentieth Century

The Meiji era (1868–1912) that followed the downfall of the Tokugawa Shoguns was a period characterised by experimentation and hybrid phenomena in urban life and the arts. In music it also saw the emergence of a number of new music genres which did not partake of any Western musical resources but were nevertheless a product of contemporary social and political circumstances. For example, several musical narrative genres—some that were adaptations of older ones, and some entirely new—rapidly acquired popularity, and one of the chief factors in their success was the nationwide waves of patriotism associated with the beginnings of the Japanese colonial era, and in particular, victorious military campaigns against China (in 1894) and Russia (in 1904–1905). While the new genres' repertories were by no means exclusively concerned with war and martial heroism, the strong followings for and amateur participation in *kindai biwa* (biwa of the modern era) recitation and the new *shamisen*-accompanied genre, *naniwa-bushi*, were largely inspired by the way in which writers and composer-performers between the mid-1890s and 1930s were able to link the contemporary glory of Japan as the first Asian power of the modern age to the ethos of the great medieval battle tales. In this sense, well into the twentieth century, traditionally styled modern musical narrative played an important role in articulating some of the central elements of the new state's official ideology of a national identity rooted in traditional virtues: 'the art of the Biwa player is still a living one, and his recitations of the deeds of these ancient heroes now mingle with the equally stirring ones of the centuries that have followed, up to the Russo-Japanese war and even the Great War. And nothing affects a Japanese audience more than these martial ballads.'[1]

There were two styles of modern biwa music, each with many distinct schools of practice: *Satsumabiwa* and *Chikuzenbiwa* both had their origins in regional Kyushu (their names indicate the two pre-modern provinces where they had origin, Satsuma and Chikuzen), but while *Satsumabiwa* was a narrative tradition with a history of several centuries in southern Kyushu, *Chikuzenbiwa* was a newly invented style, modelled on aspects of *shamisen* music, the traditions of blind, biwa-playing priests of the island's northern regions, and some elements of *Satsumabiwa* style. Old biwa songs about the history of Kyushu and the moral precepts of samurai in the service of the Shimazu lords of Satsuma formed the core repertory for players of the *Seiha* (orthodox school).[2] Most of these players were from Satsuma or had family ties to the ancient province, but the repertory that drew young people from the metropolises (Tokyo and Osaka) to learn biwa in their tens of thousands, were songs such as *Taiwan-iri* and *Hitachimaru* about incidents in the recent wars with China and Russia. The songs also included favourite episodes from the *Tale of the Heike* that had been presented and reworked in diverse narrative and dramatic arts for centuries. Professional performers, teachers and biwa-makers numbered in their thousands around 1915, performances took place regularly in all major

[1] Chōmei Kamo, *The Ten Foot Square Hut and Tales of the Heike,* transl. A.L. Sadler (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1928) ix.

[2] Practitioners of all styles of modern biwa music refer to repertory items as songs (*biwa uta*) regardless of narrative content.

regional cities (as shown in the 'Regional Activities' listings of the monthly *Biwa Shinbun*), and star players were able to tour throughout Japan and its colonies, Korea and Taiwan. It is important to emphasise that despite the antiquarian, classical reputation of these musical traditions today, *Satsumabiwa* and *Chikuzenbiwa* narrative were popular in their day among people who had only an average education, and who on the whole were certainly not from the affluent upper-middle class who now provide the majority of students and audience for Japanese traditional music.[3]

Notations in Formal and Informal Learning

The viability of biwa as a profession triggered the establishment of schools by some of the leading performers in accordance with the *iemoto* model.[4] For a time, star performers of *Chikuzenbiwa* and the Tokyo-based, new style of *Satsumabiwa* called the Kinshin-ryū, commanded large incomes and tiered networks of students. In the *Seiha* style that I am concerned with here, however, even after the establishment of one *iemoto*-based school by Yoshimizu Kinnō,[5] the basic framework for learning remained the small *kai* (club or circle) in which a single teacher lead a small group of students, neither regulated by nor affiliated with any larger organisational structure. Within the bounds of a *kai*, textual aids to instruction were mostly circulated in handwritten copies among the members, as documents that authenticated membership of the group. The written aids included notations for biwa preludes and interludes (an important part of *Seiha* practice that is emphasised far less within the Kinshin school), text-scores and writings by the teacher about biwa. The text-scores might be used in performance by less experienced members of a *kai*, but an advanced performer was expected to recite and play without any written aids.

It seems that large numbers of biwa enthusiasts felt free to seek additional instruction that was not authorised by the teacher, and that others engaged in teaching themselves outside any *kai* framework for tuition, for during the years 1900 to1925 there appeared many commercial publications of individual teachers' settings of the standard repertory, as well as versions of the biwa interludes in various notation systems. Moreover afficionados of biwa songs who did not themselves learn to play would buy the printed anthologies so that they might read the narrative texts while 'hearing' the melodic chant patterns or while vocalising them. Just as they had been for fans of *gidayū-bushi* (puppet theatre chant) since the late seventeenth century, printed texts were inseparable from the performance tradition for biwa fans; the columns of metrically regulated text on the printed page came to life in their minds as pitched recitation.

Amateurs—even ones without any teacher—could use such printed text-scores to work up their own renditions of biwa songs they had heard at concerts (and later on the many commercial recordings of biwa narrative that became available from the 1910s up until the

[3] This is not to say that more affluent youths were not interested; there were *biwa* clubs at most major universities at the time.

[4] This is a system in which the name and title of Head of a school or 'house' (a tradition of practice) is passed on to a chosen individual, who is often a child or blood relative of the preceding head. See 'Continuity and Authenticity in Traditional Japanese music,' *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, vol. 7: East Asia: China, Japan and Korea, ed. Robert Provine, Yosihiko Tokumaru and J. Lawrence Witzleben (New York: Routledge, 2002): 767–72.

[5] At its establishment in 1902, this group was named the *kinsui kai* (Kinsui circle). Yoshimizu began to call his style of playing '*seishin kyōiku teikoku biwa*' (Imperial Biwa for Spiritual Education) in 1903. Later the term '*teikoku ha*' (Teikoku school) was used to refer to the tradition of Yoshimizu and his successors.

1940s). But what was the role of notation—and specifically the text-score—in formal and informal learning during the heyday of modern biwa music?

Broadly speaking, in formal learning contexts, these documents were the symbolic embodiments of a teacher's authority and a student's membership of the *kai*, but they were on the whole peripheral to the transmission process, which placed primary emphasis on strict imitation of the aural models offered by the teacher's performance, as in most other genres of Japanese music. Even with the most complex and explicit of the vocal notation systems I will describe—that of the *Seiha* performer Fumon Yoshinori—this practice of primary reliance on oral imitation continued to be the case when he was teaching, although he would refer to vocal notation when theorising about his art. Importantly, in most *kai* the tuition process included no introduction of a formalised pitch system: three vocal registers (high, middle and 'basic' or ground pitch) were recognised, and in many cases both vocal and instrumental pitches were distinguished by an analogy with the amount of pressure required to produce them at a particular fret on the instrument. For example, even one of the most sophisticated of practitioners and writers in the *Seiha* tradition, Yoshimura Gakujō, explains vocal pitch with expressions like *ito o shimeta oto* (literally, 'pitches produced when the strings are pressed'), *takai onkai* ('high-pitched scale') and *hikui onkai* ('low-pitched scale').[6]

An inscribed text-score was an aid to the teacher in conveying both a particular set of named vocal patterns and a normative model for the overall structure of any given recitation, in accordance with which an authorised advanced student should be able to carry out the task of making his or her own setting of a narrative text (*fushizuke*). The basic features of that tripartite model are:

'opening song' (*maeuta*)	introduction two to ten lines (*ku;* units of text that conform to the *shichigo-chō* meter of seven plus five moras) in length, starting with the sequence *ji no chū – ji no jō* and ending with *kiri*
'main song' (*hon'uta*)	the core narrative and longest section, starting with sequence *taikan – chūkan* and ending with *kiri*
'closing song' (*atouta*)	a short ending section

Within these three broad sections of a *Seiha* repertory item, individual vocal patterns for the rendition of single lines or portions of lines are classed as either *hiragin*—syllabic delivery around a central reciting pitch—or *utagin,* more melodically elaborate and melismatic delivery.[7] Most of the individual pattern names are based upon the distinction between the three vocal registers: high/*taikan,* middle/*chūkan,* and low or 'ground'/*ji.* (These are summarised at the right of Figure 1, below, which will be introduced in the context of explaining the notation system of Fumon Yoshinori.) Yet very few of the component elements of the model are shown in the majority of text-scores: only the *utagin* patterns and certain outstanding *hiragin* patterns (such as *taikan* and *kuzure*) are specified. Neither the overall tripartite division of the text nor the bulk of *hiragin* patterns that comprise at least half of any performance are indicated. It is assumed that the user will know both where to make the divisions between the *maeuta, hon'uta*

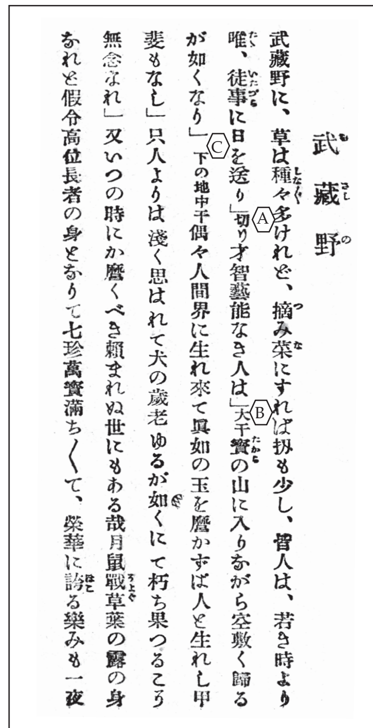
[6] Yoshimura Gakujō, *Biwa Dokuhon* (Tokyo: Shisoin, 1933) 120.
[7] These are the terms used by Fumon Yoshinori in his teaching and writings.

and *atouta*, and which sequences of *hiragin* reciting pitches to use for the unmarked columns of text. In the *maeuta* and *atouta*, standard performance practice dictates which *hiragin* patterns to use, but during extensive stretches of the *hon'uta*, the singer must decide the sequence of tones.

Approaches to Vocal Notation

The earliest published sources of *Satsumabiwa* texts appeared in the late 1880s and 1890s. They were compiled out of a concern to provide authoritative forms of the texts themselves, as a guarantee against 'corruption' of the repertory of this regional tradition in the hands of non-Satsuma players who were taking it up in increasing numbers. Transmission of the musical settings was left in the hands of individual teachers, for in these earliest sources there are no symbols of any kind for vocal patterns. While it is likely that handwritten shorthand symbols for performance patterns were already used at that time, the first printed representation of both vocal patterns and biwa interludes appeared in 1901 in the *Satsumabiwa Doku Annai*.[8] Most of the numerous publications that appeared in subsequent years included at least the names of *utagin* and certain *hiragin* patterns, some form of instrumental notation, and in some cases also vocal notation. Figure 1 shows the first six columns of text of a song in the 1901 collection, in which Sino-Japanese characters for vocal patterns are given in smaller font than the words of the line they follow and refer to. Only the *kiri* (at letter A in Figure 1) and *taikan* (letter B) patterns that mark the end of the *maeuta* and start of *hon'uta*, respectively, and one exceptional pattern, *ge no ji chūkan* (letter C) are denoted.

Figure 1. Excerpt from the song *Musashino*


武藏野

武藏野に、草は種々多けれど、摘み菜にすれば扨も少し、昔人は、若き時より
唯、徒事に日を送り」切り才智藝能なき人は」大干寶の山に入りながら空敷く歸る
が如くなり」下の地中干偶々人間界に生れ來て眞如の玉を磨かずば人と生れし甲
斐もなし」只人よりは淺く思はれて犬の歳老ゆるが如くにて朽ち果つるころ
無念なれ」又いつの時にか磨くべき頼まれぬ世にもある哉月鼠戰草葉の露の身
なれど假令高位長者の身となりて七珍萬寶滿ち〳〵て、榮華に誇る樂みも一夜

Source: Terao Akira and Iwase Kiyoshi *Satsumabiwa Doku Annai* (Tokyo: Shinonome-dō Shoten, 1901) 12.

[8] Terao Akira and Iwase Kiyoshi, *Satsumabiwa Doku Annai* (Tokyo: Shinonome-dō Shoten, 1901).

Turning to graphic notations, the first category I will introduce is a standard kind of text-score with shorthand symbols (as distinct from the Sino-Japanese characters or names themselves that appear in Figure 1) for certain patterns. The morphology of the shorthand symbols used in Figure 2 and almost all such sources is similar: simple geometrical designs based on circles, triangles, squares and dashes, as well as various kinds of brackets (used for the delimitation of patterns). There is considerable variation in the number and types of patterns denoted, and despite a common morphology, there is no standardisation of the meanings of individual signs in various sources. In some sources *both* the sign and the character for the pattern are written; in such cases the user was expected to respond to the larger-print symbols, which could be taken in at a glance and conveyed the duration of the pattern's use by being repeated alongside the appropriate number of lines.

Figure 2. Excerpt from the song *Monogurui*

物狂ひ

風に柳亂れ心や狂ふらん胸のほのうが身を焦す恨みしの浮世かな嗚呼、恨みし
の此世かな」切り　此の里の人の心が性なくて」大干谷の埋れ木朽ち〳〵にいひ立
てられて君と我れ別れ〳〵に鳴海瀉身の終りてそうたてけれ」中干思ひ出つれば
今は早や我が郷故に住家なしいざゝあらば思ひ立つ田の戀紅葉夜半の嵐に誘は

Source: Terao and Iwase, *Satsumabiwa Doku Annai* 9.

The circles and triangles used in the Example 2 excerpt denote the *kiri* (or *utai-kiri*) and *taikan* patterns, respectively, and are the first two (read in columns from right to left) of the seven symbols for vocal patterns which Terao and Iwase list in a Key to their notation system.

Figure 3. Set of vocal notation symbols

○○○」謡切り（或は單に切り。）
△△△」大干
ヽヽヽ」吟替り
◎◎◎」留則謡ひ切り（單に切り。）
○○○」留め
「●●● 崩れの謡ひ出し
ロロロ」崩れの留め
」中干

Source: Terao and Iwase, *Satsumabiwa Doku Annai* iv.

If one compares a range of text-scores that use symbols such as those listed in Figure 3, it is apparent that very few signs are used with the same meaning in different sources. The fact that there is a common morphology of signs but a complete lack of standardisation in usage suggests that individual teachers freely adapted signs with little concern for notational practice within other *kai*, and devised new ones appropriate to the levels of detail that they wished to specify in their own text-scores. Notwithstanding, many such sources were printed and commercially available, and these shorthand symbols have been the most common form of Satsumabiwa vocal pattern notation.

A second kind of graphic notational system, first published around 1910, attempts to represent the vocal melody line not with shorthand symbols, but with a detailed graphic mapping. The system was devised by Namba Mokuan, a lawyer and part-time teacher of *Satsumabiwa* whose five-volume series, *Zushiki no Kyokufu*, was published in eleven reprints over the period 1908–1911.[9] Namba's system shows the influence of European staff notation, for it is written on a left–right horizontal axis, with vertical calibration of pitch, but utilises neume-like lines (of the *hakase*-type) that had been used for graphic representation of vocal melody in some Buddhist chant traditions. The basis for calibration of pitch is neither any of the traditional Japanese and Sino-Japanese scale systems, nor the pitches of the European system, but rather a set of pitches defined by everyday words and concepts, including 'standard tone' (*hyōjun on*) and 'the pitch of everyday speech' (*gonin nichijō no kaiwa on*) as a point of reference (= pitch 2).

kan-on/dai on	6
chūkan	5
shōkan	4
chū-on	3
otsu-on	2
ji-on	1

[9] Namba Mokuan, *Zushiki no Kyokufu* (Tokyo: Senbunkan, 1908–11).

Figure 4. The *Gin-gawari* segment in *Sakuragari*

Source: Namba Mokuan, *Zushiki no Kyokufu* (Tokyo: Senbunkan, 1908–11), vol. 1: 13 S.

The overall system is relative to the pitch of the user's speaking voice, and Namba made allowance for variation therein, so that the whole system could be moved upward or downward. 'Standard tone' (3) probably denotes the unison pitch of the first and third strings on the four-string instrument used by all *Satsumabiwa* players at the time. In terms of the pitches most commonly used in *Seiha* school recitation, however, it is likely that Namba intended the following pitches and pitch areas for the six tones:

6 = above *sol* (flat *la*– flat *si* – *do*)
5 = *sol*
4 = *fa*
3 = *do*
2 = *sol* to flat *si*,
1 = pitches below *sol*

For whom was such notation intended? As a system presented with thorough and clear explanations of its conventions, it was probably devised with the intention that anyone would be able to use it. Even users who had no access to a competent teacher, but only knew *Satsumabiwa* vocalisation from attending performances and listening to some of the recordings that were starting to become available, could develop their reciting ability much more rapidly with these graphic mappings of the vocal line than by using the standard text-scores with their shorthand symbols. The large demand for Namba's booklets can be accounted for by the fact that they inscribe versions of the vocal patterns characteristic of what was the largest group of

Seiha players at the time, the Imperial Biwa for Spiritual Education group (as the *kinsuikai* that Yoshimizu Kinnō had founded in 1902 came to be called). Yet it seems that the notation was neither produced under the authority of Yoshimizu's group (which produced no comparable vocal scores), nor intended for use by members of any single group; rather, it was available to all enthusiasts of *Satsumabiwa* recitation.

A third system of vocal notation is that devised by the renowned *Seiha* musician Fumon Yoshinori (1911–2003). Trained at the end of biwa music's 'golden age,' Fumon Yoshinori was the only such *Seiha* performer to remain active beyond the late 1980s (because he had been among the youngest of talented students during the 1920s and 1930s) who was able to pass on some of his skills and knowledge to a small number of students. Fumon had theorised about the tonal and formal structures of both vocal and instrumental elements of *Satsumabiwa* since his twenties. He formulated his own accounts of biwa music on the basis of his study of the theoretical grounds of *gagaku* and *shōmyō*, applying concepts and terminology therein to a framework of theory given orally by his own teachers. In his writings, he proposed a system of modes to account for melodic content in the *Seiha* biwa tradition, as an elaboration of a system first outlined for him by his teacher in Osaka, Sagara Shijō.

The first step in this theorisation was the application to *biwa* of the ancient five-tone (*gosei*) pitch framework used in *gagaku* and *shōmyō*, with qualifying terms that enable description of various octave-based scales. Fumon's innovation was to correlate these tones, *kyū-shō-kaku-chi-u*, their sharpened and flattened versions, with the seven principal pitches of the Western diatonic scales.[10] He told me he had first done this when he started to teach biwa in 1933, by adapting the *sūjifu* numerical (or Cheve) notation—also called *ryakufu*—that had been used for teaching songs and *Taishōgoto* melodies during his elementary schooling.[11] In his teaching during the 1980s (which I experienced as a student between 1984 and 1988), Fumon would use verbally the numerical pitch terms for all students, but for students whom he knew to be competent in the *gosei* and Western *solfege* systems he would make them interchangeable with *kyū-shō-kaku-chi-u* and *do-re-mi-fa-sol-la-si*. Figure 4 shows those correlations; it includes *gosei*, numerical notation and *solfege* terms, as well as the vocal pattern names and registral terms referred to above.

Using these systems, Fumon was able to present the precise pitch-forms of both biwa and vocal patterns to his students in a readily understandable form. His chief concern in making notations was to document for his students (and thereby transmit) the repertory of elaborate instrumental patterns that he had learned from his Satsuma-trained teachers, which he used improvisationally in performance and for which he was renowned.[12] For that reason he did not write out any of the vocal patterns in full, but rather included what he felt to be most

[10] His approach is reflective of the interplay of modernity and traditionalism in his individual experience, as well as the historical forces that have brought about the change in the genre's status. In the 1920s he had first hoped to play European classical guitar, but turned to a Japanese plucked instrument which provided both the possibility of a virtuosic mode of instrumental performance, and the prestige of narrative recitation on canonical literary and martial themes.

[11] The *taishōgoto* is a zither developed in the Taishō era (1912–1926), fitted with keys that enable the strings to produce Western diatonic scales.

[12] Hugh de Ferranti, *Seiha Satsuma biwa no kifuhō to sono kinō* [Notations of the Seiha School of Satsuma Biwa and their Roles in Transmission], MA thesis, Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music, 1989; de Ferranti, 'Composition and Improvisation in Satsuma Biwa,' *Musica Asiatica* 6 (1991): 102–27.

Figure 5. Fumon Yoshinori's system for pitch representation

solfege term	*gosei* term	Fumon's numerical scheme	*hiragin* patterns with corresponding responding tone	vocal register
do	*kyū*	$\dot{1}$		
la#	*ei u*	$\#\dot{6}$		
la	*u*	$\dot{6}$		
sol#	*ei chi*	$\#\dot{5}$	*taikan*	
sol	*chi*	$\dot{5}$	*chūkan no jō*	*kan-*
fa#	*ei kaku*	$\#\dot{4}$		*goe*
fa	*kaku*	$\dot{4}$	*chūkan no ge*	
mi	*rōkaku*	$\dot{3}$		
re#	*ei shō*	$\#\dot{2}$		
re	*shō*	$\dot{2}$		
do#	*ei kyū*	$\#\dot{1}$	*(ji no)jō hari*	
do	*kyū*	$\dot{1}$	*(ji no)jō*	
la#	*ei u*	$\#6$	*(ji no)chū*	
la	*u*	6		*ji-*
sol#	*ei chi*	$\#5$		*goe*
sol	*chi*	5	*(ji no)ge*	
fa	*kaku*	4	*(ji no)ge no ge*	
re	*shō*	2		
do	*kyū*	1	*saige*	
sol	*chi*	$\underset{\cdot}{5}$	(used in *biwa* part only)	

Source: Hugh de Ferranti, 'Composition and Improvisation in Satsuma Biwa,' *Musica Asiatica* 6 (1991): 111.

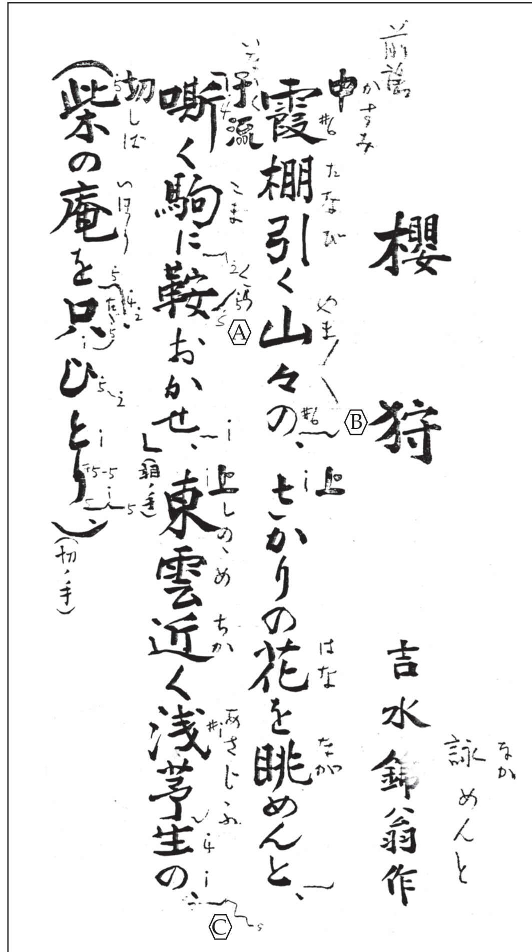
important for the rendition of each pattern on his handwritten text-scores. Fumon wrote numbers (and used Arabic numerals both for their economy of size and their association with Western diatonic scale degrees) beside individual syllables of text-lines, in particular the first, seventh, eighth and twelfth syllables that mark the bounds of the diadic seven+five-syllable foot that underpins each line of verse. Figure 6 shows a melodic outline in numerals to the right of the text of *Sakuragari*.

Romanised, the five text lines of Figure 6 are as follows:

KASUMI TANABIKU YAMAYAMA NO
Mists trailing over the mountains'
SAKARI NO HANA O NAGAMEN TO
Blossoms I will gaze at
INANAKU KOMA NI KURA O KASE
Saddling my neighing horse
SHINONOME CHIKAKU ASAJIU NO
Just before dawn
SHIBA NO IORI O TADA HITORI
I leave my thatched hut hidden by reeds, alone

In addition to the inclusion of a pattern term for each and every line (both for *hiragin* and *utagin*), Fumon's text-scores are characterised by the occasional use of linear neumes (*hakase*) as a supplement to the pitch outline shown in Arabic numerals. The latter are used rarely, at points where the vocal line should include: a particular kind of sudden leap (in Figure 6 at

Figure 6. *Maeuta* from a Fumon Yoshinori text-score of *Sakuragari*



'*kura,*' indicated by letter A); a conspicuous microtonal wavering leading to a quick lower or upper motion (on the final syllable of '*yamayama no,*' letter B); or various kinds of flourishes (such as an elaborate melisma (at *asa jiu no*, letter C).

Fumon Yoshinori trained in biwa performance during the period when published text-scores sold well all over the country, but he was most active as a teacher only after 1950, when interest in *Satsumabiwa* recitation had fallen to levels that provided no justification for publication of anything apart from histories of the music. Fumon never published any of his text-scores and instrumental notations; they were given out strictly to members of his *kai* over a forty-year period from the mid-1950s. Unlike Nanba half a century before him, it was never his intention that players without access to his direct oral teachings be able to make sense of the various elements in his notations. Yet by combining numerical notation based on diatonic seven-tone scales, *hakase* neumes, and the ancient five-tone scale terms, with an expanded set of terms for individual recitation patterns, he devised the most comprehensible and comprehensive representations of the vocal part in any *Satsumabiwa* source.

Conclusion

It would be mistaken to interpret the existence of Namba's and Fumon's highly detailed vocal notations as evidence for a broader *Satsumabiwa* practice of disciplined vocal performance based on the ideal of accurately reproducing a notated 'original' in every performance. As a narrative art that had gained a foothold in the metropolises of Tokyo, Osaka and Kyoto only in the late nineteenth century, and constituted a profession for no-one until the 1890s (discounting the possibility of professionalism much earlier in Satsuma province), even in its heyday in the years 1910 to 1925 this musical tradition had not developed the organisational structure or pedagogical sophistication of the shamisen and koto traditions. In those professional musical worlds, students' progress and ultimate livelihood depended upon their ability to reproduce the teacher's model in close detail. The vast majority of biwa players, by contrast, were amateur enthusiasts for whom melodic exactitude was of less concern than competence in conveying the content of the narrative text effectively and with conviction. This was sought through other kinds of technical discipline, among them, clear enunciation and accent placement, variation in the pace of text delivery, and the matching of instrumental interlude performance style to the manner of vocal recitation.

In most expository writing by biwa teachers, vocal pitch was conceived of only in terms of differentiation between 'high,' 'middle' and 'ground' registers—the last of which was 'grounded' in the pitch of the biwa's first and third open strings. If anything, then, both Namba and Fumon (and a number of other notators) were working against the grain of normative practice in this musical tradition, which did not require students to pay attention to discrete pitch units in vocal recitation, but rather to concentrate upon clear enunciation and expression of the text. Of the two performers, Nanba worked in a way closer to the norm, in the sense that his vocal notations specified no more than six pitch-levels, within which there was scope for individuated pitch adjustment. He also included accent marks as an aid to clear enunciation. It seems that he sought to improve the level of performance among all biwa players—especially amateurs—whom he claimed were becoming especially numerous, but also 'loose' in their approach.

By contrast, Fumon was concerned only with the skills of members of his own *kai*, and his approach to expression of the narrative text was a compositional one—hence his concern to inscribe important elements of his particular versions of vocal patterns in individual pieces—which nevertheless left room for improvisational or intuitive response to text in performance.[13] In Fumon's case, I can say that very few of his students have made thorough use of the resources provided in the notations—perhaps only two or three recite in strict accordance with the pitch frames specified for particular repertory items. It seems that the common approach to learning and performing *Satsumabiwa* in the 1980s and 1990s was little different to that of the 1910s; although the art had become an antiquarian, 'classical' one studied by few, the objective of performance for most remained clear recitation showing sensitivity to the text content, rather than melodic precision and complexity. For the majority of its practitioners—which today include Fumon's students, and those of other distinguished performers who died in the 1980s and 1990s—*Seiha*-school *Satsumabiwa* remains a poetic narrative with instrumental accompaniment, rather than a form of vocal music.

[13] See de Ferranti, 'Composition and Improvisation.'

Glossary

琵琶	biwa	切り	kiri
琵琶新聞	Biwa Shinbun	句	ku
筑前琵琶	Chikuzenbiwa	崩れ	kuzure
中干	chūkan	宮一商一角一徴一羽	kyū–shō–kaku–chi–u
台本	daihon	前歌・本歌・後歌	maeuta/hon'uta/atouta
普門義則	Fumon Yoshinori	南波杢庵	Namba Mokuan
節付け	fushizuke	浪花節	Naniwa-bushi
雅楽	gagaku	略譜	ryakufu
義太夫節	gidayū-bushi	薩摩琵琶	Satsumabiwa
五声	gosei	正派	Seiha
博士	hakase	精神教育帝国琵琶	Seishin Kyōiku Teikoku Biwa
低い音階	hikui onkai	三味線	shamisen
平吟	hiragin	声明	shômyô
標準音	hyōjun-on	数字譜	sūjifu
飯田胡春	Iida Koshun	大干	taikan
家元	iemoto	大正琴	Taishōgoto
地	ji	高い音階	takai onkai
会	kai	帝国琵琶	teikoku biwa
語り物	katarimono	帝国派	teikoku ha
語り	katari	謡い切り	utai-kiri
近代琵琶楽	kindai biwagaku	吉水錦扇	Yoshimizu Kinnō
錦水会	kinsuikai	吉村岳城	Yoshimura Gakujō