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| Shōchiku Company Limited [松竹株式会社] |
| **[Enter any *variant forms* of your headword – OPTIONAL]** |
| Shōchiku Company Limited [松竹株式会社] is a Japanese entertainment industry that owns theatres, film studios, production companies for motion pictures and theatre, real estate and other business such as music recording and publishing.  In Kyoto in 1895, one of the founders of Shōchiku, Takejirō Ōtani (1877-1969) became a theatrical promoter for Sakaiza. In 1900 Ōtani purchased Sakaiza and renamed it Kabukiza and became a theatrical promoter of Tokiwaza. In 1902, Ōtani and his twin brother Matsujirō Shirai (1877-1951) established a production company Matsu Take Partnership Corporation (renamed as Shōchiku Company in 1937) and opened Meijiza (later Shōchikuza). By 1909, the company purchased most of the major *kabuki* theatres in Kyoto and Osaka including Minamiza, Nakaza and Asahiza. In 1909, the company purchased Bunrakuza and produced the first *ningyo joruri* performance. Since when Shōchiku purchased modernized Shintomiza, the site of the Meiji era’s Theatre Reform in 1911, the company began expanding its business to Tokyo. Ōtani was in charge of Tokyo while Shirai, Kyoto and Osaka. In 1914 Tokyo’s Kabukiza became under Shōchiku’s management, and by 1929 all *kabuki* actors became affiliated with Shōchiku. Under the influence of creator of *shimpa* Kawakami Otojirōand Kawakami’s troupe actor Shizuma Kojirō, Shōchiku modernized the production system by establishing multiple ticket prices, abolishing selling food and drink in audience seating areas, shortening the length of productions, modernizing/westernizing the theatre building and improving sanitary conditions of the theatre. |
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