

What's on the RILM Japan and its Future

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The RILM National Committee of Japan was founded in 1967, one year after the foundation of the RILM International. The present committee (the RILM Japan, “Ongaku Bunken Mokuroku Iinnkai” in Japanese), is supported by three principal musicological societies in Japan (the Musicological Society of Japan, the Society for Research in Asiatic Music, Japan Music Education Society), the Music Library Association of Japan, and Japanese Branch of the IAML(International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centers). The members of the committee consist of Japanese musicologists, ethnomusicologists, and librarians.

In 1973, we published the first volume of the National Bibliography of Music Literature in Japanese (now titled as “Ongaku Bunken Mokuroku”), with 456 items. Since then, 45 volumes have been printed until last year, 42,130 in all. Each volume includes more than 1,000 items since 1993 (1,225 in 2018). Among these items, our committee has chosen more than 10,000 items for the RILM Abstracts of Music Literature in New York. Why not all items? For it takes a lot of time and hard work for Romanization of Japanese (for example, correct pronunciation of Kanji characters), translating in English, and registering in the RILM iBis on the internet. Ms. Asayama, chief of the iBis project at the RILM Japan, will explain more on these problems.

In the last fifty years, the RILM Japan had several financial crises, but we made maximum efforts to resolve them. Moreover, new musicological subjects and fields, such as, popular music, have increased and the internet research has developed rapidly for young generations. Therefore, we need to change the directions and methods of editing Japanese Bibliography.

In 1990, we have introduced Computer editing and prepared for Internet Search for the Bibliography in Japan. However, the project was terminated several years ago because of financial and web technical difficulties. The committee of the RILM Japan aspires to find a new way to realize this internet project in cooperation with the RILM Abstracts by adding international musicological researches on Japanese subjects.