

DEVELOPMENT OF THE ELECTRONIC LIBRARY PROJECTS OF THE NATIONAL DIET LIBRARY

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Since the 1980s, Japan's National Diet Library (NDL) has been working on the Kansaikan Project, vigorously espoused with promotion of electronic library services. In 1994, NDL participated in the "Pilot Electronic Library Project." The NDL Electronic Library Concept was prepared in 1998.

Since March 2000, three major components of NDL's Electronic Library have been made accessible to the general public at the NDL web site at <<http://www.ndl.go.jp/e/index.html>>: full-text database system for the minutes of the Japanese Diet; Web-OPAC; and rare books image database.

The Diet session minutes full-text database provides users with search functionality by session number, legislator name, and keyword for presentation of relevant parts of session minutes from both chambers of the Japanese bicameral system. Complete retrospective data starting with the 1947 first session, which are already entered in the system, will be placed in a production mode in 2001. (*already made available in April 2001)

Web-OPAC contains approximately 2.2 million bibliographic records of Japanese as well as non-Japanese imprints acquired by NDL with search functionality also through romanized Japanese query values.

The rare books image database registers 20,000 images of 460 titles from NDL's collection of Japanese books and colored woodblock prints, searched by author and keyword with result presentation in both thumbnail and enlarged versions of the digitized images.

The National Diet Library has also been holding a rather popular Electronic Exhibition in collaboration with other organizations. As a part of the *Bibliotheca Universalis Project*, NDL released in August 2000 "Nippon in the World", currently consisting of three parts: scenic mementoes of Japan; Vienna International Exposition; and modern Japanese political history materials. More material will be added in the future.

See <<http://nippon.ndl.go.jp/e/default.html>>

The National Diet Library secured for the financial year 2000/2001 a budgetary allocation from the national government for digitisation over a three-year period of 168,000 books, to total to 17 million images, published during the Meiji period. Pre-existing microfilms of these Meiji publications are scanned to form bit-map image data; and corresponding MARC bibliographic records are extracted from the NDL system. In addition, in this Meiji imprint digitisation project, tables of contents are incorporated in a searchable text format. A hindrance is the current Japanese Copyright Law, in compliance of which NDL contracted out in December 2000 the task of copyright status verification of approximately 100,000 books. Yet, it is NDL's

plan to make some of the digitized Meiji imprints available to the general public in the fall of 2002.

A partial amendment to the National Diet Library Law was issued in April 2000, through which such off-line publications as CD-ROMs were added, in October 2000, to the Japanese legal depository system. Furthermore, NDL plans to selectively collect on-line publications and to preserve them for permanent access. In the meanwhile, in October 2000, NDL started development of a Dublin Core-based metadata-compatible system to refer users to external Internet sources for on-line publications deselected at NDL itself.

While the year 2002 will bring unprecedented change to the National Diet Library, through which the electronic library will be required to function as a cornerstone of new services within the new tripartite system of the Headquarters, Kansaikan, and the International Library of Children's Literature, it is recognized that the electronic library is a diverse concept that calls for cooperation among various libraries, each of which will maintain its uniqueness.

