

外国語要旨

Process of acceptance of Opera in *Opera Hyoron* and *Opera* NAKATSUGAWA Sachiko

This study of historical materials aims to clarify the performance of details of opera in the Taisho period that is now called Asakusa Opera generically, and the acceptance of opera in Japan, using two Taisho period opera magazines, *Opera Hyoron* and *Opera* (hereinafter “two magazines”). In the publications of the time, there was a chaotic situation in which the word ‘opera’ was interchangeable with ‘Kageki’, and it is not clear whether there was any perception of the distinction between Opera and ‘Kageki’ in these publications. However, the two terms were also treated as different in other circles. In the programs for opera groups that were published in the two magazines, the word opera is widely used for various genres such as dance and chorus, as well as for plays accompanied by music. In this dissertation, the term ‘Asakusa Opera’ is defined and used distinctly to refer to performing arts comprised of programs in many genres, including plays accompanied by music, that are performed for audiences in various locations. Asakusa Opera was sometimes looked down upon and given a low technical valuation at that time.

Some earlier studies on Asakusa Opera collected performance data from newspapers and magazines; they were effective in helping to grasp the flow of opera performances in Japan. However, because of the small number of opera groups whose activities are known, and because many earlier studies focused on the players, the facts of performance and audience are unclear despite the considerable importance of the acceptance of opera. The reason for this deficiency in information are disasters such as the Great Kanto Earthquake, but it is possible to investigate matters that are still left unclear from the remaining materials such as two magazines.

Opera Hyoron is the predecessor of *Opera*, and these magazines were published only during the sixth year from Taisho eighth to 13th. In this dissertation, trends for the players in Asakusa opera and those of the audience, derived from information found in two magazines, are converted into data, and the process of acceptance of opera by Japanese in Taisho period is examined. From the activities of editors, readers, and actors as they appear in two magazines, the following can be understood.

Editors’ names appear in the readers’ column and editorial notes. Magazine editors created branch offices in Kyoto, Osaka, etc., and posted opera information collected from various places in the form of branch office communications. They led some readers to be appointed as supervisors of the branch offices; and also editors also conducted friendly communications with readers in the readers’ column. Arguably, involving readers in the magazine and creating a friendly atmosphere in the readers’ columns would increase their interest in magazines and opera.

Regarding the reader, as the names of almost all prefectures, except Okinawa, were confirmed

to have appeared in the literary column and other sections, it is evident that readers were in widespread places. The readers' column gradually increases the number of pages in the magazine. The trends of the readers as seen in the readers' column can be classified into three categories: publishing their magazines, organizing Opera lovers' associations and fan clubs, and requests for and the implementation of meetings for direct communication. In particular, organizing groups and having meetings were related to actor support, and it is clear that communication networks were constructed around favourite actors. Since the reader is also a part of the audience, the trends of the reader can be assumed to be those of a part of the audience. Regarding letters, it was confirmed that the readers built a network and accepted the opera due to their support for the actors.

The actors' activities were made clear mainly by utilizing the appendix in *Opera*, which was called 'Opera newspaper,' with the help of other complementary materials. Opera newspaper records detailed not only the programs for each opera group, but also the cast. Within these records, five groups received the most attention as examples of players: the Negishi Opera Company, which performed almost exclusively in Kinryukan at Asakusa; the Tokyo Girl Singing Troupe, the Minshu Song and Dance Troupe, *Gakugekiza*, and the Naniwa Girl Singing Troupe, being examples of touring opera groups.

For the Negishi Opera Company, the performance schedule and the program at Kinryukan have already been summarized in earlier studies. Two magazines once again showed that this company had a rich repertoire and popular actors, thus, it was at the centre of the performance scene in Asakusa.

On the other hand, four other groups had performances in various places with their own repertoire, although their scope was different. When classifying players for each performance based on the Opera newspaper, two types were identified: those who had been performing continuously for a long time and those who appeared only on a one-time basis. It can be pointed out that fluidity exists in the activities of individual actors and also in groups moving to and from various places. Moreover, it seems that the chosen actors were fixed for roles played solely by one actor, while roles played by many actors, like girls, friends or other general roles, tended to change actors every performance, so even in casting, there was fluidity. It is clear that these touring opera groups with fluid actors were involved in Asakusa Opera.

Asakusa Opera has a variety of shapes in its performance and a process involving the fluid acceptance of opera between players and audiences. For the people involved in Asakusa Opera, there were many opera groups performing in various places and there were also readers who were looking forward to opera as well as those who supported actors as audiences or through magazines.