9-1-1987


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In 1956, four years before the University of British Columbia (UBC) Asian Studies Library was officially established at the University of British Columbia, an internationally known British Japanologist and sociologist, Dr. Ronald P. Dore, who was then a faculty member of the Asian Studies Department at UBC, began efforts to initiate the establishment of a depository relationship with the National Diet Library (NDL), Tokyo. Later it developed officially into the international gift and exchange program of Japanese and Canadian government publications between the NDL and the National Library of Canada (NLC), Ottawa. Professor Dore's farsighted planning was successfully implemented in 1958 when the official agreement for this exchange project was reached by the governments of Japan and Canada and their two national libraries. The following librarians made major contributions to finalizing this co-operative project:

Tokujirō Kanamori, then National Librarian, NDL
T. Ichikawa, then Director, Division of International Affairs, NDL
W. Kaye Lamb, then National Librarian, NLC
Neal Harlow, then University Librarian, UBC

In July 1958 the NDL was granted the status of full depository library for Canadian government publications by the NLC. In August 1958 the UBC Library was nominated by the NLC as a depository for publications of the Japanese government, and a reciprocal status was officially granted by the NDL to UBC. The reason why the UBC Library was then assigned to receive the shipment from NDL on behalf of the NLC was that, in addition to Dore's efforts and initiative, UBC already had established courses in Japanese studies in the 1950s; and there were users of Japanese government publications not only on the UBC campus but also in pan-Pacific business circles in Vancouver, B.C., as well as in the Japanese-Canadian communities in British Columbia and other provinces in western Canada. On the other hand, in 1958 in the eastern Canadian provinces such as Ontario and Quebec, the potential users for Japanese materials were limited in number. The NLC being fully aware of such facts, they appointed the UBC Library as the receiver of Japanese government publications.

In March 1959 the first shipment of publications, 332 volumes in total, arrived safely at the UBC Library. This was the inaugural date and the beginning of the successful development of the collection which owes much to the foresight of the above-mentioned faculty members and librarians. The original 332 volumes included both monographs and serials. A breakdown of these is not available, but most were probably serials such as statistics, yearbooks, white papers etc.

This paper was originally presented at the 1985 annual meeting of the CEAL Subcommittee on Japanese Materials in Philadelphia.
As the 1984 acquisitions show, over 90% of the receipts are serials. Holdings of post-1964 serial publications are particularly good although some sets are incomplete.

Since 1959, things have changed greatly in Canada as in other parts of the world. Academic institutions in eastern Canada such as Toronto and York Universities in Ontario and McGill and Montreal Universities in Quebec established courses in Japanese studies during the 1960s and 1970s. In the 1980s, more universities and colleges have started or are now preparing Japanese courses in various fields. Reflecting Canada’s economic reliance on Japan in pan-Pacific trade, both the government and private sectors in Canada feel the need to acquire current information, particularly that available in Japanese government publications. The greatest demands for information in Canada fall into the areas of: 1) National Economics, 2) Industry, Commerce and Foreign Trade, and 3) Research and Development respectively.

From time to time I answer reference queries from the federal government in Ottawa or provincial government of British Columbia in Victoria. Some of these questions are about population statistics, national income, family savings, annual agricultural production, forestry and fisheries, etc. Canadian private corporations are very much concerned with employment status in Japan, wages and salaries, business investment, exports and imports, annual industrial production, etc. In response to some of these questions, the following publications would be useful: Kokusei chōsa hōkoku (Population Census of Japan) by Sōrifu Tōkeiyoku (Bureau of Statistics, Office of the Prime Minister), Kokumin shotoku tōkei nempo (Annual Report on National Income Statistics) by Keizai Kikakucho (Economic Planning Agency), and Nōrin Suisanshō tōkeihyō (Statistical Yearbook of Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries).

Canadian academic institutions also frequently inquire about current research and development in Japan. For these queries, the following materials would be most suitable to consult: Mombushō kagaku kenkyūshi ni yoru kenkyū hōkoku: Jim bunhen shakai kagaku hen (Reports on research by grantees, Ministry of Education: Humanities & Social Sciences), Kagaku gijutsu kenkyū chōsa hōkoku (Report on the Survey of Research and Development in Japan) by Sorifu Tōkeiyoku, or Kagaku gijutsu hakusho (White Paper on Science and Technology) by Kagaku Gijutsucho (Science and Technology Agency).

In 1981 when the Law School at UBC started a Japanese legal course through the auspices of the Bar Association of British Columbia, all materials on Japanese law such as Hanreishū (Law Reports), Hōmu tōkei (Judicial Statistics), and Kampō
(Official Gazettes) etc. were transferred from the Asian Studies Library to the UBC Law Library in response to their request.

Due to the richness of social science and science and technology materials, the depository collection has played a unique and important part in the operation of the Asian Studies Library. As a full status depository library of Japanese government publications in Canada on behalf of the NLC, we are very much aware of the obligation to make these publications available to Canadian users, of the responsibility to maintain the collection in good order, and to provide information requested by government, private and academic sectors across Canada as efficiently as possible.

Among serial publications, bilingual materials printed in English and Japanese are most useful. The "List of Basic Statistical Publications," which includes many such materials, was compiled by the NDL. Checking it against the UBC holdings, UBC is shown to have received 64% of the materials most likely to be requested by our users. Librarians from the NDL suggested that this 64% of the important basic statistical materials was a good percentage for a depository library. None of the fifteen worldwide depository libraries has received 100% of government publications. These kinds of statistical serial publications are in constant use not only by UBC faculty members and students but also by users from government agencies, industrial and commercial enterprises, and other institutions of higher learning.

A List of Basic Statistical Publications
Published by
Japanese National Government Agencies


*3. Housing Survey of Japan.


Note: Items marked with * are held at UBC. Of the above 136 titles, the Asian Studies Library has eighty-seven of them (64%) as of March 1985.


18. Family Saving Survey.


29. Japan Export and Import.

34. Report on the School Health Survey.
38. Statistics of Communicable Disease and Food Poisoning.
43. Survey of Medical Institutions.
45. Survey of Physicians, Dentists and Pharmacists.
46. National Health Survey.
49. Statistical Yearbook of Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.
55. Statistics Tables of Fishing Vessels.
56. Statistics of Farm Household Living Expenses.
58. Annual Statistics of Food Control.
60. Census of Manufactures.
61. Yearbook of Textile Statistics.
63. Census of Commerce.
64. Yearbook of Chemical Industries Statistics.
65. Yearbook of Ceramics Statistics.
68. Yearbook of Department Store Sales Statistics.
70. Yearbook of Machinery Statistics.
71. Yearbook of Non-Ferrous Metal Products Statistics.
72. Yearbook of Iron and Steel Statistics.
73. Annual Survey on Equipment Working Faces of Coal Mines; with that of Lignite Mines.
74. Yearbook of Coal and Coke Statistics.
75. Yearbook of Petroleum Statistics.
78. Annual Financial Reports on Household Economy.
80. Statistics of Farm Household Living Expenses.
82. Annual Statistics of Food Control.
83. Report of Demand and Supply of Lumber.
84. Census of Manufactures.
85. Yearbook of Textile Statistics.
86. Yearbook of General Merchandise Statistics.
87. Census of Commerce.
88. Yearbook of Chemical Industries Statistics.
89. Yearbook of Ceramics Statistics.
90. Yearbook of Rubbers Statistics.
92. Yearbook of Department Store Sales Statistics.
94. Yearbook of Machinery Statistics.
95. Yearbook of Non-Ferrous Metal Products Statistics.
96. Yearbook of Iron and Steel Statistics.
98. Yearbook of Coal and Coke Statistics.
100. Annual Financial Reports on Mining Enterprises.
103. Statistics of Fishing Vessels.
104. Statistics of Farm Household Living Expenses.
106. Annual Statistics of Food Control.
108. Census of Manufactures.
110. Yearbook of General Merchandise Statistics.
111. Census of Commerce.
112. Yearbook of Chemical Industries Statistics.
113. Yearbook of Ceramics Statistics.
114. Yearbook of Rubbers Statistics.
118. Yearbook of Machinery Statistics.
119. Yearbook of Non-Ferrous Metal Products Statistics.
120. Yearbook of Iron and Steel Statistics.
*76. Mining Yearbook of Japan
*77. Yearbook of Plastics Statistics.
*78. Yearbook of Non-Ferrous Metals Demand and Supply Statistics.
*80. Yearbook of Indexes of Industrial Production.
*83. Statistics of Business Survey on Foreign Trade.
*84. Report of Statistics Survey on Sales of Machines With Payment in Installment.
*86. Yearbook of Private Railways Statistics
*88. Annual Statistics on Land Transport.
*91. Annual Statistics on Coast-wise Vessel Transportation.
*92. Annual Statistics on Maritime Transportation.
*96. Seaman’s Labour Statistics.
*97. Annual Statistics on Foreign Visitors.
113. Annual Report of Survey on Construction Work Orders Received.
117. Report of Field Survey Building, etc.
121. Yearbook of Road Statistics.
130. Analysis of Financial Statements of Main Industrial Corporations.
132. Export and Import Price Indexes Annual.