

The Syncretisms in Musical Accompaniment of *Jidaigeki* Films in the late 1920s: *Wayo gasso*, Musical Selection, New Composition

SHIBATA Kotaro

In the 1920s, music for Japanese silent films was undergoing the process of reformation, which was a complex outcome of localization of Western music in Japan and of the contemporary conversion from stage to film. In the first place, the accompaniment style of Japanese films in the 1910s was implicated in that of kabuki, Japanese traditional drama, because Japanese films at that time were a kind of cheap substitute for stage drama and were shot in long fixed shots and long takes. They were usually accompanied with the Japanese traditional instruments, such as *shamisen* and *taiko*, so as to imitate the soundscape of kabuki. Around 1920, however, such stage-oriented films came to be criticized for being content with old-fashioned stories and for not pursuing film techniques like close up and cross cutting, which were considered to be central to cinema. In the Pure Film Movement, which tried to pursue new Japanese films, the accompaniment music also came to be substantially reformed under the influence of Western music and Western film accompaniment. Moreover, this movement extended over period drama in Japan (*Jidaigeki*), which is under the tradition of kabuki. *Jidaigeki* films began to be screened with classical Japanese music and imported Western music as well as newly composed music, which were played with Western-style ensemble or syncretic-style ensemble of Japanese and Western Instruments.

This study tries to conceive how these accompaniment music of Japanese cinema was transformed through examining the contemporary documents on the screening practices of Japanese movie theaters and on repertoires and ensembles of Asakusa Fuji-kan and Kanda Nikkatsu-kan, premier theaters of Nikkatsu in Tokyo. The first section of the paper examines the try and errors of Iwao Miyake, the manager of Fuji-kan, and the process of introduction of Western ensembles and syncretic ensembles into *Jidaigeki* films. Then, through examining the documents and contemporary scores which survives, the last two sections scrutinize the repertoire of *Jidaigeki* accompaniment around 1926 and the practice of the composer Nobuhiro Matsudaira, one of the representative accompanist of *Jidaigeki* films after 1927, which show how Japanese- and Western styles in the repertoire and ensemble were syncretized and transformed in the latter half of the 1920s.