

文化財保護法

—「無形文化財」保護における保存と革新の側面—

有澤 知乃

文化財保護法の解釈において、音楽、舞踊、演劇などを指す「無形文化財」保護の目的は、芸能の伝統的な様式を「保存」することとされており、中でも同法が認定する「人間国宝」（重要無形文化財保持者の通称）は、伝統の正当な継承者というイメージが強調されている。本稿では、このような法の解釈やイメージと反して、人間国宝の多くは、新しい技術や発想を取り入れて伝統を「革新」している点を検証した。

ケーススタディとして、地歌の人間国宝である富山清琴と、箏曲の人間国宝である米川敏子を取り上げ、特に彼らの作曲家としての側面に着目した。まず、二人の創作した曲の分析を行い、既存の音楽様式に、新しい要素がどのような形で取り入れられているかを検討した。富山が創作した曲の多くは、全体的には江戸時代までに固定化した地歌の楽曲形式に基づいているが、部分的に洋楽や他の邦楽ジャン

ルの音階やモチーフを挿入し、所々に現れる意外性を追求している。一方米川の創作曲は、洋楽の音階や旋律形などを大胆に取り入れ、既存の箏曲の楽曲形式から大きく離れたものとなっている。二人の後継者とのインタビューから、富山と米川の作曲活動には、個々の経験や感性に基づいた、個性的で革新的な芸術文化を生み出そうという動機が見出された。

人間国宝は、様々な新しい試みによって伝統の発展に貢献している。しかし、文化庁担当官とのインタビューでは、現状における人間国宝の認定制度では、保存の側面のみが評価されていることが明らかになった。法の目的と、実際に芸能を担う人々の意識には、食い違いが生じており、法の解釈や適用をめぐって矛盾が生じている。

（ありさわ しの・東京学芸大学）

Cultural Properties Protection Law: Aspects of Preservation and Innovation in the Protection of Intangible Cultural Properties of Japan

ARISAWA, Shino

Table of contents

Introduction

1. Intangible Cultural Properties as Preservation of Tradition

2. Innovation within “Traditional” Performing arts

3. Diversity in Artistic Conceptions

4. Interpretation of the Law and Designation Criteria

Conclusion

Introduction

This article investigates aspects of innovation in “traditional” performing arts, specifically examining the legislation to protect Intangible Cultural Properties (*mukei bunkazai*) within the Cultural Properties Protection Law (*bunkazai hogohô*) implemented in 1950. Although the motive of the legislation is to preserve the traditional culture of Japan, I argue that the performing artists who are designated as preservers of traditions are often radical innovators of their arts. This article explores, in particular, the issues surrounding the holders (*hojisha*) of Important Intangible Cultural Properties (*jûyo mukei bunkazai*), commonly known as Living National Treasures (*ningen kokuho*) who are designated as the most important inheritors of Japan’s traditional heritage. I will investigate the contradictory aspects of the legislation, including preservation and innovation, and argue how, despite their image as preservers of tradition, Living National Treasures themselves often desire to expand the boundaries of tradition, incorporating their own aesthetics and creativity.

Looking first at the portrayal of Living National Treasures in public, I will examine in what way historical values are highlighted and their aspect as inheritors of traditions is emphasised. The second part of the article will investigate the aspects of innovation within the works of the Living National Treasures and discuss how individual artistic conceptions are diverse and differ from the widely spread images as preservers of the tradition. In order to look into individual artists’ ideas, two Living National Treasures from the music genre will be closely investigated as case studies. I will, in particular, examine in what way new musical styles were incorporated into their compositions and consider the motives behind their works. Interpretation of the law and designation criteria within the government will also be examined in relation to the aspects of preservation and innovation. This study is based on my field research carried out between 2005 and 2008 where I attended concerts and conducted interviews with musicians as well as with a former officer of the Agency for Cultural Affairs (Bunkachô).

1. Intangible Cultural Properties as Preservation of Tradition

The Cultural Properties Protection Law (*bunkazai hogohô*) first created the concept of *bunkazai* or “cultural properties”.¹ Within this Law, cultural properties were divided into Tangible Cultural Properties (*yûkei bunakzai*), such as architecture, and Intangible Cultural Properties, such as performing art traditions and crafts (e.g. pottery making). The Law states that these Intangible Cultural Properties possess “high historic or artistic value for Japan” and consist of “human ‘technical artistry’ which is embodied by individuals or groups of individuals.” Among these Intangible Cultural Properties, the government designates especially “important” ones as Important Intangible Cultural Properties (*jûyo mukei bunkazai*), and Living National Treasures are designated as artists who “represent the highest mastery of the techniques concerned”.² Thirty one performing artists and forty three crafts artists are currently designated as holding Important Intangible Cultural Properties or as being Living National Treasures (as of 1 April, 2008).³ The government provides each individual with two million Japanese yen per year as a grant to continue creating their art (thus preserving Japanese heritage) and to enable them to hand down their skills to younger generations.⁴

In order to highlight the significance of Living National Treasures, concerts and exhibitions are often organised for them, and TV programmes and journals regularly feature them as representing national heritage. In this way, attention is drawn to past and present Living National Treasures as well as to their contributions to the prosperity of state culture and the transmission of this important cultural heritage to future generations. The historical value of these arts is often highlighted, and Living National Treasures are usually introduced to the public as inheritors (*keishôsha*) of tradition. For example, in the concert programme notes for the performances of twelve Living National Treasures held in Tokyo in 2004, *nagauta* singer Miyata Tetsuo⁵ was introduced as “the inheritor of the elegant singing styles of *nagauta*, the most representative vocal music in the history of *shamisen* music of the Edo period”.⁶ It is often the case that a lineage or genealogical chart of the performer is shown at their performances and at exhibitions in order to emphasise the historical continuity and the hereditary aspect of the tradition.

Living National Treasures are also frequently sent abroad as honorary ambassadors for their art to present Japanese national culture to the outside world. For example, in the foreword of the concert programme for a London performance by Living National Treasure Nishikawa Senzô, a *nihon buyô* dancer, the Japanese ambassador Nogami Yoshiji emphasised the historical continuity embedded within this art form:

Nihon Buyo is one of Japan’s most revered and long-established performing arts. We can trace its roots at least as far back as the eighth century as it is mentioned in the *Kojiki*, Japan’s oldest history book, which

¹ For the overall development of the system of the Cultural Properties Protection Law, see Kawamura (2002), Bunkachô (2001), and Nakamura (1999).

² “Preservation and Utilization of Cultural Properties” <http://www.bunka.go.jp/english/pdf/chapter-04pdf> (Accessed 1 November 2009), p. 36.

³ Figures are based on information from the Agency for Cultural Affairs Web site. See footnote 2.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ His full stage name is To-on Miyata Tetsuo.

⁶ Concert programme: *Ningen kokuhô ni yoru buyô hōgaku kanshōkai* (Japanese traditional dance and music performance by Living National Treasures), 17 April 2004, Kokuritsu Gekijō, Tokyo.

was completed in 712. With its combination of exquisite costumes and restrained movement, *Nihon Buyo* embodies the spirit and essence of Japan.⁷

2. Innovation within “Traditional” Performing Arts

Despite their appearance of preserving traditions, many Living National Treasures are involved in innovations and changes to the styles and the methods of their art forms. I will therefore argue that these individual artists have different ideas and concepts about their own work to those their public image would imply. In the following section, I will look at two Living National Treasures who were designated from the music genres of *jiuta* and *sōkyoku*. Having lived in pre-war and post-war Japan, the two musicians I will look at were significantly influenced by the social and cultural changes which took place in Japan over the last century. Looking at the individual lives of the artists, their work and philosophies, I will investigate whether or not the Living National Treasures themselves actually reflect the image of traditional heritage of Japan which is promoted by the Cultural Properties Protection Law.

The musicians I will look at are Tomiyama Seikin the 1st (1913-2008) and Yonekawa Toshiko (1913-2005). In the rest of this article, their names will be written as Seikin the 1st and Toshiko.⁸ Seikin the 1st was acknowledged as a Living National Treasure in 1969 in the *jiuta* category. Toshiko was acknowledged in the category of *sōkyoku* in 1996. Within the categories of *jiuta* and *sōkyoku*, which were closely developed musical genres during the Edo period (1603-1868), there have been twelve Living National Treasures, including the above two, since the inception of this scheme in 1954.⁹ I have chosen these two musicians for the discussion in this article, as they were especially active in composing new pieces, while others such as Kikuhara Hatsuko (1899-2001) and Fujii Kunie (1930-2006) mainly dedicated their musical activities to teaching and performing the existing traditional repertoires. Therefore, in the following section, I will look at these two musicians’ interests as innovators of the tradition.

The two musicians I describe in this article have marked differences in their musical backgrounds and thus I will outline their life histories. Both Seikin the 1st and Toshiko were born in 1913. Seikin the 1st was born in Osaka as the son of a wholesale dealer of sugar. When Seikin the 1st was one year old he lost his eyesight, and so his parents later encouraged him to become a professional *jiuta* musician as that was still one of the common professions for the blind people. His teachers were also blind, and were acknowledged as renowned musicians who represented the *ryūha* (school) known as Tomi-suji group within the Nogawa-ryū lineage which was thought to have its historical roots in Osaka. In his autobiography, Seikin the 1st described how it had been hard for a child like him to travel to his teacher’s place every day to have many hours of lessons, and how his first teacher was strict with him. At the age of thirty-five, he was granted permission to become independent

⁷ Nogami, Yoshiji, A Message from the Ambassador, in a concert programme, *Nihon Buyo* (London; Peacock Theatre, 11-12 March 2005), no page numbers.

⁸ Tomiyama Seikin the 1st changed his stage name into Tomiyama Seiō in 2000, and his son Kiyotaka inherited his father’s name to become Tomiyama Seikin the 2nd. As for Seiō, the most active time of his composition works was while he was still Seikin the 1st. Therefore, I will use his previous stage name Seikin the 1st within this thesis.

⁹ Among them, four were nominated in the category of *jiuta*, and eight were for *sōkyoku*. The data is based on the following source: *Shūkan ningenkokuhō* (Tokyo, May 2007).

from his second teacher, and founded his own school, becoming the head.¹⁰ Toshiko, on the other hand, was born in Hyôgo in Western Japan and later moved to Tokyo with her father, who had taught her since the age of three. Unlike Seikin the 1st, neither Toshiko nor her father was blind. However, they were both acknowledged as professionals of *sôkyoku*. In fact, her family and relatives produced several (sighted) professional *sôkyoku* musicians, including female ones.

As previously mentioned, the two musicians' childhoods coincided with a period when there was a marked influence of Western music on Japanese music, which took place around the 1920s. This innovation in Japanese music due to Western influence continued after the Second World War, when Seikin the 1st and Toshiko further cultivated their professional musical careers. On this topic, Nagahiro Hiroshi, a former director of NHK, the national broadcasting company in Japan, has illustrated how traditional Japanese music developed after the 1920s, and how such innovations became widely recognised in public as a result of the start of NHK radio broadcasts in 1925. He states that prior to these broadcasts, there were already some musicians who had attempted to innovate Japanese music by introducing elements of Western music. Miyagi Michio (1894-1956), for example, was the best known innovative composer at this time. He gave a concert with Yoshida Seifû, a *shakuhachi* player in 1920, and entitled it *Shin nihon ongaku* (New Japanese Music).¹¹ During this period, new musical styles were adopted from Western music idioms, such as the use of harmony, and instrumentation and musical structures such as the string quartet and concerto.

Competitions for compositions on Japanese instruments started around the 1940s. For example, in 1941, The Central Federation for Japanese Culture (Nihon bunka chûô renmei), an organisation associated with the Ministry of Education (Monbushô), announced a competition for *sankyoku*, music for *koto*, *shamisen*, and *shakuhachi*. The two musicians in my study also released their early works at the competitions, and won prizes. As their musical achievements became widely known within musical circles in Japan, they started to receive commissions to create new pieces from record companies and radio companies. In the following section, in order to investigate the individual artistic achievements of these two musicians and their ideas about composition, I will look at some of their work and the differences between them.

The overall characteristic of the compositions of Seikin the 1st can be described as being based on the conventional structure of *jiuta*, which was established during the Edo period, before Western music became influential in Japan. Since its inception in the early 17th century, *jiuta* has developed into various sub-genres (or repertoires) according to the musical style, such as the instrumentation and compositional style, and the type of the lyrics. Most of Seikin the 1st's pieces can be categorised into these sub-genres within *jiuta*. However, what makes his compositions different from "conventional" *jiuta*, is his subtle use of new musical idioms which he incorporated from Western music, such as harmony and diatonic scales. He also merged his music with other musical styles from Japanese music, such as *noh* and *kabuki* theatre music.

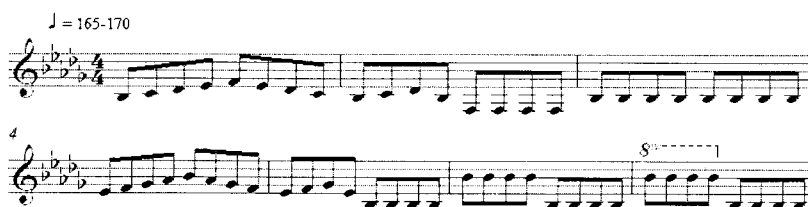
In order to examine the characteristics of his works further, I will look at a specific piece of music entitled The Electric Fan (*Senpûki*). This piece was commissioned by NHK in 1948, and was written for the

¹⁰ Tomiyama, Seikin, quoted in Kenzaburo Imai, ed. *Seikin jiuta shugyo* (Tokyo, 1966), pp. 10-14.

¹¹ Nagahiro, Hitoshi, Web site of Kyoto shiritsu geijutsu daigaku nihon dentô ongaku kenkyu sentâ <<http://w3.kcua.ac.jp/jtm/>> (Accessed 29 July 2005).

voice accompanied by the *shamisen*. Its lyrics depict one of the hottest days in summer. The image is modern: of a visitor who is sweating profusely, and so his host turns on an electric fan for the visitor. Unfortunately, the fan stops due to a power cut. Such power cuts were common after the Second World War in Japan.¹² The music is composed using the structure of the *hauta-mono* repertoire, which is a short vocal piece accompanied by the *shamisen*. In this piece, the overall vocal melody uses the conventional pentatonic scales of *jiuta*, and the *shamisen* accompaniment is also composed using such conventional tonality and techniques in general. However, in this piece, Seikin the 1st inserts an unconventional short *shamisen* interlude as in Figure 1. This section is played directly after the lyrics which describe the scene of a host turning on a fan, and which seems to depict the sound of the electric fan rotating. The interlude here is set in a B flat minor scale, rather than a conventional pentatonic scale. At the end of the piece, a *shamisen* interlude, played *tremolo*, gradually slows down, and depicts the fan which is about to stop due to a power cut. This method of trying to imitate real-life sounds using instruments is based on the tradition of the *jiuta*, and can especially be found in the humorous and improvisatory *saku-mono* repertoire. Seikin the 1st used this concept to create his own style with a more modern and unconventional approach.¹³

Figure 1: *Shamisen* interlude in *Senpûki*¹⁴



Such examples of incorporating other Japanese music genres can also be seen in another of his compositions *Sound of Bell (Kanenone)*.¹⁵ This piece was also commissioned by NHK in 1965, and the lyrics tell a funny story about a stupid servant boy who misunderstood his master's words "price of gold" as "sound of a bell", which in Japanese have the same pronunciation, *kane no ne*. Within this piece, Seikin the 1st uses various sounds to depict temple bells using different *shamisen* techniques to conjure up a variety of images of different temples. For this piece, Seikin the 1st used a melodic and rhythmic pattern in a particular section which was typical of *heike biwa* (narrative performance of *Tale of the Heike*). This melody was produced for the lyrics which were written in the style of a classical Chinese poetic structure, also used in classical Japanese literature, including *Tale of the Heike*. Using such a style for the vocal melody at this particular section somehow creates an odd image through combining a "classical" or "serious" tone to this humorous musical style. As mentioned earlier,

¹² Hirano, Kenji, *Tomiyama seikinshi sosaku no sekai*, in *Tomiyama seikin sosaku no sekai* (LP notes, Tokyo, 1980), p. 29.

¹³ The musical analysis on this piece is based on the following recording; Side B, LP7: *Tomiyama seikin sosaku no sekai* (1980, Nippon Columbia).

¹⁴ The transcription is based on the following recording; Side B, LP7: *Tomiyama seikin sôsaku no sekai* (1980, Nippon Columbia; WX-7051A-WX-7058B).

¹⁵ The musical analysis on this piece is based on the following recording; Side A, LP5: *Tomiyama seikin sosaku no sekai* (1980, Nippon Columbia).

this is an example of a method used by Seikin the 1st: incorporating different musical styles from other Japanese music genres into his own compositions.

Toshiko's compositions, in contrast to Seikin the 1st, were often noticeably different from the conventional styles or structures of *sôkyoku*. In order to investigate this, I have chosen one of her best known works, Chieko Playing with Plover Birds (*Chidori to asobu chieko*), which is a vocal piece accompanied by two *koto*. This piece was commissioned by Radio Tokyo in 1953, and awarded a prize at the Arts Festival, organised by the Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs. The lyrics were taken from a poem, *Chieko-shô* (Poems for Chieko), published by Takamura Kôtarô in 1941. The lyrics depict the poet's wife, Chieko, who had a psychiatric illness, and plays innocently with plover birds at the seaside. It also depicts the complex emotions of the poet who is watching her.

Compared to Seikin the 1st's work which is grounded in pre-modern structures and styles, this piece, written by Toshiko, introduces the elements of Western classical music in radical ways, which make the music sound very innovative. It is therefore difficult to apply any of the sub-categories of *sôkyoku* to describe this piece. The significant characteristic of this piece is that the vocal part is completely independent from the instrumental part. In conventional *sôkyoku* compositions before the introduction of Western music, the vocal part and the instrumental part are played in heterophony.¹⁶ It was also the case that either the *koto* or the *shamisen* player performed the vocal part. However, this piece was written for, and performed by, an opera singer who was trained in Western classical singing. The instrumental parts are written for two *kotos*, one tuned to a high pitch, and the other to a low pitch. These two parts also have independent melodies, and unlike conventional *sôkyoku*, these *koto* parts do not merely accompany the vocal part.¹⁷

What makes this piece even more radically innovative is that both vocal and instrumental parts are written in order to express dramatic and emotional moments of the poet and his wife's life. For example, in the last *koto* interlude, the music creates an image of the poet's emotional conflict with his psychiatrically ill wife. Here the lyrics describe how the poet looks at his wife while she has her back to him, and thinks about her illness, which has made her into a different person from the one whom he once knew. The vocal part sung by a soprano is also full of "expressiveness" to describe the tragic image and the sad feelings of the poet. Among musicians and specialists, "traditional" *sôkyoku* was seen as music in which emotions are not overtly expressed. It can be argued that this was due to the fact that *sôkyoku* was not music performed for the theatre, but was rather performed as chamber music, where the relationship between the performer and his or her audience was more intimate. Thus subtle musical expressions were thought to be preferred over visible or exaggerated ways of presenting emotion. This piece written by Toshiko, however, has many elements where passionate and heartbreaking emotions can be fully expressed by the music.

3. Diversity in Artistic Conceptions

As explained above, these two Living National Treasures' works contain originality which reflects their

¹⁶ "Heterophony" is to describe simultaneous variation of a single melody.

¹⁷ The musical analysis on this piece is based on the following recording: Track 2, CD: *Ohaguruma yonekawa toshiko* (Tokyo: Victor Dentô-bunka Shinkô-zaidan, 2004).

idiosyncratic attitudes towards music. In order to further investigate this phenomenon, I will look at their motives for creating these compositions. When I started field research in 2005, Seikin the 1st and Toshiko were both aged 92, and were not in good health, and so I conducted interviews with their children instead.¹⁸ Both Seikin the 1st and Toshiko had retired from stage performances and their children, Seikin the 2nd (son) and Hiroe (daughter) had taken over their positions as head musicians. Based on the interviews with their successors, I will examine, in the next section, the artistic conceptions of Seikin the 1st and Toshiko.

Although Seikin the 1st's teachers had suggested to him that he should work on traditional repertoires rather than being distracted by "new music" (*shinkyoku*), Seikin the 1st went against his teacher's suggestion and kept on composing new pieces by following his enthusiasm in composition. What is described as "new music" here is the repertoire composed by early 20th century musicians such as the innovative musician Miyagi Michio mentioned earlier. Seikin the 1st used to say to Seikin the 2nd that "there are many ghosts of Mr. Miyagi", by which he meant that many people tended to merely copy Miyagi's style. Seikin the 1st wanted to create something that Miyagi's works did not have. The direction which Seikin the 1st took was different from the one of New Japanese Music pioneered by Miyagi Michio. Seikin the 2nd pointed out that New Japanese Music took extreme directions and his father may have been looking for a different approach. Seikin the 2nd argued that the foundation of music in which Seikin the 1st had grown was traditional repertoires rather than contemporary repertoires, and so he had tried to make traditional music more "original" (*zanshin*). Seikin the 1st told his son that original work is made with slight changes. If one makes too great a change, it becomes a "conversion" (*henshitsu*) which is different from an original. Seikin the 2nd used the example of cooking to describe this, by saying that "secret seasoning" (*kakushi aji*) is used only a little, otherwise, the food itself will become different".

Unlike Seikin the 1st, Toshiko composed more than a hundred pieces, eighty-two of these being major works, and the others involving a variety of repertoires such as children's music and *koto* pieces for other musical genres. Toshiko learnt Western music composition from Hiraoka Jirô, who was the leading musician of the modern musical group Tômei-ryû School. The Tômei-ryû School was founded in 1897 by Hiraoka Ginshû, and their music used various musical elements from existing genres in *shamisen* music which were merged with Western music.

Toshiko was also known to be a rare musician within traditional music circles, who could read Western staff notation and was good at sight reading. Toshiko was often asked to collaborate with musicians from other musical genres such as *gidayû* (music for *bunraku* puppet theatre), *kiyomoto* and *nagauta* (music for *kabuki* theatre.). Toshiko was able to immediately and flexibly get along with any kind of music, including even jazz. It was lucky for Toshiko that she could collaborate with musicians from many musical genres, since through this she had been able to develop her talent. Western films may have also influenced her because she liked watching Western films in Ginza (downtown in Tokyo), and she enjoyed watching films like 'Tarzan'.

When I asked whether or not Toshiko categorised her work as *sôkyoku*, Hiroe pointed out that Toshiko had not cared which category her music had been classified as. Toshiko was not a person who would label her

¹⁸ Toshiko passed away in December 2005 and Seikin the 1st in September 2008.

work to draw public attention to it, as for example the label New Japanese Music was pioneered by Miyagi Michio. Toshiko's compositions were an expression of her emotion. The composer Nakanoshima Kin'ichi told Hiroe that his compositions were logical while Toshiko's came from her emotion. Toshiko herself also mentioned in a video resource¹⁹ that when her work Chieko Playing with Plover Birds, analysed earlier, had first been performed, she had been impressed by the opera singer Nagato Miho who had sung it in a very emotional and expressive way, and so she had appreciated her performance very much.

Hiroe mentioned that some "high level" pieces such as this Chieko Playing with Plover Birds were not "technical" pieces but required "emotional expression", and the person who had played it had been always Toshiko herself. Toshiko did not want other people to play her works because they might destroy them. This idea which, in practice, aimed at forbidding others to play her music, is very different from Seikin the 1st's idea. Seikin the 1st decided to give up the copyright on his music, as he wanted his works performed by anybody who wished to do so. Some of his works were published, so that anyone, even those in other schools, could try playing them.

The above case study shows that these two Living National Treasures had quite different artistic conceptions which resulted in significant differences in their music. For Seikin the 1st, there was a conscious divide between "traditional" music and "new" music. He considered compositional styles established before the marked modernisation in the Meiji era as a traditional basis for his compositions. He further added his own styles and techniques in subtle ways in order to create originality in his music. In evaluating Seikin the 1st's work, a Japanese music scholar, Tanabe Hisao, described it as "a model of contemporary *jiuta*."²⁰ His artistic idea was to bring traditional music up to date. His desire was not merely to preserve what was handed down from his predecessors but to make innovations to the tradition by the means of contemporary aesthetics. However, he did not follow the direction of New Japanese Music, which aimed to make radical changes to Japanese music by introducing Western music in an obvious manner. He instead composed his music in previously established styles of *jiuta*. However he also appreciated Western music, and in his talks on his art he mentioned that he often listened to pop music and Western classical music, and his favourite composers were Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert.²¹ Despite the fact that Seikin the 1st was exposed to Western music and often appreciated this style, he did not wish to incorporate it too overtly into his own compositions, as many other modern Japanese composers had attempted to do. I would assume that he hoped that his work would be handed down to future generations as the musical genre of *jiuta*, rather than being seen as "Westernised" Japanese music like "New Japanese Music".

In comparison to Seikin the 1st, it seems that Toshiko did not distinguish between a "traditional" style, and a "new" or "Western" style, but instead instinctively produced music using ideas collected from different types of music which she had collaborated with or heard in her everyday life. Hiroe mentioned to me that Toshiko had not been a person who composed at a desk but she had done so while playing instruments, and she

¹⁹ *Nihon sankyoku kyōkai kiroku bideo* (1997, Nihon Sankyoku Kyōkai).

²⁰ Tanabe, Hisao, Gendai jiuta no mohanteki sakuhin, in *Tomiyama seikin sosaku no sekai* (LP notes), p. 5.

²¹ Tokumaru, Yoshihiko, Entretien avec Tomiyama Seikin, in *Music, signs and intertextuality: collected papers* (Tokyo, 2005 [1988]), p. 97.

had composed by “the selection of her favourite notes”. Thus, it can be argued that Toshiko’s desire was to express herself in a way that was free from “traditional” styles. Toshiko’s daughter, Hiroe, also mentioned that Toshiko had not been seen as a musician of “traditional” music within musical circles. Hiroe said that Toshiko had rather been regarded as a musician specialising in contemporary music due to her works where she collaborated with many other musical genres such as jazz. Hiroe emphasised that, however, once Toshiko was designated as a Living National Treasure, she had to work on the “transmission” (*denshō*) of “classical repertoires” (*kokyoku*) because she was given annual grants by the government for transmission and not for innovation.

4. Interpretation of the Law and Designation Criteria

As mentioned above, the Law states that Intangible Cultural Properties possess high historical and artistic value for Japan and consist of human “technical artistry”. In the following section, I will examine how the Law is interpreted in terms of the selection of artists designated as Living National Treasures, in particular, how “technical artistry” is assessed in relation to preservation and innovation.

Within the Traditional Culture Division (*dentō bunkaka*) at the Agency for Cultural Affairs are three Investigators of Cultural Properties (*bunkazai chōsakan*) for performing art genres. They gather information on potential Living National Treasures. The list of nominees is called the *jimukyokuan* or “secretariats’ proposal”, and it contains information on the candidates’ backgrounds, such as age, gender, and history of artistic activities. The list made within the Traditional Culture Division is taken to the Special Investigation Committee (*senmon chōsakai*) where around seven Special Investigators (*senmon chōsaiin*) – university researchers and specialists in that genre – select the finalists. The resulting short list is taken to the Council for Cultural Affairs (*bunka shingikai*), where official approval for designation is made.

One could argue that the people involved in designation process have different interpretations of the Law in regard to the definition of “technical artistry” in which both aspects of preservation and innovation are often incorporated. Some would assess the aspect of innovation as a contribution to the continuation of tradition, while others might consider it destructive force. In the cases of the two Living National Treasures I have mentioned in this article, further study needs to be done to investigate how their innovation and creativity were assessed by members of the Committee at that time. I was unable to determine which Committee members were involved in their designation. Therefore, instead, I examined the recent case of a Living National Treasure in the music category, *shakuhachi* player Yamamoto Hozan, who was designated as such in 2002.

Yamamoto Hozan, born in 1937, has performed many concerts in collaboration with jazz musicians, and he is also a composer himself, producing many pieces incorporating various musical elements from other genres, such as jazz and Western classical music. In order to examine how Hozan’s case was evaluated by the Committee, I conducted an interview with Miyata Shigeyuki, former Special Investigator of Cultural Properties, who was involved in the process of designation at that time.²² Miyata stated that when Hozan being proposed as a Living National Treasure caused much of debate within the Committee since he was known not as a

²² Interview was conducted in September 2008.

traditional *shakuhachi* player but as a “contemporary” (*gendaiteki*) or even “avant garde” (*zen'eiteki*) musician, especially during his youth and middle age. Because the Intangible Cultural Properties scheme aims at maintaining traditional performing arts, Hozan's case became a controversial issue. However, many Special Investigators acknowledged not only his innovative musical activities but also his mastery of the traditional *shakuhachi* repertoire known as *honkyoku* originating from the late 19th century. By the time he was nominated in 2002, at the age of 65, Hozan's contribution to the transmission of this traditional repertoire had been recognised, and that was a crucial criterion in his designation as a Living National Treasure.

From Hozan's case, one could argue that in order to justify a designation as a Living National Treasure, the artist must have demonstrated his or her ability to preserve tradition even though it is the artist's creativity and innovation that make him or her popular. “Technical artistry”, in Hozan's case, was interpreted as the skill to preserve, not the ability to develop, the traditional repertoire. However, Hozan's case also suggests that both aspects of preservation and innovation are often incorporated into a person's artistic contribution, which is made throughout his or her entire artistic history. Therefore the Law, which highlights one aspect of artists' achievement as preservers of tradition and neglect their other aspect, as innovators, creates a contradiction in evaluating artists' comprehensive contribution to tradition.

Conclusion

In this article, I aimed to discuss how the image associated with Living National Treasures shows only one aspect of their technical artistry. The image of Living National Treasures portrayed to society usually emphasises that they are authentic inheritors of Japan's cultural tradition, which has been preserved and maintained through generations. Within such images, the reality that arts are always evolving is often lost and neglected. In this study, I sought to highlight the aspects of innovation and creativity within Living National Treasures' works and discussed how their artistic desire contradicts the static image of traditional performing artists.

The case studies of two musicians designated as Living National Treasures show that the motives for their artistic endeavours are not limited to the preservation of the traditional culture of Japan, but also encompass creativity, experimentation, borrowing from other Japanese and Western genres, and fusion. Creativity and originality are important aspects of performers' artistic conceptions. Living National Treasures, despite the images associated with them, often try to build a unique artistic foundation incorporating their aesthetics and experiences, helping traditions to evolve. Their artistic desire for novelty and creativity and the legislation's emphasis on preservation of tradition thus conflict.

More than fifty years have passed since the introduction of the designation system for Living National Treasures. The Law has been interpreted differently by different people at different times. As the present study shows, preservation and innovation are conflicting aspects in assessing artists' contribution to tradition. Due to the difficulty and ambiguity of the interpretation of the aim of the Law, such debate and contradiction will continue to occur among people who designate and who are designated.

References

- Bunkacho (Agency for Cultural Affairs). 2001. *Bunkazai hogohô gojûnenshi*. Tokyo: Gyôsei.
- Hirano, Kenji. 1980. Tomiyama seikinshi sosaku no sekai, in *Tomiyama seikin sôsaku no sekai*. LP notes, Nippon Columbia.
- Kawamura, Tsuneaki (supervising); Negi Akira and Wada Katsuhiko (eds.) 2002. *Bunkazai seisaku gairon: Bunkaisan hogo no arata na tenkai ni mukete*. Tokyo: Tokai Daigaku Shuppankai.
- Nakamura, Kenjiro. 1999. *Bunkazai hogoseido gaisetsu*. Tokyo: Gyôsei.
- Nogami, Yoshiji, A Message from the Ambassador, in a concert programme, *Nihon Buyo*, (London; Peacock Theatre, 11-12 March 2005).
- Tanabe, Hisao. 1980. Gendai jiuta no mohanteki sakuhin, in *Tomiyama seikin sôsaku no sekai*. LP notes, Nippon Columbia.
- Tokumaru, Yoshihiko. 2005[1988]. Entretien avec Tomiyama Seikin, in *Music, signs and intertextuality: collected papers*. Tokyo: Academia Music, pp. 95-101.
- Tomiyama, Seikin, quoted in Kenzaburo Imai, ed. 1996. *Seikin jiuta shugyô*. Tokyo: Geinô hakkôsho, pp.10-14.

Magazine

Shûkan ningenkokuhô (Tokyo; Asahi shinbunsha, May 2007).

Internet sources

- Nagahiro, Hitoshi. webpage of Kyoto shiritsu geijutsu daigaku nihon dentô ongaku kenkyu sentâ <<http://w3.kcua.ac.jp/jtm/>> (Accessed 29 July 2005).
- “Preservation and Utilization of Cultural Properties” <<http://www.bunka.go.jp/english/pdf/chapter-04pdf>> (Accessed 1 November 2009).

Concert programme

Ningen kokuhô ni yoru buyô hōgaku kanshōkai [Japanese traditional dance and music performance by Living National Treasures], (Tokyo; Kokuritsu Gekijō, 17 April 2004).

Audio and visual sources

- Nihon sankyoku kyōkai kiroku bideo* (Tokyo; Nihon Sankyoku Kyōkai, 1997).
- Ohaguruma yonekawa toshiko* (Tokyo; Victor Dentō-bunka Shinkō-zaidan: VZCP-1091, 2004).
- Tomiyama seikin sôsaku no sekai* (Tokyo; Nippon Clumbia: WX-7091A-WX7096B, 1980).