

Koto by Naoko Kikuchi

The Japanese koto is a simple instrument made by hollowing out a large piece of paulownia wood. 13 strings extend the length of the slim box shaped instrument. When played, the entire piece of wood acts as a resonance body.

The koto is about 180cm long, 40cm wide and 5cm deep. The body is slightly bowed, with the seventh (most central string) rising highest.

The shape of the instrument is likened to a Chinese legendary animal, a dragon. For example, parts of the instrument have names such as "head of the dragon", "tongue of the dragon", "eyes of the dragon" and "horn of the dragon".

In the past silk thread was most often used for string, but today a type of nylon material called Tetron is most popular. This material is much stronger and durable than silk, and the tone is quite similar.

The strings of the koto are all stretched tightly across the top of the instrument.

The tension on the strings is relatively uniform, and the instrument has no real "tuning" until you place bridges under the strings. The placement of the bridges - towards one end of the koto or the other - determines the pitch of the string. The player sits behind the instrument, at the far right end (where the permanent, "ryukaku" bridge is located). Generally, strings are tuned to the right of the movable bridges ("ji" in Japanese), with the string to the left remaining untuned. If a bridge is placed towards the far (left) end of the koto, the length of the playing area on the string is long, resulting in a pitch low, and if it is placed near the player, the length of the playing area on the string is short, making the pitch high.

The koto is tuned by moving the bridges under the strings until the desired note is achieved when the string is plucked.

When playing, picks are worn on the thumb, forefinger and middle finger of the right hand. Koto picks are called "Tsume" in Japanese. Tsume are made by fastening the pick inside a band called a "Wa." The bands are made from thickly lacquered paper, or sometimes leather. And the picks are usually ivory or plastic.

The range of the koto depends on the tension of the strings, but generally three octaves can be obtained, with the lowest note being the C below middle C on the piano. The most common tunings start with the bridge under the first string (string farthest from the player) placed far to the left, and the remaining strings (moving closer to the player) tuned consecutively higher (in ascending order). The bridges at the high end (to the right, closest to the player) are placed relatively closely together, and it is generally possible to obtain a difference of a half tone.

Considerable adjustment of tension is necessary, should it be necessary to tune a string to both the right and left (usually untuned) side of the bridge.

As the strings of the koto are traditionally tuned only on the right side of the movable bridges, a permanent bridge exists only at the far right end of the instrument. There is no true bridge at the left end, and as such, sound quality when playing to the left is totally different.

Bridges can be placed out of order (in both ascending and descending order), but this results in uneven heights for the strings, sometimes making it difficult to play.

techniques

The koto is generally played by plucking the strings with the picks attached to the first three fingers of the right hand. A variety of tone qualities are possible, from the very soft and warm to something quite hard and strong. Tone quality and volume can be varied by changing the playing area (distance from bridge), and the speed and strength with which a string is struck.

Picked chords, using the thumb and middle finger, are possible to a width of up to eight strings. When the index finger is also used (for a three note chord), a width of up to six strings is possible. Chords of a greater width (more than eight strings) can be made possible by playing as an arpeggio. Also, fingers of the left hand (unpicked - pizzicato) can be used to increase the number of notes in a chord.

The pitch of a string can be temporarily raised by pushing down on the string to the left side of the Ji. Generally it is possible to raise the pitch up to one whole step. If the tension of a string is very low however, the pitch may be raised up to one and a half steps. When a press is released, and the string is left to ring, the pitch returns to the original tone (For example, a string tuned to D can be pressed to raise the pitch to E, and then released, resulting in a ringing tone of D.) Timing for presses and releases can be varied, resulting in great differences in nuance.

When a string is played with the thumb, the string directly below that string is struck with the thumb pick and is dampened. When this lower string is a pressed string, the tone is cut off (by the playing of the higher string) and the left hand press can be immediately released, freeing the left hand for further use. When this is not the case we must either wait for the tone to naturally fade, or else dampen the string before releasing the press.

It is possible to press on two strings at the same time, the width between the strings being up to about five strings.

Continuous use of presses, in rapid succession requires an extremely high degree of skill.

The pitch of a string can be raised or lowered by moving the Ji (movable bridge) to the right or left. Such changes can be made during the course of a piece, when the left hand is free. It is very difficult (and sometimes not possible), to change many strings in a short period of time. Also, it is much easier to change pitches of strings (with the left hand) in the higher (or lower) range when playing with the right hand in the same (high or low) range.

The most common performance method involves striking the string squarely with the pick (using the whole pick). A variety of other playing techniques, such as a tremolo using just the corner of the pick, using the side of the pick for a scraping effect, and sweeping down across the strings with the backs of the picks (a common classical technique) are also possible.

A variety of modern techniques are also used. These include, Bartok, pizzicato, harmonics and muted techniques. Recently a number of artists have come to use various prepared techniques, inserting materials such as piano wire, sticks, paper and metal objects between the strings. Other interesting effects can be created by using the instrument in more percussive ways, striking or rubbing not only the strings, but the wood and various parts of the instrument with the hands or other objects.

a brief history

What we know of today as the Koto first came to Japan from China in the 7th century. It is thought that there was also a koto-like zither which already existed in Japan, evidenced in a small, clay figurine dating from some time between the 3rd century BC and 3rd century AD.

Like all of the other cultural influences originating in China and brought to Japan at this time, the Koto was given a very high status, and was immediately incorporated into the Imperial Court Ensemble.

The Imperial Court Ensemble music, called Gagaku was a highly stylized, ritualistic music which was performed solely for the enjoyment of the emperor and his court. Because of its sacred status, only a select few were allowed to study the instrument, and today the music has been carefully but loosely reconstructed without the aid of written scores. The Koto played a significant role for many centuries

within the confines of this small ensemble, which consisted of various wind, string, and percussion instruments.

The 13-string paulownia wood koto played today remains essentially the same in size and shape today. The beginnings of Koto music in Japan are cloaked in a very elite, elegant atmosphere, and associated with the luxurious, unhurried lifestyles of the ruling class. Kenjun (1547-1636), a Buddhist priest, is acknowledged as being the first person to take Koto - against all rules- outside of the Gagaku tradition. He developed a repertoire for koto and voice called Kumiuta, and a style of Koto playing called Tsukushi-style. Yatsuhashi Kengyo, who learned Tsukushi-style Koto music, changed the Kumiuta repertoire, and is credited with writing the koto classic, "Rokudan no shirabe" (study in Six steps) and other important koto works, several of which are still commonly played. Yatsuhashi wrote new tunings for the Koto which made the music lighter and more pleasing to the untrained ear, including the most common tuning used today, Hira-joshi (pentatonic tuning). He also developed the "17 Koto Techniques," a series of right hand koto playing methods which are today considered to be basic to Koto playing. In all, Yatsuhashi is said to have made 100 important contributions to the Koto.

Yatsuhashi's "Dan-mono" (section) works are extremely systematic and mathematically symmetric; each section has the same number of measures, for example, and certain strings are played the same number of times in those sections. Today he is called the "Father of Modern Koto" because of his contributions to both Koto music and koto playing techniques, without which the instrument might never have successfully survived the transformation from the restricted confines of the court ensemble.

Two Schools Develop Perhaps because there were so few opportunities open to them, many blind people took up the study of Koto, so much so that the name " Kengyo" began to be awarded exclusively to blind kotoists who had achieved mastery of the instrument. One of Yatsuhashi's disciples, Ikuta Kengyo, was the first to write music which combined koto and the three stringed shamisen. The "jiuta" singing style was thus further developed with these two instruments. Ikuta began his own school of Koto, which uses square picks. Yamada Kengyo, who was from the southern Osaka region of Japan's main island, developed a style of Koto playing which emphasized the voice. Today the Yamada school is mainly distinguished from the Ikuta school by the shape of its picks, which are rounded at the ends, and its emphasis on singing jiuta pieces. For several hundred years, both Yamada and Ikuta schools performed primarily solo and "sankyoku" works for koto and voice combined with shamisen and shakuhachi(usually shamisen player sing) with subtle differences in the performance styles.

In 1867, Japan underwent one of the most dramatic changes any country has ever gone through. After over 200 years of self-imposed isolation, it was forcibly opened by Commodore Perry, who insisted that ports be opened for trade with the outside world. The system of irreconcilable shogunates collapsed and the emperor was reinstated to unite the country, while at the same time Japan began to modernize-i.e. westernize- at an incredible pace. Everything from clothing to schooling to lifestyles were transformed to be more like the west, in an effort to " catch up" with the outside world. Many of Japan's traditional arts were abandoned along with everything else "old-fashioned" in the national rush to westernize. The study of koto was no exception, and was relegated to a back burner, to be carried out mainly by young upperclass women who wanted to give their marriage resume an elegant touch. The sound of the koto could barely be heard amongst the growing din of machinery , trains and bargaining traders.

koto today

There are numerous schools of both Ikuta-style and Yamada -style koto in Japan today, with over 2million players officially registered. all of the major schools have now been joined by players of various nationalities. It became required to take in a traditional Japanese music caliber by Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology all over the compulsory education period for four years and increased at the opportunity when a primary and secondary student mentioned koto. In addition, departments of traditional Japanese music specialty continue increasing in College of Music for these past several years, and it can call that interest to traditional Japanese music.

Koto technique
note and How sound like
⑦

	<p>ヲ五六</p> <p>○</p> <p>オ七八</p> <p>○</p>		<p>一ニ³</p> <p>○</p> <p>○</p> <p>○</p>		<p>六²</p> <p>七</p> <p>五³</p> <p>六</p> <p>十</p> <p>○</p>
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^(g)
Oshi awase zume

^(d)
kakite
<shan>

^(a)
Kakezume
<kara kara ten>

	<p>サ</p> <p>六</p> <p>○</p> <p>○</p>		<p>ニ七</p> <p>○</p> <p>○</p> <p>○</p>		<p>六²</p> <p>五³</p> <p>六</p> <p>十</p> <p>○</p>
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^(h)
Ren
<Sakharin>

^(e)
Awase zume
<shan>

^(b)
Hangake
<ton kara ten>

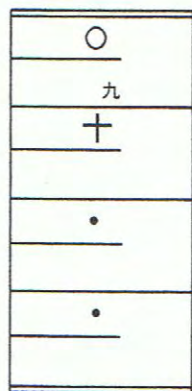
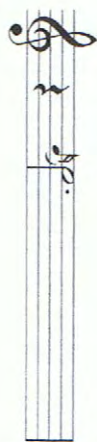
	<p>一ニ³</p> <p>オ為</p> <p>←</p> <p>○</p>		<p>五</p> <p>○</p> <p>オ九十</p> <p>○</p>		<p>六²</p> <p>五³</p> <p>六</p> <p>十</p> <p>○</p> <p>○</p>
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⁽ⁱ⁾
Namigaeshi

^(f)
chirashi
<shu>

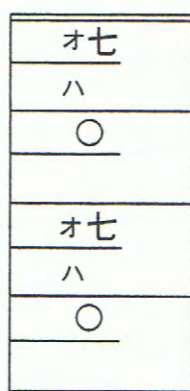
^(c)
Haya kake
<kara kara teh>





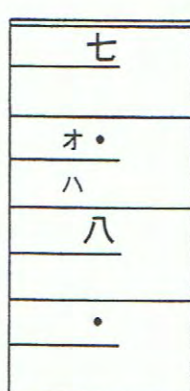
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Kasahe zume



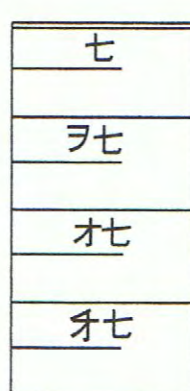
(y)

Oshi Hanashi



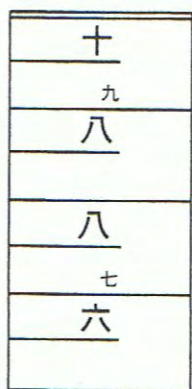
(v)

Kasahe oshi
< o ha >



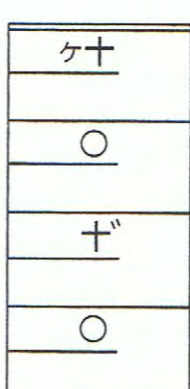
(s)

Oshide



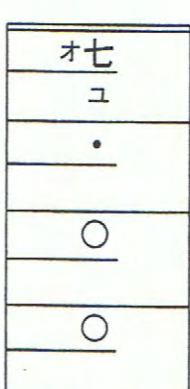
(cc)

< Kohronin >



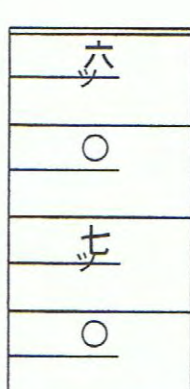
(z)

Keshi zume
< ke' >



(w)

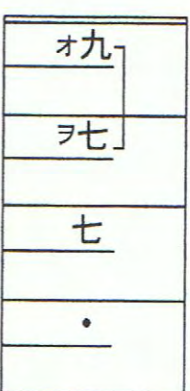
Yuni (iro)



(t)

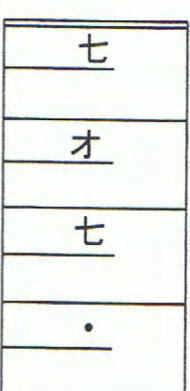
Tsu ki (iro)

the technique
Koto ~~technique~~
note and How sound like
(3)

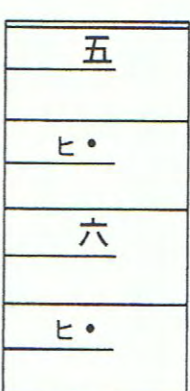


(aa)

Kake oshi



(x)



(u)

Hiki (iro)

~ Koto techniques ~

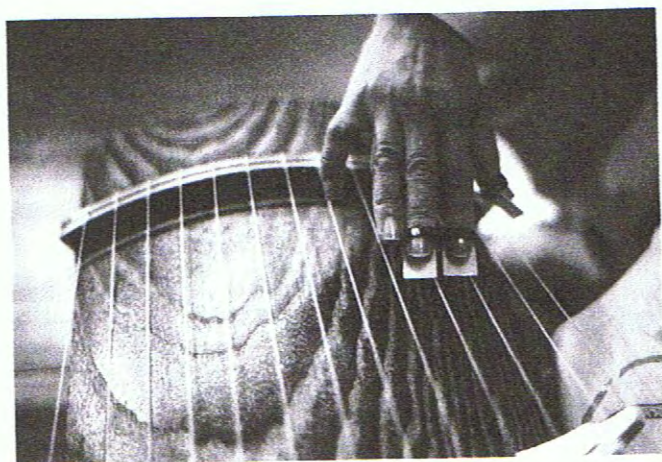
These are often found in both traditional and contemporary music. These techniques and the written symbols in the notation can vary slightly between different performance traditions, as do the diverse onomatopoeic names describing them.

The *Sōkyoku taiishō* ([1779] 1903), regarded as a major treatise on *zokusō* (fig. 91), describes twenty-five techniques of ornamentation (see listing below): seventeen for the right hand and eight for the left hand. While this historical work gives a concise explanation on how to play the techniques, the inclusive explanation given below of each of them is intended to cover the possible performance practices of several present-day performance traditions in order to present various ways in which the techniques are played nowadays. These descriptions, shown below, closely follow Andō's (1986, 195) own outline of the techniques, together with his clarification of performance practice and onomatopoeic names that are based on the Ikuta-ryū. While not all performance traditions can be covered fully, the examples given are meant as a general outline of some possible types of ornamentation. The techniques of the other main everyday tradition of koto performance, the Yamada-ryū, are displayed in figure 97; they are based on the scores of the former *iemoto* Nakanoshima Kin'ichi. These techniques and their symbols are either the same or very similar to those delineated for the Ikuta tradition.³⁵

The techniques shown in figure 91 use a notation of the Ikuta-ryū, and those in figure 97 that of the Yamada-ryū. Both utilize the *hirajōshi* tuning. In the notations right-hand fingering is expressed with "2" (index finger), "3" (middle finger). Most notes without a number are played by the thumb, which except for the first string, usually rests on the string below the one just plucked. When the thumb does not rest on the next string the technique is called *kozume*. As well as the diverse alternative terminology used for the techniques, well-known onomatopoeic words and phrases are indicated in parenthesis. These are usually found in everyday speech, with slight variations occurring between different performance traditions.

- (a) *Kakezume* (dispersed plectra) (*tonren tonren ten* or *kara kara ten*). A melodic pattern that uses the thumb, index and middle fingers. Usually, the index finger plays one string followed by the next string above it; the middle finger then plays the string below the first one played, followed by the next one above it; the thumb then plays the note an octave above the first string played by the middle finger.
- (b) *Hankake/hangake* (half kake; i.e., half *kakezume*). A variation of *kakezume* that has fewer notes. In any of the variants, grace notes might be played by the middle finger before the thumb plays (*to to ten* or *ka ka ten*). Three types are found:
 - (i) *Mukōhan* (*ton ren ton ten*). The index finger plays two strings followed by the middle finger playing one.
 - (ii) *Tanhan* (*ton ton ren ten* or *ton ka ra ten*). The index finger plays one string and the middle finger two, as in the illustration.
 - (iii) *Kaihan*. Both the index and the middle finger play one string each.
- (c) *Hayakake/hayagake* (fast kake; i.e., fast *kakezume*) (*kara kara ten*). This is a variation of *kakezume* that plays the sequence at twice the normal speed.
- (d) *Kakite* (scratch hand); *kakizume* (scratch plectra) (*sha, shan*). The middle finger plucks two adjacent strings (usually the first and second strings) in one fast stroke. The plucking motion is toward the player so that the string furthest away is played first. One sound is heard when played quickly, although two separate notes can sometimes be heard when played slowly. The plectra might come to rest on the next string above the two that were struck. Adriaansz (1973, 51) comments that in the Yamada-ryū the player "may (not 'must') continue the movement of...[the] finger in the same direction until it stops against the next string." Ikuta-ryū players today usually play *kakite* in the same way as the Yamada-ryū.





92 *Awasezume koto technique.*

Player: Yamakawa Tamae
(Miyagi-ha, Ikuta-ryū).
Dunedin, 1996. Photograph by
the author.

(e) *Awasezume* (meeting plectra) (*shan*) (fig. 92). The thumb and (usually) middle finger play simultaneously (usually in octaves), although the middle finger might occasionally play momentarily before the thumb.

93 *Chirashi/namigaeshi koto*

technique. Player: Yamakawa
Tamae (Miyagi-ha, Ikuta-ryū).
Dunedin, 1996. Photograph by
the author.

(f) *Chirashi* (scatter); *chirashizume* (scatter plectra) (*shu'*). This technique, which varies considerably between different traditions, is played by scraping the right side (as viewed from the top of the hand) of the middle plectrum along one, two or more strings (depending on the tradition) in a sweeping motion from right to left (*cf. waren*). It is often indicated by a horizontal arrow above the string, or strings.

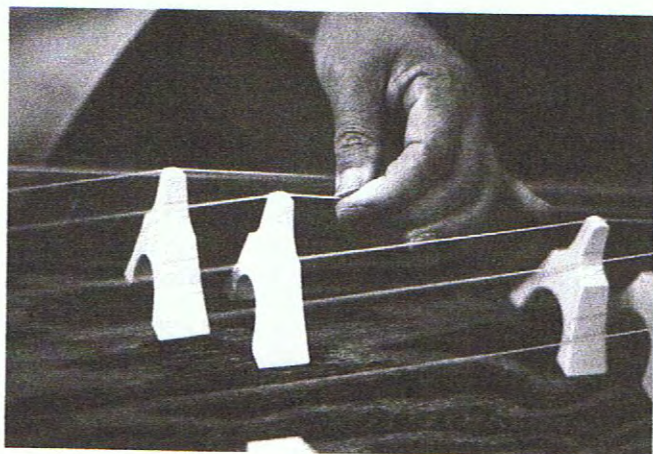
The term *chirashi* might also be used to describe a technique that is played by scraping the strings with the end of the index and middle plectra along two adjacent strings, the lower of which is often pressed in order to raise it to the pitch of the upper string (fig. 93). In this instance, the technique is sometimes called *namigaeshi* (wave return). In such cases, the technique is notated with either a curved or a straight arrow pointing to the left (either horizontally or to the upper left). In some modern music the technique might be played with the plectra scraping to the player's right, in which case the arrow points to the right.

- (g) *Oshiwasezume* (push, meeting plectra); *oshiwase* (*ryan*; *shan*). Two adjacent strings are plucked simultaneously by the thumb, the lower of the two being raised by pressing it down to match the pitch of the upper string (shown in the example with a *katakana* "wo" for a half tone and an "o" for a whole tone).
- (h) *Ren* (progression); *uraren* (back progression) (*sārarin*). The plectrum on the index finger plays a tremolo on the thirteenth string (unless indicated otherwise) and then this finger and the middle finger alternate rapidly to play a glissando from high to low. This technique usually ends with a grace note on the string immediately before the final note in the progression. In the Yamada-ryū the tremolo is not usually played. Instead, the player hooks the index and middle finger plectra around the string to produce a scraping sound and then plays the glissando from high to low (Read 1975, 380-81).
- (i) *Namigaeshi* (wave return) (*shan shu' shū*). This technique is interpreted in several ways. Sometimes it is played with a pattern of three techniques, as shown in the example, which begins with *kakite*, then *chirashi* (scraping with the tips of the index and middle plectra along two adjacent strings), and finally *waren*. Another method is to play the technique in the same way as one of the versions of *chirashi* (scraping with the extremity of the index and middle plectra along two adjacent strings).

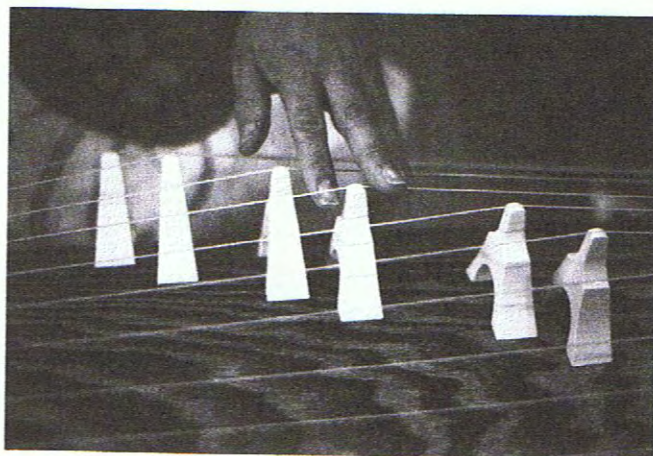
- (p) *Hanhikiren* (half pulling progression) (*shān rin*). A version of *hikiren* that begins on a higher string than *hikiren*.
- (q) *Hikisute* (pulling, give up) (*shān toton*). A version of *hikiren* that ends on a string lower than the thirteenth string.
- (r) *En* (cover, or shade); *atooshi* (after push). After a string has been plucked, it is pressed behind its movable bridge by left-hand fingers (thumb, index and middle fingers) to raise the pitch (portamento). The string is usually pressed on the part of the beat indicated, although the exact point is usually learned through one's tradition, as is the point of release unless it is shown specifically in the score.
- (s) *Kō* (push); *oshide* (push hand); *oshiiro* (push, color). A string is pressed behind its movable bridge by the left hand to raise the pitch either by a half tone, a whole tone or one and a half tones. A related technique called *kakeoshi* holds down two strings at the same time.
- (t) *Tsuki* (thrust); *tsukiuro* (thrust, color). A string is pressed immediately after a note is played (usually raised about one tone), and then released straight away. The technique is indicated with a *katakana* "tsu" in the score.
- (u) *Jū*; ⁹⁵ *hikiuro* (pull, color) (fig. 95). A string is pulled toward the player's right (usually about a half tone) and then released. It is usually pulled on the beat following the one played and released on or before the half beat before the next. The technique is indicated with a *katakana* "hi" in the score.
- (v) *Jūkō* (layered pushing); *kasaneoshi* (layered pressing). Repeated pushing and releasing of a string, or raising an already pushed string further.
- (w) *Yōgin* (shake, song); *yuriuro* (shake, color). Usually releasing a pushed string and pushing it again immediately (the opposite of *tsuki*). The technique is indicated by a *katakana* "yu."
- (x) *Kōkyō* (push reverberation); *oshihibiki* (push reverberation). After an open string is played it is pressed on the next beat to raise its pitch before the open string is played again. The motion is slower than *en* (*atooshi*).
- (y) *Kōhō* (push release); *oshihanashi* (push release). Releasing a pushed string. Indicated in the notation by a *katakana* "ha".

95 *Hikiuro koto technique*. Player: Yamakawa Tamae (Miyagi-ha, Ikuta-ryū). Dunedin, 1996. Photograph by the author.

96 *Keshizume koto technique*. Player: Yamakawa Tamae (Miyagi-ha, Ikuta-ryū). Dunedin, 1996. Photograph by the author.

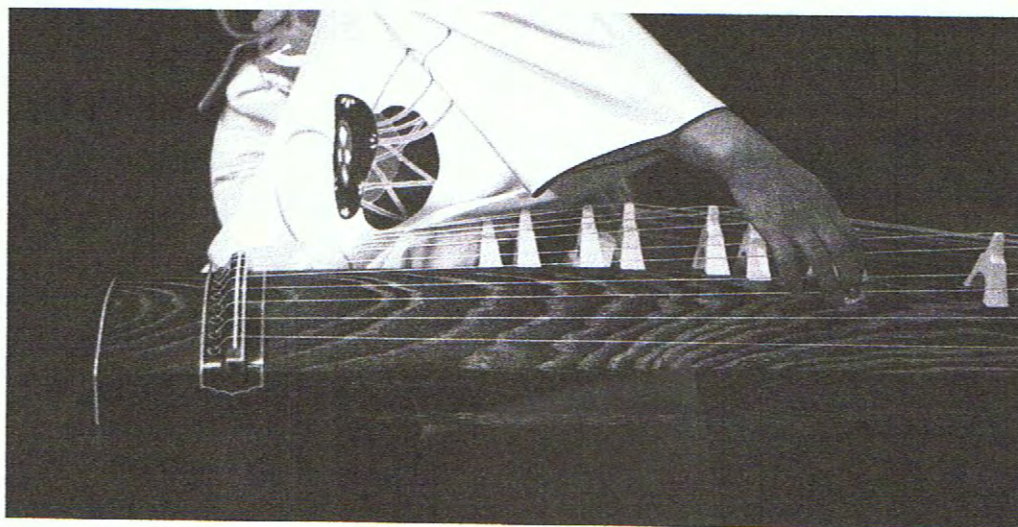


(u) *hiki (iro)*

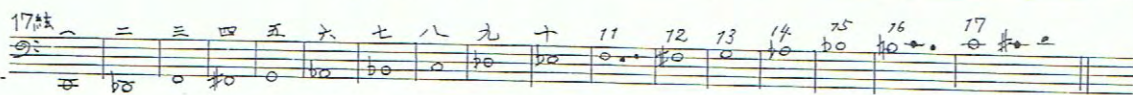
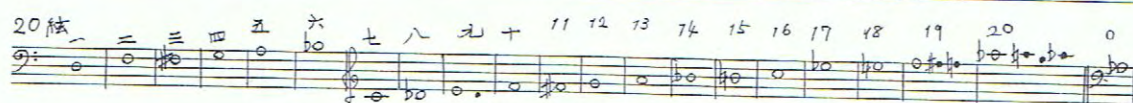


(z) *Keshi zume*

- (j) *Waren* (ring movement) (*shū*). The side of the middle finger plectrum sweeps across the first string with a quick movement from the player's right to left, sometimes just touching the second and even the third strings as well, in order to produce a scraping sound (cf. *chirashi*). In the *Ikuta-ryū* the technique is notated by either a horizontal arrow pointing left (either above the notation of the first and second strings, or on its own without any indication of strings, but signifying the first two), or by a *katakana* "wa."
- (k) *Nagashizume* (flowing plectra) (*kārarin*). This technique consists of a glissando played by the thumb plectrum from high (usually from the thirteenth string, unless indicated otherwise, and emphasizing it and the string below it – the lower string is not indicated) to low, very often leaving out or playing very quietly the strings between start and finish. The technique usually ends with one or two grace notes before the final note. It is sometimes called *hanryū* (half flowing), if it begins on a lower string.
- (l) *Warizume* (dividing plectra) (*sha sha*). The index finger plays two adjacent strings very quickly beginning with the lower, followed by an identical pattern on the same strings by the middle finger (in the example a repeat sign occupies the second half of the beat). The thumb usually continues by playing a string an octave higher than the lower of the two adjacent strings, in which case the technique is labeled onomatopoeically as *sha sha ten*.
- (m) *Surizume* (scraping plectra); *urazuri* (backward scraping) (*zū zū*) (fig. 94). The index and middle plectra scrape with their right side first from right to left along two adjacent strings, pause, and then scrape from left to right along the same strings. The technique is usually notated with arrows indicating the direction of the plectra.
- (n) *Sukuizume* (backward plectra) (~~ri; ru; re; ro~~). A backward stroke by the thumb that produces a slight scraping sound (indicated by a *katakana* "su"). When played slowly the ring on the index plectrum may hold onto the thumb ring in order for the technique to be played louder and preventing the thumb ring from falling off. The same technique is used on the *shamisen*, which is played with a backward stroke of the plectrum.
- (o) *Hikiren* (pulling progression) (*shān rin*). The middle finger plays a glissando from low to high. The first part usually begins with *kakite* on the first and second strings, followed by very quiet notes before the final string (sometimes with a grace note, *kasanezume*, in front of it).



94 *Surizume koto* technique.
 Player: Yamakawa Tamae
 (Miyagi-ha, *Ikuta-ryū*).
 Dunedin, 1996. Photograph by
 the author.



↑	半音押し	Semi-tone pressing	gl.	グリスサント	glissando
↑	全音押し	Whole-tone pressing		任意の音まで gl.	glissando to any note
↑	後押し	press after playing		() 内の音まで gl.	glissando to the note within ()
~~~~~	ユリ	"Yuri" (vibrato)			
N.R	竜角の近く	near the "ryūkaku"			
off.R	竜角の遠く	off the "ryūkaku"		最後の音まで gl.	glissando to the last note
+	左手の指 (爪はして) With L.H. (without "tsume")		↑	↑ 印の方向にアルペジオ	arpeggiate towards the indicated direction
	指定のない所でも使用可	possible to be done at other unindicated sections			
□	普通に爪で	using "tsume" in normal manner	✎	爪でトレモロ	tremolo using "tsume"
✓	スクイ爪	rub the string roughly			
U	テラシ爪	rub the string with the side of "tsume"			
⊙, ▽	打ち爪	tap the string with the surface of "tsume"			
×	音高任意の音	note of any pitch			
⇄	柱の反対側をグリスサント	glissando on the opposite side of the bridges ("ji")			
(↔)	柱の位置を変える	change the position of the bridge ("ji")			
(mp ↔ f)	指定のあるまで mp から f の間で任意の強弱	any dynamic level between mp and f until indicated			



# 記号の説明

主として左手に関係するもの

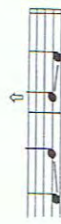
「押し」の記号は音符または余韻線の上に付される。

半音押し ↑

全音押し ⇑

押さない状態は○をつけることもある。

つぎのように、隣り合った2音符が線（実線、ときには点線）で結ばれているときは、その2音符は同一の弦で発音される。すなわち、あとの音が低いときは、その音は「押し手」で作り、あとの音符が高いときは、その音は押し手によって強く「押し放し」の手法となる。しかも前の音が弾いてすぐ左手で線の方向に従った変化をはしめる。



これに反して、途中の変化を感じさせないように、瞬間的に「押し」た押し放し」ときは、つぎのように記譜する。



つぎのように、さらにスラーがついているときは、あとの音符は、前の音を弾いた余韻の中で、左手の操作のみによって変化する。右手で弾くことはない。



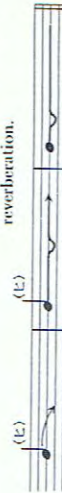
つぎの記号は、だいたい視覚的に判断できる余韻の動きをおこすよう、で裝飾的に「後押し」をする。その高さまで押すかは不定である。



同じく視覚的に判断して、左手で余韻を操作するものに「つき」また「突きイロ」というのがある。音程の変化の幅は、だいたい半音程度で



つぎの記号も、視覚的な余韻の動きで、「ひき」または「ひきイロ」とor「引きイロ」。弾いたあと、柱の左側で弦を右方向（柱の方向）に引っぱる余韻を下げ、またすぐ指をはなしてもとの音程に戻す。ただし、低音動作の上で無理があり、高音域は余韻が少なすぎて効果が悪い。



ひき」ではないが、それとよく似た効果は「押し弾き」と「後押し」を並べて使うことにより作り出すことができる。この場合の方が、余韻は明快になるが、「ひき」とはムードそのものに違いがある。

## ● Explanation of signs

Signs mainly for the left hand

“Oshide” (to press a string at the left side of the bridge) is indicated by the following signs, which are given above notes or above lines showing trailing tones:

Semi-tone pressing: ↑, whole-tone pressing: ⇑, Non-pressing: ○  
When two adjacent notes are connected by a solid line or sometimes by a dotted line, as shown in below, these should be played on the same string. Actually, if the second note is of a higher pitch, the tone should be produced by “Oshide”, and if of a lower pitch, it is plucked by “oshi-hanashi”, with the string of the first note kept pressed. And in this execution, the instant the first note is played, the left hand should start making inflection according to the line indicated there.



In contrast to this, if “oshide” or “oshi-hanashi” is to be done instantaneously so that the inflection for the moment may be imperceptible, the following notation is employed:



When slurs are inserted in addition, as in the following example, the later note(s) should be inflected in the resonance of the first tone by the movement of left hand alone, without plucking the string again by the right hand.



When indicated as the following, the notes should be played by “ato-oshi” (ornamental after-pressing of the left hand) so that the trailing resonance which is clearly perceptible may be caused. The degree of pressing is left to the player's discretion.

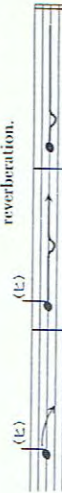


Other indications for controlling the reverberation with the left hand according to the player's visual perception is “tsuki” or “tsuki-iro”. The range of variation in pitch is about semi-tone.



These signs also indicate clarity of resonance, which is called “hiki” or “hiki-iro”. After plucking the string, first make the pitch go down by pulling the string at the left side of the “ji” (bridge) toward right, that is, in the direction on of the bridge, and then let the pitch return to the original by releasing the string immediately.

However, this motion is difficult to execute in low registers, while in high registers the effect is unsatisfactory because of insufficient reverberation.



An effect which is not exactly of “hiki” but similar to it can be caused by successive use of “oshi-hiki” and “ato-oshi” starting on a stopped string. This execution gives more clarity to the swell of reverberation, but differs substantially from “hiki” in the mood they

※ ▲ は「押し爪」で、左指の爪を柱のすぐ内側の弦の下に当てて「さわり」をつける。



※ は、「笛音」(ハーモニックス)で、上が聞える音。

※ の位置の弦の真中を左手（ときに右手の腹）で軽くおさえて右手で弾く。

※ + 印は、左手の指による（ピチカート）奏法。

## 2 主として右手に関するもの

※ pizz. は、「ことづめ」を使わない右手の指による（ピチカート）奏法。

※ は、弦をつまみ上げるようなpizz.を示す。弦が弦面におつかるよう

ord. は、普通に「ことづめ」に戻ることの意味する。

※ N-R=Near the Ryūkakuは、竜角に近いところで、硬い音色で弾く。

※ off R.=off the Ryūkakuは、竜角から離れ、幾分柱に寄って、やわらかい音色で弾く。

※ 普通の位置で弾くときにはもord.またはposition ord.を使用する。

3 以下の記号も右手に関するものであるが、その下の音符について有効である（simileとして省略された場合は除き）。

※ □ は、爪で普通に弾く。（隣りの弦に当てるように）。

※ ♪ は、「小爪」といい、爪の先で弦を持ち上げるように弾く。

※ V は、「スクイ爪」であり、爪の裏で弦をすくうように弾く。（和音のときは、その数だけの指に適用される。）

※ ♪ は、弦をこすりながら行なう強い「スクイ爪」。

※ ∇ は、「打爪」であり、爪の腹で弦を叩く。

※ ←または↙ は、「ちらし爪」であり、爪の脇で弦をこする。

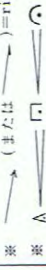
※ ⇄ は、爪の先で弦の上面をこする。

※ ♪ または ♪ は、「打ちかき」とてもいうが、3〜4本の弦をこすつてのななめ方向にクリッサンドのように振く。

## 4 その他

※ → (または ⇨) =accel.

※ → (または ⇨) =rit.



▲“Keshi-zume”: Put a finger nail of the left hand to the downside of the string at the nearest inside part of the bridge, thus producing an effect of “sawari” (a kind of harsh staccato sound).

“Fuene”(or harmonics): The upper note shows the sounding pitch. Press the string indicated by the lower note at its midpoint softly with the left hand (or sometimes with the inner surface of the right hand) and pluck it with the right hand.

The sign + indicates the left hand pizzicato.

## ● Signs mainly for the right hand

“Pizz.” should not be played with the “koto-zume” (plectrum) but by the other right hand fingers.

The mark ♪ means a kind of pizz. (Bartok pizz.) in a pinch-fashin. Pluck the string to the extent that it strikes the body of koto.

“ord.” means return to the normal use of the plectrum.

The indication “N.R.” (near the Ryūkaku) means that the player should pluck the strings near the Ryūkaku to produce a hard tone, while “off R.” (off the Ryūkaku) means that he should play the notes away from the Ryūkaku, that is, nearer to the bridge, to produce a milder tone.

Plucking at the normal position is also indicated by “ord.” “position ord.”

The following signs, which are also for the right hand, are applied only to the notes above which such signs are given, except when notes are omitted with the indication of sim.

The sign □ means the ordinary execution by the “Koto-zume” (plectrum) in such a way that it touches the next string.

The sign ♪ indicates “ko-zume”, which is executed as if lifting the string with the tip of the plectrum.

The sign V indicates “saku-zume”, which is executed by striking the string with the back of plectrum. To play the notes of a chord such execution is applied to several fingers.

The sign ♪ is a kind of “saku-zume”, which is executed rubbing the string roughly.

The mark ∇ means “uchi-zume” indicating that the string should be tapped with the surface of the plectrum.

The mark ← or ↙ means “chirashi-zume” indicating the string should rubbed with the side of the plectrum.

The mark ⇄ indicates that the string should be rubbed with the ridge of the plectrum.

♪ or ♪: This execution may also be called “uchi-kaki”. Several three or four strings in a kind of glissando with the plectrum in has direction.

Other signs, which are necessary in performances.

→ or ⇨ means accelerando.

→ or ⇨ means ritardando.

