Japanese Voice Recording
Collections Recorded in Europe
in 1900-1901

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Academic Use of Recording Machines

• In 1890s, the **improvement of sound recording machines** enabled scholars to take recordings of languages and performing arts for academic use.

• The earliest attempt was made by an American anthropologist **Jesse Walter Fewkes** (1850-1930).

• In **1890**, using wax cylinder machine, he recorded a few songs and narratives of Pasamaquoddy Indians in Main State.
Establishment of Sound Archives in Europe

• In the end of 19th century, academic sound archives were established in Europe.
• In 1899, the first sound archive in the world, *Phonogrammarchiv in Vienna* was founded.
• In 1900, *Berliner Phonogramm-Archiv* was established.
• The former had the main focus on recording the various speech materials.
• The latter aimed to record the musical performances in the world.

Founder of the Vienna Archive
Sigmund Exner (1846-1926)
Prof. Univ. of Vienna
### Vienna 1901 recordings by Japanese

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Shinkichi Imamura</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>26 y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth place</td>
<td>Tokio, Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of rec.</td>
<td>14. IV. 1901.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pl. of rec.</td>
<td>Wien, Phonogrammarchiv</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Common information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>114: Japanisch / alterer Schriftdpache: Japanese / old written language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>116: modern Japanisch (Umgangssprache vor ca. 100 jahren) Modern Japanese (colloquial language ca. 100 year ago)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- In **April of 1901**, **Vienna Archive** took the recordings, 3 discs as above, of a Japanese medical doctor, named **IMAMURA Shinkichi** 今村新吉 (1874-1946) who was studying in Vienna then.

- No. 115 has a theme of **Present Colloquial Japanese**, a mock conversation, giving a little bit unnatural impression.
Berlin 1901 recordings by Japanese

- In **November** of 1901, Berlin Archive recorded the performances of **KAWAKAMI Otojirô** 川上音二郎 Troupe, having public shows in Berlin then.
- Koto performances with female singing were probably played by their leading actress **Sada-Yakko** 貞奴 (1871-1946)

**CDs:** *Wax Cylinders Recording Japanese Music* by the Berlin Archive
Musée phonographique project by Société d’Anthropologie de Paris, 1900

• During the Paris Exposition 1900, la Société d’Anthropologie de Paris planned the project of le Musée phonographique for recording the voices of people visiting the exposition from many countries in the world.

• Léon Azoulay was the advocator and prosecutor.

• He recorded readings of “Parable of the Prodigal Son” in Gospel of Luke, pronunciations of the characters, conversations, declamations of the theatre, and musical performances, on 351 wax cylinders, in some 60 languages in total.
# Document Sheet of Paris 1900 Recordings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sheet No.</th>
<th>Wax Cylinder No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

## Content
- Language-Dialect, Genre, Subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Phonogramme No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1ère Langue Japonais
- Dialecte: Japonais
- Région géographique: Japon
- Non écrite; écrite en caractères chinois et japonais

### Phonétique, vocabulaire, phrases usuelles
- Conversation avec
- Récit (Folklore) sur
- Déclamation sur
- Lecture de chansons populaires

### 2ème Chant (Nature) sur

### 3ème Musique (solo, concert) nature
- Instruments: corde, vent, percussion
- Noms des:  

## Conditions de l’enregistrement
- Enregistré: à voix, au conet, au tube parleur, au diapragne
- Enregistré au musee phonographique
- Enregistré sur phonographie Columbia
- Avec diaphragme: Pallas
- Diamètre du mandrin: 27 cm
- Température: 17°C
- Vitesse de tournage: 100 tours (mètres) à la minute

## Performer
- Nom et prénoms du phonographié
- Homme ou femme
- Âgé: ______ ans solaires ou lunaire
- Né à ______
- Pays ou tribu: Japon
- Continent: Asie
- Profession: Geisha
- Lettré ou illettré
- Parle autres langues: non

## Rec. equipment s rpm
- Rec. Place: Paris
- Date: 29 août 1900
- Recordist: L. Couray

## Observations
- Texte imprimé, écrit: transcription, traduction
- N° des photographies: corps, face

## Performer Details
- Name, sex, age, birthplace, parents, residence, travelling abroad, literacy, foreign language ability, profession
Paris 1900 Wax Cylinders stored by *le Laboratoire d’ethnomusicologie*
### List of Paris 1900 recordings by Japanese

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>duration</th>
<th>dialect</th>
<th>content</th>
<th>sex</th>
<th>age</th>
<th>birth place</th>
<th>travel abroad</th>
<th>other language</th>
<th>profession</th>
<th>recording date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>194</td>
<td>2'51</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
<td>Reading of &quot;Prodigal Son&quot;</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>ab. 40</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Geisha</td>
<td>Aug 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>195</td>
<td>2'55</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
<td>ditto [syllabic reading]</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>ab. 40</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Geisha</td>
<td>Aug 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>196</td>
<td>2'52</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
<td>ditto [, pronunciation of iroha]</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>ab.</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Geisha</td>
<td>Aug 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>197</td>
<td>1'16</td>
<td>Kyushu</td>
<td>ditto</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>ab.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Geisha</td>
<td>Aug 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>198</td>
<td>2'52</td>
<td>Shizuoka</td>
<td>ditto Pronunciation of iroha and numbers</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>ab.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Geisha</td>
<td>Aug 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>199</td>
<td>2'44</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
<td>Conversation with a woman ab. 40</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>ab.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Geisha</td>
<td>Aug 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>1'35</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
<td>Song: dance song</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Geisha</td>
<td>Aug 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201</td>
<td>2'52</td>
<td>Ibaragi</td>
<td>Kokin-Waka-shu</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Merchant?</td>
<td>Jul 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>202</td>
<td>2'54</td>
<td>Ibaragi</td>
<td>Tokiwazu-bungo, nagauta, Gidayu</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Merchant?</td>
<td>Jul 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>203</td>
<td>2'40</td>
<td></td>
<td>Shamisen: dance song</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Geisha</td>
<td>Aug 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>204</td>
<td>2'36</td>
<td></td>
<td>Shamisen: dodoitsu</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Geisha</td>
<td>Aug 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>205</td>
<td>2'48</td>
<td></td>
<td>Shinobue solo: song of New Year</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>ab. 35</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Cook</td>
<td>Aug 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>206</td>
<td>2'52</td>
<td></td>
<td>Shakuhachi solo: 2 popular songs</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>ab. 50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Trader</td>
<td>Aug 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>207</td>
<td>1’20</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tsudumi solo: popular song</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Geisha</td>
<td>Aug 31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The numbers of Documental Sheets were ordered by the content. Reading > Conversation> Recitation> Song> Instrument
**All the performers of No. 196, 197, 198, 201, 202, and 206, recorded on July 20\textsuperscript{th}, 22\textsuperscript{nd} and 23\textsuperscript{rd}, are men.**

**The performers of July recordings and those of August belong to different groups each other.**

The performers of No. 194, 195, 199, 200, 203, 204, 205, and 207, recorded on August 21\textsuperscript{st}, 28\textsuperscript{th}, 29\textsuperscript{th} and 31\textsuperscript{st}, are mainly women, with only one man (199 & 205: same man). All these female performers are Geisha(s).
Identification of *Hitomi*, the performer of No. 197, July

- Only No. 197 shows the performer's name as *Hitomi*
- about 35 years old man
- born in Kyushu
- having travels to France
- speaking French very well.

Azoulay wrote his gratitude to “M. Hitomi, délégué du gouvernement à Formose,” *Taiwan Sôtoku-fu*, as a collaborator for the recording project.
HITOMI Ichitarô 人見一太郎: The First Performer

• A journalist HITOMI Ichitarô 人見一太郎 (1865-1924) was found as the person who met the above information.
• born and grew up in Kumamoto.
• devoted himself to establishing and managing Min’yû-sha 民友社.
• visited France in 1899.
• donated *Le Japon*, own writing in French, to the celebrities in the exposition.
• “délégué spécial du gouvernement de Formose à l’exposition universelle de 1900”
Identification of the main speaker of chattering, the performer of No.199, August

- The first half of No. 199 is the most interesting item as a research material for linguistics
- a conversation between a man and a woman
- woman plays the main role
- a natural daily chattering
- vivid Tokyo dialectal expressions

- A set of words in the conversation becomes a clue to identify the performers.
  - O-Tama-san, O-E-san
  - Panorama, hakurankai
  - Okumiya-san, Obayashi-san
A secret report kept in the Diplomatic Record Office reveals that they are the members of Shinbashi Geisha Troupe appearing on le Panorama stage at le Tour du Monde, a pavilion in the exposition, planned by OKUNOMIYA Kenshi and others.

A Secret Report about Sending Geishas to Paris Exposition planned by OKUNOMIYA Kenshi
By the documents of the Diplomatic Record Office and news paper articles, all the members of the Geisha Troupe to Paris Expo 1900 can be identified.
Geisha Troupe on illustrated magazine

Geisha Troupe performing at le Panorama “Nikko”
Values and Characteristics as the research materials for linguistics

- **The oldest voice recording materials in Japanese**: Every item can be confirmed the date of recording by the documental sheet, July 20th - August 31st, 1900. They are the oldest existing Japanese sound recordings ever found.

- **Discourse material by Tokyoite woman in daily conversation**: The most interesting item is the chattering in No. 199. It is an extremely valuable resource because it is performed by a middle aged Tokyoite woman in daily conversational style.

- **Readings of various speakers holding different dialectal backgrounds**: Recordings performed by persons from Kyushu, Shizuoka, Ebaraki or Ibaraki, and Tokyo, the oldest voice materials of each dialect. Several distinctive dialectal pronunciations can be heard from them.