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Lynne Kutsukake
Sachie Noguchi

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THE FOURTH JAPAN FOUNDATION/NATIONAL DIET LIBRARY TRAINING PROGRAM FOR JAPANESE STUDIES LIBRARIANS

Preface

This year two of us attended the Japan Foundation/National Diet Library Training Program for Japanese Studies Librarians from North America. Sachié Noguchi of the University of Pittsburgh went from the United States, and Lynne Kutsukake of the University of Toronto went from Canada. We discussed the merits of the program, and this report is the product of our joint collaboration.

Report for CEAL CJM Meeting

The fourth Japan Foundation/National Diet Library Training Program for Japanese Studies Librarians took place from January 17th to February 4th, 2000. Like its predecessors, the program lasted three weeks and brought together librarians from around the world. Altogether there were thirteen participants from eleven different countries. We were a remarkably diverse group, coming from Asia, Europe, Africa, Australia and North America. The only continent not represented this time was South America.

National Diet Library (NDL) Training Program:
The training program was superb, and all of the participants agreed that we learned an enormous amount. The program offered a wide range of courses covering all the major aspects of librarianship: reference materials, acquisition and collection development, technical processing, rare books, preservation, electronic resources and digital library projects. While all the courses were fascinating, we found the courses on reference materials and on rare books to be specially interesting and helpful.

The reference courses--one on general reference materials and the other focussing on statistical resources--were excellent because of the depth of coverage the instructors provided. They prepared extensive handouts, and enriched the content of these lists of reference titles by their own personal assessments of each work. They explained why they liked certain reference books and how they might use them in their day to day work. The NDL's reference collection is vast, but the instructors seemed to understand that we are forced to be more selective: for that reason they were careful to provide evaluations of the materials that might help us select the most important titles for our own libraries. In the case of the statistics course, the instructor went to great lengths to photocopy covers, title pages, and even sample index pages of the materials he wanted to introduce to us. That way, we could take away a visual image of the book. This was an extremely helpful touch, and we can only imagine the amount of time it must have taken to compile these handouts. A newspaper course was also added at the participants’ request, and it was quite valuable because it is difficult to grasp the scope of the materials and issues related to Japanese newspapers. These examples illustrate the extent to which the NDL instructors--all of them--

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* This report was originally presented by Sachié Noguchi at the CEAL Committee on Japanese Materials on March 9, 2000, during the annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies in San Diego.
went out of their way to provide us with the best and most meaningful training they possibly could. We are very grateful to everyone at NDL for their generosity and commitment to us.

The course on rare books is also worth mentioning briefly because it provided us with insights into a world which many of us in our daily work seldom see. We were given an introduction to the scope of the rare book collection at NDL and current ongoing developments in digitization. The digitizing technology is of a very high quality, capturing all the fine details and subtle colors of the original. This database becomes available to everyone over the Internet (http://www3.ndl.go.jp/rm/index.html) in late March, 2000.

Some of the participants expressed interest in an extra course on the handling and processing of rare book materials and the NDL staff very kindly accommodated our request. We were able to go to the rare book processing room where the instructor showed us the bibliographic reference tools they use in identifying materials and explained the steps they follow in cataloging. It was, by necessity, a very brief overview, but the reference tools the instructor selected to show us indicated that she had considered our special needs as overseas librarians. We were especially grateful to have had this learning opportunity because we were unable to attend the Freer Gallery Rare Books Workshop.

**National Center for Science Information Systems (NACSIS):**
The training program includes two days at NACSIS where we received training in a variety of NACSIS services and learned about various plans for the near future. It was exciting to be among the first to have hands-on training in the new fully operational Web version of NACSIS-IR. The Web version became available from January 7th and we immediately posted this important news on eastlib. It came as no surprise to the people at NACSIS when we told them how much better the interface on the Web is compared to the old TELNET version. Another piece of very good news is that later in the spring NACSIS plans to include the readings (*yomi*) in the Webcat catalog records. This will make a valuable resource even that much more valuable.

**Cooperation for Japanese Library Resources Overseas Workshop**
At the end of our first week of training, the International House of Japan in Tokyo (I-House : *Kokusai Bunka Kaikan*) organized a special workshop: *Kaigai ni Okeru Nihon Shiryō Teikyō no Kyōryoku Taisei* ("Cooperation for Japanese Library Resources Overseas"). Many Japanese librarians attended and it was an excellent opportunity for all of us to learn about current cooperative efforts taking place around the world. Presentations covered activities in North America, Europe, Australia and Asia. In addition to six presentations by program participants, there were several speakers from Japanese libraries and library organizations. We learned that we are all working very hard to make the dream of global cooperative sharing of Japanese materials a reality. But we also learned that there are still numerous barriers, such as in payment methods and restrictions on the lending of books. The meeting provided everyone with an opportunity to see just how crucial library networks and interlibrary loan cooperative arrangements are to all of us. It was a great chance to show Japanese librarians how much overseas Japanese studies librarians depend on their help.
Site Visits:
We were privileged to be able to make a number of different on-site visits. We went to all types of libraries (national, private, public, special), as well as national and governmental institutions, such as the National Archives (Kokuritsu Kōbunshokan), the National Institute of Japanese Literature (Kokubungaku Kenkyū Shiryōkan), and the Statistics Library of the Management and Coordination Agency (Sōmushō Tōkei Toshokan). Each visit provided different insights and perspectives about how information is acquired, organized, preserved, and provided in Japan.

It was fascinating to visit other libraries—we went to Waseda University Library, Kyoto University Library, Osaka Prefectural Central Library (Osaka Furitsu Chūō Toshokan), International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken) Library, and two Japan Foundation Libraries. These visits were very interesting opportunities to gain insight into current library service developments as well as a better understanding of differences in administrative structure and organization. As librarians, all of us around the world share many of the same concerns, such as declining budgets and the trend toward outsourcing of work. We had some very interesting discussions.

Conclusion and Thanks:

The entire three weeks of Kenshu provided us with a plethora of information. It was indeed splendid. However, we consider that the beauty of this program is in the synergistic effect of complex interactions and reactions to the different components of the program: that is, the courses we took, the institutions we visited, and people we met. We met so many wonderful people!—our instructors at NDL and NACSIS, the Japan Foundation staff, the participants and guests at the I. House workshop and reception, colleagues at the institutions we visited, and of course our fellow Kenshūsei. It was a total encounter—the interaction and synthesis provided by this marvelous training program during these rich three weeks.

We would like to express our gratitude to the National Diet Library for organizing such a wonderful training program, especially those in the Institute of Library and Information Science (Toshokan Kenkyūjo) who were so helpful and responsive to all our needs. We are, of course, deeply grateful to the Japan Foundation, first, for recognizing the vital importance of this kind of training program, and second, for its generous financial support. It is our fervent hope that librarian training programs of one form or another may continue well into the future.

We would also like to thank NACSIS for providing us with a stimulating two days of training, despite being so busy with preparations for the move to their new location in Hitotsubashi in the Kanda area. And finally, we would like to extend our thanks to the I. House for providing us with the opportunity to get to know each other so well at the breakfast table and in the hallways, and in particular to Ms. Izumi Koide for playing such an important role in coordinating the program from its inception.

Lynne Kutsukake, University of Toronto and Sachie Noguchi, University of Pittsburgh