

PRIZE LECTURE (FULL TEXT)

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**Expanding Relationships between the
University and the Community through Ethnomusicology**

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I am deeply honored by the award of the Koizumi Fumio Prize for Ethnomusicology, named for a man I respected highly as a scholar, teacher and person. My first opportunity to hear him lecture was here in Tokyo in 1963 at the 5th conference of the International Society for Music Education. His paper "Folk and Art Music in the Past and Present - in the Orient" was prominently placed in a plenary session. Two points in it were especially pertinent to my activities in Hawai'i: first, that the significantly distinctive qualities of the many Asian folk musics cannot be properly understood in terms of Western music; and second, the need to learn what is valuable for the present and the future, and what to "discard" (the word used in its English-language abstract) to allow for progress.

My views on the relationships of the university and the community are largely based on my experiences at the University of Hawai'i, and I recognize that even where broad concepts are shared, details will differ from one university to another because they are located in different communities, and also that over-emphasis on local differences may seem opposed to another often sought goal: a standard to which all universities should conform. I believe, however, that an effective and productive balance between them can be achieved. ◦

The University of Hawai'i's Department of Music was established in 1947, primarily to provide local students who could not afford to go "to the States" to take the music courses required to teach the Territory's high schools. When I arrived in 1949 to teach piano and music theory, with very few exceptions, my students were Hawaiians (more accurately part-Hawaiians, their Polynesian ancestry being mixed with those of sailors and settlers from Europe, North America and Asia), and descendants of Asians who had been brought to Hawai'i to work on sugar or pineapple plantations from China, Japan, Korea, Okinawa (then considered separate from Japan) and the Philippines (including some of mixed ancestry).

As I became acquainted with them, I was puzzled by their lack of knowledge or interest and – except for the westernized genres of Hawaiian music and dance performed in Waikiki’s tourist industry – their negative views of the musics of their ancestral heritages. My colleagues who had come to Hawai‘i a year or two before I arrived, were not concerned about it, because the students were preparing for a role in the Territory which was becoming increasingly Americanized. However, in 1953, through scanning the books for teaching music in elementary schools exhibited at a UNESCO conference in Belgium, I discovered what I thought might be a different, and psychologically important reason for it. The songs in the books from each of the European countries were limited to those of that country’s heritage, whereas the books from the United States contained songs from many European countries – but none from Hawai‘i or the Asian countries of my students’ origins.

Soon after my return to Hawai‘i, I unintentionally overheard a conversation among some of our students in which they expressed deep concern that, through their studies at the University, they were becoming “coconuts and bananas” (a local, mildly derogatory designation for people with white mentalities in brown or yellow bodies). Although they did not mention music courses, I realized that what I was teaching them was contributing to their low self-esteem, and that something about Hawaiian and Asian musics needed to be added to the curriculum. The problem was what, how and through whom it could be accomplished. Finding no interest – in fact, strong resistance – to the idea of doing anything more than developing our program to meet American standards, I felt obligated to at least explore that possibility myself.

Although only teaching and service (usually viewed as outreach to the local community) were then considered essential for teachers of music performance (that of research merging with service), as I became involved in developing an ethnomusicology program, my experiences involved a three-part process: first, input from the community; second, teaching, research, and development of what was then a new delivery system for it; and third, outreach not only to the local community, but also to other communities beyond its geographic boundaries. I should note, however, that some of what I experienced as input from the community, many people in the community considered outreach to them.

Having been unable to find anything relevant in the library, and remembering that my study of Western music had begun with the piano, I decided to begin by learning to play an Asian instrument an Asian instrument. I was fortunate to locate Kay Mikami (formally, Kazue

Mikami) who taught koto to a few girls and women of Japanese ancestry, and took lessons from her. I also consulted with some prominent bearers of Hawaiian chant and other genres of Hawaiian music and dance. Then, after returning from a trip to Asia to study koto with Miyagi Michio and purchase books and recordings for the library, I offered a summer session lecture course, and also began to give lectures to community organizations.

But performing experience, which I was not qualified to teach, also seemed needed, so new criteria had to be developed for a part-time position for Kay Mikami (her daishihan in koto in substitution for a master's degree from an American university), and comparable ways to certify qualification of Ka'upena Wong to teach Hawaiian chant, and several local teachers of Asian dance traditions to teach them.

Then, as revealed by the books exhibited at the UNESCO conference, a course seemed needed for in-service elementary-school teachers and advanced college students preparing to teach in the Territory's elementary schools in which to learn representative songs and dances that they, in turn, could teach their students. Because I was not qualified to either select or teach them, I turned to respected members of the several ethnic communities asking them to select children's songs and dances of their traditional heritage that they would like to have shared with children of all ethnic backgrounds, and arranged for someone from the respective ethnic group to teach them. As a result of that course, within a few years, most of those songs and dances had been learned by several thousand school children. In addition, some teachers who had enrolled in that or successive offerings of the course, were inviting a person from their school's neighborhood, to come to their school to teach another song or dance of their traditional heritage.

As previously mentioned, some projects initiated for the University of Hawai'i and its local community expanded to other communities. One of these was a short-term training program in ethnomusicological methods at the East-West Center for Pacific Islanders and later also for Asians from countries having no comparable training. It was a result of our outreach activity of presenting programs by local performers of Asian music and dance traditions, both on- and off-campus, to introduce these traditions to both newcomers to Hawai'i and residents who were not acquainted with them. In addition, based on what I had found during a trip to survey traditional music and dance in the Caroline and Marshall Islands, I encouraged Yamaguti Osamu, then an East-West Center grantee who had come to the University of Hawai'i to earn the Master of Arts degree, to go to Palau for his fieldwork for his thesis. Through this and his subsequent research, and that of some of his students, he has made enormous contributions

to scholarship in Belauan music and dance, as well as having been a member of the team that taught the first of these East-West Center training programs.

Our experience with gagaku provides a final example. Following our practice of appointing local experts to teach their specialty, gagaku was introduced to provide a fine graduate-student dancer who had chosen bugaku for his MA thesis some acquaintance with its music before going to Japan to study the dance. Because gagaku, although a traditional Japanese genre, had not been a significant part of the experience of Hawai'i's people of Japanese ancestry, I expected that it would be taught for only a few semesters. However, through the enthusiasm generated for it by the Reverend Masatoshi Shamoto who had recently come from Japan to join the ministry of the Tenrikyo Mission in Hawai'i to elevate gagaku's role in its services, it has been offered continuously since then. He and former students of the University class founded the Hawai'i Gagaku Kenkyukai that meets weekly at the Music Department to play for its members' enjoyment, and to prepare for its frequent performances of "Moon-viewing" programs in beautiful locations on- and off-campus, and numerous special occasions in the community. Among the memorable activities and experiences organized through the Reverend Shamoto's initiative have been a trip to Japan to study with musicians of the Imperial Palace in 1972 and several subsequent trips there to study and perform with the Japan Gagaku Society; visits to Hawai'i by that Society to provide specialized instruction, teach additional repertoire, and perform in concerts with the local group; and in 1996 a trip to Washington D.C. to perform in the Smithsonian Institution's Festival of American Folklife. In 1998, Dr. Robert Guenther, Professor of Music at the University of Cologne who is well known for his work in Japanese music – especially Buddhist traditions and koto music – came to the University of Hawai'i as a visiting professor. While here, he studied gagaku with Shamoto-sensei (as we usually address him) and, on return to Germany, established a gagaku study group at his university. Beginning in 2000 and for several summers thereafter, he arranged a residency at Cologne for Shamoto-sensei to teach gagaku to this group that became Europe's first and only resident gagaku-performance ensemble. As a result of the Reverend Shamoto's 50 years of teaching gagaku in Hawai'i, 48 of them as a part-time teacher in the University of Hawai'i's ethnomusicology program, and his outreach to the local, as well as national and international communities of music lovers, he was awarded the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays.

The experience of gagaku in Hawai'i illustrates the three-part process I presented earlier: input from the community; research, education and development in the university; and outreach not only to the local community but also beyond its geographic boundaries. It is a

process for maintenance of what I believe to be a meaningful and relevant commitment for ethnomusicology.

Arigato gozaimashita.

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