

Program Producers and the Changes in Music Broadcasting During the Pacific War: A Focus on the Ideas and Practices of Yoshida Shin, the Director of the Music Department at Nippon Hoso Kyokai

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This study adopts the standpoint of relevant program producers to examine the changes in music broadcasting during the Pacific War. It attends particularly to Yoshida Shin (1904–1988), who became Director of the Music Department of Nippon Hoso Kyokai (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) in 1943, investigating the context of his appointment as Director and his ideas on music. It further outlines several music programs produced under Yoshida's supervision.

Western and Japanese music programs were produced in separate sections in Japan since the start of radio broadcasting in 1925. Western music program producers placed much importance on enhancing the education levels of their listeners. This broadcasting policy shifted from lifting wartime spirits to a more mass-oriented direction once the protracted nature of the Pacific War became evident. The Corporation then asked Yoshida to assume the position of Director to handle the changing circumstances. Music journalist Yoshida was well versed in all genres of music and had cultivated a widespread human network. He requested an organizational merger of music program production and emphasized devising music presentations that the public could enjoy or that were based on traditional Japanese aesthetics. He subsequently accelerated the generation of music broadcasts and songs that transcended the existing musical genres.

Intertwined with the wartime broadcasting policy, Yoshida's views on music, which did not separate music by genre, triggered a removal of the exclusive framework of "Western music broadcasting" that had existed for a long time and a subsequent ideological and organizational transfiguration of the music-broadcasting domain. His approach to emphasizing the preferences of the public has strong continuity with music broadcasting after the war. Thus, music broadcasting during this period can also be understood as the embryonic period of a new era of music broadcasting.