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## **Locating Primary Source Materials in Japanese Archival Institutions: The Role of Area Studies Librarians in North America<sup>1</sup>**

Izumi Koide<sup>2</sup>

The problem of how to locate primary source materials in Japanese archival institutions is increasingly gathering attention from both scholars and librarians in Japanese studies in North America. In this article I will first discuss why primary sources matter in the context of research libraries and why they are crucial for area studies librarians. Then I will describe the three levels of Web-based tools for searching archives of research materials in Japan. Lastly, with a brief comparison of archives and libraries, I will look at the role of area studies collections in the research process. While primary sources may range from written materials to sound recordings, and from films to museum items, the main focus of discussion here is documents and records.

### **Research Libraries and Archives**

Why do we, as librarians working at academic institutions, care about primary sources? It is because we often receive reference questions from scholars on the whereabouts of source materials. Why are they searching for materials? The main reason is that primary sources are closely connected to research, and most East Asian libraries are part of a research library. ARL, the Association of Research Libraries, in their Principles of Membership,<sup>3</sup> tries to define the “research library,” referring to “the breadth and quality of their collections” and “the research nature of the library.” From this also we can extrapolate that primary sources are closely related to research.

A close look at the research process gives an idea as to how primary sources are woven into the process: when exploring a new research topic, the first step a researcher may take is a literature search to look for preceding works. Preceding works are most likely in published format. He/she may use library catalogs and other search tools to find these publications. In the next step in order to do research and add new knowledge to the field, the researcher has to utilize primary sources such as documents, records,

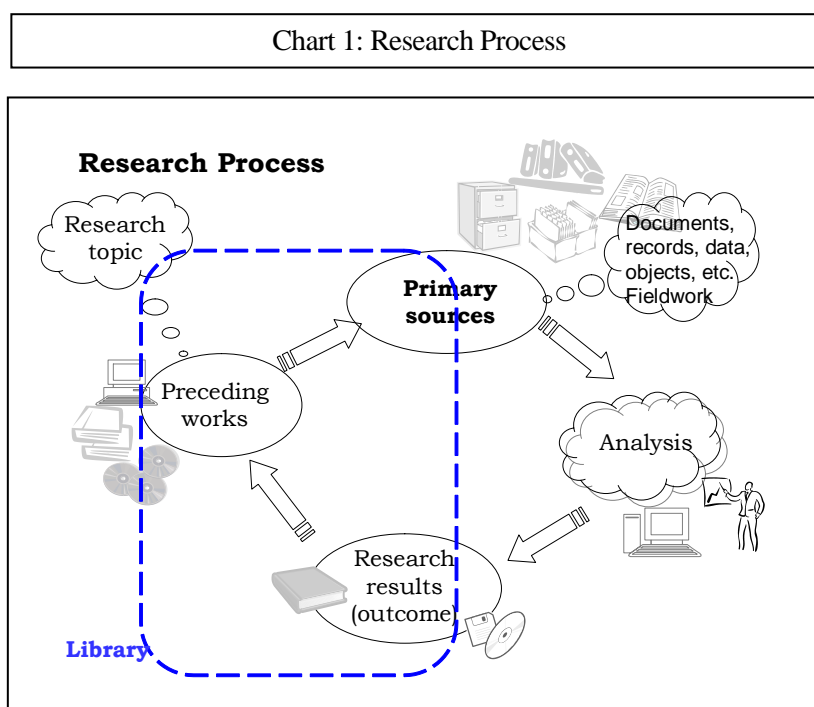
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<sup>1</sup> First presented at the annual meeting of the Committee on Japanese Materials of the Council on East Asian Libraries, March 25, 2010 at the Philadelphia Marriott Downtown.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.arl.org/arl/membership/qualprin.shtml> (last accessed May 4, 2010)

data, and other materials. In the social sciences, fieldwork is also used as a means of acquiring data from primary sources. After analyzing these primary sources and data, the researcher formulates new ideas or analysis. These results are then published in some format. These publications in turn become preceding works for future research. Chart 1 “Research Process” shows a simplified description of this process.



The area outlined with a dotted line may be considered directly relevant to libraries. Preceding works are mostly held in library collections, while primary source materials exist both within and outside of libraries. As primary source materials are indispensable in the research process, and as we work in research libraries to provide services to researchers, access issues to primary source materials are crucial for us, particularly for reference services.

The 1962 By-Laws of ARL state that “Major university libraries are considered to be those whose parent institutions emphasize research and graduate instruction at the doctoral level, and which support large, comprehensive collections of library materials on a permanent basis.”<sup>4</sup> However, at an ARL meeting in 1992 David Stam commented that primary sources, which make research possible, receive less attention and care than

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in Frank M. McGowan, *The Association of Research Libraries 1932-62* (Doctoral dissertation submitted to University of Pittsburgh, 1972). Appendix B, p197.

publications that are the end results produced by the research.<sup>5</sup> While research materials are what make libraries research libraries, the “raw materials” in the library have not been necessarily been given their due place. Now they are referred as “hidden collections,”<sup>6</sup> and their value has begun receiving attention. In 2008 the Council on Library and Information Resources launched a new grant program to fund the cataloging of hidden collections in order to provide better access.<sup>7</sup>

Research libraries have special collections, manuscripts, rare books, and perhaps university archives. In the U.S. university archives often exist as a wing of the university library and house two types of archival materials: 1) collecting archives for research, and 2) institutional archives of university records. Collecting archives are repositories that collect materials from individuals, families, and organizations other than the parent organization. Institutional archives are repositories that hold records created or received by its parent institution.<sup>8</sup>

As in the United States, there are university archives in Japan. For example, the Kyoto University Archives was founded in 2000 and houses institutional records. The Hiroshima University Archives was founded in 2004 and has institutional records and collecting archives such as the Morito Tatsuo papers. Some Japanese collecting archives are housed in a specific academic department or faculty. For example, the University of Tokyo's Faculty of Economics has a repository of materials related to the economic history of modern Japan. In particular it has archives related to companies and economic organizations. This is totally separate from the archives of the University of Tokyo. Shiga University also has a similar repository of materials related to economic history.

There is a guide to university archives in Japan entitled “*Nihon no daigaku akaivuzu*” (日本の大学アーカイヴズ).<sup>9</sup> However because of the Japanese spelling of the word “archives” (アーカイヴズ *akaivuzu*, namely the use of the less common ヴ) in its title, it can be hard to find in online catalogs. Writing the word “archives” in *katakana* is problematic as there are several ways including アーカイブ (*akaibu*), アーカイブス

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<sup>5</sup> “Plus ça change...Sixty Years of the Association of Research Libraries” by David H. Stam, a speech at the Association's 121st Membership Meeting, October 22, 1992.

<http://www.arl.org/bm-doc/pluscachange.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> “Hidden Collections, Scholarly Barriers: Creating Access to Unprocessed Special Collections Materials in North America's Research Libraries: A White Paper for the Association of Research Libraries Task Force on Special Collections,” compiled by Barbara M. Jones, 2003.

<http://www.arl.org/bm-doc/hiddencollwhitepaperjun6.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> *CLIR issues* Number 62, March/April 2008, p.1. See also

<http://www.clir.org/hiddencollections/index.html>

<sup>8</sup> Richard Pearce-Moses, *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology* (Society of American Archivists, 2005).

<sup>9</sup> Zenkoku Daigakushi Shiryo Kyogikai, 2005.

(*akaibusu*), アーカイブズ (*akaibuzu*), アーカイヴ (*akaivu*), アーカイヴス (*akaivusu*), and アーカイヴズ (*akaivuzu*). The Japanese term in *kanji* is not simple either. Although the same three characters, 文書館, are used for “archives,” the way the characters is pronounced varies. For example, the local government in Chiba Prefecture uses the pronunciation “*bunshokan*,” while Hokkaido and Tochigi Prefectures use “*monjokan*” for 文書館 in their names.

The guide was compiled by the Japanese Association of College and University Archives. On the Association’s website<sup>10</sup> there is a list of members with links to the top page of each member university’s website. It is interesting and frustrating to note that the archival section in a university is often hard to find on the university’s website. I believe that this reflects the relative organizational status of the archives within the university. For example, Waseda University has a separate archives (早稲田大学大学史資料センター). However, at Chuo University, the archives is located in the Section of the Compilation of University History in the Center for Admission and Public Relations (中央大学入試広報センター事務部大学史編纂課). At other universities the archives may be part of the university press (e.g. Kansai University 関西大学出版部出版課) or, as already mentioned, part of the library (e.g. International Christian University 国際基督教大学図書館大学史資料室) or a specific department. Thus, in addition to difficulties in spelling and terminology for archives in Japanese, a variety of names and a range of organizational locations may make archives less visible and more difficult to access.

Even if you do find the webpage of a university archives, information on the collection may not be available online. For example, the Meiji University Archives has the Miki Takeo papers, with some 65,000 items. However, the words “Miki Takeo” appear only as the name of one of the ongoing research projects on the Archives’ activities webpage.<sup>11</sup>

### Tools for searching archives for research materials/documents

For archival materials, there are three levels of information: level 1 is repositories that house archival materials; level 2 is archival collections, namely “fonds” or “series” in archival science terminology; level 3 is item or folder catalogs, called “finding aids.” Information on level 3 is most important for research purposes.

#### -- Level 3: Online Finding Aids

OPAC is commonly used by libraries. It provides information online about each

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.universityarchives.jp/index.php>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.meiji.ac.jp/history/business/about.html>

book in the library's collection. For archival collections, however, databases available on the Internet do not always give the same type of detailed information. An exception to this is the Japan Center for Asian Historical Records (JACAR)<sup>12</sup> at the National Archives of Japan. JACAR provides images of documents pertaining to Japan's relationship with Asia between the late 19<sup>th</sup> and mid 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. JACAR includes documents from three repositories, namely the National Archives of Japan, the Diplomatic Record Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Library of the National Institute of Defense Studies of the National Defense Ministry. Some 18 million images of documents are available. Besides Japanese, an introductory webpage is available in English, Chinese and Korean, and the search page is available in both Japanese and English. Although the site is searchable in English, documents are shown without translation (most of them are in Japanese). JACAR is certainly the main gateway to access modern Japanese government records.

The National Archives of Japan has its Digital Archive available on the Web.<sup>13</sup> This resource provides images of some of the documents but most have only cataloging data available. The Digital Archive includes 720,000 volumes of official documents from the Japanese Government. Although the archive's time scope is not given in the introduction, it includes information from both the pre- and post war periods.

-- Level 2: Guide to subjects of archival collections

The National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections (NUCMC) from the Library of Congress<sup>14</sup> is a well known example of a guide to manuscript collections, which can be searched by subject. The British National Archive's A2A, or Access to Archives,<sup>15</sup> database contains catalogs of archives throughout England and Wales dating from the eighth century to the present day. These databases are guides to archival collections and correspond to a level 2 .

In Japan the National Institute of Japanese Literature (NIJL) provides the National Archival Information Database and Network (*Shiryō Joho Kyōyūka Detabesu*, NAIDN) website.<sup>16</sup> The webpage claims to provide information on collections (*shiryōgun*) from various institutions. I counted the number of institutions which contribute information and found 600 participant organizations. The website includes information on more than

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.jacar.go.jp/>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.digital.archives.go.jp/>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.loc.gov/coll/nucmc/>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/a2a/>

<sup>16</sup> <http://base1.nijl.ac.jp/-isad/>

13,600 collections (or fonds) held by these organizations.

On this site, you can do both itemized searches and simple searches. If you search with “Miki Takeo,” for example, you get one hit, the Miki Takeo materials at the Meiji University Archive Center. You can also see details on the Miki Takeo collection. The description is based on the General International Standard Archival Description, ISAD(G) which is a metadata standard for the description of archival collections formulated by the International Council on Archives.

The database has an English-language interface. However, if you search with “America,” zero hits result, while if you input “米国” (*Beikoku*) on the English-language search page, you get 19 hits. Searching on the Japanese page with the same word gives the same results. Japanese proper names are thus not translated into English.

The institutions participating in the database range from prefectural archives, such as the Hokkaido Prefectural Archives, to archives of scientific institutes, such as KEK (High Energy Accelerator Research Organization); from public libraries, such as the Gunma Prefectural Library, to the National Diet Library’s Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room (*KenseiShiryoshitsu*). While the database includes a wide range of institutions, it is limited by the voluntary nature of participation. For example, the Shibusawa Memorial Museum is not yet participating so its collections are not included in the database.

Another feature of the database is that it can be used as a directory of repositories. If you click on “Number of participating organizations and registered historical materials” on the search page (Chart 2),



you can see a list of participating organizations with the number of registered collections it holds (Chart 3).

Chart 3: “Details of the warehouse” in the participating organization list page (NAIDN)



And by clicking “details of the warehouse” on that page, you are directed to a profile of the repository (Chart 4).

Chart 4: Details of warehouse page for the Hokkaido Prefectural Archives (NAIDN)

北海道立文書館	
Tag	Title
Identifier	0100-187186
Repository name	北海道立文書館
Repository name(KATAKANA)	ホッカイドウシヨモンシヨカン
Using abbreviations	(postcode) 000186 (Prefecture) 北海道 (City/Country) 札幌市 (Street Number) 中央区北3条西6丁目 (Phone number) 011-224-5077 (URL) http://www.pref.hokkaido.lg.jp/arc/
Access	札幌市宮地カネさっばろ駅より徒歩6分、JR札幌駅・地下鉄大通駅より徒歩10分。
opening time	(開館) 9:45～17:00 (休館) 日曜日、国民の休日及び振替休日、毎月第3休曜日(休日の場合はその前日)、年末年始(12月29日～1月2日)、その他12月27日、28日及び1月4日が土曜日にあたる場合。
request procedure	貸借は無し。閲覧請求書により請求すること。
establishment history of repository	北海道の歴史に関する文書や記録などを収集し、保存するとともに、これらの資料を利用して調べのための施設として、昭和50年に設置された。(補記:URLは、2009年4月まで http://www.pref.hokkaido.lg.jp/arc/arc/index.html だった。)
related information	無
summary of holdings	所蔵資料総数約26万2千点。その内訳は北海道の行政機関などの公文書4万9千点、私文書2万9千点、地誌・地誌・日記等の古記録、地図、写真、北海道関係の図書など18万9千点となっている。
finding aids	「北海道所蔵史料目録」「北海道立文書館所蔵史料目録」「北海道所蔵公文書目録」「北海道所蔵私文書目録」「北海道立文書館所蔵公文書目録」

If you click the repository name on the “list of organizations” page (Chart 5, the same page as Chart 3),





you can see a list of collections it houses; for example, Chart 6 shows some of the 263 collections in the Hokkaido Prefectural Archives: for example the Matsumae *Bugyosho* papers (1812-1822), the Hakodate *Bugyosho* papers (1854-1868), and the Hakodate *Saibansho* and Hakodate-fu papers (1868-1869).



If you click the name of a collection, you get a description of that collection including the title, dates, scope and content, and availability of finding aids. If you search from the English page only the column names are shown in English.

Although the NIJL database is comprehensive in its coverage, the majority of

participating organizations are public repositories. Therefore, company records are less visible if not housed in public repositories. The Resource Center for the History of Entrepreneurship of the Shibusawa Eiichi Memorial Foundation provides a directory of company archives on the Web.<sup>17</sup> The directory includes both archives in companies (institutional archives) and those in repositories and academic institutions (collecting archives). A description of the collection is given for each company archives.

-- Level 1: Directories of Repositories

When the databases of archival materials that are available are limited, direct contact with repositories may be necessary. Several directories of repositories have been published such as the *Rekishi Shiryō Hozon Kikan Soran, Zoho Kaiteiban* (1990).<sup>18</sup> More current information on repositories may be acquired through archival organizations. There are so far three major organizations, namely the Japan Society of Archival Institutions (*Zenkoku Rekishi Shiryō Hozon Riyo Kikan Renraku Kyogikai*, or *Zen Shiryōkyō* for short), the Japanese Association of College and University Archives mentioned earlier, and the Business Archives Association. Founded in 1976, members of *Zen Shiryōkyō* include private, public, and university archives; libraries; repositories of historical materials (*rekishi shiryōkan*); and editorial sections for compiling local government history (*jichitaishi hensanshitsu*). As of 2009, the member list webpage of *Zen Shiryōkyō*<sup>19</sup> listed 153 member repositories, with websites if available. Founded in 1981, the Business Archives Association (BAA) had 80 members as of 2009. On the member list page of the BAA website<sup>20</sup> the names of members are provided with web addresses. This list shows that archives in the Japanese private sector are often housed in *kinenkan* (memorial museums) or *hakubutsukan* (museums).

-- Directories of Special Collections

In Japan, as in the United States, “special collections” may include both publications and archival materials.<sup>21</sup> The Collaborative Reference Database,<sup>22</sup> compiled by the National Diet Library, can be used as a directory database for special collections. Collections can be searched by subject key word. For example for “*rodo undo*, or “labor movement” related collections, select “special collections” (*tokubetsu*

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<sup>17</sup> <http://www.shibusawa.or.jp/center/dir/list.html>

<sup>18</sup> Chihoshi Kenkyū Kyogikai, ed. *Zoho kaiteiban*. Yamakawa Shuppansha, 1990. 2 v.

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.jsai.jp/kikan/index.html>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.baa.gr.jp/files/06.html>

<sup>21</sup> For a definition of “special collections,” see *Special Collections in ARL Libraries: A Discussion Report from the ARL Working Group on Special Collections* (ARL, Washington, D.C., March 2009), <http://www.arl.org/bm-doc/scwg-report.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> <http://crd.ndl.go.jp/jp/public/>

korekushon) box (Chart 7) on the simple search (*kan'i kensaku*) window on the top page,<sup>23</sup> type in “*rodo undo*” and press the search button. This produces two hits (as of April 19, 2010), as two special collections on labor movements are shown.

To see a list of special collections participating in this database, choose *tokubetsu korekushon* from the pull-down menu on the left side and click on *shosai kensaku* (detailed search) (Chart 7), then on the detailed search page input the year 2000 in “*toroku nichiji* (registration starting date)” so that the database will retrieve data on all special collections registered since the service began.



The result is a listing of all the participating repositories, currently 174, mainly public and university libraries. This list partially overlaps with the *Kokyo toshokan no tokubetsu korekushon shozo chosa hokokusho* (Nihon Toshokan Kyokai, 1997) which lists 735 special collections in 308 public libraries.

ARL has a website that provides profiles of the special collections of 118 ARL member institutions in the United States.<sup>24</sup> The same information is also available in book format, *Celebrating Research: Rare and Special Collections from the Membership of the Association of Research Libraries* (Philip N. Cronenwett, Kevin Osborn, and Samuel A. Streit, eds. ARL, 2007).

<sup>23</sup> <http://crd.ndl.go.jp/GENERAL/servlet/common.Controller> It should be noted that “*Sankakan Purofairu* (Profile of participating libraries)” in this database stands for libraries providing reference case studies, and not for special collections.

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.celebratingresearch.org/about/index.shtml>

## Characteristics of Area Studies Collections

### --Archives and Libraries

A comparison of archives and libraries from various angles gives deeper understanding of their relationship. Archives and libraries can be compared from three angles: type of materials, technologies developed, and intellectual characteristics.

In terms of the physical features or type of materials, library collections are predominantly in book format, now increasingly with e-resources. Archival materials, however, may be unbound and vulnerable and require special attention for both preservation and public access. A library may have many copies of the same book while archives are normally limited to a single original. This difference in physical features necessitates different ways of handling materials, particularly in terms of both physical and intellectual access.

Technologies developed in libraries and archives also differ and result in differing environments. Libraries have commonly used standards such as AACRII and infrastructure such as bibliographic utilities and ILL networks; creating reference tools has a long tradition. In this digital age, reference tools and catalogs have been made available in database format and even books themselves are being digitized. In archives, however, an international standard for cataloging, ISAD(G) is available but not commonly used. Sometimes a finding aid is available in an archival collection, but it cannot always be expected. Rapid change in information technology is affecting both libraries and archives. Libraries in Japan and in the U.S. are better equipped to deal with this change, and archives have begun to take advantage of information technology.

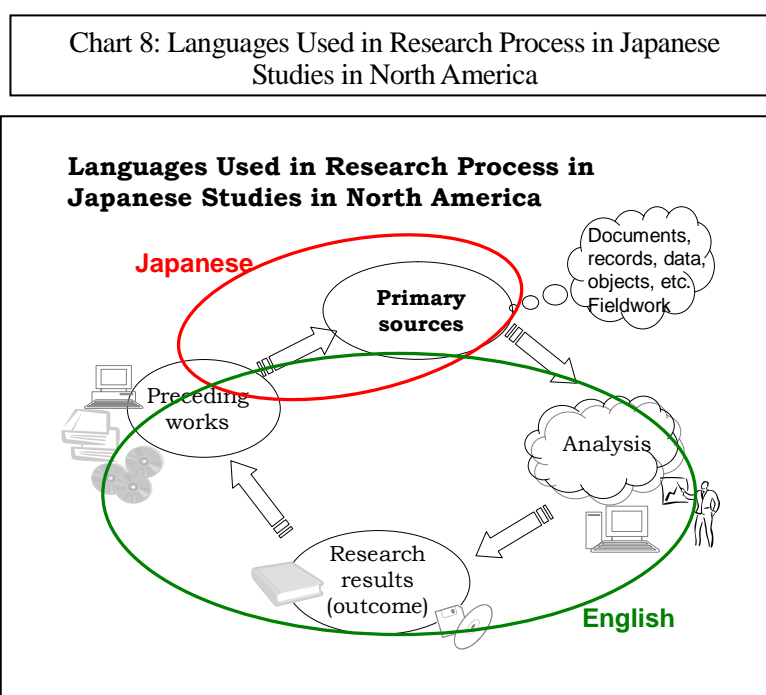
Regarding the intellectual characteristics of archives and library materials, as I mentioned earlier, primary source materials in archives will become publications in libraries through research activities. At the same time, library materials may become primary source materials. Books were a source of information at the time they were published and often become rare as time passes, thereby increasing the research value of a library's collections, similar to archival materials. Library collections of old books and rare publications, such as gray literature in particular, become archival materials with future research value. Time can turn library collections into archival materials. The distinction between archival and library materials may thus become blurred.

The value of a collection may be measured in two dimensions: the horizontal axis representing time, and the vertical axis representing the quality of the collection. When a collection is assessed highly in either or both dimensions, it will acquire research value. This nature is common to a research collection in libraries and archives, and it

could loosen the distinction between library and archival collections.

--Research and Area Studies Collections

The chart describing the research process which was discussed earlier can be analyzed from the language used in each step, as language is a distinctive factor in area studies. In the case of Japanese studies in North America, both Japanese and English can be used for the literature search step, as preceding works often exist in both languages. However, more primary sources concerning Japan exist in Japanese. (Of course sources in English and other languages do exist, but here I am simplifying in order to focus on the characteristics of area studies.) Researchers in North America accustomed to an English analytical framework and belonging to the North American academic community, tend to publish the results of their research in English (Chart 8).



Therefore because Japanese language primary sources are necessary in the research process, most Japanese collections in North American research libraries include primary source materials. Hence institutions collect such materials as microfilms of old newspapers or complete sets of a journal no longer being published. It also means that Japanese libraries in North American research universities are expected to be a gateway for researchers to access primary source materials in Japan and elsewhere. As information navigation is one of the important functions of the librarian, area studies librarians are increasingly expected to play the role of subject specialist in addition to being a language expert.