

**THE SUETSUGU-ADF SCHOOL OF LANGUAGE
COLLECTION AT MONASH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY:
ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH JAPANESE EARLY BOOKS**

Eiko Sakaguchi

BACKGROUND

Late in 1997, Monash University Library received a significant donation from the Australian Defence Force (ADF) School of Languages in Point Cook, Victoria. To our surprise the donation included many Japanese and Chinese classics written and published before the pre-modern period, going back as early as 1661. It was realised that the donation was not only significant in numbers but also for the collections' rare nature. The issues that arose at that stage were: physical handling, on-line cataloguing for global access, and identifying the uniqueness of the resources.

NATURE OF THE COLLECTION

Mr. Susumu Suetsugu shipped these books to Australia in the 1970s. The recipient was Captain L. K. Shepherd at the ADF School of Languages. The donation was the result of their friendship in Kure after the Korean War. (Refer to the letter at the end of this report) The books were all bundled in category from A to I and each title was annotated by Mr Suetsugu.

	Category and Topic	Pre-Modern books title (volume)	Modern publication title (volume)
A	Chinese classics and criticism	26(106)	73(84)
B	Chinese & Japanese history	45(254)	22(27)
C	Education, Military	35(159)	16(20)
D	Chinese literature & criticism	16(84)	
E	Poetry	5(16)	13(18)
F	Calligraphy, Chinese writing	9(35)	12(50)
G	Story & History of Chinese literature	1(20)	17(34)
H	Japanese literature and criticism	11(11)	22(36)
I	Miscellaneous	3(6)	13(28)
	Total	151(691)	188(297)

(figure based on brief inventory by staff members)

PHYSICAL HANDLING

Because of the physical nature of the collection, it is obvious that most of the books should be housed in the Rare Book Collection. Some books already had damage before the shipment, but the condition of the old books is already stabilised. There seems to be no current silverfish problem, however this must be confirmed before the collection is finally sent to the Rare Book Collection. An inventory was conducted and the titles (authors if known), volumes, publication years, contents of the materials, special marks (eg. insect damage) and notes from the donor were recorded on cards with.

ON-LINE CATALOGUING

"While acquiring library materials is certainly an essential task in building library collections, preserving those materials in a proper manner and providing bibliographic access to them must be considered as equally important."

(Miki, 2000)

Apart from preservation, the most difficult task was how to catalogue the materials to make them accessible to Monash and broader user communities. Cataloguing these books requires high level special knowledge: reading skills in classic Japanese and Chinese, knowledge of the publishing industry in pre-Meiji Japan and China, etc., etc. There could be some really unique resources in the collection, but how one could identify them: what tools should be used? Issues extend that we do not have enough human resources or funding.

WORKSHOPS IN UNITED STATES

In June 1999, I saw a posting on EASTLIB that the Freer Gallery of Art and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Library in Washington were hosting the Workshop on Early Japanese Illustrated Books in late January 2000. The workshop was aiming at providing the participants with basic knowledge, historical background, publishing practices of Japanese illustrated books from the Edo period, as well as surveying the materials and practising hands-on cataloguing. I applied for the workshop and I was very excited to be accepted. I was also very fortunate to be invited to the Workshop on Early Japanese Books at C. V. Starr East Asian Library, Columbia University a few days after the Freer Gallery workshop. Dr Jun Suzuki of the National Institute of Japanese Literature, Tokyo, led both workshops.

The Freer Gallery workshop began with a talk by Dr Suzuki in the evening of 23rd January. It attracted a lecture room full of students and researchers. The talk was about historical research on a Japanese early-illustrated book. For the following two days Dr. Suzuki lectured us on introductory history, definition, painting technique and cataloguing of these books. The lecture also covered necessary reference tools and some practice sessions on cataloguing.

Due to an unexpected blizzard, the workshop was cut one day short and we missed the scheduled visit of rare books at the Library of Congress and the Freer Gallery of Art Collection. However we were provided with copies of plates covered in the lecture and a textbook (Suzuki, 2000) which contains research level details in this type of materials. It also accompanies an annotated bibliography and selected bibliographies published in Japan as well as outside Japan.

The workshop attracted near forty people: academics and librarians from all over the United States, Europe and Australia. It indicates the global interests and the needs for this type of material. It was so nice again to see the librarians from Cambridge and Princeton University whom I had met at the First Japan Foundation Japanese Librarians Training held in Tokyo in 1997. Talking with them and other participants, I realised that their expertise and interests were built on actual collections of such which were purchased and donated over the years.

The Columbia workshop was held in a lecture room at the C.V. Starr East Asian Library on Saturday 29th. There were more than thirty participants and some postgraduates were included. This workshop covered all formats of Japanese early writing, printing and publishing practices of each period. We had a chance to handle an abundance of real historical materials, which were held in the library.

AFTER THE WORKSHOP

Attending both workshops I was very thankful to Mr Suetsugu for his donation. Without it I would never have had an interest in these types of materials. Attending the workshops made me to realise how little I knew, but it did provide me with "knowledge on the books" as well as a goal in a practical, approachable sense. The goal is that the existence of the Suetsugu-ADF Collection should be widely notified within and beyond the Monash Community. The collection should be made available on-line for research needs and it should also be preserved in proper manner. To achieve this goal library staff and Monash academic staff should discuss how this collection is to be dealt with, identify how useful in research and teaching it can be and how significant it is as a rare collection. Once it is established as a project, there are ways to approach funding assistance, and experiences from US libraries show that expert assistance from Japan is available.

Mr Suetsugu has presented this family collection, accumulated over the centuries to Australia as a token of friendship between him and Captain Shepherd. We never knew, however that his gesture extended beyond personal friendship but also to the goodwill between Japan and Australia.

Extended thanks to Mr. Hiroshi Honda, Lecturer in Charge of Japanese of Australian Defence Force School of Language and Mr. M. Gretton, Registrar of Australian Defence Force School of Language making this donation available to the Monash University Library.

Letter from Captain Shepherd (Retired)

L.K. Sheperd
3 Clendon Place
Melton 3337
Tele: 9743 3614

9th July 2000

Ms. Eiko Sakaguchi
Main Library, Monash University
Clayton. 3168

I received a request from Hiroshi Honda last week to write to you about the Suetsugu collection for an article you wish to include in your next newsletter.

I hope the following notes will meet your needs.

A little background information concerning myself may be of use also:

After studying Japanese at the R.A.A.F. School of Languages at Point Cook in 1947, I was posted to Japan in November 1947 as an Intelligence Linguist with British Commonwealth Occupation Force (B.C.O.F.) and later with British Commonwealth Forces Korea (B.C.F.K.). I remained in Japan until December 1956.

I retired from the Army in 1974 and from my Civilian position with the R.A.A.F. School of languages in 1986.

I am glad after all this time that the collection has at last found a suitable home

Captain L.K. Sheperd (Retd.)

[A photograph was also supplied which unfortunately doesn't reproduce well on a laser printer/photocopier. It will eventually be included with the online version of this document - ed.]

References:

Miki, Mihoko. *Kariforunia Daigaku-Rosu Anzerusuko shozo Nihon Kotenseki mokuroku*. Tokyo : Tosui Shobo, 2000.

Suzuki, Jun. *Workshop on the early Japanese illustrated books : Kinsei Ehon Koza*. Washington : Arthur M. Freer Gallery of Art Library, 2000.

Bibliography:

Kokusho somokuroku. 9 v. Tokyo : Iwanami Shoten, Showa 38-51 [1963-1976].

Okayama Daigaku shozo Ikeda-ke Bunko so mokuroku / Okayama Daigaku Fuzoku Toshokan henshu. Okayama : Okayama Daigaku Fuzoku Toshokan, Showa 45 [1970]

Okuizumi, Eizaburo, "Biblio-Studies and roots of the Tale of Ise and other Japanese language rare books in the University of Chicago Library," *Shuppan Kenkyu*, 29, 187-211 (1998).

Seikado Bunko. *Seikado Bunko Kanseki bunrui mokuroku / [hensan Seikado Bunko, daihyosha]*

[Morohashi Tetsuji]. *Tokyo-fu Kitatama-gun Kinuta-mura : Seikado Bunko*, Showa 5 [1930]