Namaroku culture in 1970s Japan: The techniques and joy of sound recording *

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Introduction

In 1974, a recording engineer, Yoichi Namekata described the trend of "Namaroku" as follows:

> Namaroku—It is simply just an abbreviation of Nama-Rokuon [live-recording], and there isn't any other proper expression for it so far. The recordings of natural sound in the field or musical performance in a studio are called namaroku to distinguish them from the dubbing of FM radio, records, and tapes. If you call them SE (sound effects), it has too broad a sense, and if you call them a documentary, it sounds somehow too formal and strained. Only Namaroku comes to my mind if I casually say "let's go out and record sounds." […]
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> The number of field recording fans is said to be rapidly increasing these days. I was dubious about that until I actually went to find out and was surprised by the unexpected rush of people when I arrived at a recording scene. It wasn't quite half of the photography maniacs there but certainly more than a quarter of them that also carried a sound recorder. There was a group of three or four people who concentrated on sound recording fully armed with a boom stand, mixer, and sound collector. But there were also people casually holding a recorder for studying.[1]

The Namaroku trend continued through the 1970s as an activity for enjoying the recording not only of music, but also various sounds from steam locomotives, nature, and events, among others [Fig.1]. Namaroku was featured in articles in both specialist and generalist magazines, and numerous Namaroku guidebooks were published. There were sound

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[1] Yoichi Namekata, "Kieyuku Jokikikansha: C-11 wo otte [Fading Steam Locomotives: In chase of C-11]," in *Bessatsu FM Fan: Tokushu Rokuon no Sekai* [FM Fan Special Issue: Featuring The World of Sound Recording], 1974, p.71.

recording devices for Namaroku, Namaroku contests, magazines, and a radio program to which listeners contributed recordings.

Fig.1 The snapshots of a traveling recording of Oigawa Railway SL, organized by *Rokuhan*, and supported by Victor Company of Japan. *Rokuhan*, no.9, 1976, pp.12-13.

Recently, the concept of "aurality" has been discussed in an interdisciplinary field called "sound studies." In contrast to the "visuality" discussed in visual culture theories, aurality denotes modes of listening that are historically and culturally constructed. Before this word became common, a number of studies of the history of listening in Japan were undertaken from varying approaches, such as musicology, soundscape theory, and sound media theory. A central element of research into modern aurality has also been the question of the relationship between sound technology and listening. For example, the history of methodologies to produce spatiality in sound recordings has been discussed in the context of research on studio work in music.[2] Jonathan Sterne examined documents from laboratories and open experiments from the rise of sound reproduction technology to trace the construction of the concept of fidelity in sound reproduction through collaborations between humans and technology.[3]

This paper considers Namaroku culture in 1970s Japan as a contribution to research examining aurality through sound recording. Although Namaroku culture emerged a century after the birth of sound recording, it represented the first experience of enjoying sound

[2] Cf. Fumikazu Taniguchi organized the related arguments introducing researches since the 1990s in "Record ongaku ga motarasu kukan: Oto no media hyogenron [Space of record music: The theory of media expression]" (in *Ratio Special Issue: Shiso toshite no Ongaku* [Ratio Special Issue: Music as Thought], 2010, pp.240-265).

[3] Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past: Cultural Origine of Sound Reproduction*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2003, chap.5.

recording for many Japanese at the time, particularly younger people. Specialists offered arguments for beginners on how to use recording devices and on defining sound recording and understanding how people hear sounds. As Makoto Fujioka described the process, "problems in sound recording won't be solved completely only by technology. The heart of sound recording is what you might call epistemology, a question of how we can understand sounds."[4] Based on such discourses, this paper considers how practitioners of Namaroku hear sounds through sound recording devices.

The roles of audio makers, journalism, and sound media other than records and radio were significant in popularizing the Namaroku trend. These elements were as impactful as developments in sound recording technologies in influencing the mode of listening in Namaroku culture. To understand aurality at the time, it is necessary to examine the connection between Namaroku and society through their roles. Using the words of Hiroshi Watanabe, "looking into the condition of society and media, to regard diverse movements around an event as problems of the relationship between several background contexts and their dynamics" is indispensable to a proper consideration of the mode of listening in Namaroku.[5] For example, Sterne studied how the collaboration between sound reproduction technology and human beings was influenced by the society of the same period, highlighting the impact of capitalism, bureaucracy, and a culture called "the ethos of preservation."[6] Therefore, this paper begins by investigating the process and background of the Namaroku trend as a means to understand its perspective and present the first comprehensive inquiry into this culture.

Previous research related to Namaroku includes a study on "Sound Hunting," similar to Namaroku, in several Western countries.[7] David Morton, who traced the history of the technology and culture of sound recording in North America, mentioned field recordings and sound albums as cultures that emerged with the popularization of the tape recorder but soon disappeared.[8] Karin Bijsterveld described how practitioners in the Netherlands in the 1950s and 1960s enjoyed sound recording like a sport, and that sounds associated with traditional cultures were significant elements in the culture of sound hunting.[9] Japanese Namaroku has been discussed with regard to the history of sound technologies published by audio critics such as Shuji Kasagi and Tetsuo Nagaoka, who identified Namaroku as an important or cyclical

[4] Makoto Fujioka, *Jitsuyo Audio Koza 5: Oto no Hunt (Rokuon no Tanoshimi)* [Practical Audio Course 5: Sound Hunting (The Joy of Sound Recording)], Tokyo: Ongaku No Tomo Sha Corp, 1975, p.1.

[5] Hiroshi Watanabe, *Sound to Media no Bunkashigengaku: Kyokaisenjo no Ongaku* [The Cultural Resources Studies of Sound and Media: Music on a Borderline], Tokyo: Shunjusha Publishing Company, 2013, p.417.

[6] Sterne, *op.cit.*, chap.5, 6.

[7] The comparison between Namaroku and Sound Hunting in detail is out of the scope of this paper. Both of them were basically cultures enjoying the recording of various sounds but became trends at different times. Further, another difference is that the former mainly used a cassette whereas the latter an open reel.

[8] David Morton, *Off the Record: The Technology and Culture of Sound Recording in America*, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2000, pp.138-143.

[9] Karin Bijsterveld "'What do I do with my tape recorder…?': Sound hunting and the sounds of everyday Dutch life in the 1950s and 1960s" in *Historical Journal of Film, Radio, and Television*, 24:4, 2004, pp.613-634.

phenomenon in the history of audio culture.[10] *Nyumon Audio Bunkaron: Human na Audio wo Motomete* [Introduction to Audio Culture Theory: Searching for a Human Audio], which was published by Kasagi in 1976, was a particularly ambitious work that considered the history of audio beginning with the discovery of electricity and the influence of audio culture on other cultures.

This paper adds to the body of previous research by investigating audio journalism and numerous Namaroku guidebooks as a means to examine Namaroku's mode of listening or aurality. The term "audio journalism" is borrowed from Kasagi and Nagaoka.[11] Kasagi used "audio journalism" as a generic term to describe technology magazines such as *Musen to Jikken* [The Radio Experimenter's Magazine], audio magazines like *Stereo*, FM magazines such as *FM Fan*, and music magazines like *Record Geijutsu* [Record Art]. So-called audio critics developed their arguments in the fields of these media, and discourses on Namaroku were located mainly in these contexts.

This paper consists of three sections. The introduction notes the topics of each section in advance. The first section outlines the history of tape-recording culture in Japan since the 1950s and describes the emergence of the Namaroku trend as an extension of this process. The second section examines discourses and criticisms associated with Namaroku at that time, to understand the background of this cultural phenomenon. The third section considers the mode of listening in Namaroku culture. Although music was recognized as an element of Namaroku, as stated in this paper's opening quote, in what follows I will address listening in the context of field recording of actual sounds (genjitsuon).[12] "Genjitsuon" denotes all real sounds except for conversation and music. This paper focuses on such sounds because it is regarded as a representative practice of Namaroku. As Namekata argued, the popularity of Namaroku increased rapidly after people began paying attention to "surrounding sounds except for music."[13] Moreover, discourses on the recording of actual sounds tend to be more concerned with the act of listening rather than the sources of the sounds due to the lack of the limitation of recording objects. It can be said that eliminating distractions deriving from music and conversation turns people's attention from sound sources to listening. The third section analyzes the discourses of contemporary specialists who explained Namaroku techniques as a means to better understand the aurality of Namaroku culture. In conclusion, the paper reviews arguments presented in the preceding sections and discusses the joy of sound recording and its

[10] Shuji Kasagi, *Nyumon Audio Bunkaron: Human na Audio wo Motomete* [Introduction to Audio Culture Theory: Searching for a Human Audio], Tokyo: Miosha, 1976, pp.32-41. Tetsuo Nagaoka, *Nagaoka Tetsuo no Nihon Audio Shi 1950-82* [Tesuo Nagaoka's Japan Audio History 1950-82], Tokyo: Ongaku No Tomo Sha Corp, 1993, p.180. Cf. Yoshihisa Mori, Masanori Kimizuka, Toru Kamekawa, *Onkyo Gijutsushi* [History of Sound Recording], Tokyo: Tokyo Geidai Press, 2011, pp.93-94.

[11] Nagaoka, *op.cit.*, p.48. Kasagi, *op.cit.*, pp.67-93.

[12] It is beyond question that the development of amateur home musical recording, so-called Takuroku, that is parallel with the recording of actual sounds in the field is quite an important movement in the history of popular music. Yet, to question how the listening through sound recording devices was understood at the time, this essay chooses the recording of actual sounds in particular from Namaroku culture as a subject.

[13] Namekata, *op.cit*., p.71.

conditions at the time.

1. The Namaroku boom and the cultural history of tape recording until the 1970s

This section reviews the development of the Namaroku trend and locates Namaroku in the cultural history of tape recording in Japan. The first tape recorder manufactured in Japan was the "Tape Corder Type-G" released in 1950 by the predecessor of Sony Corporation, Tokyo Tsushin Kogyo [Tokyo Telecommunications Engineering Corporation]. The portable recorder "Type-M" released by Sony in 1951 was used in the broadcast scene and given the nickname "Densuke" derived from the main character of a comic who gathered news in the street with the recorder. Later, the Sony "TC-2850SD," a recorder released in 1973 that symbolized the Namaroku trend, succeeded to the nickname and was called the "Cassette Densuke."

According to Hiroshi Watanabe, a documentary method called "rokuon kosei" [programs composed of recorded voices] based on tape-recorded man-on-the-street interviews emerged mainly in the radio scene in the 1950s.[14] Then it was applied to documentary records and "sound reportage" in sonosheets like Asahi Sonorama as well as television. Meanwhile, trials of new expressions through Tokyo Telecommunications Engineering Corporation's tape recorders started in the 1950s in the context of contemporary music. For example, Jikken Kobo [Experimental Workshop], a group formed by young avant-garde artists in various genres, with Shuzo Takiguchi as its main member, presented a work using the reverse rotation of tape in their fifth presentation, in 1953, and gave a concert titled "Music Concrete and Electronic Music Audition" in 1956. However, only a few articles on Namaroku specifically mention rokuon kosei and Music Concrete, and references to particular methods and the names of works and artists appear to have been rare in the Namaroku context. As will be explained in the third section, one reason for this might be that instructions on the method of Namaroku emphasized how to use a microphone rather than tape editing. It is necessary to consider this carefully in order to better understand the influence of the above-mentioned cultures on Namaroku.

From here, let us shift the focus to more general audio users. Masahiro Ogi, a film critic who judged Namaroku contests and published a number of works on audio, noted that sound recording devices became widespread about five years later than audio playback.[15] After mainly imported playback devices became popularized in the early 1950s, Akai and Sony released low-priced domestic recorders in 1957. After the stereo boom emerged around 1960, domestic makers released recorders one after another in 1964. The technology magazine *Musen to Jikken* began holding a series of "tape recording contests" with no restrictions on the

[14] Watanabe, *op.cit.*, pp.474-478.

[15] Masahiro Ogi, " "Kiku" kara "Tsukuru" he: Namaroku toiu na no Sozo [From "listening" to "creation": Creation called Namaroku]," in *Bessatsu FM Fan: Tokushu Rokuon no Sekai* [FM Fan Special Issue: Featuring The World of Sound Recording], 1974, pp.56-61.

object of recording in 1962. These contests were supported by TRK (Tape Recorder Kenkyukai [Society for Tape Recorder Research]), a group promoting self-made tape recorders, and included entries that dealt with various actual sounds as well as music.

In the late 1960s, Japanese tape-recording culture came to be largely bisected. On the one hand, Hi-Fi open reel recorders like "Tsutora sanpachi [2 tracks 38 centimeters]" became popular for audiophiles. Although these devices were too heavy to be easily carried, audiophiles would bring their own recorders to recording concerts organized by audio makers and enjoy sound recordings that were largely limited to music [Fig.2].[16] On the other hand, when the Philips cassette recorder was released in Japan in 1965, domestic makers reproduced their own versions, and cheap easy-to-operate monaural recorders spread widely. However, these devices were often used in language study or making minutes rather than recording music.

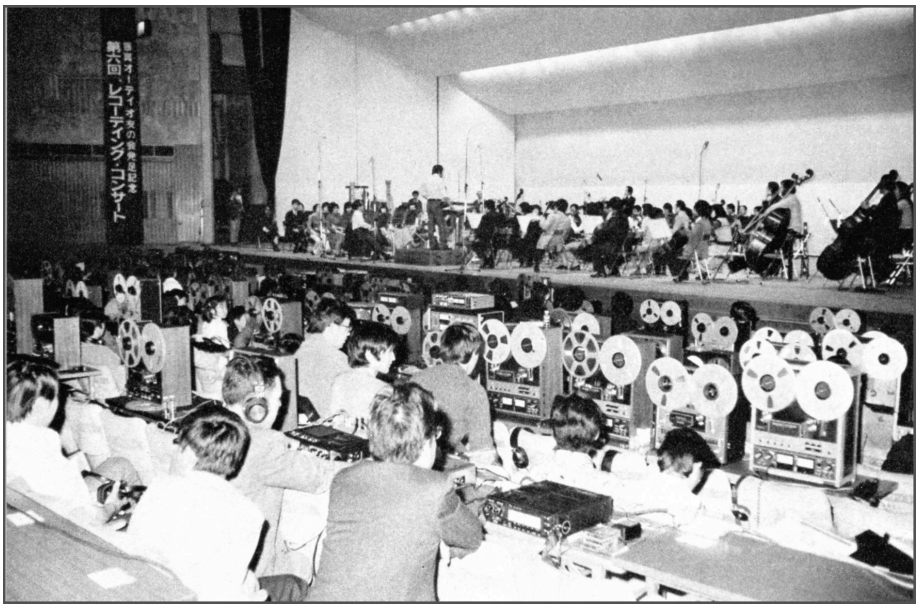


Fig.2 A recoding concert (The 6th Recording Concert organized by Shinko Electric Company). *Tape Sound*, no.21, 1976, p.343.

Masahiro Ogi identified the early 1970s as the period when recording culture re-emerged as a trend in Japan. This section traces the process of the trend's emergence and the next section examines the factors in its popularization. *Rokuon no Subete* [All about Sound Recording], a book edited by Jun Okada and published in 1971, was a guidebook for audiophiles who were interested in "the creation of new sound 'by their own hands'."[17] Previous works on tape recorders had dealt mainly with recording devices and treated only recordings of music and conversation; however, Okada's volume spared chapters for recordings of "documentary sounds," "voices of birds," and "sound effects" in addition to

[16] About Recording Concert, cf. Nagaoka, *op.cit.*, p.180.

[17] Jun Okada, "A postface style preface," in *Rokuon no Subete*, Jun Okada ed., Tokyo: Futoh-sha, 1971, pp.164-165.

music. A number of works explaining the recordings of diverse sound sources were published one after another in 1973, including *Amateur Rokuon Nyumon* [Introduction to Amateur Sound Recording], supervised by Shigeki Kato, Kimiyasu Kondo's *Darenidemo wakaru Rokuon no Chishiki to Jissai* [The Knowledge and Reality of Sound Recording for Everyone], and *Stereo Shukan FM Bessatsu: Rokuon no Subete* [The Stereo, The Weekly FM Special Issue: Expansion of the Recording World]. In the same year, the Sony "TC-2850SD" was released, and an audio magazine, *Tape Sound*, featured field recording over two issues. Around the same time, the term Namaroku began to appear frequently in audio journalism.

The number of Namaroku fans increased in the mid-1970s. Whereas there were only 206 entries for the "Audio Union Recording Contest" in 1974, entries for the "Sony Zen Nihon Narmaroku Contest [Sony All Japan Namaroku Contest]" in 1976 reached 1147.[18] Namaroku was featured not only in audio journalism magazines, but also in general magazines and travel- and comic magazines. A number of guidebooks were published, and those that contained recordings of actual sounds increased. In 1975, publication began for *Rokuhan*, a magazine that specialized in Namaroku and embodied its trends. The title was an abbreviation of "Rokuon Hunting [Recording Hunting]." The magazine included "Kyomei Kan [Resonance Hall]," a page for readers' interactive communication that listed announcements of activities of Namaroku clubs in each district. The above-mentioned "Sony Zen Nihon Namaroku Contest" expanded the range of the Namaroku trend, as did the establishment of the Federation of All Japan Amateur Recording Associations (FJR), which was founded in 1976 and joined the Fédération Internationale des Chasseurs de Sons (FICS, International Federation of Soundhunters). That same year, Nippon Cultural Broadcasting began airing Sony Namaroku Jockey, a radio program to which listeners contributed Namaroku recordings.

However, the Namaroku trend began to decline in the late 1970s. Although *Rokuhan* held its "Rokuhan Tape Contest" annually since 1977, the entries decreased each year. The magazine's publication ceased in 1979, and the Sony Namaroku Jockey program ended in the same year. Following that, there was no publication of the Namaroku guidebook. What factors contributed to the decline of Namaroku? This paper cannot explore this question in detail; however, it is useful to consider the context surrounding the phenomenon. For example, the transition of the article topics in *Rokuhan* is highly suggestive; in the magazine's later issues, it appears that the readers' interests had expanded into diverse electric devices and home musical recording activities, and the focus of its Namaroku contest entries shifted from documentary to electronic sounds and drama made by more advanced editing. Similarly, the original subtitle of the magazine, "Namaroku Adventure," was replaced in 1977 with a new moniker reflective of this shift, "Sound Create Magazine." The next section continues to examine the factors in the decline of Namaroku.

This section traced the history of tape recording culture in Japan and located the Namaroku boon within this framework. By the early 1960s at the latest, general audio users

[18] Ogi, *op.cit.*, p.58.

were expressing interests in the recording of "actual" sounds. In the late 1960s, tape recording culture became separated between Hi-Fi and Lo-Fi, followed shortly by the popularization of the Namaroku phenomenon. The next section provides a detailed examination of how the Namaroku boom emerged from split tape-recording culture. The expansion of interest in recording actual sounds can be traced to the early 1970s, contemporary with the appearance of the Namaroku trend, which reached its apex in the mid-1970s before gradually dissipating in the late 1970s.

2. The background of Namaroku culture: Discourses on the trend's emergence

What was the situation surrounding sound recording culture in the 1970s when Namaroku became a trend? To answer this question, this section will explore some events that were mentioned previously as potential factors in the popularization of discourses on Namaroku. A review of relevant writings shows that critics active during this period highlighted factors such as an attitude of enjoying sound recording and the popularization of a culture of recording actual sounds. The emergence of HiFi stereo cassette recorders, as represented by "TC-2850SD," was most frequently given as a reason. The sound quality of the cassette improved with the spread of Dolby systems in 1971, leading to the release of relatively cheaper and highly mobile HiFi stereo recording devices with significantly greater capabilities than earlier recorders, which were either large, hard-to-operate, and Hi-Fi, or small, Lo-Fi, and monaural. There was no question that these devices facilitated the popularization of the Namaroku trend. However, the question is in what context were these devices produced and released as Namaroku equipment?

The aircheck of the radio programs has been widely cited as predecessors of Namaroku, and the influence of FM radio recording has often been mentioned. NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) began experimental stereo broadcasting in FM radio in 1962, and the first publication of *FM Fan* marked that publication as a focal point for the widespread interest in airchecks. According to Kasagi, recording devices for airchecks drew attention at the Fifteenth All Japan Audio Fair in 1966.[19] The aircheck fan base rapidly increased in parallel with improvements in the sound quality of cassette recorders. Namekata and Kasagi both noted that airchecks allowed the public to participate in the practice of sound recording and opened a path to appreciating its joys.[20] Although some critics elevated the dynamic creativity of Namaroku above the more passive operations of airchecks, Kasagi emphasized the innovativeness evidenced in aircheck culture's exploration of favorite sounds.

As mentioned above, tape recording culture in the 1960s was split into Hi-Fi and Lo-Fi, and it seemed that both the cultures had their own contributing factors in the popularization of Namaroku. Audio magazines like Stereo and Stereo Sound took the lead in highlighting HiFi

[19] Kasagi, *op.cit.*, pp.22-23.
[20] Namekata, *op.cit*., pp.72. Kasagi, *op.cit.*, pp.12-13.

recording culture from the 1960s, and critics who taught their readers about the difference between good and bad audio became famous. For example, in citing major factors in the spread of Namaroku, Ogi recounted the emergence of "star recording producers" such as audio critics Shunsuke Wakabayashi and Okihiko Sugano.[21] They both participated as judges in a recording concert and "Stereo Recording Contest" organized by *Stereo Rinji Zoukan: Tape Music* [Stereo Special Issue: Tape Music] in 1969.

Documentary recording was also influential in directing audiophiles' interest toward the recording of actual sound. Ogi devoted a chapter to "documentary recording" in his 1968 book, *Stereo: Kiku Hito no Soi to Yorokobi* [Stereo: the Creativity and Joy of Listeners], in which he defined it as "an exclusive territory of stereo."[22] Shigeki Kato proposed that one reason for the popularization of recording actual sounds was that it "has different qualities of a sonic field from music like a natural expansion of and a feeling of movement in a sonic field. These qualities drew new attention as program sources."[23]

Meanwhile, in the case of LoFi recording culture, Kasagi emphasized the spread of the radio cassette recorders beginning around 1967.[24] He described how some radio cassette recorder owners who had purchased the devices for aircheck purposes started recording sounds in their daily life, such as taking pictures, rather than recording concerts. After 1970, the year that Japanese National Railways launched their "Discover Japan" campaign, Kasagi reported seeing travelers taking radio cassette recorders, listening to a radio or cassette, and recording the sounds much like other tourists take photographs to document their journeys. Among the sound tourists, SL (steam lcocmotive) enthusiasts were the most dedicated to working with sounds and making trips solely for the purpose of recording. This was the middle of the "SL boom," which had been stimulated by events like restarting the operation of the Koumi line in 1973.

It was in the above contexts that "Cassette Densuke" was released in the early 1970s. In 1973, Heitaro Nakajima reported that a survey on audio had found that demand for recording singers' voices, musical performances, and actual sounds was increasing.[25] Nakajima also noted that users of HiFi recording devices were demanding cheaper and easier-to-operate devices, whereas fans of LoFi demanded higher sound quality. It can be argued that audio makers released HiFi stereo cassette recorders to meet those demands. However, the audio makers did more than meet consumer demands; they also embarked on marketing campaigns to further increase public interest in sound recording.

Genji Ogawa, who directed the marketing of "TC-2850SD," documented the sales

[21] Ogi, *op.cit.*, p.60.

[22] Masahiro Ogi, *Stereo: Kiku Hito no Soi to Yorokobi* [Stereo: the Creativity and Joy of Listeners], Tokyo: The Mainichi Newspapers Co., Ltd, 1968, p.124.

[23] Shigeki Kato, Yoshiyuki Ishida, Yoichi Namekata, *Amateur Rokuon Nyumon* [Introduction to Amateur Recording], Tokyo: Radio-Craft Company, 1973, p.97.

[24] Kasagi, *op.cit.*, pp.32-36.

[25] Heitaro Nakajima, *Audio ni Tsuyokunaru: Atarashii Oto no Sozu* [Let's become skilled in Sound Recording: Creation of New Sound], Tokyo: Kodansha LTD., 1973, p.226.

strategy for that product in detail.[26] He reported that Sony "did not only introduce "Densuke" […] but also decided to emphasize the live recording as a software." In order to do so, it organized a location recording in Africa and placed the resulting recordings and photographs in the center of the advertisement. Sony distributed demo tapes to retailers and published a guidebook to make the joy of Namaroku known to the public. It also organized Namaroku tours for enthusiasts and provided related accessories like mixers and parabolic sound collectors to further promote Namaroku culture itself. Later, Sony sponsored special contests such as the aforementioned "Sony Zen Nihon Namaroku Contest" and Sony Namaroku Jockey, among others, to expand the market beyond the field of audiophiles. Indeed, it is impossible to understand the popularity of Namaroku in the 1970s without a consideration of the strategies of audio makers.

The sales strategy of "TC-2850SD" was twofold.[27] The pamphlet accompanying the device had two headings, namely "INDOOR" and "OUTDOOR," to which was appended such suggestions as "first, please examine it thoroughly as a Hi-Fi cassette deck," or "deck machine jumps out into the field." Under a heading titled "We recommend this for," was a list that identified potential users as those "who use this as stereo cassette decks in a room" and "who want to stereo-record natural sounds in the field." In describing the popularity of this device, Kasagi explained that "young people who wanted to have a cassette deck paid attention to it because they can use it both as a deck and Densuke."[28] Therefore, it can be inferred that an increase in the population of consumers who wanted a Hi-Fi cassette deck for playback was a significant factor contributing to the Namaroku boom. The price of the "TC-2850SD" was close to a new employee's starting salary. Thus, this device appears to have been marketed as a component of personal Hi-Fi stereo ownership by younger, single people rather than families.

Thus far, this section has considered some factors contributing to the emergence of the Namaroku trend as a means of understanding its cultural background. The popularization of radio airchecks in the 1960s made sound recordings more familiar to ordinary people, after which audio journalism and documentary recordings led Hi-Fi recording culture. Then, the emergence of radio cassette recorders activated Lo-Fi recording culture, which was also impacted by expanding travel and the SL boom. Finally, the introduction of the HiFi stereo cassette recorder in the early 1970s solidified the Namaroku trend. Audio makers that supported the trend considered Namaroku as a useful vehicle for expanding their market beyond audiophiles. In addition, it can be supposed that the marketing strategy for HiFi cassette recorders was related to the personalization of audio consumers.

To end this section, we can briefly examine some factors in the decline of Namaroku, the markers of which were outlined in the preceding section. In discussing the decline of Sound

[26] Genji Ogawa, "Namaroku boom no tateyakusya, "Cassette Densuke" [The leading figure of Namaroku boom, "Cassette Densuke"]" in *Sendenkaigi Special Issue*, no.8, 1974, pp.102-105.

[27] From the interview with Masanori Kimizuka and Genji Ogawa by the author [September 15, 2015: Tokyo].

[28] Kasagi, *op.cit.*, p37.

Hunting in the Netherlands, Bijsterveld referred to the concept of remediation proposed by Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin.[29] It indicates that successful new media absorb the uses of past media. Thus, Bijsterveld notes that while a tape recorder came to be used like a record, the practices of using it like a photograph or letter came to fail eventually because of the transition of cultures at the time. We can see a similar pattern in the eventual fading of the Namaroku trend in Japan.

In the case of Namaroku, it seems more remarkable that subsequent media took its place than that it failed to absorb previous media. A review of the later issues of *Rokuhan* and Namaroku guidebooks of the same period clarifies that new media and tools replaced the joy of Namaroku with a tape recorder. From the late 1970s to the 1980s, the tape recorder's function as a musical medium was usurped by the CD and mini-component, home video took its place as a documentary medium of daily life, synthesizers and multitrack recorders superseded it as tools for sonic creation, and the Walkman displaced it as a medium for enjoying sounds in the field. Such transitions of media can be considered as major factors in the decline of the Namaroku trend.

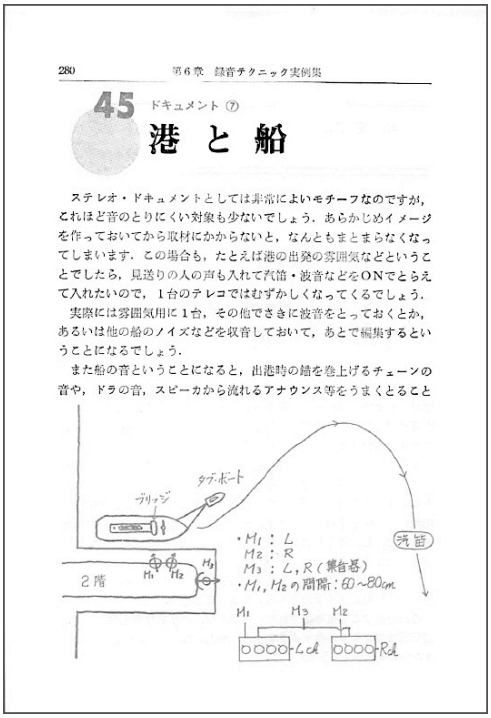
3. The phonography of Namaroku: How a microphone captures the reality

Up to now, this paper has explored the development and background of Namaroku culture as a means to create a perspective on this phenomenon. It is necessary to regard the culture "as problems of the relationship between several background contexts and their dynamics." Based on the above discussion, this section will proceed to an examination of the mode of listening in Namaroku, which is the main aim of this paper. In order to do so, it will analyze the contemporary discourses of specialists' instructions on Namaroku techniques, or its "phonography." According to Fujioka, phonography includes not only the knowledge of how to operate sound recording devices, but also the understanding of sounds. Therefore, how sounds and listening were understood in Namaroku and how this perspective connected to its development and background will be examined through the discourses on phonography. This section considers only the recording of actual sounds, as the liberation from music and language was a core element of the Namaroku culture. Further, as discussed later in this section, arguments about how the ears function were often developed in the instructions published on the phonography of actual sounds.

As mentioned in the first section, numerous books and magazine articles instructing readers on the phonography of actual sounds were published during the onset of the Namaroku boom, and many of those instructions primarily dealt with how to use a microphone. For example, the chapters in *Namaroku ni Tsuyokunaru Record vol.2: Documentary Sound ni Challenge!!* [Record to get skills in Namaroku vol.2: Challenge to documentary sounds!!], which explained phonography along with examples of sound, proceeded from "Microphone

[29] Bijsterveld, *op.cit.*, p.631.

setting (the distance between two microphones),” to “The effect of windshield”, “The differences between sounds due to directivity,” “Setting of sound level,” “The effect of a limiter,” “How to grab a microphone,” and “Making sound sources change.”[30] As Fujioka noted, illustrations of microphone arrangements for each sound source [Fig.3] were often included in Namaroku guidebooks. Fujioka, however, viewed how to handle a microphone as “the essence of amateur recording,” and reported that “although most of the articles on basic knowledge or techniques of sound recording give an example of microphone arrangements with illustrations, I neither write about it nor give an example of it in this article’ to encourage the readers to arrange microphone settings freely.”[31] In the case of sending a work to a recording contest, it was important to be able to compose sound recordings within a limited time; however, average fans seemed more interested in how to capture sounds in the field than the composition of recordings.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45 ドキュメント ⑦

港と船

ステレオ・ドキュメントとしては非常によいモチーフなのですが，これほど音のとりにくい対象も少ないでしょう．あらかじめイメージを作っておいてから取材にかからないと，なんともまとまらなくなってしまいます．この場合も，たとえば港の出発の雰囲気などということでしたら，見送りの人の声も入れて汽笛・波音などをONでとらえて入れたいので，1台のテレコではむずかしくなってくるでしょう．

実際には雰囲気用に1台，その他できるに波音をとっておくとか，あるいは他の船のノイズなどを収音しておいて，あとで編集するということになるでしょう．

また船の音ということになると，出港時の錨を巻上げるチェーンの音や，ドラの音，スピーカから流れるアナウンス等をうまくとること

Fig.3 An example of the illustration of a microphone arrangement. Shigeki Kato, Yoshiyuki Ishida, Yoichi Namekata, *Amateur Rokuon Nyumon* [Introduction to Amateur Recording], Tokyo: Radio-Craft Company, 1973, p.280.

At the end of the first section, it was pointed out that articles on electronic instruments and home musical recording increased in later issues of *Rokuhan*, and the magazine replaced the subtitle with “Sound create magazine.” However, the notion of sound creation was more or less connected to Namaroku in general as well, and terms like “creation” or “creativity” were frequently used in the relevant publications of the period. Toru Yuki asked “why could sound recording be a hobby? After all, the biggest common reason is that there is the joy of creation in producing a world through sounds.”[32] Shohachiro Aizawa stressed that creativity was not limited to multitrack recording and tape editing, but was also possible with stereo recording, and he traced “the transition of the policy of recording” from the spread of electric recording in the 1920s.[33] Thus, the

[30] Yoshiyuki Ishida supervising ed., *Namaroku ni Tsuyokunaru Record vol.2: Documentary Sound ni Challenge!!* [Record to get skills in Namaroku vol.2: Let’s challenge to documentary sounds!!] (TW-50008) Tokyo: Toshiba-EMI Limited, 1978.

[31] Makoto Fujioka, “Rokuon technique nyumon [Introduction to sound recording technique],” in *Stereo Shukan FM Bessatsu: Rokuon no Subete 1974* [The Stereo, The Weekly FM Special Issue: Expansion of the Recording World 1974], 1974, p.66.

[32] Toru Yuki, “Hajimeni Image Ariki: Recording director toshite amateur rockon wo kangaeru [In the beginning was the image: Thinking about amateur recording as a recording director],” in *Tape Sound*, no.14, 1974, p.252.

[33] Shohachiro Aizawa, Motohiko Takawa, Ken-ichi Handa, *Rokuon Seisaku to Saisei: Recording no Genba kara* [Recording Production and Playback: From a Site of Recording], Tokyo: Ohmsha, 1977, pp.8-15.

creativity of stereo recording appears to have been an important theme for Namaroku, which became established contemporaneously with the popularization of the Hi-Fi stereo cassette recorder. Further, this view derives from the origins of hobby audio in the form of self-made radios.[34]

The connection between the microphone and the ears was repeatedly mentioned as a guiding principle of creation in phonography instructions of the period, and Akira Miyazawa concisely described the relationship:

> The human ear itself is very convenient for humans by nature, being able to hear sounds that you need and not to hear sounds that you do not need. […] A living ear has a mechanism that conveniently shuts out so-called noises. However, it is ironic that people who try to record natural sounds with a microphone take the first step in capturing sounds when they start to become conscious of the noises. That is, the key of capturing great sounds in a natural sound recording is how to take out consciously what the living ear naturally rejects and removes as noise, and how to approach the natural sounds that you want to take.[35]

The first part of the liner notes of "Record to get skills in Namaroku" explains the selectivity of an ear and the phonography of Namaroku. Sugano often used the term "microphone ear" to describe the microphone's specific way of capturing sounds. Another common explanation was that the eye affects the selection of the ear. For example, when you listen to the sound of a beach while standing there, you can feel that the sound of the waves is moving along with the waves; however, when you listen to the same sound on a stereo recording, the only sensation is the increases or decreases in volume. These understandings about the relationship between microphone and ear are the foundation of the phonography of Namaroku.

The microphone arrangement mentioned earlier is the most important method for consciously separating noises which is the basis of Namaroku phonography, and a Namaroku icon, the parabolic sound collector is another useful tool. Minoru Gennaka introduced the classification "point, group, or moving sound sources" in his instructions on microphone arrangement [Fig.4].[36] As he explained, "when a recorded sound source is replayed by two speakers, it forms various sound structures. A sound source focusing into a single sound image

[34] Cf. Shuhei Hosokawa and Hideaki Matsuoka, "On the fetish character of sound and the progression of technology: Theorizing Japanese audiophiles," in *Sonic Synergies: Music, Technology, Community, Identity*, Gerry Bloustien, Margaret Peters, and Susan Luckman eds., Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2008, pp.39-50.

[35] Akira Miyazawa, "Kokaon no troikata: Radio drama no seisaku ni sokushite [How to record sound effects: On the basis of the production of a radio drama]," in *Rokuon no Subete*, Jun Okada ed., Tokyo: Futoh-sha, 1971, pp.257.

[36] Minoru Gennaka, Ken Hoyanagi, "Neratta ongen wo Ikani shuroku suruka [How to record a target sound source]," in *Tape Sound*, no.12, 1974, pp.63-86.

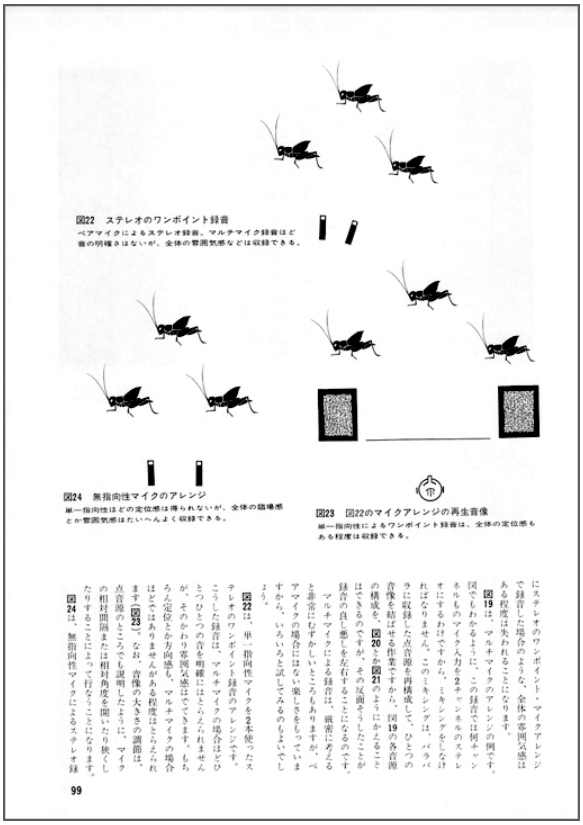


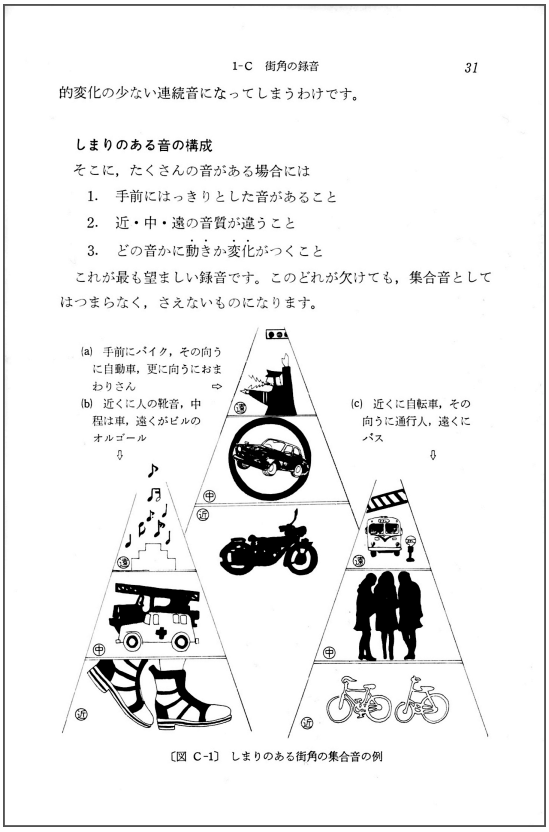
Fig.4 Illustrations of a microphone arrangement based on the classification between point, group, moving sound source, by Minoru Gennaka. *Tape Sound*, no.11, 1973, p.99.

is called a point sound source." It is notable that these three categories are not related to the classification of sound sources but rather of sound images. In other words, they do not represent the classification of live sound but that of replayed sound. Sound image denotes sounds with direction and distance replayed by speakers. As Gennaka argued, "a point sound source is not about a sound source itself. It would be more accurate to say a sound source that is replayed as a point sound image." It is up to the recordist to make a sound source, whether it is a point- or group sound source, and this choice corresponds to the unconscious selection of the ear. To record a point sound source, the recordist brings a unidirectional microphone closer to the sound source. If using a stereo recorder, the recordist must make the angle of two microphones as small as possible to exclude environmental noises. To record as group sound sources, the recordist makes the angle larger to enlarge the sound image. The sense of localization of the sound image is enhanced by using a unidirectional microphone, whereas a nondirectional microphone stresses the sense of atmosphere.

Reiji Nakatsubo's instructions on phonography for a cassette recorder are particularly interesting. Nakatsubo and Saburo Takahashi's *Shumi no Yagai Rokuon* [Field Recording as a Hobby] was published in 1974 and based on a lecture by Nakatsubo ten years prior to that. Nakatsubo and Takahashi regarded "*decomposing sounds in recording*, and *composing them* at the final stage [the italics indicates bold types in the original text]" as the foundational principle of field recording of actual sounds.[37] This was a method of embodying a planned image by separately removing noises through recording sounds and composing them. However, in his next book, *Cassette Rokuon: Yagai Hen* [Cassette Recording: In the Field], Nakatsubo proposed a replacement for this method because he thought it was less suitable for the stereo cassette recording technique that was in fashion at the time. During the composition of stereo recordings, the sense of incompatibility tends to occur in the sound image, and before that, it is difficult to edit cassette tapes through cuts and splices. Therefore, Nakatsubo proposed

[37] Reiji Nakatsubo, Saburo Takahashi, *Shumi no Yagai Rokuon* [Field Recording as a Hobby], Tokyo: Japan Broadcast Publishing, 1974, p.8.

to make the elaborate search of appropriate sound sources for recording the substitution of the human ear's selectivity. Nakatsubo centered his phonography upon the comprehensive search for "a well-organized scenery" in which there were clear sounds near the recordist and noises in the distance, rather than making an imagined sound through decomposing and composing recordings [Fig.5].[38] As he explained, "the important thing is to focus on something and grasp the movement of the sounds firmly and to have an opportunity to record them when sounds clearly different in quality were combined well."[39] Nakatsubo's cassette phonography showed that developments in this field were stimulated not only by the development of technology, but also by the creativity of the recordist.


1-C 街角の録音 31

的変化の少ない連続音になってしまうわけです。

しまりのある音の構成

そこに，たくさんの音がある場合には

1. 手前にはっきりとした音があること
2. 近・中・遠の音質が違うこと
3. どの音かに動きか変化がつくこと

これが最も望ましい録音です。このどれが欠けても，集合音としてはつまらなく，さえないものになります。

(a) 手前にバイク，その向うに自動車，更に向うにおまわりさん ⇨
(b) 近くに人の靴音，中程は車，遠くがビルのオルゴール ⇩
(c) 近くに自転車，その向うに通行人，遠くにバス ⇩

〔図 C-1〕 しまりのある街角の集合音の例

Fig.5 "Well-organized group of sounds in the street," an illustration by Reiji Nakatsubo. Reiji Nakatsubo, *Cassette Rokuon: Yagai Hen* [Cassette Recording: In the Field], Tokyo: Japan Broadcast Publishing Co., Ltd., 1975, p.31.

This section examined phonography instructions to consider how Namaroku practitioners listened to sounds through recording devices. Underlying these instructions was the concept of sound recording as a creative act. The principle of creation was founded on the argument that a recordist needed elaborate microphone arrangements because of the microphone's inability to achieve the same selections made unconsciously by the human ear. It can be said that this argument crystallized the understanding of sounds, listening, and sound recording in Namaroku culture. The classification of microphone arrangements that Gennaka explained was based on the differences between sound images rather than sound sources, and it substituted the selection of those arrangements for that of the human ear. Further, based on the spread of the cassette recorder, Nakatsubo proposed to substitute this technique with searching for sound sources suitable for recording with the ear's selectivity.

Conclusion

What was the joy of sound recording in Namaroku? Although of course, this is difficult to define uniformly, the trend's foundation can be described as "the joy of creation" celebrated

[38] Reiji Nakatsubo, *Cassette Rokuon: Yagai Hen* [Cassette Recording: In the Field], Tokyo: Japan Broadcast Publishing Co., Ltd., 1975, p.4.

[39] *Ibid.*, p32.

by Yuki. In the context of phonography, it could be inferred that the joy of creation was achieved in identifying a recordist's targeted sounds from noises that a microphone has captured without any selectivity on the part of the recorder. In order to do so, the recordist determined an image of sounds that they wanted to record, carefully selected locations and microphone arrangements, and tackled tape editing if necessary. Thus, the original subtitle of *Rokuhan*, "Namaroku Adventure," could be applied not only to exploring in natural or urban space but also to finding a target sound captured by a microphone in an extraordinary sound space.

A review of relevant literature found that creative modes of listening became common under historical conditions, such as the FM aircheck, the development and stagnancy of audio journalism, the emergence of radio cassette recorders and HiFi stereo cassette recorders, targeted marketing campaigns by audio makers, and the travel and SL booms. Without these conditions, Namaroku's listening mode of recognizing creativity in stereo phonography and emphasizing microphone arrangements would have taken a different shape.

This paper has examined the relationship between the mode of listening in Namaroku culture and its background, and these issues will be explored more in future studies. Although the scope of the research was limited to elements cited by contemporary critics as direct factors in the Namaroku boom, it is also necessary to survey the situation from a wider perspective. Future studies should examine the relationship of Namaroku with other media, such as radio and music; other arts, such as visual arts; and other media such as film. Further, the phonography that was examined in this paper was based on the specialized knowledge of recording engineers from broadcasting and music—normative phonography, so to speak. However, more playful approaches to phonography also spread in Namaroku culture, and this should also be explored in future research.