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[Setting the Scene in Japan]  
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### The Birth of Art Song in Modern Japan

How the concept of 'art song' was shaped and embodied in modern Japan? This paper aims to make it clear through analysis of 1) a music magazine, named *Gekkan Gakufu* (*The Musical Monthly*) published in Tokyo from 1912 to 1941, and 2) main topics published in two main daily newspapers, *Asahi* and *Yomiuri*, from the Meiji era to the end of the Second World War.

Art song, as 'a song intended for the concert repertory, as opposed to a traditional or popular song. The term is more often applied to solo than to polyphonic songs' (Oxford Music Online), is one of musical genres which contributed to Japanese modernization and its national culture cultivation.

*Gekkan Gakufu* is a music magazine published monthly by a music instruments company, Matsumoto Gakki, in Tokyo from 1912 to 1941, accumulating up to 356 issues. It was one of the most long-running music magazines before the state publication control in the Second World War, and the most selling one in its early time. At that time, it was not easy to get music notes in general and especially of foreign composers, making the need and the influence of such publications much greater, almost incomparable to now.

Through this analysis, the following facts have become clear:

- 1) Terminology of Japanese songs printed in *Gekkan Gakufu* is multiple and miscellaneous, but it can be effectively divided into three groups as school song (Sho-ka), solo song (Dokusho-ka), and art song (Kakyoku).
- 2) Of these three, most ambiguous and crucial to understand the birth of art song in modern Japan is 'solo song'. Solo song is a song sung by a single singer with piano accompaniment. Most of the solo songs in *Gekkan Gakufu* are works of foreign composers as Schubert, Mendelssohn and others, including opera arias of Verdi, Puccini, Wagner or Bizet with piano reduction, but works by Japanese composers emerges increasingly, reaching to YAMADA Kosaku's works published in 1930.
- 3) The term 'art song' was first used in an English-Japanese dictionary published as early as in 1867 and in some literary works as *INAKA Kyousi* of TAYAMA Katai of 1909, but it took long to be pervaded into musical circle by writing and publishing. It was only in the middle of 1930's that 'art song' was established, surpassing the former common frame of thinking that school song is the basic and starting point to think about Japanese songs.

Although the analysis of newspaper articles is still on its way, it will give a framework for the following research on Japanese art song, because their topics include publications of art songs, performances of Japanese songs, and critics and debates on Japanese art songs and singing in Japanese.

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