

The Diffusion of Western Music through Distance-learning in the Taishô Period : Focusing on the Dai-Nihon Katei Ongaku Kai

UENO, Masaaki

Western music, which was introduced in the Meiji period, got more attention in the Taishô period. The enjoyment of playing music gained greater popularity. Recently, developments in Japanese modern music study have gradually clarified the fact that a lot of people enjoyed Western music in Japanese rural cities.

However, how did music lovers who lived in regional towns learn to play Western music? Unlike the big cities, there were only a few people who had highly professional skills and knowledge of Western music in rural parts of Japan in the Taishô period. I will attempt to clarify, from a survey of the material, that distance learning of violin music was run by the Dai-Nihon Katei Ongaku Kai and this organization played an important role in the diffusion of Western music - especially in rural parts of Japan.

Firstly, I pay attention to the number of texts issued and to the areas in which students lived. I will clarify the quantity of texts and to what degree they spread to regional areas. Next, I will clarify the system and curricula of distance learning by focusing on how students enrolled in the courses and if they learnt instrumental performance. Finally, I will survey the correspondence columns of bulletins and the interaction among students who used the postal system.

In conclusion, I will point out four factors in the diffusion of music tuition in Japan as a whole: 1. An all-in-one package of music goods enabled students to learn the violin easily. 2. The violin practice method was based on the learning system of Japanese traditional music which was familiar to all of Japanese in the Taishô period. 3. Patient strategy made it possible to monopolize distant learning of violin music and to standardize the notation system. 4. Students' interaction system activated music communication among students.