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NAOMI FUKUDA AT MICHIGAN

Weiyang Wan

Retired Curator, Asia Library, University of Michigan

Naomi Fukuda joined the staff of the Asia Library, University of Michigan in 1970 as the assistant head of the Library. She was for a short period of time before that at the University of Maryland in some capacity related to Japanese library materials.

Before her American library career, Miss Fukuda was the librarian at the International House (in Tokyo), where she coordinated the *Nihon no Sanko Toshu Henshu linkai* and published the *Nihon no sanko tosho* in 1965. In the next year, she was instrumental in having this compilation translated into English and published by the American Library Association as the *Guide to Japanese Reference Books*. As the first of such compilations, the Guide was an immediate success and was often referred to familiarly as the Japanese Winchell, in reference to Constance Winchell, the chief compiler of the 8th edition of *Guide to American Reference Books*, the American standard guide to reference books.

Miss Fukuda brought her interest in bibliography and library services to Michigan, where she taught a graduate course of Japanese bibliography for the Center for Japanese Studies. She also worked with some of the library's bibliographers to produce topical bibliographies of high quality, for example, *A Select List of Books on Tokyo, 1868-1971*, Masaei Saito, compiler (Ann Arbor: The Asia Library and The Center for Japanese Studies, 1975). These activities enabled her to learn the depth of the Michigan collection as well as to spot certain gaps that needed to be filled.

The decade Miss Fukuda spent in Ann Arbor coincided with one of the fastest development phases of the Asia Library. She not only kept pace with current Japanese scholarly publications and acquired major source materials such as the diplomatic and military archives; she also filled important gaps in serials and strengthened channels for acquiring research institution and government publications. Moreover, this was also the period in which the Japanese Yen gained at least forty percent against the Dollar. She was able to apply her considerable resourcefulness to secure supplementary funding from a variety of large and small Japanese foundations.

Michigan was not the only institution that benefitted from Miss Fukuda's talents and services. In 1975, she was appointed to the Executive Group of the Committee on East Asian Libraries to chair the then-dormant Japanese Materials Subcommittee. Under her leadership, a survey of Japanese collections in the United States was conducted and later published by the University of Michigan Center for Japanese Studies (Naomi Fukuda, *Survey of Japanese Collections in the United States*, Ann Arbor : Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 1980).

After her retirement from the library, Miss Fukuda remained in Ann Arbor as an associate of the University of Michigan Center for Japanese Studies to concentrate on her ambitious annotated bibliography project. In 1979, the *Bibliography of Reference Works for Japanese Studies* was published by the Center. In 1984, her two-volume *Japanese History: a Guide to Survey Histories* was also published by the Center.

Michigan was also where she received her library training. She attended the University's Department of Library Science in the late nineteen thirties and graduated in 1940 with an AMLS. Her master's thesis was entitled "Some Problems in Cataloging Japanese Books for American Libraries."

At the CEAL fellowship dinner following Miss Fukuda's retirement, I paraphrased what Confucius said about friendship to indicate in some measure how I had benefitted from my friendship "with the upright, with the sincere, with the well-informed." These words truly characterized my association with Naomi Fukuda.



Photographs courtesy of the International House of Japan Library.