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Retirements

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RETIREMENTS

Philip Melzer Retires from Library of Congress

Philip Melzer retired as Chief of the Asian and Middle Eastern Division of the Library of Congress on December 31, 2011. CEAL members recall with gratitude Phil's contributions over the years to Korean and East Asian librarianship through his participation in CEAL and his dedicated work of decades at the Library of Congress. Particularly memorable were his leadership in the change to pinyin Romanization for Chinese and his service as CEAL President 2006-2008. Many of us have known him as colleague, mentor, advisor, and friend. We will miss him. Upon Phil's retirement, Thompson (Tom) Yee was appointed as Acting Chief of the Asian and Near Eastern Division of LC effective January 1, 2012.

Kenneth Tanaka Retires from the University of Maryland

Kenneth Tanaka, Japanese Studies Librarian at the University of Maryland, retired on January 31, and a ceremony honoring him on the occasion of his retirement was held January 26. Geraldine Park, member of the McKeldin Library Technical Services Division, delivered a talk about Kenneth's life, his career, and his professional contributions as part of the ceremony. Her talk, edited for publication, follows.

"What goes around, comes around, sometimes it's wonderful"

Edited Remarks by Geraldine B. Park on the Occasion of the Retirement of
Kenneth Tanaka, Japanese Studies Librarian, University of Maryland at College Park

January 26, 2012, McKeldin Library, University of Maryland at College Park

In the years immediately following World War II, the United States played an instrumental role in bringing about major reforms in the Japanese education system. Coincidentally, Gordon W. Prange, a history professor then on leave from the University of Maryland, was a witness to this process while it was happening and Kenneth Tanaka, a young pupil starting his first year of Middle School (6th grade), experienced these reforms. Professor Prange, who arranged for the University of Maryland to receive an extensive collection of postwar Japanese censorship-related materials that is now named after him, ended his career as a historian here.

At the end of this month, Mr. Tanaka will end his career as a librarian here. Thus today, we gather to thank him for his many years of service, to wish him many happy,

healthy years surrounded by his family in retirement, and to praise his enduring contributions to the library world. I would like briefly to tell how Mr. Tanaka's years here came to pass, mentioning along the way his major contributions in context of their importance to us catalogers.

By 1963 at Taisho University in Tokyo, Mr. Tanaka had completed his B.A., M.A. and A.B.D. (yes, All but Dissertation, since as a rule in those days only the very top 10% of those seeking Ph.D.s in Japan were allowed to write dissertations). His major for all of these degrees was Buddhist Studies; his minors were: social studies, Japanese history and philosophy.

Afterwards, Mr. Tanaka took a position as a Buddhist minister in Hawaii. He arrived there most auspiciously on February 14, 1963, Valentine's Day. After a few years in the field, poor health and illness sadly caused him to resign. Rather than returning to Japan, he ventured to the U.S. mainland to seek more education. He aimed for an M.A. degree in Asian Studies from the University of Wisconsin at Madison. With his English language skills still a bit limited, Mr. Tanaka worked several part-time jobs to support himself. He sanded wood for a furniture maker, and he scanned documents at Argonne National Laboratory. This latter job led to his working in the library at the University of Wisconsin. Library work suited him rather well.

Upon graduation in 1968, Mr. Tanaka took a position at the Library of Congress as a support worker responsible for general bibliographic searching. He was happily working there that year when an edict from President Richard Nixon forced the Library of Congress to issue lay-off notices with only one month of advance notice to over 500 employees who had less than a full year of employment. Everyone was scrambling to find work. Still a bachelor, Mr. Tanaka focused first on helping a married friend who had a baby, but at the same time he submitted applications for two of LC's open vacancies. (Although LC had a mandate to lay people off, it could still fill essential vacancies.) On what he thought was his last day at work, Mr. Tanaka learned that he was twenty-sixth on a list for one position and second on a list for another position in the Subject Cataloging Division as a subject cataloger, the position he accepted. Using LC's Classification Schedules, Mr. Tanaka worked with letters DS (History of Asia) and BL (Religions). Both needed some expansion to adequately cover the materials that Mr. Tanaka was tasked to classify and assign subjects to. On his own time, he developed a Japanese local history and description table for the DS schedule. His DS-DX6 Table for Japanese Prefectures, Subregions, Etc. is still a part of the DS schedule.

In 1971, now married and in the midst of work to build into the BL schedule a 100 number range for Buddhism (BL1400-1499), Mr. Tanaka took an eight-month leave

of absence from LC to earn a University of Michigan M.L.S. degree. One of his library school classmates happened to be Frank Joseph Shulman. Upon returning to LC, Mr. Tanaka and his Subject Cataloging Division chief discussed the status of the BL1400-1499 expansion and concluded that it was a band-aid approach. His chief speculated that if a new class of letters BQ and all of its possible 10, 000 numbers were reserved for Buddhism, the fix could last for fifty or more years.

Mr. Tanaka went back to work, using his own time and money doing the research necessary to develop and populate the BQ Schedule for Buddhism. His scholarly efforts paid off. LC started using the BQ schedule before the first edition of it was published in 1973 in all its glory, complete with highly prized handwritten vernacular characters alongside Romanized text in association with the numbers. Mr. Tanaka received a meritorious award and remuneration from the Librarian of the Library of Congress for his scholarly work. Also beginning to make use of the BQ schedule, the University of Chicago lured Mr. Tanaka to Chicago in 1973 as head of the Japanese Section in its East Asian Library, where he remained until 1980.

Mr. Tanaka eventually returned once again to Hawaii to resume being a Buddhist minister. By happenstance, it occurred to Frank Shulman to look him up while vacationing in Hawaii. Frank urged him to consider working at his institution, the University of Maryland Libraries. Shortly thereafter, Mr. Tanaka applied for positions at both the University of Maryland and Indiana University. Serendipity caused a scheduling mix-up at Indiana. So in the Fall of 1986, when Mr. Tanaka received a new date for his Indiana interview, he had already been hired here [at Maryland] and was on the job.

In Maryland's East Asia Collection, Mr. Tanaka's time was split between the work of providing public services and cataloging. In those days, Mr. Kuang-yao Fan, our Chinese librarian, Dr. Thomas H. Kang, our Korean librarian, and Mr. Tanaka, our Japanese librarian, did their cataloging in the East Asia Collection on the fourth floor of the McKeldin Library.

With the expansion in the use of automation (GEAC, CARL, OCLC bibliographic utility, etc.), with Maryland's joining the National Programs for Cooperative Cataloging, and with the opening of the new addition to the McKeldin Library, cataloging became centralized in the Technical Services Division on the second floor of the new addition. Mr. Tanaka became active in contributing name authority records to NACO and eventually PCC bibliographic records as well. His contributions to the Program of Cooperative Cataloging over the years have been truly impressive.

Throughout his library career, Mr. Tanaka has kept in touch with his cataloging contacts at the Library of Congress and with those in CEAL (Council on East Asian Libraries), the association of East Asian librarians in North America. Since learning of Mr. Tanaka's upcoming retirement, its members have been sending him wonderful letters of appreciation and congratulations.

Now from us--congratulations, Ken, on your splendid career and well deserved retirement. Thanks for the memories and your twenty-five plus years of service with the Libraries. In Metadata Services, we are really, really going to miss you, and we have one last special request: please autograph our copy of the BQ Schedule.