Japanese Collections in Canadian Libraries

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The purpose of this paper* is to provide a brief description of the general state of Japanese collections in Canadian libraries. The following descriptions span the country from west to east and the statistical figures reflect conditions in 1988. Although this report is brief, I hope it will show the diversity of Japanese-language collections in Canada at the present time.

Academic Libraries

Japanese collections in Canadian libraries were born with the inception of Japanese studies in Canada and they have developed together. Japanese studies at the university level started in Canada in 1956 with the appointment of the English sociologist, Dr. Ronald Dore, to the first professorship of Japanese programs at the University of British Columbia (UBC). He taught Japanese language and also lectured on Japanese culture and society. Since then, courses in Japanese studies have been created at many Canadian universities.

The two major centers with extensive programs in Japanese studies are the University of British Columbia and the University of Toronto, located in the western and the eastern parts of Canada respectively. Each has an extensive Japanese collection of around 100,000 volumes. Five other Canadian universities (Victoria, Alberta, York, McGill, and Montreal) with smaller Japanese library collections offer less comprehensive Japanese courses.

The University of British Columbia (UBC)

Asian Studies Library  Asian Centre, 1871 West Mall, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1W5

Tsuneharu Gonnami, Japanese Librarian  Phone:  (604) 228-2023
Koji Okada, Library Assistant  (604) 228-2322
Tomoko Goto Hermsmeier, Japanese Cataloger  (604) 228-3271
Kay Tomiye, Library Assistant  (604) 228-3271

Holdings  Monographs & Bound Periodicals: 90,499 volumes
Current Periodicals: 320 titles (Academic & learned journals)
1,038 titles (Japanese govt publications)
Newspapers: 6 titles
Microforms: 1,749 reels (microfilm)
10,297 sheets (microfiche)

*This paper was originally presented at the 1989 ASPAC Library Panel on East Asian Libraries held on July 2, 1989 in Honolulu, Hawaii.
The collection coverage is quite comprehensive in Japanese studies for the humanities and social sciences. Materials on literature, history, and Buddhism are extensive. Along with the new curriculum policy of the University to strengthen Japanese programs in Pacific Rim Studies, the Library has tried to further expand its Japanese Collection in social science fields such as economics, political science, sociology, and geography. The Asian Centre Library has an extensive collection of Japanese government publications (JGP) because it has been designated a full depository of JGP by the National Diet Library, Tokyo. Most of the acquisitions of JGP are serials. At present the Library receives 1,038 titles of current JGP periodicals and there are about 15,000 volumes of monographs and bound journals of JGP. There also are approximately 10,000 sheets of JGP microfiche (mainly serial backfiles).

**Law Library** 1822 East Mall, George F. Curtis Bldg., Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Y1

Sumiko Owa, Library Assistant  
Phone: (604) 228-4909

Holdings  
Bound periodicals: 2,500 volumes  
Current periodicals: 100 titles

The Law Library has been collecting many different Japanese legal periodicals like journals, statutes, reports, and gazettes since 1981 when the UBC Law School established the Japanese Legal Program. They have been keeping law journals but Japanese law books are maintained at the Asian Studies Library.

**Special Collections Division, UBC Main Library** 1956 Main Mall, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Y3

**Japanese-Canadian Archives**  
Phone: (604) 228-2232

The University houses two distinguished collections of Japanese materials in the Special Collections Division of the Main Library. First, there is the Japanese-Canadian Archives, containing rare historical documents of Japanese immigrants to Canada since 1877 including diaries, memoirs, correspondence, and a great many volumes of Japanese-Canadian history books as well as extensive backfiles of newspapers and journals. Among the latter, *Tairiku Nippō* (The Continental Daily News), 1908-1941, is particularly important. It has become indispensable research material for determining economic, social, and political conditions of Japanese-Canadians in pre-World War II days. The microfilm edition of *Tairiku Nippō* is available for purchase upon written request from the Government and Microfilm Division of the UBC Main Library. The holdings of the Archives consist of 41 linear feet of unpublished documents in Japanese, 240 volumes of books in both English and Japanese, 850 still photographs, and 150 phonotapes, mainly in Japanese, besides other materials.

**Beans Collection of Edo Maps**  
Phone: (604) 228-2521

Second, the Special Collections Division also contains a world-famous Tokugawa Map Collection, mostly woodblocks, produced between 1600 and 1867. There are 320 titles of sheet maps, screen and scroll maps, and many "atlases," etc., in the Collection. This collection of Edo maps is one of the largest in existence outside Japan.
The University of Victoria

Department of Pacific and Asian Studies  P O Box 1700, Victoria, B.C. V8W 2Y2

Gene Mah, McPherson Library  Phone:  (604) 721-8242

Holdings  Monographs:  600 volumes

The University Main Library (McPherson) contains approximately 600 volumes of Japanese books in history, literature, language, and the fine arts of Japan. These are intershelfed with western-language books on Japan (7,000 vols.). The Library also has 200 volumes of Japanese reference works in the Departmental Reading Room.

The University of Alberta

Department of East Asian Languages and Literature  Room 400 Arts Bldg., Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2E6

Louis Chow, East Asian Librarian, Main Library  Phone:  (403) 492-3780

Holdings  Monographs:  15,000 volumes

Current periodicals:  10 titles

In total there are 15,000 volumes of Japanese research materials in this collection. Approximately 7,000 volumes have been cataloged and are intershelfed with the western-language books on Japan (10,000 vols.) in the University Main Library. The remaining 8,000 volumes belong to the Department of East Asian Languages and Literature and they are maintained by the Department Reading Room without being cataloged. The Japanese collection is composed mainly of literature, language, and history books.

The University of Toronto

East Asia Library  130 St. George Street, 8th Floor, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1A5

Lynn Kutsukake, Japanese Ref. Librarian  Phone:  (461) 978-7691

Miwako Kendlbacher, Japanese Cataloger  (461) 978-5275

Akiko Maruoka, Japanese Cataloger  (461) 978-5275

Michiko Shimizu, Library Assistant  (461) 978-5275

Yoshiko Sawa, System Librarian  (461) 978-2300

(Main Library System Division)

Holdings  Monographs, Bound periodicals:  101,566 volumes

Current periodicals:  300 titles

Newspapers:  7 titles

Microforms:  134 reels (microfilm)

175 sheets (microfiche)

The Japanese collection has distinguished holdings in literature, history, and ethnology. In particular, its comprehensive collection of modern Japanese literature (1868-present) is excellent. In response to requests from faculty members, the Library has tried to strengthen
its collection of research materials in the social sciences, particularly with various statistics, white papers, and other official reports published by the ministries and agencies of the national government of Japan. The East Asia Library of the University of Toronto is characterized by the following two unique features: 1) In terms of the holdings of monographs and bound periodicals, its Japanese collection (101,566 vols.) is the largest in Canada, exceeding that of the UBC collection (93,000 vols.); 2) It is the only Asian library among Canadian academic libraries which uses an online CJK processing system. Presently the East Asia Library is participating in the RLIN CJK system. Data input into this system is also loaded in romanized form only into the University of Toronto's UTLAS data base, ensuring wide access to the bibliographical information.

**York University**

**East Asian Studies Programme/Founders College**
Downsview, Ontario M3J 1P3
Phone: (416) 736-2100

**Holdings**
**Monographs:** 250 volumes

The East Asian Studies Reading Room has about 250 volumes of Japanese books on history, literature, and other subjects. The Main Library houses 2,300 monographs in western languages on Japan.

**McGill University**

**Centre for East Asian Studies**
3434 McTavish Street, Montreal H3A 1X9
Phone: (514) 398-6742

**Holdings**
**Monographs:** 1,150 volumes

The Main Library houses approximately 1,150 volumes of Japanese-language research books together with 11,600 volumes of western-language books on Japan. These materials are in the fields of specialization of the faculty members. These areas include history, literature, and the material culture of Japan, with a particular focus on areas such as economic development from the Meiji era to the present, Sino-Japanese relations, the status of Japanese women, the concept of state and family, Edo popular culture, the history of fashion and of food, etc.

**Université de Montréal**

**Centre d'Études de l'Asie de l'Est**
C.P. 6128, Succ. A, Montreal, Quebec H3C 3J7
Akemi Azumi, Japanese Bibliographer
Phone: (514) 343-5970

**Holdings**
**Monographs:** 8,000 volumes

The Centre for East Asian Studies has its own Asian Documentation Centre. It contains approximately 8,000 volumes of Japanese-language research books as well as 3,000 volumes
of western-language books on Japan. There are specialized collections of particular strength in the social sciences such as anthropology, sociology, economics, political science, and geography. In 1980 the documentation center became a "selective" depository for Japanese government publications under a program of exchange of official publications between Japan and the Quebec provincial government. The center receives approximately 1,000 items a year from Japan on behalf of the Bibliothèque National de Québec. A Japanese librarian with a French language background is sent by the National Diet Library to manage this collection. She is supported financially by the Japan Foundation and usually stays at the center for a few years on a rotating basis.

In the table below, the seven institutions mentioned above are ordered by the size of their Japanese-language collections. The number of Japan specialist faculty members with a Japanese language background and first-year students of the Japanese Language Program (1978-1988) is also given.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Collection</th>
<th>Specialists</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>101,566 v.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UBC</td>
<td>93,000 v.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>15,000 v.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montreal</td>
<td>8,000 v.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McGill</td>
<td>1,150 v.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>**800 v.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York</td>
<td>**250 v.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Alberta is expanding its library collection in order to meet the needs of this large number of interested students.

**Victoria and York depend heavily on the Japanese collections of UBC and Toronto, respectively, due to their physical proximity.

School Libraries

We should not forget privately-organized Japanese schools with Japanese resource rooms. In prewar days before 1941, about fifty Japanese-language schools for children of Japanese-Canadians existed in a variety of Japanese communities, particularly commercial, agricultural, fishing, logging, and mining centers. However, all these schools were closed at the outbreak of the Pacific War. After the war new schools opened, mostly in urban areas, and currently there are a total of twenty-seven such Japanese-language schools all across Canada with about 2,300 students listed in Kaigai Nihongo kyōiku kikan ichiran (1987). Each school has a resource room that holds juvenile books on literature, history, social studies, and science. The Japanese collections range from a few hundred to a few thousand volumes depending on the number of students enrolled which varies from 20 to 300. The total estimated holdings of Japanese children’s books by these twenty-seven schools comes to approximately 40,000 volumes. A representative school is:

The Vancouver Japanese School 1370 West 73rd Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V6P 3E8

Tokuko Sekita, School Librarian Phone: (604) 266-0333
(Saturday only)
During the period of the Second World War, Japanese communities were broken up and all the Japanese-Canadians on the West Coast were forced to move further inland. When they were released from relocation camps in 1949, the majority of them migrated to the eastern part of Canada, mainly the greater Toronto City area in Ontario Province, while some returned to their previous homeland, the Vancouver area in British Columbia. This resulted in the present population distribution pattern of Japanese-Canadians; approximately 12,000 live in the greater Vancouver area while about 40,000 reside in the Toronto metropolitan area. This population difference is clearly reflected in the number of Japanese books held by the Vancouver and Richmond Public Libraries and the Metropolitan Toronto Library.

The Vancouver Public Library

Central Library - Foreign Books Section 750 Burrard Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6Z 1X5
Phone: (604) 665-2280
Holdings: 400 volumes - mainly popular fiction

Carnegie Library 401 Main Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6A 2T7
Phone: (604) 665-3010
Holdings: 500 volumes - mostly modern novels

The former Japan Town, where many Japanese merchants settled in shops on Powell Street in prewar years, is only a few blocks away from the Library.

The Richmond Public Library

Brighouse Centre Library 7691 Minoru Gate, Richmond, B.C. V6Y 1R8
Phone: (604) 273-6606
Holdings: 546 volumes - chiefly for leisure reading

Steveston Library 4111 Moncton Street, Richmond, B.C. V7E 3E8
Phone: (604) 274-2012
Holdings: 1,351 volumes
(About 1,500 volumes of children's book will be transferred here from the Steveston Japanese School in the near future.)

The Library houses various Japanese-language books on modern literature, popular history, culture, and the fine arts for use by the general public. It also has books on traditional Japanese martial arts like judo, kendo, and karate since the Library is adjacent to the Steveston Martial Arts Centre. Steveston is a fishing village and Japanese-Canadian fishermen have earned their living there since the late nineteenth century. The library is located in the Steveston Community Centre. The Japanese Language School, the Japanese Nursery School, and the Martial Arts Centre, mentioned above, form a unique complex of Japanese-Canadian cultural and sports centers.
The Metropolitan Toronto Library Language Section 789 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario M4W 2G8

Mariko Liliefeldt, Japanese Reference Librarian Phone: (416) 393-7138

Holdings: Approximately 3,000 volumes

The collection contains contemporary Japanese fiction, history, culture, and fine arts. This is the largest Japanese collection among Canadian public libraries at present.

Community Libraries

In addition to the foregoing, some groups within the Japanese-Canadian community maintain their own Japanese collections.

Tonarigumi Bunko (Japanese Collection of the Japanese-Canadian Volunteers' Association) 378 Powell Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6A 1G5

Phone: (604) 687-2172

Holdings: 4,000 volumes

The Japanese-Canadian Volunteers' Association is located on Powell Street which was once the main street of Vancouver's Little Tokyo. This "Japan Town" has almost disappeared due to the relocation of Japanese-Canadians during World War II. However, there are still some Japanese shops on the street as well as the Japanese-Canadian Citizenship Office and the Japanese-Canadian Senior Citizen's Home. Tonarigumi is an association of volunteers helping Japanese-Canadian seniors, new immigrants, and any transients from Japan in Canada. Some of these people casually drop in the Tonarigumi to read Japanese books, chat with each other, and so on. A library corner has been set up in the Tonarigumi Office where about 4,000 volumes of Japanese books are kept. They are mostly popular novels, monthly and weekly journals, and daily newspapers acquired from Japan.

Kaede Bunko (Maple Library) c/o Japanese-Canadian Cultural Centre, Box 191 - 123 Wynford Drive, Don Mills, Ontario M3C 2S2

Phone: (416) 441-2345

Holdings: 5,000 volumes

This community library was originally founded and maintained by a group of new Japanese immigrants for leisure reading by their members. Most of the Japanese books are bunkobon (paperbacks) of contemporary writers' works, history, and culture. There are also a small number of children's books and magazines. Most of the books in the library have been donated by the members.

Nihon Bunko (Japanese Collection) c/o Japanese-Canadian Cultural Centre, 8155 Rousselot Street, Montreal, Quebec H2E 1Z7

Phone: (514) 728-1996

Holdings: 3,000 Japanese books in the same categories as those mentioned in the paragraph just above.
Government Libraries

Japanese collections are also found in government libraries and museums. Official government documents concerning Japanese-Canadians are for the most part held by the public archives.

Archives

The B.C. Provincial Archives  Parliament Buildings, Victoria, B.C.  V8V 1X4
Phone: (604) 387-5885

Holdings:  One hundred oral history tapes of Japanese-Canadians.
Photographs of early Japanese immigrants in the latter half of the nineteenth century.
B.C. government documents on Japanese-Canadians (1941-49)
Diary of Ranald McDonald (1824-1894)

The Archives house approximately 100 open-reel interview tapes with Japanese-Canadian senior citizens. Most are recorded in Japanese, some in English. Interviews were conducted in the early 1970s. A few transcriptions were made after translating interview dialogues in Japanese into English, but most are not so transcribed. Statistics of B.C. holdings of official documents and photographs are not available.

Public Archives of Canada 395 Wellington Street, Ottawa, Ontario  K1A 0N3
Phone: (613) 996-7686

Holdings:  Still photographs and 16 mm films of Japanese-Canadians (1941-49)
Federal government documents on Japanese-Canadians (1941-49)

Exact figures of its holdings are not available, but the Public Archives is the main repository of Canadian federal government documents relating to Japanese-Canadians during the period of the Pacific War.

Libraries

Royal Ontario Museum, Far Eastern Library  100 Queen's Park Crescent, Toronto, Ontario  M5S 2C6

Jack Howard, Librarian (Japan Specialist)  Phone: (416) 586-5718

Holdings:  Monographs and Bound Periodicals: 9,500 volumes
Current Periodicals: 121 titles

Japanese books started being collected during the 1950s. Many of the Japanese books are prewar collectors' editions on Japanese and Oriental art and archaeology. In addition, there are some Edo-period illustrated books in the collection. The Library also has Japanese books on history, papermaking, costume, and textiles, etc. The Museum currently receives 121 titles of Japanese periodicals relating to the subject fields mentioned above.
Hiroko Ozaki, Japanese Acquisitions and Cataloging Librarian
Phone: (819) 997-6208
Holdings: Statistics of the Japanese holdings in NLC are approximately 1,000 volumes

Most of NLC's acquisitions of Japanese-language books are obtained through gifts and exchanges. However, NLC is particularly interested in purchasing any Japanese books that deal with Canadian subjects.

Agriculture Canada, Vancouver Research Station Library 6660 N.W. Marine Drive, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1X2
Tony Matsumoto, Librarian Phone: (604) 224-4355

Although his library lacks Japanese research materials, Mr. Matsumoto, with a horticultural science background, has provided reference services concerning Japanese scientific information in the fields of agricultural science as well as biology. For the main part, he provides information services to researchers in Agriculture Canada across the country by utilizing Japanese science materials held at University of British Columbia libraries.

Conclusion

As we may gather from the above, there is a wide range of need in Canada for Japanese library resources from the academic to the public and government sectors. Over the past three decades since Japan studies in Canada began in the mid-1950s, Japanese collections in every sector have been expanding to meet the needs of their users. In particular, while academic interest in Japanese studies has been growing and becoming more diverse, the Japanese collections in universities have been developing both in quantity and quality. On the other hand, expansion of collections in public and government libraries has been slow. However, as general interest in Japan increases, we can expect more library development in these sectors.

This survey is brief and small in scope and detail, but I believe that I have presented the current profile of each Japanese-language collection in Canada based upon the best figures available so that we can see what has been achieved and what it still lacking. I hope that this short paper will facilitate the further improvement of Japanese collections in Canadian libraries.