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In Memoriam: Toshiyuki Aoki

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IN MEMORIAM

Toshiyuki Aoki

Toshiyuki Aoki was born in Niigata Prefecture in Japan and in 1956 came to the United States to study at Columbia University. He received a B.S. Degree in geography in 1959 and an M.L.S. Degree in library science from the same university in 1962. From 1968 he worked at Harvard-Yenching Library as head of its Japanese Section until his retirement in 1999. He loved music and literature and spent most of his retired time translating classical novels into Japanese. He died on October 19, 2016. Mr. Aoki is survived by his family in Japan and in Sweden. A burial service was held on Monday, December 5 at Christ Church Cambridge, with burial following at Mount Auburn Cemetery.

(From the obituary published in *The Boston Globe*, November 13, 2016)

Remembering Toshiyuki Aoki

During his tenure of over three decades at Harvard, Mr. Aoki served numerous faculty members, students, and visiting scholars in Japanese Studies while selecting and acquiring research materials on both Humanities and Social Sciences. Not only are the depth and breadth of the Japanese collection remarkable; it also offers many pleasant surprises to those who explore it. He was and still is highly respected among his library colleagues while many remember him as a bit reserved and mild manner man.

After his retirement, Mr. Aoki, a long-time resident of Cambridge, Mass, was witnessed frequently at the café of the Harvard Coop Bookstore in the Harvard Square. He was typically translating mysteries such as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes into Japanese. "He liked to keep his brain active while learning something new," his niece now living in Sweden told me at the funeral service. The conversation reminded me of his abacus. When I succeeded to his position in 1999, I found impeccable acquisition transaction records all neatly hand-written. He would not surrender to modern conveniences like a calculator as long as his abacus and his hand and brain would work beautifully.

Mr. Aoki was a man of few words, as you might remember, but his solid professionalism is quite eloquently presented in the collection. Every time I walk in the stacks, I treasure the wonderful collection he built and left for us.

Kuniko Yamada McVey
Librarian for the Japanese Collection
Harvard-Yenching Library