The Osaka-Kobe (Hanshin) region sported a flamboyant modernity in the period after the first performance of Takarazuka Girls' Opera in 1914, to the last performance of the Takarazuka Symphony Orchestra in 1942. This is Japan's era of unequivocal modernity, although it could be called (quasi) colonial modernity, as it is coeval and concomitant with the colonial modernity of East Asia, and is anyway a non-Western modernity. This time and place were characterized by the proactive adoption of Western musical culture, which was buttressed by inflows of people: through trade, settlement and missionary activity; it was also affected by waves of refugees from Europe.\(^1\)

By focusing on the Hanshin region rather than Tokyo, and on the resort town of Takarazuka, we will see what an amazing flower bloomed in Western Japan at this time, made possible by Osakan entrepreneurial capital, Osakan inspiration and tastes, and an Osakan response to the challenges of modernization. With modern Japanese literature, Tokyo early became the centre of a vibrant culture. With music, which is dependent on performance, the local remained important and continues to be so. Music in modern Japan has struggled between two tendencies: the urge to become fully Western by reproducing authentic Western music (or *chokuyunyyu-ha* according to Watanabe 1999 and 2002), and the urge to localize Western music by adapting it to local tastes and producing a new hybrid musical culture.\(^2\) Tokyo is associated with the former and Osaka with the latter. However, even in Osaka,

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\(^1\) White Russian refugees started arriving in China after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917; by 1929, over 13,000 in Shanghai, by 1939 had swelled to 25,000. The earliest Russian Jews in Shanghai probably date from after the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905), after which some Jewish conscripts in the Russian army decided to remain in China. Between 18,000 and 20,000 Central European German and Yiddish-speaking refugees (‘the refugee flood’) fleeing persecution in Nazi Germany arrived in Shanghai from 1938–41. (Eber 2008a: 6–7) (Also Eber 2008b, Chinese and Jews: 1–65)

\(^2\) Hybrid genres which emerged include *jazu*, *kayōkyoku*, *enka*. 
while the Takarazuka shows exemplify the urge towards hybridization, other segments of the bourgeois community were keen to equal Tokyo's urge towards authenticity in the pursuit of piano culture and their support of the development of symphonic music.

Indigenous music also had to make similar choices and struggled between the urge to change and the urge to preserve. In this period, there was much experimentation in indigenous genres, and new 'traditional' genres even emerged (such as kindai biwa, naniwa-bushi).³

It is obvious that the adoption of Western music was seen as a form of modernity. However, this chapter is not simply an account of the growth of Western music in the Hanshin region. In considering the cultural modernity, and more specifically the musical modernity of this region, we need to ask just how 'modern' was music in pre-1945 Japan; and to ask where we can locate modernism in Japanese music.

In contrast to the modernism evident in Japanese literature and fine art, Japan did not evince musical modernism in this period. There was no strong uptake of the modernism of European music till after 1945, so the question of modernity is more relevant to this chapter, and the relation of music to Westernization. The flowering of musical modernity before 1945 laid the foundation for more adventurous modernist composition in the postwar period. It seems that it is more challenging to transplant musical culture than technology and institutions on the one hand and literature and visual arts on the other.⁴

In discussing musical modernity in the Hanshin region in this era, this chapter will tell two stories: the story of Kobayashi Ichizō's formation and development of Takarazuka from 1914, and the story of Joseph Laska's formation and development of the Takarazuka Symphony orchestra in 1926.

The music-theatre form of the Takarazuka All-women's Opera troupe (established 1914 as a girls' opera troupe) has become well-known through the work of Jennifer Robertson and others, particularly from a gender studies perspective. The role of the Takarazuka Girls' Opera in promoting the growth of Western classical music in Western Japan in the 1920s and 1930s has been largely overlooked. Most accounts of the history of Western classical music in Japan do not mention Takarazuka

³ The terms for new music were not gendai ongaku, nor kindai ongaku, but yōgaku and hōgaku, and shin nihon ongaku.
⁴ However, the fact that Western music was transplanted at all is surely attributable to the rationalization, the modernization it had undergone by the mid-nineteenth century, including the mechanization of instruments such as the piano.