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## JAPANESE STUDIES COLLECTIONS IN THE UNITED STATES A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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### I. Academic Research Waves

The first doctoral dissertation in the United States concerning Japan was completed in 1877 (Meiji 10) at Columbia University. Written by Henry S. Munroe and entitled *Yesso Coals*, it focused on a geographical survey of coal deposits found on the island of Hokkaido (Yesso, the northernmost island of Japan).<sup>1</sup> Subsequently, seven doctoral dissertations in the U.S. concerning Japan were completed during the years 1890-1899, and sixteen doctoral dissertations during the years 1900-1909, most written by students from Japan. While only eighteen doctoral dissertations were written during the years 1910-1919, the number tripled to fifty-three doctoral dissertations during 1920-1929, followed by ninety-eight doctoral dissertations during the years 1930-1939.

The numbers continued to grow: by the years 1940-1945, 155 dissertations were written, and the number rose to 372 and 602 in the periods 1950-1959 and 1960-1969 respectively. During the next decade, the number tripled to 1,900, and in 1980-1989, over 3,000 doctoral dissertations concerning Japan were estimated to have been written. In 1988 alone, 441 students were known to be specializing in some aspect of Japan in doctoral programs at fifty academic institutions in the U.S. As of the same year, there were ten institutions with Japanese studies programs, with the number of faculty members ranging from twenty-three to sixty-seven (the largest, in Hawaii).<sup>2</sup>

There is no doubt that these trends heavily influenced other facets of the field of Japanese studies, such as academic personnel, research methods and supports, and Japanese research collections in the U.S. For example, during the 1960s, American scholars focused on the Japanese "phenomenon," searching for factors behind the country's rapid industrialization and modernization. As the Japanese economy's rising productivity and export volume engendered trade disputes in the 1980s, many scholars turned their eyes to Japan once again. This meant that the scholars increasingly needed and demanded Japanese materials in the fields of social sciences or multidisciplines in contemporary Japan, rather than materials relating to traditional Japanese literature or the humanities.<sup>3</sup> Thus, it is of no surprise that there are more than 2,300 items of English-language materials concerning women in Japanese society.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, there is an abundance of materials relating to the Japanese educational system due to the increased interest in the possible reasons behind the Japanese economic success.

## 2. Supporting Organizations

In 1974, there were 846 Japan specialists in U.S. academic institutions of higher education, but the number has now grown to more than 1,294 (as of 1988). To enhance and strengthen this academic community, there has been generous support and direction from a number of organizations and foundations in both the U.S. and Japan. These include:

- The Asia Foundation
- The Association for Asian Studies (Northeast Asia Council, Committee on East Asian Libraries)
- The Commemorative Association for the Japan World Exposition (1970)
- The Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE)
- The Japan Foundation
- The Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership (CGP)
- The Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS)
- The Japan-United States Friendship Commission (JUSFC)
- Social Science Research Council-American Council of Learned Societies' (SSRC-ACLS) Joint Committee on Japanese Studies
- The U.S.-Japan Foundation
- The Yoshida International Education Foundation

and many others, including both public and private organizations.

In 1991, the field of Japan-U.S. academic exchanges expanded dramatically with the establishment of the new Japanese government foundation, the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership, mandated exclusively to support Japan-U.S. exchanges. In 1993 for example, the CGP donated U.S.\$1 million to the University of Maryland for the microfilming of the Prange Collection of Japanese materials. One of the newest organizations is the Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA (SPF-USA), a nonprofit foundation established in December 1992 and located in Washington, D.C. The SPF-USA operates a library and an art gallery which was established with an endowment from the Sasakawa Foundation (Tokyo), as was the U.S.-Japan Foundation. However, the SPF-USA and the U.S.-Japan Foundations are independent of the Sasakawa Foundation as well as of each other in terms of budget and operation. The SPF-USA Library's targeted patrons are, in order of priority, graduate students, university professors, think-tank researchers, and others interested in Japan in the greater Washington metropolitan area. Thus, in addition to the services of the Japanese Section of the Library of Congress and other academic libraries, scholars in Washington now have another source for accessing information relating to Japan.

In addition to the above organizations which provide financial assistance, the United States-Japan Conference on Cultural and Educational Interchange (CULCON) has been active since the early 1960s in the promotion of cultural exchange programs in American and Japanese studies. These programs have included participation by academic institutions, museums, and media. This organization was initiated by an agreement between President

Kennedy and Prime Minister Ikeda in 1962 and has served to focus official and public attention in both the United States and Japan on the vital cultural and educational underpinnings of the bilateral relationship.

In 1975, CULCON approved the establishment of the Japanese and American Subcommittees on Libraries in order to advise and assist CULCON in its effort to further develop exchanges concerning U.S. and Japanese libraries. The reason why these subcommittees have ceased to exist while still in the middle of their mission is unclear; nevertheless, they were successful in expressing the hope for greater cooperation in the exchange of information, publications, and library personnel. The committees even set forth concrete ideas and proposals, such as mutual assistance in the establishment of documentation centers, compilation of specialized bibliographies, and the dissemination of difficult-to-procure publications and documents.<sup>5</sup> Needless to say, this was the first systematic approach in the histories of either country to promote Japanese-American library cooperation. However, we must continuously explore new solutions to improve our libraries.

### **3. Big-Ten Japanese Collections**

In addition to the Japanese collection of the Library of Congress,<sup>6</sup> there are the so-called big-ten Japanese collections in the U.S., ranked originally in 1960; four were in the northeast, two in the midwest, and four on the Pacific Coast and in Hawaii. Each of these collections received \$1 million from the Japan Foundation in 1972 and have also received sizable grants from the Japan-United States Friendship Commission in order to promote Japan studies and Japanese libraries in the U.S. After seventeen years of Japanese acquisition support for major Japanese libraries in the U.S., the JUSFC changed its funding policy, shifting from direct acquisition grants to support for resource sharing with the application of technology.

The number of academic Japanese-language materials in this country now reach at least 4 million volumes of monographs and bound serials, and include materials which are not part of East Asian library collections (i.e., materials which are part of the law library or a science library). Of these Japanese collections, fifteen institutions in 1980, and twenty-one in 1992 have already surpassed the 30,000-volume mark. In terms of annual acquisitions rates, a recent survey showed that there were fifteen library collections which acquired more than 2,500 volumes in Japanese (again, monographs and bound serials) in fiscal year 1991/1992. Size alone is not the only relevant criterion of library strength. A smaller or specialized collection may be of more use to scholars in a particular field than a general one. Although there are no tools to measure the quality of these collections, at the present time one may say that these major Japanese collections lead the smaller ones in terms of both quantity and quality.

The statistics on the major collections follow. Each is financially supported by both internal (university) and external (foundation) sources. However, problems have arisen, such as unfavorable foreign exchange rates, cutbacks in library budgets, evolving collection

development policies, and an overabundance of relevant materials. As a result, the National Coordinating Committee on Japanese Library Resources (NCC) was established in the early 1990s with the support of the Japan Foundation and the Japan-United States Friendship Commission. The Commission may be a key organization for future collection development activities as well as for the general promotion of Japanese libraries in the U.S.

University	Holdings 6/30/92	Major Grants/Gifts Received	Faculty Size (Rank)
Harvard	214,643	JF, JUSFC, M-NDL	n/a
Columbia*	211,991	JF, JUSFC, (M-NDL)	3
Yale	183,974	JF, JUSFC	n/a
Princeton*	125,527	JF, JUSFC, JWECF	n/a
Michigan*	222,033	JF, JUSFC	2
Chicago	147,451	JF, JUSFC, JWECF, (M-NDL)	5
Washington(Seattle)*	103,113	JF, JUSFC, JWECF, (M-NDL)	n/a
California(Berkeley)	290,000	JF, JUSFC, JWECF, (M-NDL)	6
Stanford(Hoover)*	138,152	JF, JUSFC, JWECF	4
Hawaii*	107,138	JF, JUSFC	1

Notes: \* =substantial financial supporter of the *Journal of Japanese Studies*

JF=Japan Foundation's grant: US\$1 million each in 1972

JUSFC=Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission grant: 1970s-1992/93, for example, ¥2 million each in 1991/92)

JWECF=Japan World Exposition Commemorative Fund grant: for example, US\$10,000 each in 1973

M-NDL=Maruzen and NDL Meiji Publications in Microfilm: US\$1 million each

In 1991, six Japanese collections in the United States were selected by the AAS Northeast Asia Council to receive the Meiji-period publications microfilm set, valued at about one million U.S. dollars each. Harvard University has already received its set, although no date has yet been set for delivery of the microfilms for the remaining collections. (These are indicated by "M-NDL" in parentheses in the table above.) The M-NDL project, which put on microfilm all of the Meiji period materials in the National Diet Library, unquestionably inaugurated a new period for the scholarship of the period.<sup>7</sup> The project, which includes a CD-ROM index, comprises 110,000 titles in 160,000 volumes, approximately 70 percent of the total books (except periodicals and newspapers) from the Meiji era (1868-1912). This CD-ROM index has now been installed at Chicago, Columbia, Harvard, and Stanford as of early 1993. The collection itself reveals that Japan made an enormous effort during the Meiji period in acquiring and understanding information from the West, especially the United States. It is an important addition to Japanese collections in the United States because research in this area may help to ensure the success of future U.S.-Japan relations.

#### 4. Changes in the Japan Specialists Environment

It is almost a cliché to talk about the evergrowing interdependence in the Japanese library community. It may be a general phenomenon in every area of academic research. It is important, however, because this growing global interdependence has meant that major institutions are increasingly pressured to explore and define their future directions, and articulate their roles in the Japanese studies or the East Asian research community. Although "shared responsibilities" or "a spirit to shoulder a share of interlibrary loan" are often translated as "increased efforts" when applied to major institutions, it is essential that items requested by library patrons be provided in a timely manner and, in this regard, it may be necessary for the lender to charge reasonable handling and/or search fees. It is important to keep in mind that information is not inexpensive to process and organize. Openness, ownership, and accessibility in this context is very costly.

The broadness and depth of relevant materials in a particular subject is another significant issue. For example, as mentioned earlier, the United States has recently become seriously engaged in ways to regain the competitiveness of its industries and businesses. Since the biggest challenge to America's industry comes from Japan, Americans have naturally tried to uncover what Japanese companies are doing differently. American scholars have been pointing out the merits of Japanese business practices one after another, including lifetime employment, unions organized separately at each company, the small gap between the highest and lowest wages, and decision making by consensus. However, many of those writing about Japan have also been looking beyond business practices to the Japanese educational system. After all, it is the schools that have furnished industry with capable human resources and made Japan's economic success possible.

The wide variety in the forms of available information – from monographs and periodicals to microfilm, microfiche, video, databases, etc. – is another issue of increasing importance.

#### NOTES

1. Frank Joseph Shulman, *An Annotated Bibliography of Doctoral Dissertations in Western Languages, 1877-1969* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1970).

2. *Japanese Studies in the United States*, Pt. 1-2 in 3 volumes (Tokyo and Ann Arbor: The Japan Foundation and the Association for Asian Studies, 1989).

3. *Supplying Information and Data on Contemporary Japan to the United States: Problems and Perspectives* [in Japanese] (Tokyo: The Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership, 1991).

"Report for ARL Foreign Acquisitions Project for Japanese Materials, February 25, 1993," chaired by Yasuko Matsudo (Unpublished).

*The Postwar Development of Japanese Studies in the United States: A Historical Review and Prospects for the Future* (Tokyo: The International House of Japan, 1993).

4. Kristina Ruth Huber, *Women in Japanese Society: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected English Language Materials* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1992).

5. In this connection, a series of following conferences were conducted: Japan-U.S. Conference on Libraries and Information Science in Higher Education. It was organized by the Japanese University Libraries International Liaison Committee and the American Library Association Committee on Liaisons with Japanese Libraries, 1st (1969)-5th (1992).

For details see Eizaburo Okuizumi and Theodore F. Welch, "Form and Substance: How Japanese and American Academic Librarians Have Shaped a Relationship" in *The Role of American Academic Libraries in International Progress*, ed. Bruce Bonita and James G. Neal Foundations in Library and Information Science, vol. 27 (Greenwich, Conn.: JAI Press, 1992), 227-260.

6. The Library of Congress has now over 760,000 volumes of Japanese-language materials, 17,000 titles of periodicals, 6,000 microfilm reels, and 10,000 microfiche sheets. The Japanese collection began in 1875 when the Japanese government accepted a proposal for an exchange of government publications to be housed in the Library of Congress.

7. Apart from this project, there is a very large project at Waseda University, called the Japan Meiji Short Title Catalog (JMSTC) which will supply all of the books published in the Meiji era. So far, forty-two units have been published with 5,375 items in 10,304 fiches.