

特別賞

藤原 寛太さん 東京音楽大学付属高等学校 3年

東京都

バッハとメンデルスゾーンという 2 人のクラシックの作曲家の作品を軸に、宗教的価値観の違いによって生み出された現代社会の溝を埋めるためにはどうすれば良いかを、作品を演奏するという立場から考えてみました。

## Beyond Believing in God

“Try to think about what Bach was trying to tell us through this piece and play it,”

my teacher told me the day my spectacular summer began. I’m in a music high school, majoring in cello, and I’m spending my summer practicing for my solo recital in three weeks.

The recital will feature some of the greatest classical works for cello, and the first piece is Bach’s Suite for Unaccompanied Cello. This piece is especially famous for the first prelude, which is widely used in Japan for TV programs and commercials, but it’s very difficult for cellists to play. Most cellists face this piece, so their own interpretation of it is very important.

Therefore, I researched Bach’s background and various elements behind his music composing in my own way. In the process, I came across an interesting piece. It’s called “Matthew Passion.”

Composed when Bach was 42 years old, it is a large work consisting of 68 solo and choral pieces that are based on the New Testament book of Matthew, which tells the story of the Passion of Jesus Christ as he meets his death on the cross. One question came to me, “Do I have to become a Christian if I really want to know this piece?”

Actually, I don’t. Many people who have played it in Japan did not become Christian to play it. However, I really wanted to understand this religious element. So, I tried to read the Old Testament and other literature written about Christianity, but as I read it I felt that I was getting away from playing Bach.

But there was another interesting fact.

In fact, it was not until one composer discovered the true value of this piece 200 years after it was composed that it came to be accepted by the general public. That composer was Mendelssohn.

As I researched Mendelssohn, I learned about the religious struggles he faced.

He was a Jew, and at the time he was regularly subjected to discriminatory treatment.

His father, sensing the danger of this, converted him to Christianity. He persisted in his belief in Christianity as a Jew, and composed a piece with such complicated feelings.

The piece is called Symphony No.5, "Reformation." I think this is the most beautiful piece in his works.

However, it was not well accepted at that time. This was because prejudice against Jews was still strong.

Although I had done some research on the teaching of Judaism, I still felt that this was far from a dialogue with his music.

After all this research, it occurred to me:

"Is there a God?"

Recently, wars in the Middle East have been raging. I somehow knew that there was a religious element behind it, but does God really want them to kill each other? If people are killing each other because of differences in belief in a God or because they are fighting for a sacred place, it seems to me that God's existence is a terrible thing. In the first place, Christianity and Judaism both believe in the same God. But I think it's time to question the existence of God.

I think that the works of Bach and Mendelssohn resonate with those of us who do not believe in any God is proof that it is not God that is important, but our hearts themselves.

With the development of media and information technology, values from all over the world are clashing with each other. Nowadays, what we need to believe in is not God, but the people with whom we talk. We should believe in each other, respect each other's ideas, and get along with people all over the world.

With that in mind, I went back to Bach's piece, and somehow all the sounds seemed to come alive. I was able to sense something beyond religion and God, something like nature and the universe.

"All you have to do is express what you believe in," my teacher said. I hope that my thoughts will reach as many people as possible through my performance.

(679 words)