

## Cross Culture and Gamelan Studies in Japan

### A. Introduction

#### 1. Background

Cultural phenomenon of the gamelan dissemination to the world outside Java, Indonesia, seems like the early Western music dissemination to the outside Western culture. Perhaps it brought some wonders, excitements, and the needs to imitate that followed by the creative process for making the something new, something that might be suitable for their own musical language or expression.

Historically speaking, the early Western music dissemination and cultivation in Indonesia was happened in the 16<sup>th</sup> century (1512) that was brought mostly by the Portuguese missionaries and merchants.<sup>1</sup> In 1535, most of the children in the collegio of Teranate islands (established by Antonio Galvao) already sung the Gregorian songs in Latin or Portuguese languages. And the local people had also been introduced to the guitar and the violin that in the future had become the importance musical instruments of their folk songs. These can be found until recently to the whole Maluku islands and the areas of Flores. Meanwhile, the Portuguese missionaries came to Japan in 1543 and the dissemination and cultivation of Western music and Catholicism developed more profoundly that the area of Hirado had been called as 'a little Rome'. The local people not only imitated how to play the organ but also had produced the instrument at later on. The remains of the Gregorian songs can still be found in what so-called 'Uta-Orashio'.

The early gamelan dissemination to the West was happened in 1889 at the Paris Exhibition, the project that was intended to perform the political and power hegemony of the West to their colonies in Asia and Africa. This followed by the Chicago Columbian Exposition in 1893, in which the gamelan had been performed in this occasion. The cultural movement to look east in early 20<sup>th</sup> century brought many Western scholars and musicians to visit Indonesia. Like wisely, the gamelan and many other Indonesian instruments were brought to the West, followed by the imitating and the creative process that recently can be found in so many contemporary gamelan music.

This, also what had happened in Japan but in a slightly different patch. The first gamelan instruments brought to Japan in 1940 by Ichizou Kobayashi, the founder of Hankyu Railway and the owner of the Takarazuka Revue in Osaka. The instruments had been used to accompany two of their productions. Following the booming of world music in 1970s, some Japanese scholars, composers and musicians had started to work with the gamelan. This paper will describe mainly the gamelan groups and their activities in Kansai area of Japan. They are the Dharma Budaya, the Marga Sari, the Tirta Kencana and the group of the CAP House in Kobe.

## ***2. Methodology***

The methodology employed in this research was an observation and interview. The researcher came to the groups' rehearsals and performances, made some interviews with some figures whose ideas have been described in this paper. The procedures were quite a simple one that notes, impressions and analyses have been mixed together with a historical perspective in order to make that the paper will present the whole pictures of the research objects. Thus, this paper is a descriptive result of a field observation of the gamelan groups in Kansai area.

## ***3. The gamelan goes to the West***

Mantle Hood was right when he said that Javanese gamelan is a complex and highly developed form of musical expression. He mentioned that a complete gamelan has about 75 instruments and may use as many as 30 players and 10 or 15 singers.<sup>2</sup> But a gamelan ensemble may include only a few basic instruments. For instance, East Javanese *reog* (or '*reog Ponorogo*'), may be accompanied by a few iron gongs, a *sarunen* (double reed oboe), two bonang kettles and one or two kendhang.

Most of the music played by so many kinds of gamelan ensembles is of the traditional and anonymous genres. The age of any composition is impossible to determine since they were anonymous. And, as Judith Becker described, "... the question of age reflects a view of history characteristic of Western musicology and its associated written tradition that is irrelevant here."<sup>3</sup>

Recent studies of gamelan out of Indonesia have come hand in hand with the multiculturalism issues. But then, this is also the most important issue of urban cultural studies here in this paper. The first two sets of gamelan that were brought to London by Thomas Stanford Raffles in 1816, a year before he published his famous book entitled *The History of Java*. These gamelan instruments now can be seen one in Claydon House and the other one in Museum of Mankind, both in London.<sup>4</sup>

The event was then followed by the 1889 Paris Exhibition in which gamelan had been performed lively in front of European society. It was in this moment that the impressionist composer Claude Debussy was so impressed by the music and thus he took the gamelan's counterpoint (interlocking) technique into some of his compositions. It should be noted here, however, that despite its cultural issues, the event politically was to perform the hegemony of the Dutch colonialism over Indonesia.

The next world exhibition was held in Chicago in 1893, the so-called The Chicago Columbian Exhibition. It is in this occasion that the gamelan Jawa was introduced for the first time to the American society. All the gamelan performances in this exhibition were recorded and now had become the collection of the Library of Congress.<sup>5</sup>

In 1919, the Dutch scholar namely Jaap Kunst, the founder of ethnomusicology, was sent by his government to study the gamelan. During his field research visit to Jogjakarta and Surakarta (Solo), he was assisted by Raden Mas Jayadipura and Prof. Dr. Purbacaraka, the two scholars of the Keraton Jogjakarta, and Raden Tjakrahadikusuma and Raden Bagoes Soelardi, two scholars of the Mangkunegaran Palace (Surakarta). It was in this period of elaborative that he completed his first book entitled *De Toonkunst van Java* (published in 1934).

Almost at the same time, in early 1920, a Canadian born composer, so-called Colin McPhee was so astonished to hear the Balinese gamelan recordings. It took him 11 years until he might realise his first visit to Bali and to do an elaborate research there. He met Walter Spies, a musician and an artist who devoted most of his life in Bali, who also gave help to him in writing his masterpiece book entitled *Music in Bali*. Despite some of his music compositions that inspired by Balinese music, he wrote three books; *A House in Bali* (1946), *A Club of Small Men* (1948) and *Music in Bali* (published in 1966).

Soon after Jaap Kunst proclaimed his theory of ethnomusicology in 1950s, one of his supporters and Ph.D students namely Mantle Hood was sent to Jawa to do the study of gamelan. After spent sometime working with local maestros such as Ki Pontjopangrawit, Ki Mlojoreksoko and Ki Tjokrowasito, he went back to America and became a professor of ethnomusicology at the University California Los Angeles (UCLA). This marked the beginning period of flourishing studies of the gamelan at some universities in the United States. Barbara Benary reported her survey done in 1983 that the total number of gamelan in the US was 98 sets. One year later Jody Diamond added the number to 7 sets. At present, according to Vincent McDermott, one of contemporary American composers who had recently been invited to become a visiting professor in music composition at the Indonesia Arts Institute (ISI) in Yogyakarta, the total number has become more than 200 sets.

#### **4. The gamelan goes to Japan**

As the influence of the world music booming in early 1970, almost at the same time Indonesian performing arts and the arts of gamelan and the gamelan playing have been introduced for the first time in Japan. Indonesian performing artists were invited to give performance and workshop as well. But it is importance to note that as the musical instruments, the gamelan had been brought to Japan in 1940, bought directly from Java by Ichizou Kobayashi, the owner of the famous Popular Variety Show of Takarazuka (or the Takarazuka Revue). Parts of the instruments was used as the accompaniment to the group's

performances entitled *Onna Bansen* in 1941 and *The Javanese Children Dance* in 1952 (this repeated in 1982).<sup>6</sup>

The second Javanese gamelan instruments brought to Japan in 1970 by Fumio Kohara, to be set up at the Tokyo University of Fine Arts. Saptana, who like many Javanese uses only one name, the native Javanese gamelan player of Surakartan School, was invited to teach at this prestigious arts university in Japan as early as in 1979. What is also importance to be noted here was that in 1980, the students majoring in music were sent to Java to learn the gamelan. Some of them have now become the leading scholars in the gamelan studies and performances in Japan. To name one of them is Shin Nakagawa, a professor of music and one of important Japanese contemporary composers. Then, also in 1980s the gamelan courses and gamelan club activities have become more and more increasing in numbers.

This followed by the increasing in number of imported gamelan instruments to be used in some universities in Japan. The gamelan courses and activities increase very rapidly in the area of education. And the number of gamelan audience seemed also to have been widening. Periodically the native gamelan players were invited to give lectures and workshops. Similarly, gamelan from Bali and Balinese dance and also gamelan from Sunda and Sundanese dance were introduced to enrich the genre of gamelan studies in Japan.

In an interview done on the 9<sup>th</sup> September 2003, Shota Fukuoka, an ethnomusicologist and a specialist of the Sundanese popular music at the National Museum of Ethnology (Minpaku Hakubutsukan), during the 1980s the Javanese gamelan was being disseminated around the universities circle and with the objectives of education. But by the end of the 1990s, the gamelan was to be introduced to the Japanese society through the performances and workshops, followed by the establishment of the gamelan music courses especially in Tokyo and Osaka.

Fukuoka, who speaks Indonesian language (Bahasa Indonesia) very fluently, goes on to say that he had been motivated to learn the gamelan just after the exhibition of the instruments at the museum in 1999. He then established a gamelan group at the museum to practice the Javanese classical pieces once a week for 30 minute during the lunch break. Since then he also gives a regular workshops for the visitors of the museum twice a week each for 30 minute.

The museum bought the gamelan instruments in 1970 and was used for the first time during the opening ceremony of the museum performed by the Lambang Sari group from Tokyo. These instruments were still being used for the rehearsal under the leadership of Shota Fukuoka himself. At present the museum displayed 3 sets of the Javanese gamelan instruments, 1 set is exhibited at the Southeast Asia Pavilion, 1 set has been kept at the storage room, and another 1 set is being exhibited at the Main Exhibition Pavilion. This year the museum is to going to buy a full sets of Sundanese gamelan instruments and by the next year they will buy a full sets of Balinese gamelan instruments.

When asked about the gamelan future in Japan, he described that he is very optimistic but it needs a tied link between the gamelan communities in Japan and in Jawa. He then refers to what is now has been doing by Shin Nakagawa through his projects to invite Javanese musicians and composers to come to Japan. Nakagawa wants that the Javanese musicians and composers to write new pieces or do some experiments with the gamelan. Through the COE projects, Fukuoka says, at least for the upcoming 5 years, Shin Nakagawa will do all his best efforts for the sake of the dynamism of the gamelan life in Japan.

## **B. Gamelan groups in Kansai**

### **1. The Darma Budaya**

This group belongs to the gamelan studies of the Osaka University and was set up in 1989. The group has a full set of Javanese gamelan of Yogyakarta's style. In the academic year of 2000, the total number of the group is 16 persons, comprises of 6 male and 10 female members. They are not only students majoring in music but that the recruitment is open to anyone who wants to participate in the group, the system that a common practice for any students' club in any universities in Japan.

The group focuses its repertoires varied not only from Javanese classical pieces but also to contemporary music composed both by Japanese or foreign composers. Native gamelan players from Yogyakarta sometime were invited to give the workshops to its members.<sup>7</sup> Darma Budaya remains one of the leading gamelan groups in Japan together with Marga Sari (Kansai), Lambang Sari (Tokyo), Sekar Sakura (Nagoya), etc.

This group is now lead by Teruo Yamazaki, a music psychologist who speaks Indonesian fluently and comes to Jawa once every year to take a short gamelan study mostly in Solo. In an interview with the writer on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2003, he explained that the most problems faced by this group in its regular programs are:

- A settle place to be used for their regular practice and rehearsal schedules
- The needs of native Javanese gamelan teacher to lead the group in mastering Javanese classical pieces
- The continuity of the group members

However, when the writer observed the group's rehearsal at the same date (3<sup>rd</sup> Sept. 2003), it seems that most of the members were already skilful in playing and singing the Javanese classical pieces that makes the writer so impressive. The upcoming concert and workshop of the group will be held at the Aramaki Rose Garden in Itami city on the 19<sup>th</sup> October 2003. This will be a one and a half hour concert and workshop of the Javanese classical pieces of both Yogyakarta's and Solo's (Surakarta) schools. Next year concert in March is planned to perform original pieces and workshop.

Despite publishing its pamphlets once a year, the group also has its website ([www.gamelans.org](http://www.gamelans.org)). More information about and contact to this group can be accessed to the given web address.

## **2. The Marga Sari**

This group was founded in March 1998 by Shin Nakagawa, an ethnomusicologist and a contemporary composer, who devoted much of his times to study and to disseminate the Javanese gamelan music of Yogyakarta's school for the Japanese society. But he also was one of the co-founders of Darma Budaya gamelan group of Osaka University.

Marga Sari based its activities at the Art Studio "Paradise Space" ("Space Ten") in the North Osaka. The group has two full sets of the Javanese gamelan instruments of the Surakarta's (also known as 'Solo') and Yogyakarta's schools. According to Nakagawa, one of the gamelan sets was transferred from the Takarazuka Popular Variety Show's, the one that was bought by Ichizou Kobayashi, the owner of the group, in 1940.

What is so special about the group is that regularly the group invites different native gamelan players mostly from the Indonesia Institute of the Arts in Yogyakarta to give tutorials and to teach how to play the Javanese classical pieces. However, it should be noted that the group not only focuses its repertoires of the classical pieces but also contemporary pieces written by the Japanese, Indonesian and foreign contemporary composers.

The group can be said as the leading of the gamelan groups in Kansai area since it is the most active not only in performance but also in education. Nakagawa wrote that the Japanese school music should not merely be concentrated on Western music for Asian music and dance are also importance to be introduced to the Japanese students.<sup>8</sup>

Several concerts and workshops had been done by the group since its foundation in 1998, thanks to the devoted members whose numbers are now about 16 person. For the upcoming projects until 2005, its leader, Shin Nakagawa, has a plan to perform 'Momo Taro Series' up to 5 stories. The scenes will be written by Nakagawa himself, meanwhile its music is going to be composed by Makoto Nomura in collaboration with all the group's members as done in a workshop. Like the story of 'Ramayana' which tells the human relationship with the animals that is well known throughout Asia, and like the popularity of Mozart's 'Magic Flute', the story of 'Momo Taro' is also quite popular in Japan and will be possible to be popular through out the world.

## **3. The Tirta Kencana**

What must to be applauded here before we go to get to know about the Tirta Kencana gamelan group is that this group belongs to the Hekisui Hall; it is to say that the Hekisui Hall is the first of its kinds which is so many in Japan, that bought and set up a full set of the gamelan instruments in it. Thanks to Michio

Nakamura, the Hekisui Hall's director, who has been bravely proposed to the local government to buy the instruments and to be set up in the hall which is located in Minakuchi district of Shiga Prefecture. Thanks also go to the local government of Minakuchi that had given the approval of the Nakamura's proposal.

This information below was as the result of an interview with Nakamura done in his office on August 27, 2003. The idea to buy a set of gamelan instrument to be set up at the Hekisui Hall was began in January 2001, however the decision that was made by the local government to give approve of the proposal happened after they saw the Marga Sari concert at the Hekisui Hall in September 2001. The order was made immediately and the instruments must be ready in March 2002. What a speedy since the instruments were made by hand in quite traditional technological way.

When being asked about why the gamelan has been chosen to be set up in the Hekisui Hall as it is uncommon phenomena throughout Japanese concert halls? Nakamura told us that if he could not play or if he did not have an appreciation about the gamelan, there would not be a gamelan set up here in this hall. Of course, he is going on to say, that these instruments were set up here with the intention not to master and play merely the Javanese classical pieces, but also intended to be enjoyed by the public as much as they can, through the various activities using the instruments, like workshop and experimental in new music like some that has been done recently (he was referred to the concert held at the Hekisui Hall, on 24 August, 2003, entitled 'The World of Makoto Nomura').

It is good to share here what the impression has been received by the writer when observing the workshop activities lead by Makoto Nomura several days before his concert. He collaborated with several kids and young people to produced an experimental music creatively. He even included one mentally retarded child that wonderfully could well participated the creative process during the workshops and during in the performance. The eight days workshop gives the result of a gamelan exploration piece entitle 'Sukeko!!!' (What a strange Japanese word isn't it?).

What was interesting in this piece is that not only Nomura included dance, drama and children play game, but also the martial art. He even also asked the audience to join into the performance, and the whole situation inside the hall was turned like an outdoor festive that was enjoyed by so many people.

In his 1996 gamelan composition entitled 'Odore! Beethoven' (first of his works with gamelan), he was collaborated with the Marga Sari members, the Tirta Kencana gamelan group, and the children of the workshop participants. This piece sounds full of exploration possibilities that can be produced by the gamelan instruments. All of the audience seems so delighted and I was

wondering what a creative person this young composer named Motoko Nakamura is.

Let us go back to what the Hekisui Hall's director, Michio Nakamura, told us about his ideas of setting up the gamelan instruments and founded the Tirta Kencana gamelan group in Minakuchi district of Shiga Prefecture. He said that as a common phenomena that every young people of his age has an appreciation to pop music like The Beatles that then lead us to an appreciation to Indian music. But then he also wanted that the public of Minakuchi district could have an appreciation to other music culture than that of Western classical. It was in this frame of mind when he met Shin Nakagawa and shared with him about the idea. As can be supposed, Nakagawa catch the idea and gave him an offer to set up a set of gamelan instruments in the concert hall of Minakuchi. A gamelan concert plan was scheduled immediately to perform the Marga Sari gamelan group that was in September 2001. The concert must had been so impressive that brought the local government's decision to give approve to Nakamura's proposal to buy the instruments.

Soon right after the instruments were set up at the Hekisui Hall, it was followed by the set up of the so-called Tirta Kencana gamelan group, which members are now about 8 people. One or two of the Marga Sari gamelan group members came to the place regularly to teach the new group. Native gamelan teachers from the Indonesia Institute of the Arts (ISI) in Yogyakarta who were invited regularly by the Marga Sari also should have to teach the Tirta Kencana, Darma Budaya and CAP House gamelan group all together.

#### **4. The CAP House' gamelan group**

The CAP House located in Port Island of Kobe was formerly the building of the National Emigrant Accommodation Center, constructed in 1928. Whilst undergoing to a number of name changes, the building was used as to advise and educate people who were planning to go abroad. By the 1971, the name was the Kobe Emigration Center that had sent more than 250.000 people from throughout the nation to the foreign countries, mainly Brazil. Later on, the building housed a number of other facilities including the Kobe Municipal School of Nursing and the Kobe Marine Meteorological Observatory, Interim Office and played house to C.A.P.'s "CAP House: A 190-Day Artistic Experiment" in 1999.<sup>9</sup>

This event gave the result of the group's sense, that there was a need for a "place" where a large number of people could come into contact with each other through a common interest in art. At the same time, Japanese people throughout the world were expressing a desire to preserve the Kobe Emigration Center as a historic structure telling the story of their emigration abroad.

In Kobe, a project is currently underway to rename the building the National Overseas Emigration Commemorative House (tentative name) in 2008 to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Brazil emigration policy. As of Spring 2002, having received a commission from the city of Kobe, CAP began to manage the



building, exhibit data on Japanese emigration as well as proposing and planning future Cap House events. Since then the CAP House has become a center for experimental project design to create a place for artists to gather and engage in creative activities, encounter a wide variety of different people and affect each other by revising one another's values.<sup>10</sup>

The objectives and detail activities of this House<sup>11</sup> can be described as follows:

- Objectives:
  - Exploration and Diffusion of Art in Society
  - Study of art as it exists in contemporary society
  - i. Creation of new methods to encourage the permeation of art in society
  - Cultivation of international exchange based on the medium of art
  
- Detail activities:
  - Holding of periodic study meetings
  - Organizing and holding of new types of exhibitions
  - Holding of symposiums, lectures and workshops
  - Promotion and exchange of art-related information
  - Holding of events with the aim of strengthening ties and exchange with other countries
  - Publication and printed matter and other media (pamphlets, etc.)

The gamelan group of the CAP House has been set up, has no group's name yet, only in August this year. The CAP House' director, Nobuhisa Shimoda, in an interview with the writer done in 29 August 2003, explained that the instruments were borrowed from the Marga Sari gamelan group. The CAP House gamelan group has recruited 8 members in which only one person has already experienced to join the Balinese gamelan. The others are the beginners but it seems that they are very excited and enjoyed very much to play the gamelan.

Shimoda also told us that the gamelan is so interesting for example the way how to make music and the system to make the music sounds. He wants that many people could enjoy the gamelan pieces, both of old classical Javanese and experimental or new pieces. In this sense, he invites the Japanese composers as well to write compositions for the gamelan. The Marga Sari senior members came to teach the CAP House gamelan group regularly and the Marga Sari leader, Shin Nakagawa, as sometime also sends an Indonesian teacher to teach his own group, sends the native teacher to teach not only the CAP House group, but also the Tirta Kencana and Dharma Budaya as well.

### III. The Japanese contemporary music composers' works with the gamelan

#### 1. Shin Nakagawa, his philosophy and his works with the gamelan

He was born in 1951 in Nara. He finished his undergraduate study at the Kyoto University in 1975, and completed his master degree in 1980. Under the guidance of Prof. Ko Tanimura he had completed his Ph.D. from the Osaka University of Arts in 2001. His teaching experience in music can be described as follows. Since 1980 to 1986 he was an Assistant/Lecturer at the Osaka University and from 1986 to 2000 had been promoted as an Associate Professor at the Kyoto University of Arts. Since 2001 he was received his professorship of the Osaka City University.

Before he leads the Marga Sari gamelan group, he was the leader of the Dharma Budaya gamelan group of the Osaka University from 1979 to 1997. With the Dharma Budaya he made a tour concert in 1995 to Indonesia to perform the gamelan new pieces or contemporary works. For a twelve year of his leadership, the Dharma Budaya promoted mostly only to perform the contemporary music. It because at that time he was so interested in contemporary music. In 1997 he was invited as a visiting professor to the Indonesia Institute of the Arts (ISI) in Yogyakarta. He was tried to work with the Javanese gamelan musicians to play some contemporary works from Japan for the gamelan but it was not worked well. The problem was that the Javanese musicians had no experience in new notation and a lack of Western music theory and appreciation. The sense of rhythm and the language of the contemporary music did not matched to their sense of the gamelan rhythm in which they might have been fed up since their childhood. But, as Nakagawa said, it was also his mistake that he could not understand the language of the *Karawitan* (Javanese classical pieces).

In order for him to understand the language of the karawitan, he and his Marga Sari group worked extensively for 3 years (that was from 1998 to 2001) to practice only the Javanese classical pieces. He wanted to enter into the language of the karawitan so that one day he may make a good communication with the traditionalists of the Javanese gamelan musicians to share about the language of the contemporary music. To realise the idea, he invites the Javanese musicians to come to his studio regularly not only to teach the karawitan but also to collaborate in experimental music making. This, what he called the 'process method' in music making. He shares the ideas to all of the members, to elaborate a creative and innovative process in composing experimental music together. He applies this method sometime with a well-known composer such as Makoto Nomura. He asks Nomura to come to the rehearsal without music notation but of his ideas in music making. But the young composer would always recorded the process and listened afterward, took some interesting phrases and melodies that might be possible to be explored more creatively. When the writer observed the group's rehearsal some time ago, they rehearsed the 'Momo Taro Part 3 and 4'

and it was so interesting that everyone of the group member could shared the creative process under the guidance of Shin Nakagawa, who wrote its basic scripts, and Makoto Nomura, who guides the music making process.

Through this process, according to Nakagawa, he wants to overcome the boundaries between the gap in cultural process that was popular during the seventies, i.e., the dichotomy of the insider and outsider. He believes that this process leads the gamelan to become a universal culture. No more dichotomy of oneself culture and the otherness culture. In this process he wants that the both sides, the Javanese and the Japanese musicians, should make a cooperative efforts. The Javanese musicians should be more open to the new ideas and learned about the Western music, meanwhile for the Japanese gamelan musicians, they should learned and understood the Javanese classical pieces as a return. It should be added that for the major Japanese, they have been cultivated with the Western music since their childhood. This is the gap that made the most boundaries to collaborate with the Javanese gamelan musicians. And Nakagawa looks like a solitary person to overcome these boundaries.

He goes to marching on to find out to build a bridge that might become some kinds of a stairway to the heaven of a new culture in music making. But he also busies in composing and teaching the gamelan at some universities and private classes in Kobe and Shiga. He is now working for his 'Momo Taro Series' and since 1995 he still going on to work with one of his compositions so-called 'Gendhing Kosmos' ('Cosmic piece for the gamelan'), and in collaboration with Makoto Nomura and Will Eisma he is working for his 'Gendhing Kosmos Kolaborasi' ('Collaborative Cosmic piece for the gamelan'). What a hard working!

## **2. Makoto Nomura and his experimental with the gamelan**

Makoto Nakamura was born in Nagoya in 1968.<sup>12</sup> At his six year old, his first musical instrument that he learnt was a mouth organ but at the same time he already wrote his first 16 bars music for piano. He then started to learn the piano when he was be hospitalised for a month in March 1977. At this age, he also had had his interest when he told about modern music and it was amazing that for his school's homework of words composition he wrote about Bartok (Bela Bartok). Then he went ahead to compose three piano pieces; 'Fue no Oto', 'Ame dare Botan', and 'Densya Gokko', followed by several other compositions.

Since then until he entered a secondary junior high school, at least he produced one piece in a year, one of which was become a popular song in his elementary school, the piece entitled 'Tanuki to Kitsune' for piano. In 1984 he was confused about his talent in composing and rather like to become a concert artist. However, he went to compose until he completed his high school in 1986. He entered the Kyoto University majoring in mathematic and he began his career as a modern music pianist. He visited Suisse in 1987 to learn about modern music notations.

He began to work with folk music in 1988 despite was so busy to give concerts that even he skipped his university's graduation ceremony instead to attend the concert at the Kyoto Performing Art Center. He went to New York in 1991 but he felt that he would return to Kyoto to complete his study at the Kyoto University. He produced his first CD in 1992 and also his first debut on NHK program entitled 'Watashi tachi wa shin ongaku jin desu' ('We are the new music men').

In 1994 he received a scholarship from the British Council to visit York University and give concerts in several cities. The years that followed he often received invitations to make some concerts of his own works. What should be noted here is that it is also in this period (1996) that this prolific composer wrote 'Odore! Beethoven' ('Dance! Beethoven'), an experimental work with the gamelan, musical toys, dance, martial art, children's games and songs and drama. He loves children and many of his works until 2003 were also included and dedicated to the children all over the world. He should be noted as one of the young Japanese genius contemporary composers.

### **3. Hiroshi Nanatsuya, his ideas and his works about gamelan**

Hiroshi Nanatsuya is a composer and a professor of music of the Graduate School of Music at the Osaka University of Fine Arts. This college of Arts is known as the second largest after the Tokyo University of Arts, consists of 17 Departments in which there are Music Education, Musicology and Music Performance Departments. Nanatsuya, is the chief of the Musicology Department. Following is what he says about the gamelan and how he works with it. These are the results of an interview with him done on the 8<sup>th</sup> of September 2003.

The college bought a full set of the gamelan instruments, consists of pelog and slendro tuning systems, in 1998. The price was almost similar with that of a Steinway grand piano, but marvellous, it's a full set of gamelan instruments of a good quality. About more than 30 students were taking the gamelan class this summer under Prof Shin Nakagawa's instructions. When the writer observed the class' activities, the writer could see how exciting were the students during the session. They played a 'ladrang' and it was sounds very good indeed, though, as Nakagawa said, most of them are the beginners.

The instruments were set up inside an oval hall that has a good acoustics suitable for the instruments. It's a sense of a rich and a jealousy for the Javanese musicians and for the writer himself to see that a full set of gamelan were set up in the hall like that. Remember that another gamelan instruments were also set up in a concert hall like that of the Hekisui Hall. The Javanese who own the gamelan usually set them up at a 'pendopo', i.e., an open square of traditional building made of wood. The Marga Sari sets its full set of the gamelan instruments in their based-camp that is almost look similar with that of a

Javanese traditional 'pendopo' building. But it is more impressive like a temple for the extensive study of a gamelan school.

In answering the writer's question about how the gamelan study will be going on in the future in Japan, Nanatsuya told us that he is very optimistic about it. For instance, in his department not only the gamelan playing that be given to the students but also the studies on the gamelan is going on through the students' thesis or through a computer programming to investigate the gamelan's tuning system. The gamelan groups in the college are not only to learn about how to master the Javanese classical pieces but also to work on the experimental music and to the expansion of the new possibilities of collaboration that can be done by any musical medium and or computer music program.

Nanatsuya has been working with the gamelan since a decade ago when he was asked by Shin Nakagawa to write a composition for the instruments. Then he worked out on the possibilities of exploring the slendro and pelog systems based on the Western B flat key. The result was a chaotic that turned on and on between the sense of B flat, slendro and pelog systems. The composition was entitled 'Saisyoku saseta oto no kouso' ('The coloured sounds' structure'). Three years later he wrote the second gamelan piece of his own entitled 'Exciting Gamelan' (1996), to express himself that the instruments were so exciting that he could not stop himself to explore the gamelan through his experimental works.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

Many figures (persons) that have been asked by the writer about the gamelan's future in Japan were basically shared the same ideas that sound very much optimistic. The writer knows well about the Japanese ethic that can be seen in their daily life and cultures. The writer believes that the gamelan's future here will very developing and more appreciable for a wider society of Japan. As Shota Fukuoka said that the gamelan has already developing and reached the areas out of Tokyo and Kansai, i.e., to Kyushu and Niigata.

What is more impressive is that the extensive studies of the Javanese classical pieces go hand in hand with the exploration to the something new, something that creative and innovative, the so-called 'process method' that is being done by Shin Nakagawa and his colleagues. These efforts have been doing by most of the important figures that their names have been described above on this paper. Not only that they are the gamelan devotees in this country but also the heroes of the gamelan life in creating a multiculturalism in the dynamism of the daily urban culture in Kansai areas.

Times and histories have shown us that any new contact, dissemination and or cultivation of foreign music and culture to one society have always gave the impact of new creativity towards the receivers. This what was happened to the dissemination of Western music in Asia in early sixteenth century of Indonesia and Japan. For instance, the Malukans people of eastern Indonesia had been in contact with the Gregorian music and songs in 1512 that was introduced

by the Portuguese who sought the spice there. At that time there must be some kinds of culture shocked for the local people but then was followed by the imitating and then a creative process that gave the results of new music practices that is now we refer them as folk music. Keroncong music is believed to be one example of these genres. Meanwhile, about three decades later, the Kyushu people of Japan had also been in contact with the Gregorian music and songs that was introduced also by the Portuguese. Imitating and creative process followed and gave the result of what so-called 'Uta-Orashio' to name one of the genres.

Will that the dissemination and cultivation of the gamelan through a 'process method' that is being practiced by Shin Nakagawa and his colleagues lead to a product of a new universal music culture based on the gamelan instruments? The answer is positively yes! Will that the new genre get its name under the gamelan or any other name? Let the next generation defines the name of the genre because what is in a name anyway. And this concludes my paper. Thank you.

## Catatan

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<sup>1</sup> Triyono Bramantyo, *The Early Western Music Dissemination in Indonesia and in Japan Through the Missionary Activities*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Osaka University, 1997.

<sup>2</sup> Mantle Hood, *Javanese Gamelan in the World of Music*, (Jogjakarta: Penerbit Kedaulatan Rakjat, 1958), 8.

<sup>3</sup> Judith Becker, *Traditional Music in Modern Java*, (Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1980), 9.

<sup>4</sup> Sumarsam, "Gamelan dan Barat: Interaksi Musik dan Budaya" ("Gamelan and Western: Music: Interaction and Culture"), in *Jurnal Seni Pertunjukan Indonesia* Th. IX-1998/1999, 93.

<sup>5</sup> Sumarsam. *Ibid.*, 97.

<sup>6</sup> Akiko Kawaguchi, *Transformation of Orality in the Learning Process of Gamelan*, Master's Thesis, Joetsu University of Education, Kobe, 2001, 178-80,.

<sup>7</sup> Kawaguchi, *ibid.*, 284.

<sup>8</sup> Shin Nakagawa, *Indonesian Gamelan*, Pamflet of Marga Sari, produced by 'J Planning' Corporation, n.d.

<sup>9</sup> Leaflet (1), *Cap House*, Kobe, n.d.

<sup>10</sup> Leaflet (1), *ibid.*, n.d.

<sup>11</sup> Leaflet (2), *CAP*, n.d.

<sup>12</sup> Most of these informations were excerpted and translated from his biodata published in the concert program at the Hekisui Hall, Minakuchi city, Shiga Prefecture, 24 August 2003. The concert entitled 'Nomura no Sekai' (The World of Nomura).

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Leaflet (2). *CAP House*, n.d.

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