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REPORT ON THE
JAPAN FOUNDATION – NATIONAL DIET LIBRARY
FIFTH JAPANESE STUDIES LIBRARIANS’ TRAINING PROGRAM

The fifth and final year of the Japanese Studies Librarians’ Training Program brought 16 library and museum professionals to Tokyo in January for three intensive weeks of study. The CEAL Committee on Japanese Materials provided us with the opportunity to report some of the program highlights during its 2001 session in Chicago. Below, we expand on some of these highlights, report on additional developments, and provide our thoughts on what we learned during the Program. A complete list of lectures and site visits is appended.

National Diet Library’s Web OPAC: Focusing on Zasshi kiji sakuin (雑誌記事索引) and Nihon zenkoku shoshi (日本全国書誌)

It was during the National Diet Library (NDL)’s Web-OPAC sessions that we, the trainees, received the exciting news about plans to make a vast amount of bibliographic data of various types newly available from April, 2002. This data will be featured in a "new" Web-OPAC, which will include, for example, Japanese monographs acquired since the Meiji period, doctoral dissertations, and some pre-modern Japanese literature.¹ [See Chart I below for a detailed list.] We were also informed that the Japanese Periodicals Index (Zasshi kiji sakuin), containing citations for more than 9,000 popular and scholarly journals in all disciplines, would finally be made available to us free of charge through the Web-OPAC sometime after Sept., 2002. We were also pleased with the NDL’s plan for enhanced service, which will allow a patron to request photocopies of journal articles online after identifying them in the Web-OPAC. [On the following day, we learned from the NDL staff that citations for the period 1948 to 1974 would also be made available in their Web-OPAC in the near future.]

While we were excited about the NDL’s plans for expanded access to bibliographic data, we had mixed feelings toward a Web-based version of the Japanese National Bibliography Weekly List (Nihon zenkoku shoshi), which is to replace the printed version in March, 2002. Unlike the printed version, which provides access points such as katakana readings for author and main title, Japanese subject headings, and author and title indexes, we were informed that the Web-version would only come with brief bibliographic records without these access points, and would be accessible only for one month. Although we explained to the NDL instructors inside and outside the classes that the Japanese National Bibliography is one of the primary tools for selecting materials such as those on local history and not-for-sale books, and that these access points are useful and often essential for book selectors, we had little success. We also requested that a Web-based national bibliography be retained for at least a few months and NDL is seriously considering this request.

¹ The NDL collection contains approximately 360,000 volumes of pre-modern literature, primarily consisting of wakosho and kanseki; records for 3,000 of these will be available initially.
A sample of the new web-based Japanese National Bibliography has been mounted on the NDL website.² Perhaps we will have to develop strategies to save copies of the weekly list – such as saving to disk – if the archive developed by the NDL is not sufficient for our needs. However, the loss of the katakana rendering of authors and titles is a significant demerit and will only increase our workloads.

Chart I

The National Diet Library’s New OPAC
Summary of Bibliographic Data Coverage

Type and approximate number of records currently available in the OPAC:

1. Japanese language monographs acquired since 1948 2,000,000
2. Western language monographs acquired since 1986 200,000

Type and approximate number of records to be added to the new OPAC:

1. Japanese language monographs acquired from Meiji through 1947 400,000
2. Western language monographs acquired 1948 through 1985 260,000
3. Japanese language serials 100,000
4. Western language serials 50,000
5. Japanese Periodicals Index (“Zasshi kiji sakuin”) 3,500,000
6. Maps (number not yet determined)
7. Pre-modern materials 3,000
8. U.S. government publications 130,000
9. Doctoral dissertations 190,000
10. Industrial standards materials 60,000
11. Ashihara Eiryō collection 60,000

(Translated from Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan geppo (国立国会図書館月報) (no. 478, 2001), p. 25.)

NDL’s International Services

This session focused on the NDL’s international reference service and international loan/photo duplication service. In this session, we learned that a patron can submit his/her reference inquiries to the International Cooperation Division either in Japanese or English by mail, by fax, and even by email (kokusai@ndl.go.jp), and that the NDL will try to respond to him/her within one to two months. We also learned that it will be possible for a patron to submit a reference inquiry as well as a request for photo duplication directly through NDL’s Web-OPAC, hopefully by the fall of 2002. We were informed, however, that the International Cooperation Division would most likely be dissolved and placed under new administration next fall and that CEAL would be notified when this occurs. We thought that if staff of the International Cooperation Division came to the CEAL meetings every few years, it would be beneficial not only for newly

² The URL is: http://www.ndl.go.jp/news/zenkoku.html

19
hired Japanese studies librarians but also for East Asian librarians responsible for Japanese collections. It would also allow NDL librarians to hear directly from their overseas users.

**Japanese Newspaper Resources**

One highlight of the program was the overview of Japanese newspaper resources. This included a fascinating look at the history of newspaper publishing in Japan and overseas (for example, a Japanese language newspaper was published in London as early as 1873.) It also covered basic newspaper indexes and reference works, newspaper resources on the Internet, and special libraries for newspapers. Three of these developments are particularly noteworthy. First, bibliographic data for all newspaper titles from the Meiji period to the present held by NDL will become available for searching in the new Web-OPAC when all serials titles are added to the database in the fall.

Second, the NDL plans to make public a new database on its home page (originally scheduled for release last year, it is still being tested). This is the Japan Union List of Newspapers (全国新聞総合目録データベース), which grew out of a cooperative effort to encourage the preservation of Japanese newspapers. The database will include over 18,000 newspaper titles (approximately 10,300 in Japanese) held by public and private libraries and institutes throughout Japan. The record for each will include the publishing history, format (original, reduced size version, microfilm, reprint, etc.), and publisher, as well as detailed holdings for each institution owning the title. This resource will certainly be welcomed by researchers needing to access runs of particular newspapers or to document title changes and other historical information. Furthermore it will alert them to special libraries and local collections devoted to subjects of interest.

Finally, we were introduced to a new special library for newspapers that opened in October, 2000 in Yokohama, the Japan Newspaper Museum (日本新聞博物館). This library\(^3\) joins well-established collections at the University of Tokyo\(^4\) but, unlike the University collections, it is open to the general public. It attempts to provide access to complete runs of major Japanese newspapers and make them available in a variety of formats, including online. Entry is free and copying service is available for a fee.

**Workshop Sponsored by the International House of Japan**

The sixteen librarians and curators in the Training Program participated in a workshop held at International House, each making a presentation on the theme, "Overseas Japanese Studies

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\(^3\) The Museum is located in Newspark (ニュースパーク), a facility sponsored by an association affiliated with the Japan Newspaper Publishers & Editors Association (日本新聞協会). The Museum’s home page is at: [http://www.pressnet.or.jp/newspark/libra.html](http://www.pressnet.or.jp/newspark/libra.html) Thanks to Ms. Junko Kurita of the Japan Foundation Library in Tokyo, who provided more information about the Museum.

\(^4\) These include the Meiji Newspaper and Magazine Library in the Law Faculty’s Center for the Documentation of Modern Japan’s Law and Politics (東京大学法学部付属近代日本法制史料センター明治新間雑誌部文庫; translation of name provided by authors) [http://www.j.u-tokyo.ac.jp/lib/meiji/](http://www.j.u-tokyo.ac.jp/lib/meiji/) which has an outstanding collection of Meiji era periodicals and the Institute of Socio-Information and Communication Studies’ Newspaper and Multimedia Library (東京大学社会情報研究所附属情報メディア研究資料センター) [http://www.isics.u-tokyo.ac.jp/](http://www.isics.u-tokyo.ac.jp/) which contains a comprehensive collection of newspaper resources from the Showa and Heisei eras.
Collections and Their Programs for Cooperation" (海外の日本研究図書館とその協力活動) to a group of over thirty Japanese library professionals. The workshop provided us with a great opportunity to learn about different types of libraries, their clientele, services, and collections, because half the librarians came either from national libraries, museums or Japan Foundation libraries, while the rest came from academic libraries. It was interesting to find that computer related problems seemed prevalent among overseas Japanese studies libraries. Some librarians, for example, told us how Japanese characters displayed in a Chinese or French language hardware environment often became gibberish, while others told us that CD-ROMs manufactured in Japan would be incompatible in a non-Japanese hardware environment. Having worked in libraries where our computer specialists did not support CJK related issues, we could relate to those librarians’ frustrations. It is indeed fortunate to have members of CEAL and eastlib with whom we can share our experiences and seek assistance. This workshop has helped us become aware of the importance of library cooperation not only in the areas of collection development and access to other libraries’ holdings but also in the area of access to computer mediated data in overseas libraries so that we can better serve our patrons.

**Thoughts on University and Institute Site Visits**

Visits to the University of Kyoto and Waseda University main libraries provided an opportunity for trainees who work in university libraries to compare library homepage development with what is going on in their own countries. For librarians from North America, the homepages of these libraries have a very familiar feel: they include OPACs, digital exhibitions, links to internet resources and all of the basic guides to local collections and the research process. They are also beginning to allow the user to perform circulation functions, transmit online reference questions, and do other transactions online.

Also familiar are the indexes and full-text electronic resources to which users have access through library home pages. The reason they are familiar is that, for the most part, they are precisely the same western language sources available to us at our home institutions. There are still very few Japanese full-text web resources to which university libraries in Japan can subscribe. This means that it is often easier for researchers in Japan to have desktop access to current issues of overseas periodicals, for example, rather than locally produced scholarly information. We were able to pick up some clues to this state of affairs during our training.

One major issue is copyright. The copyright laws are often claimed to be more restrictive than in the U.S. and Canada although this is a matter of debate. What is certainly true is that the law is much more stringently interpreted. Therefore, the National Institute of Informatics (日本情報学研究所) or NII, which is trying to expand full-text coverage of academic society journals in its NACSIS-ELS service, tries to contact the author of every article in every issue to get permission to publish online. If the author cannot be found, NII feels it must provide “adequate notice” by running advertisements announcing plans to publish for six months to a year prior to putting an issue up on the Internet. While this copyright clearance does not pertain to things published earlier than 50 years ago, these items are not of primary interest now.

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5 One exception to this state of affairs is the free availability of "books in print" data on the web through vendors and the major bookseller’s association. The English-language "Books in Print," is only available through purchase.
It is not surprising that commercial publishers would be uninterested in this kind of legwork (and, without the prestige of government affiliation, would have an even harder time eliciting cooperation from authors). Therefore, it is not surprising that most of the digital full-text initiatives we viewed in Japan were developed by the NDL or other government-affiliated institutions such as the NII and tend to be of older materials for which copyright is not an issue. Another notable array of digital bibliographies and full-text documents can be seen on the National Institute of Japanese Literature’s (国文学研究資料館) homepage.6

Another reason for the relative lack of private sector interest in web publishing is the popularity of CD-ROMs. As we saw at Osaka Central Public Library (大阪府立中央図書館) as well as the university libraries, CD-ROM technology is still the primary means for digital publishing. Commercial publishers clearly have a major market for CD-ROMs and most likely prefer the ease with which products can be marketed (with little need, in their view, to address ongoing maintenance issues.) And, there is no tradition in Japan of grant-funded initiatives such as JSTOR, which have greatly increased full-text electronic access to scholarly resources in the U.S.

It was interesting to find that representation of the Japanese language electronically is still a hurdle in some cases. At Waseda University, which has moved so rapidly to complete reconversion of its catalog, the pre-Meiji materials will probably remain inaccessible for some time to come. Producing bibliographic data for pre-modern items is complicated not only by the complexity of bibliographic description but also by the fact that many of the characters cannot be represented in the current version of Unicode. Until Unicode is expanded to include many pre-modern variants of characters, institutions such as Waseda that are committed to a faithful rendering of original data in the description will not be making this data available electronically.

Digitization and electronic publishing efforts spearheaded by government-affiliated institutions are impressive. There are immense benefits to the government role, especially low or no cost access to important resources, such as the Japanese Periodical Index mentioned earlier. However, there is a trade-off in terms of ease of payment and the lack of continual enhancements that often make commercial products in the U.S. so user friendly. Nevertheless, thanks to the efforts of many of the institutions that hosted us, users of Japanese language resources will have much to look forward to in the coming months.

In the meantime, many university and institute sites have online exhibits of various rare books and art objects. Several noteworthy exhibits are on the NDL homepage,7 including scans of rare books and photographs of pre-modern and early modern Japan. Waseda University Library also has a web exhibit that displays many of the library’s treasures, complete with detailed close-ups.8 Kyoto University’s well-developed digital collection includes a beautifully illustrated edition of the Otogizōshi.9 It was most interesting for us to see the real objects and then compare them to

6 The URL is: http://www.njil.ac.jp
7 The NDL exhibits can be found at: http://www.ndl.go.jp/ndl_frm_2.html.
8 The Waseda exhibit is at: http://www.wul.waseda.ac.jp/TENJI/virtual/
9 The URL for the University of Kyoto exhibition table of contents is: http://ddb.libnet.kulib.kyoto-u.ac.jp/exhibit/index.html. The Otogizōshi exhibit is at: http://ddb.libnet.kulib.kyoto-u.ac.jp/exhibit/otogi/cover/index.html
their online versions. Something is lost, of course, but the Internet is providing us with the opportunity to "visit" these valuable collections at any time.

Japanese Reference Sources

One of the many valuable handouts we received during the Training Program was a detailed guide to reference works for Japanese studies compiled by an experienced librarian in the General Reference Division of the NDL. This handout was later distributed electronically to many eastlib subscribers upon request. A revised and expanded version of this guide has now been published in Sankō shoshi kenkyū (参考書誌研究). ¹⁰ This serial is held by many North American libraries so the article can easily be obtained by inter-library loan.

Report by Naomi Kotake (Stanford University), Jack Howard (Royal Ontario Museum), and Ellen H. Hammond (University of Iowa), Training Program Participants from the U.S. and Canada

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Fifth Japanese Studies Librarians’ Training Program

Dates: January 21 – February 10, 2001
Official Sponsor: The Japan Foundation (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
Participants: 16 librarians/curators from Europe (6), the Americas (5), Asia (4), and the Middle East (1)

Lectures sponsored by the National Diet Library

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Databases for Japanese Bibliographic Information
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The National Diet Library’s Web OPAC
The National Diet Library’s Digitization Projects
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The National Diet Library’s Government Documents Collection
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Tours

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Workshop

Overseas Japanese Studies Collections and their Programs for Cooperation =
海外の日本研究図書館とその協力活動