

# Recent Japanese Library Developments

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THE FIRST JAPANESE LIBRARY in historical literature appears at the beginning of the eighth century, when the Japanese government established a library called "Zushoryō."<sup>1</sup> Following that time Japan has had libraries established and owned by noblemen and priests, as well as by some feudal lords.

During the period from 1639 to 1862 the country closed its doors to all foreign countries according to the policy of the Tokugawa shogunate, and international cultural exchanges were entirely suspended. Toward the end of this period the merchant class gradually developed into a more influential body in society and began to own private collections of printed materials. It was in 1868 that the Meiji revolution took place, and the Tokugawas restored the reins of government to the emperor. At that time Japan abandoned her closed door policy and moved swiftly toward complete modernization. Many governmental officials, scholars, and students were sent to Western countries, including the United States, where they learned library practices.<sup>2</sup> Some of them, upon their return, urged the establishment of free public libraries. Meantime, the Meiji government took over the libraries of the Tokugawa shogunate, put an education law into effect, and provided a basis for libraries in schools of higher education.

In 1872 the "Shojakukan," the first public library, was opened in Tokyo under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. In the following years, universities were established, and their de-

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partmental collections began to emerge. In 1892, twenty-four years after the revolution, the Japan Library Association was inaugurated, and it has to this day continued to promote the library movements of the country. In 1910 the Minister of Education issued a memorandum urging the establishment of local libraries. Since then many public libraries, not only in large cities but also in small towns and villages, have been established, reaching the maximum—more than five thousand libraries—in 1935. Most of those libraries, however, were established by the government, and were neither initiated nor supported by the will and needs of the public. Therefore, they became storehouses of books, and few librarians did much to encourage the use of their holdings. This period, during which Japanese public libraries prospered in number only, was followed by a period in which every aspect of the nation was militarized except the library, which was neglected. By the time of the surrender of Japan in 1945, libraries were in serious decline.

In 1945 upon the occupation by the allied powers, an American cultural center called the Library of Civil Information and Education Center (popularly known as CIE) was opened in Tokyo. Soon after, CIE libraries were set up in more than twenty other cities in Japan. The chief librarians of these libraries were American professionals who gave effective stimuli and advice to Japanese librarians.

<sup>1</sup> Noriaki Ono, *Nihon toshokanshi* ("The History of Japanese Libraries") (Kyoto: Ran Shobo, 1952), pp. 17-19.

<sup>2</sup> Japanese National Commission for UNESCO, *Development of Modern System of Education in Japan* (Tokyo: 1960), pp. 17-18.

After the war the democratization of education became a great concern of the people. In 1947 Japan's educational system was changed to the present pattern which is similar to the American. The same year the National Diet Library Law was passed by the Diet, whose library—the Japanese counterpart of the Library of Congress—was opened in 1948. In 1950 the Public Library Law was put into effect. The following year the Japan Library School was founded at Keio University in Tokyo. The School Library Law came in 1954.

#### EDUCATION FOR LIBRARIANSHIP

Education for librarianship<sup>3</sup> began in 1903 in the form of occasional short courses or institutes. In 1921 an institution for the training of librarians was opened under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. Its admission requirement was successful completion of the eleventh school grade. In 1950-51 institutes for educational leadership in library science were held with Susan Akers from the University of North Carolina School of Library Science as leader.

The most significant postwar development in this field was the foundation in 1951 of the Japan Library School at Keio University in Tokyo. When it was opened all of the full-time faculty members were American librarians who had been selected with the advice of a committee of the American Library Association. The American faculty's contributions to the development of Japanese libraries are so noteworthy that I should like to mention their names in the order of their visits: Robert L. Gitler, the founding director of the school, from the University of Washington, Seattle, and now at New York State University College at Geneseo; Mrs. Frances Cheney, Peabody College; Bertha Frick, Columbia; Han-

nah Hunt, Western Reserve; and Edgar Larson, of the Naval Post Graduate School library. These were the visiting faculty members who founded the school. After them came other American faculty members during the formative years of the school. They were: Norma Cass, from the University of Kentucky; Mr. and Mrs. Everett T. Moore, UCLA; Georgia Sealoff, West Seattle High School library; Anne M. Smith, the University of British Columbia; Ruth Strout, the University of Chicago; George S. Bonn, the New York Public library, and Mabel Turner, from the University of Washington.

Each year, according to the original terms of the project, an American faculty member was replaced by a carefully selected Japanese full-time resident faculty member. Since 1957, with new assistance from the Rockefeller Foundation, the school has continued to invite a library specialist each year for a three-month period. Those thus far invited have been: Guy R. Lyle, Emory University; John M. Cory, the New York Public library; Alice Lohrer, the University of Illinois; and Helen M. Focke, from Western Reserve. Dr. Gitler returned for a four-month visit in 1961.

Since spring 1962 the school has been carrying out, also with a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, a new three-year project for the training of librarians in the field of life sciences. This year the school invited Estelle Brodman, of the Washington University Medical library at St. Louis. Thomas Fleming, medical librarian of Columbia University is expected to be there during the spring-summer semesters of 1963.

The visiting American faculty members of the Japan Library School have not only given instruction and guidance to the students in their classes but have also served as professional consultants for Japanese librarians in various fields. Their influence on Japanese librarianship was and continues to be tremen-

<sup>3</sup> Takahisa Sawamoto, "Education for Librarianship in Japan," in *American Libraries, Report of the U.S. Field Seminar on Library Reference Services for Japanese Librarians* (Tokyo: International House of Japan, 1960), pp. 129-134.

dous. Especially their assistance to Japanese library leaders through various workshops and individual consultation has been highly valued, because after the workshops these leaders spread their learning throughout the country and furthered the results.

It may also be useful to mention that about 10 per cent of the 340 graduates of the school have come to the United States to further their studies in librarianship and upon their return home they have performed important duties as leaders in various fields.

In 1954 the Japan University Accrediting Association set up standards of education for librarianship. Although more than seventy colleges and universities are now offering varying numbers of credit units of library science, only seven of them are providing sufficient units to meet the minimum requirement for librarians under the Public Library Law. At the present time there is no other library school than Keio's which has been accredited by the association. Efforts are being made by some universities to meet the standards in order to be accredited, but the most difficult problem has been to obtain qualified faculty members. At present, of a total of 145 teachers of library science, only seventeen hold full-time teaching positions. The library school of Keio has five full-time and four part-time faculty members.

#### THE NATIONAL DIET LIBRARY

After the war the reorganization of the library system was started as a part of the program called Democratization of Education. The National Diet library, one of the features of the program, was established in 1948 by the enactment of the National Diet Library Law. It consists of a central library and thirty-three branches. It is the largest library in Japan, with about five million volumes and twelve hundred staff members. It renders services not only to the Diet and

the executive and judicial agencies of the government but also to other libraries and to the general public. In 1947 Vermer Clapp, then the chief assistant librarian of Congress, and Charles H. Brown, of Iowa State University, and in 1948, Robert B. Downs, of the University of Illinois, were invited to Japan as consultants. Their advice and recommendations gave the library administration great help in developing the national library and establishing its policies and procedures.

Other than its ordinary services to clientele, it is carrying out programs such as a printed catalog card service, thereby influencing Japanese libraries in the use of the Japanese decimal classification; the compilation of a national union catalog and occasional bibliographies on special subjects; the weekly list of current publications received; a Japanese national bibliography; the National Diet library catalog; a Japanese periodical index; international interlibrary loan; international exchange of materials; photoduplication services; and so forth. These services are helpful to foreign as well as to Japanese librarians. The establishment of the National Diet library has stimulated the development of prefectural and municipal assembly libraries (a prefecture may be comparable to one of the fifty United States). Its close cooperation with special libraries has promoted the advancement of special librarianship. The Diet library recently moved from the old Akasaka Palace, known for its beautiful murals and gorgeous chandeliers, to a new functional building near the Diet building where both the quarters and services will make its influence on Japanese librarians even greater.

#### THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

The opening of the first public library in Tokyo in 1872 may be called the dawn of modern times for Japanese li-

braries, because following that time many other free public libraries were established, but the majority of these public libraries were created by the policy of the government rather than the demand of the people. During the war years the public library was regarded by the government as an institution without any urgent need, and its financial support was cut down. Therefore, its development was entirely depressed.

After the war, in 1950, along with the movement for the democratization of Japan, a new epoch-making law of public libraries was enacted. There was, however, a regrettable misinterpretation concerning the democratization of the public library that caused the Metropolitan library in Tokyo to dissolve into about thirty small library systems. As of April 1961 there were about seven hundred forty public libraries in Japan.<sup>4</sup> Most of them have open access, circulate books, and render reference, extension, and other services. Public librarians' efforts to encourage reading and to disseminate information through library materials to the public have been made through various devices of public relations. It is worthwhile to mention one particular activity called "mothers' libraries" operated by Nagano prefectural library. It is one of the extension services of the prefectural library, circulating books to mothers in remote areas through their children attending school. In this program, schools are used as the library's extension service stations or depots, and the children deliver and return the books. By the end of last year, more than one hundred thousand mothers in rural areas had registered, making heavy use of the mothers' libraries.

#### THE SCHOOL LIBRARY

The postwar reformation of the education system of Japan prompted teach-

<sup>4</sup>Japan Library Association, *Nihon no toshokan* ("Statistics on Libraries in Japan"), 1961. (Tokyo: the Association, 1962), p. 10.

ers to consider changes in educational methods, and accordingly, the important role of the school library in the new system. The National School Library Association was inaugurated in 1950 by the teachers who had pioneered in school librarianship. A nationwide campaign supporting the bill for school libraries was vigorously led by the association. Finally, in 1953, the School Library Law was passed by the Diet. The law provided for every school to have its own library and a librarian. Even though the law contains many deficiencies, such as the lack of adequate financial support for school librarians' positions and an inadequate definition of qualifications for the school librarian, following its enactment school libraries in Japan made most remarkable progress. According to the school census<sup>5</sup> in 1954 of a total of 26,600 primary schools, 16,000 (60 per cent) have libraries; of a total of 13,000 junior high schools, 9,000 (about 70 per cent); and of a total of 5,000 senior high schools, 3,700 (about 75 per cent) have libraries. It is estimated that these ratios have been raised about 20 per cent for each group since 1954. In addition to these defects of the law, major problems in school librarianship consist in lack of cooperation and the incomplete metamorphosis in the new education system. For example, there is no cooperative, centralized cataloging for a group of school libraries in a school district. There are very difficult entrance examinations to enter a college from a high school and to a senior high school from a junior high school. In some instances the ratio of acceptance to application is one to ten. This examination system renders ineffective the new educational methods in which the library is the instructional and material center of the school.

<sup>5</sup>Mombusho ("Ministry of Education"), *Gakko setsubi chosa hokokusho, Showa 29* ("Report of Census on School Facilities, 1954") (Tokyo: Mombusho, 1955), pp. 17 and 181-84.

## SPECIAL LIBRARIES

The discussion of special libraries will be limited to the libraries of industrial companies. The Japanese Special Libraries Association was organized in 1940. The prewar special libraries were mostly archival in function. After the war, along with the rapid rehabilitation of industry, many industrial companies rapidly developed their libraries as centers for acquiring and disseminating information. The National Diet library has contributed to their development by helping the activities of the Special Libraries Association. Along with the rapid development of such company libraries, the Japan Information Center of Science and Technology was established in 1957 with both governmental and industrial support. The center is offering such services as investigation, abstracting, translation, and photoduplication.

This type of library has shown a remarkable development in the last few years. It can be seen in the fact that a rapidly increasing number of library positions offered by these companies was submitted to the Japan Library School for placement in the last few years, more than in any other area of librarianship. These libraries, neither required by a law nor forced by any outside influence, have been developing to meet their own needs. In this sense the development is healthy. Their major problem is obtaining well-qualified librarians who may satisfy their highly specialized needs.

## COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Tokyo University started its libraries very early in the Meiji era, taking over the collections of three schools of the Tokugawa shogunate; thereafter other national and private colleges and universities, as soon as they were established, began collecting library materials. In the early period a good many of the leaders of Japanese librarianship were

university librarians, but their successors were conservative, and their leadership did not last long. Thus, the university library continued a monumental, meaningless existence.

The postwar educational reformation necessarily required changes in education methods, but many professors continued to keep to traditional teaching methods. The reports made by the United States education missions in Japan in 1946 and 1950 pointed out the deficiencies of Japanese educational methods and suggested ways of developing a new education system. They influenced teachers tremendously to change their traditional methods. However, the revival and development of college and university libraries was slower than that of other types of libraries.

The Japan University Accrediting Association started its activities in 1947 and set up standards for college and university libraries along with other educational standards. In 1951 a committee was organized to work on the improvement of the national university libraries, and its report was published in 1953 as a guide to the improvement of the national university libraries. A similar guide for private college and university libraries was published three years later.

At present there are 250 colleges and universities in Japan, with a total of about five hundred fifty libraries, not counting small departmental collections.<sup>6</sup> In the last several years, more than ten new university library buildings have been built in Tokyo, Osaka, and elsewhere, including those of the International Christian University, Kogakuin University, Meiji University, St. Paul University, Yokohama National University, Kansai University, and Osaka National University. These new librar-

<sup>6</sup> Takashi Hashimoto, "Daigaku ni okeru toshokan no mondai" ("Problems of University Libraries"), in *Minshu Kyoiku Kyokai, Daigaku seido no saikento* ("Re-examination of the Higher Education System"), ed. by Masamichi Royama (Tokyo: the Kyokai, 1962), pp. 57-68.

ies were built in order to make library material available to students more freely than in the past.

Among these libraries, that of the International Christian University is the most modern; it is a good model for a college with a small enrollment.

The largest national university, Tokyo University, has recently been struggling with the improvement of its library program and services. Keyes Metcalf was invited as consultant two years ago, and on his advice a revision of its organization and services was put into practice. Along with the improvements of services of the main library the university has recently completed and opened an entirely modern medical library and is now planning to establish its agricultural sciences library in the very near future.

In Tokyo, Keio University, Japan's oldest private university, has also been struggling with serious library problems partly caused by its fifty-year-old monumental library building. A committee on a new library project was organized in the spring of 1961, and it is now carrying out library surveys. The administration is planning to dispatch a group of administrative directors and librarians to the United States late in 1963 to visit outstanding new university libraries and study their organization and services as well as their modern facilities. Also, the university plans to invite an American specialist on university library administration and buildings in the fall of 1964 to help Keio in its new venture. Should Keio succeed in this library project it would be a most influential and stimulating pilot project to other large universities and would contribute a great deal to the advancement of university library services in Japan.

Again, in the Meiji restoration when Japan with every effort was trying to digest western civilization, the leading universities such as Tokyo University in-

vited professors from the western countries, especially from Germany, to teach new subjects. From among the students of these western professors, the most outstanding ones were selected to study abroad and to succeed the professors upon their return. After an interval, usually about ten years, among the students of the professors of the second generation, the most promising ones were chosen, sent abroad to further their studies, and later they succeeded to the professorship. Repeating this procedure, Japan could reach an academic level almost equal to that of the western countries and could keep it consistently high. Apparently the majority of the scholars who studied abroad at that time did their best to learn western achievement, but many neglected to learn and to transplant the techniques of furthering research by using library materials. Therefore, in learning the most accepted practice was to take notes on what was taught by a professor and to memorize them all. The systematic use of library materials in the process of higher learning was not practiced by students.

Even at present many professors are still teaching by textbook method or by lectures alone and do not encourage students' individual research with extensive use of library materials. But after the war younger scholars and instructors in Japanese universities visited the United States and experienced or learned its teaching methods. These prospective professors, dissatisfied with their university's library services, now desire that the library be so changed that their students may learn more by using information in library materials. These progressive members have not yet become the majority of the faculty, but their number is growing and intellectual exchange programs continue to be developed between Japan and other countries, especially the United States.

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