Koto of the Heirloom of Kishu-Tokugawa Family

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This article reports research on the musical instrument collection of the heirloom of the Kishu-Tokugawa Family (owned by the National Museum of Japanese History) conducted in 2008 and 2009. Many instruments of this collection compiled by Tokugawa Harutomi, the 10th feudal lord of the Kishu domain, are Gagaku instruments. In this article, mainly, Gakuso, Kotoji and Kotozume are described. Aside from this collection, five pieces of koto are owned by the National Museum of Japanese History, and research on three pieces of koto was conducted in 2009, which is also reported in this article. Therefore, this article describes a total of eight pieces of koto, that is, five pieces in the collection ([Kimi ga chitose] [Hagiku] [Musashino] [Kou] [Kumokari]) and three pieces that are not included in the collection ([Matsukaze] [Yamashitamizu] [Koto] [tando]) and a total of 13 sets of Kotoji, that is, 12 sets included in the collection and one set not included in the collection (accessories of the koto [Matsukaze]). For Kotozume, seven sets were researched. Among them, 6 sets are included in the collection. The research was conducted through the study of the tradition and history based on the accompanying documents and the catalogues and the measurement and observation of the instruments themselves. Musical instrument history research faces the obstacle of insufficient information about tradition and history. Concerning this collection, there are plenty of accompanying documents added at the time of collecting the musical instruments. In this research, the insides of the instruments were also observed with a fiberscope. As a result, the existence of burn marks and writing in sumi ink were revealed, which were not mentioned in the accompanying documents. Also, the state of chisel cuts which were made inside the koto for sound effects and the reinforcing method of the inside using a beam plate were clarified. Many of the musical instruments researched seem to have been made in the Edo Period, but there is a possibility that some of them were made before the Edo Period. Among all the musical instruments including the instruments not included in the collection, musical instruments used as Zokuso (vulgar koto) are included. This example of the study of koto-related materials about Koto, Kotoji and Kotozume will contribute to musical instrument history research, which requires many case examples.

Key words: Gakuso, Zokuso, Kotoji, Kotozume, Study of musical instruments