

## The Interaction Process between the Singing Culture of the Merchant Marine Schools and the Culture of Folk Tunes in Japan:

The Case of “*Shiragiku-no-Uta* [*Song of the White Chrysanthemum*]”

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This study focuses on the singing culture of the prewar merchant marine schools and elucidates the interaction process between this and the culture of folk tunes. The author here defines the singing culture of schools as including not only the singing of school anthems and the likes (cheer songs and dormitory songs), but also the entire repertoire of songs that students sing together. With this as a premise, this paper centers on *Shiragiku-no-Uta* from the merchant marine schools. This song was initially sung by the Oshima Merchant Marine School, was later turned into *Shosei-tune*, and finally became represented as the dormitory song which symbolized the Tokyo Nautical College.

To trace the evolution of this song, this paper examines shifts in its melody, rhythm, and the way it was sung, as well as alterations in the Chinese poem used in the lyrics. The paper also analyzes songbooks and their repertoires published during that time, statements by the Tokyo Nautical College graduates, songbooks printed for the internal use, and comments printed in alumni magazines and newspaper articles.

As a result, a few distinctiveness of the interaction between the singing culture of the merchant marine schools and the culture of folk tunes has been revealed. That is to say, in the process of oscillating between these two cultures, the song retained its traces as a (merchant marine) school song, even as some transformations occurred when it was turned into *Shosei-tune*; also, the song’s status continued to change as the singing culture of the Tokyo Nautical College was reorganized, even after it was accepted into this culture as a kind of folk tune. This paper also sheds light on the relationship that develops as the public’s and the merchant marine school students’ own perceptions of the representation of the “merchant marine school students” intertwine.