Current Bibliographical Services in East Asia: Japan†

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The theme of this presentation is “Bibliographical Services in East Asia: Japan,” and I shall look at those services with the needs of Japanese studies in this country in mind.

The reason 1970 was set as the beginning date for the coverage may be that this paper is to be a sequel to Andrew Kuroda’s “Bibliographical Control for Japanese Studies: Present Status and Future Developments,” which was presented at the Association for Asian Studies meeting of 1970. That paper, as you know, was later published in the Foreign Acquisitions Newsletter, No. 23 (Washington D.C.: Association of Research Libraries), October, 1970, pp. 7-17. In it, after making a brief historical survey of Japanese studies in this country, Kuroda gave a very comprehensive review and indicated the current status of bibliographical sources for Japanese studies mainly in English, such as: Library of Congress cards, the National Union Catalog, and various other catalogs of notable Japanese collections. Along with Eugene W. Wu’s “Bibliographical Controls for Asian Studies: Present Status and Future Developments in Chinese Studies” and Richard C. Howard’s “The Bibliography of Asian Studies,” it should be required reading for students in East Asian studies.

How the general bibliographical tools described in those papers need to be expanded to meet the needs of Japanese studies; the comprehensiveness of bibliographical coverage of East Asian monographs and serials; how the currently functioning bibliographical

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programs may be improved to include East Asian materials; and the need for special indexes, bibliographies, and other research tools: all of these problems have been presented, with recommendations, in *East Asian Libraries: Problems and Prospects*.

In fulfilling the charge of the assignment, I began by perusing the *Committee on East Asian Libraries Bulletin*, issued regularly in an attractive format, under the able leadership of the committee chairpersons and editors. The back issues contained the announcements of:


**Far Eastern Library Catalogs of the University of Chicago.** G. K. Hall, 1973. 10 volumes.


Knowing what arduous effort the compilation of a scholarly bibliography requires, I should like to acknowledge with thanks and admiration the bibliographical work of Frank Shulman.

Then there were others, and among them are “selected” Japanese language bibliographies, such as:


A cursory study of the *Bulletin* seems to substantiate Dr. Thomas Kuo's conclusion in his “Special Subject Bibliographies of East Asian Publications,” commissioned as a guide to the work of the Steering Committee, that “Chinese studies are better served than Japanese or Korean studies.” But is the number of bibliographical aids for Japanese studies actually less than that of Chinese studies, or are they simply invisible because they have not been adequately analyzed and reported?

Gradually I began to feel a little uneasy, wondering how those titles were selected and reported. Has there been any editorial policy regarding the recording of new bibliographical publications, or has it been left more or less to whatever is reported by librarians? How could we have missed the recording of numerous catalogs published by the National Diet Library, especially such an important catalog as the *Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan Shozo Meiji Kanko Tosho Mokuroku* (National Library Catalog of Books Printed in the Meiji Era)? The catalog lists about 120,000 titles of Japanese books published during the Meiji Period (1868–1912) and kept in the National Diet Library. The titles are arranged according to Nippon Decimal Classification (NDC) with modifications. This catalog was published from 1971 through
1976 in five volumes with a separate title index volume. It is estimated that the catalog includes about 70% of all the publications of that era. It should be encouraging news for all Japanese study specialists that the National Diet Library is planning to compile and publish retrospective catalogs of the Taisho Period (1912–26) and the Showa Period (after 1926) of books in its collection.

What about its antecedent, Kokusho Somokuroku [Union Catalog of Old Japanese Books], published in eight volumes (with a separate Author Index volume) by Iwanami Shoten, a private publisher, from 1963 through 1972? As a retrospective national bibliography of Japanese works from the earliest period to 1867, and based on the collections of 426 Japanese libraries, it contains about half a million titles of old books and manuscripts which were written, compiled, or translated by the Japanese up to 1867. Many university and public libraries and special collections have been publishing catalogs, and those deposited with the National Diet Library have been duly recorded in the Nohon Shuho, a weekly national bibliography, and the Zen Nihon Shuppanbutsu Somokuroku [Japanese National Bibliography], annual, both issued by the National Diet Library. The weekly bibliography is divided into two sections: Government Publications and Non-Government Publications. Every weekly issue contains about 700 entries and new serial titles are sometimes listed as an appendix to the main part. By the way, Nohon Shuho has changed not only its format, but also its English title, "Current Publications," to "Japanese National Bibliography Weekly List." Nohon Shuho is now a bona fide weekly edition of Zen Nihon Shuppanbutsu Somokuroku. It has also started to include the titles and authors' names in katakana transliteration, which should make the identification and processing of the publications easier. The objective of this Japanese language weekly bibliography, printed in the January issues, reads:

"In order to fulfill the function as a National Bibliography of publications issued in Japan, this list is intended to disseminate, once a week both within and outside the country, accurate biblio-
graphical information regarding domestic publications deposited with, or purchased by, our Library.

The tone of this statement expresses the determination of the national library to recognize and fulfill its national and international responsibilities. It is, then, obvious that when we discuss current bibliographical services in Japan the national library would be the focus of interest and expectation.

Then, there is Amano Keitaro. *Nihon Shoshi no Shoshi* [Bibliography of Japanese Bibliographies]—Sosai-hen [General Section] (Tokyo: Gannando, 1973). This revised edition of the original published in 1933, hailed as the “most definitive of recent works in this field” of Japanese bibliographical research and “an unusually complete and useful account of Japanese bibliographical literature” in one of the University of Michigan Center for Japanese Studies Bibliographical Series publications, should still be an indispensable bibliographical tool in Japanese studies.

The *Japan Interpreter*, a quarterly journal, formerly the *Journal of Japanese Social and Political Ideas in Japan*, published by the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE) with the purpose of “acquainting English-speaking readers with current Japanese thinking on social, political, and economic issues, both domestic and international,” also seemed to have escaped our bibliographical dragnet.

*Japan Echo*, a quarterly journal (v. 1-; 1974-. Tokyo: Echo), is being published to “foster a deeper mutual understanding through improved communication.” It carries full or partial translations of “important articles by prominent Japanese critics and commentators . . . prepared for the Japanese audience and published in leading Japanese publications.” *Japanese Economic Studies*, by M. E. Sharpe, Inc., has been published since 1974. It contains “translations of economic materials from Japanese sources, primarily scholarly journals and books.” *Japanese Literature Today* (no. 1-; March, 1976-. Tokyo: Japan PEN Club) is a successor to *PEN News*. This journal not only gives
surveys of Japanese literature during the past year and English translations of recent works,” but also “a list of works of Japanese literature recently translated into European languages.” The Wheel Extended; A Toyota Quarterly Review v. 1- ; Spring, 1971- . Tokyo: Toyota Sales Co.) is restricted to translations from Japanese sources, and should be a valuable source of information on transportation, urban development, communications, industry, and technology. I can continue and mention:


A quick visit to the reference shelves of the Japanese Collection of the University of Hawaii revealed some recent bibliographical aids such as:


Regrettably, the Japanese Library Association has not been an active organization for dissemination of bibliographic infor-

I could go on and on, at the risk of never being invited back again to the CEAL meetings. Besides, bibliographies and reference materials published by one of the most prolific publishing nations of the world, Japan, are too multitudinous for a brief session. I should hasten to add that the purpose of my comments is not to nitpick but to point out the work yet to be done in order to effectively help our Japanese specialists. We should never be restive under the business requirements of the collections. In the coming decades all academic libraries will be required to be more active than heretofore in rendering bibliographical services.

We have been successful in carrying out the selection, acquisition, processing, and circulation of Japanese language materials in the traditional library mode, but are now asked to build bridges among the collections and further the use of materials by the specialists.

_CULCON_ [U.S.—Japan Conference on Cultural Education Interchange] _Report on Japanese Studies at Colleges and Universities in the United States in the Mid 70s_ reviews the development
of Japanese studies in the five areas of Teaching and Training; Research and Publication; Service to the Community beyond the University Walls; Library Facilities; and Financial Resources. Nowhere is the adequacy or inadequacy of bibliographies and reference tools for Japanese studies discussed, which is unfortunate.

Many segments active in cultural and educational interchange between the United States and Japan are interested in current and comprehensive information as to what is happening, what is available in terms of books and periodicals, who is doing what, and so forth. We must involve ourselves directly or indirectly in the dissemination of information for Japanese studies. We must concern ourselves with not only the means for disseminating documents, but also with the contents and value of the documents we disseminate. Who else but we librarians can give comprehensive bibliographical services, encompassing all the subject areas, to satisfy the informational needs of the specialists?

At this point, I would like to suggest that it might be feasible to publish a journal, in addition to the Committee on East Asian Libraries Bulletin, which focuses on bibliographical studies or information on new research tools. It is my impression that important bibliographical studies have been left out of the Bulletin, or overshadowed by various other library programs and activities. Such a journal will in effect be creating an important link between the Japanese, or East Asian collections, and the needs of the researchers.

Some of the candidates for inclusion as feature articles in such a publication, if they have not already been considered for another publication, will be:

Hastings, James J.

Sources in the National Archives of the United States Relating to Legal Reform in Japan, 1945-1952.

Shulman, Frank Joseph

We may solicit and expect contributions from the National Diet Library and other research collections in Japan. The recent donation to the National Diet Library of the documents of Mune-kata Kotaro (1863–1923), one of the famous tairiku ronin, a wanderer in China on an intelligence mission for the Japanese development of China; the acquisition by the same library of the papers of Sato Tatsuo, late President of the National Personnel Authority and a major contributor to the writing of the new Japanese Constitution; and the library’s oral history project on the makings of the Japanese Constitution are examples of resources that should be of interest to Japanese and Asian specialists. Regarding translation services, the Joint Committee on Japan–U.S. Cultural and Educational Interchange conference that was held in Hawaii on 22–24 June 1977 pointed out in its “Special Focus” that “although significant progress has been made in recent years in the volume and variety of translations, those particularly from Japanese into English continue to be too few.” It recommended:

1. A substantial increase in translations, particularly from Japanese into English, and in the fields of humanities and social studies, is needed.

2. Existing private efforts such as The Japan Interpreter, published by the Japan Center for International Exchange, should be encouraged and supported along with public efforts.

3. A comprehensive approach to the problems entails: (a) a systematic search for appropriate materials to translate involving experts from both countries and all bibliographic aids; (b) means to encourage and facilitate the work of translators, including better compensation and recognition; (c) increased distribution of translations through better information, argumented efforts to place translations in academic journals, and greater subsidization of distribution; and (d) development of an evaluation system,
4. Efforts which seem to have promise, such as the proposal by The Asia Foundation for a Translation Service Center, should be given sympathetic and careful attention.4

Exactly what form the implementation of these recommendations would take is not clear at this point.

On this matter of translation I should add that according to the “Report on Translation Aids and Centers” prepared by Key K. Kobayashi and Warren M. Tsuneishi for the U.S.-Japan Conference of Cultural and Educational Interchange, the Library of Congress may become a “potential source of information about translation in the humanities and social sciences,” if a recent recommendation to the Librarian of Congress is implemented. The report recommends that “the Library of Congress establish a national translation center for the humanities to identify creative and original works in foreign languages to be translated, compile updated records of available translators, and oversee related tasks.”5 I hope that the interest in East Asia will be sufficiently incorporated into the project.

Some of the translation aids have already been described. Yamamoto Tadashi, Director of the Japan Center for International Exchange, and publisher of The Japan Interpreter, prepared the Survey Report: Translation In International Communication, in which he first reviewed the “present availability of translated Japanese works and the roles or functions of such translations in the context of international communication.” He then studied the problems related to promoting more and better translations and finally attempted to “outline some priorities for possible future translation efforts and other related endeavors.”6 The activities of the Japan Center for International Exchange should be heralded.

Perhaps, as a corollary to the future development of translations from Japanese to English, there exists a need to review the English language articles and books issued in Japan that are never made known to the Western world of scholarship through
such bibliographical tools as the *Bibliography of Asian Studies*. There are, of course:

*DAILY SUMMARY OF JAPANESE PRESS. 1952-*  . Tokyo.

*SUMMARY OF SELECTED JAPANESE MAGAZINES. 1954-*  . Tokyo.

There still seem to be many sources that are untapped: for example, numerous articles and translations appearing in the English language newspapers and magazines issued in Japan. During my sabbatical, I wondered how many of the Japanese specialists back in the United States saw the translation of Tachibana Takashi’s “Study of the Japanese Communist Party,” which originally appeared in the *Bungei Shunju*. Later a translation of it, and the rebuttal by the Communist Party first appearing in *Akahata*, Red Flag, were both reprinted in the *Mainichi Daily News*. The proceedings of the Diet hearings on the celebrated Lockheed Incident also appeared in the same English language newspaper, and because of one of the protagonists, Kodama Yoshio, there were a few lengthy articles on the Japanese right wing. The international editions of *Time* and *Newsweek* distributed in Japan carried such interesting articles as “Japan’s Low Profile” by Tokuyama Jiro, Nomura Research Institute of Economics and Technology, which described some of the reasons why Japan had maintained a low diplomatic posture in the international arena. Also, “You Can’t Be Immoral,” by Prime Minister Fukuda Takeo, “No Excess Power to Protect Us,” by Morita Akio, Chairman of the Sony Corporation, and others.

For those of us, students of the information industry of Asia, the *Newsletter of the UNESCO Tokyo Book Development Center* is a gold mine of information on the publishing industry, book trade, reading habits of Asian countries, and other related subjects.
Shimizu, Hideo
“Book Publishing in Japan Today.”
June 1975, pp. 11-12.

Kawakita, Norio
“Magazine Publishing in Japan.”

Kako, Satoshi
“Kamishibai—the Unique Cultural Property of
Japan.” September 1976, pp. 6-7.

Aoki, Haruo
“Training for Publishing Personnel in Japan.”
December 1976, pp. 6-8.

We need to hunt for and review those "fugitive" materials, which exist, but are never made widely available. General Bibliography of Japanese Publications in the English language, again by Yamamoto Tadashi and the Project Team of the Japan Center for International Exchange, is useful for this purpose. It is a comprehensive bibliography for the purpose of "considering possible priorities in the effort to translate Japanese social science works and related efforts in international communication" and lists documents written originally in English by Japanese and English translations of the Japanese texts issued during the 1963-73 period. It includes bibliographies, monographs, and what are perhaps the most helpful in our search for "fugitive sources of information: the occasional papers, government papers, and serials of economic, business, industrial, financial, and government organizations.

Making a survey, or compiling a bibliography, is one assignment, and another that is now challenging us is how those documents of research may be made available to the Japanese study specialists. We must undertake to supply such researchers, either manually or mechanically, with bibliographical information of particular interest to them. This might be through something on the order of Current Contents, a publication that promptly
disseminates information on world-wide research and practice in the social and behavioral sciences, in management, and in educational theory and practice by reproducing the table of contents of more than 1,250 journals. Furthermore, its Original Article Tear Sheet Services (OATS) supplies articles from journals that are not available in the researcher’s library. Of course, this is not an entirely new idea, and it is my understanding that there is a China Information Library, which is a bi-monthly “current awareness reference service designed to provide easy access to up-to-date information on China and provide microfiche copies of current materials on the country.”

The Japanese-language newspapers, of course, constitute a valuable source of bibliographical information. The editorial of the Asahi Shim bun of 4 May 1976 discussed the pros and cons of releasing documents from the occupation period for research. On 31 May, the Japanese newspapers reported that 190 volumes of documents were actually made public, which triggered the interest of Prof. Ray A. Moore, Department of History, Amherst College, to write “New Japanese Government Materials on the American Occupation of Japan, 1945-52.” The publication of Tanaka’s Cyclopedia of Edible Plants of the World, the result of forty years’ research by Dr. Tanaka Chozburo, Professor Emeritus of Osaka University, was reported in the 25 April 1976 issue of the Asahi Shim bun. On 29 May of last year, the same newspaper reported the microfilming project by Kinki University Library of the (Philipp Franz von) Siebold (1796–1866) Collection, now housed in the British Library. These are just a few isolated examles to show that constant attention must be directed toward the Japanese vernacular newspapers for research aids and information.

Returning to the report of the Steering Committee for a Study of the Problems of East Asian Libraries, it states that “card catalogs cannot possibly serve as the only key for unlocking the resources of a particular library. The scholar must be aware of and utilize a host of ancillary aids—bibliographies, indexes, guides—in his search for needed information.” Needless to stress
at this meeting, "to scientists and to the research worker of any kind today, bibliographies are not only valuable—they are essential."\(^{10}\)

The Steering Committee recommends that "scholars and librarians should be encouraged to develop bibliographic projects of their own in order to meet the continuing need for East Asian reference tools," and suggests as a possible source of funding the "National Endowment for the Humanities, which has a program especially designed to finance this kind of activity."

We must laboriously analyze and evaluate information for its effective use. Then the librarians’ studies of bibliographies and other research aids need to reach the researchers, informing them of what has been done on what, where, and how. An old cliché in the book industry goes: "Books which are not advertised do not exist." Likewise, information valuable for Japanese study programs does not exist unless it is made known to the users. It has become trite to say that information is a valuable commodity. It is valuable only if it is cogent and relevant in the eye of the beholder, only if it is presented to him in the right form, at the right time, and in the right place. The cry for effective bibliographical service seems to imply that if the library does not bring information closer to them, some other agency very well might. That agency will then occupy a central role in the information business for Japanese studies—a role once occupied by libraries.

The point I should like to stress is that we need to further strengthen and develop our close working relationships with the Japanese research libraries, especially the National Diet Library.

About a decade ago, I stated that No research program can advance without adequate library resources.... Furthermore, no single institution in any country can be self-sufficient in building up, processing or maintaining library resources in foreign languages. To a very large extent, any institution, either American or foreign, must depend on a very close cooperation among
libraries and librarians. In the capturing of "fugitive" materials, the exploring of English language sources of information in Japan, the compiling of bibliographies and reference tools, or the setting up of any mechanism to assist Japanese study programs in this country, we need to rely on the cooperation and assistance of our Japanese library colleagues. They are the best bibliographical source in Japan. The cooperation of the National Diet Library is a prerequisite for any of our bibliographical projects and activities.

The Japanese government has been active in disseminating information. It has assumed responsibility for the management of scientific and technical information. We can refer, for example, to the work and accomplishments of the Japan Information Center of Science and Technology, established under the JICST Act of 1957 as a semi-governmental organization. However, there is no formalized national policy for information, or a statement like the National Information Policy: Report to the President of the United States. This is due primarily to the lack of strong centralized coordination over the development and operation of information systems. Consequently, the main responsibility seems to have fallen on the National Diet Library, and the library in turn has responded and demonstrated its increasing impact on the document dissemination and retrieval scene. In addition to being a document depository, a traditional library role, it has become the bibliographic information dissemination center. According to a note inscribed on a Christmas card from a colleague at the National Diet Library, the Japan MARC (Machine Readable Cataloging), designed to meet both national and international demands, was scheduled to start its trial run this January. A new day in Japanese bibliographical activities is dawning.

I believe that our Japanese library colleagues are willing and ready to assist us, but for that assistance to be effective, we need to identify exactly what our needs are and how they can help us. In our past expressions of needs, we tended to dwell
on vague generalities, such as "government publications" and "publications of research value." Let me quote a painful experience as an example. The National Diet Library, in response to our clamour for government publications, established the Investigation Committee on the Microfilming of Japanese Government Publications in September 1973 to study "the feasibility of copying, servicing, and distributing government publications in the form of microfiche." The National Diet Library sent a questionnaire inquiring about the kinds of government publications that were really needed, and our response concerning specific needs would have had a bearing on the scale of the project to be implemented, but very few constructive responses were forwarded.

Dr. Kuo has recommended the establishment of an Advisory Committee on Special Subject Bibliographies of East Asian Publications to determine and coordinate priorities for bibliographical projects. It is worthy of careful consideration. Perhaps one of the first priorities for the proposed committee would be to carefully study where gaps exist in bibliographical control and services, what needs to be revived, and what needs to be done and how. We need to reassess our own strength, weakness, and specific needs.

Obviously the "more" period of the 1950s and 1960s—more money, more staff, more books and journals, more programs, more space, more technology, and more this and more that—is over. Our urgent need is to develop ways of sharing library resources among East Asian collections, and we need—at the same time—to shift our emphasis away from holdings and size to access and service. As one prominent university librarian stated: "More realistic concepts of collection building will have to be adopted, and new patterns of service will have to be devised."

References

2. East Asian Libraries, p. 25.