

LIBRARY PROFILE: JAPAN FOUNDATION LIBRARY, TOKYO

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The Japan Foundation was established in 1972 under the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs to promote cultural exchange between Japan and other countries. It supports foreign researchers and students in Japan in numerous ways, one of which is through the provision of its Tokyo library. The library is a very convenient and useful resource on all aspects of Japanese culture, with a particular emphasis on works in English and to a lesser extent other European languages. It may be particularly valuable to overseas scholars who do not know Japanese, or who are affiliated to other Japanese institutions and thus have access to Japanese materials in their area of specialism, but not necessarily to standard or more general works in English.

Holdings

The principal focus of the collection is Japanese history, society and culture. Holdings comprise approximately 24 000 volumes in European languages (chiefly English) and some 23 000 volumes in Japanese. This represents an extremely valuable research collection especially in the humanities and social sciences. Particular strengths include a substantial collection of pre-World War II non-Japanese imprints, and a large collection of microform doctoral dissertations. The library collects all dissertations produced in the United States and has a considerable number of British and German theses as well. There is a small reference collection containing the most important encyclopedias, dictionaries, etc., and the library subscribes to numerous journals on all aspects of Japanese studies and in many different languages.

Catalogues and Access

Access to the collection is provided by a central card catalogue. Most post-1945 materials are held in open stacks in the reading room with separate sequences for items in Japanese and in European languages. Items which are held in the closed stacks (including all pre-1945 publications) are indicated in the catalogue by an orange stripe at the top of the card. These items and also microforms and videos must be requested from the librarian on duty. They can usually be retrieved within a few minutes.

Classification

Japanese language materials are classified following the Nippon Decimal Classification (using 3 digits followed by an accession number).

Western language materials are classified using a local scheme whose main heads are as follows:

- A. General Works
- B. Japan and the Japanese
- C. Geography
- D. Countries other than Japan
- E. History
- F. Biographies
- G. Philosophy
- H. Religions
- J. Language
- K. Literature
- L. Arts & Crafts
- M. Society
- N. Education
- P. Economics
- Q. Laws and Treaties
- R. Politics
- S. Science & Technology
- T. National Security & Defence
- Z. Periodicals

A more detailed breakdown of this classification scheme is available at:
<http://www.jpjf.go.jp/e/learn/library/list.html>

Study Facilities

The library has desks for about 24 readers and also a microfilm reader and video players. There is a small area with lounge chairs for the reading of newspapers, and a display area for Japan Foundation publications. The working environment is light and pleasant with views across Tokyo from large picture windows. There is, however, some noise from the nearby expressway.

A librarian is normally on duty at the information desk to help with readers' enquiries.

Catering Facilities

The library itself provides no catering facilities. However, there is a coffee shop on the ground floor of the Ark Mori Building and numerous catering outlets in nearby streets.

Address

The Japan Foundation Library (Kokusai Koryu Kikin Toshokan), 20F, Ark Mori Building, 1- 12-32 Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107. Telephone: +81-3-5562-3527. Fax: +813-5562-3499.

Nearest subway stations: Tameike (Nanboku line), Akasaka (Chiyoda line), Kamiyacho (Hibiya line), Kokkai-gijido mae (Chiyoda and Marunouchi lines).

Opening Hours

9 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday (closed on holidays and the last Monday of each month)

Eligibility

Anyone aged 18 or over conducting research in Japanese studies or on international exchange.

Borrowing rights are normally only given to (a) foreign nationals resident in Japan for a period of at least two months from the date of registration, and (b) Japanese nationals who are (i) staff or students of colleges or universities, (ii) staff members of international exchange bodies and organisations, (iii) supporting Members of the Japan Foundation.

Borrowing

Most non-serial items on open access can be borrowed for an extendable 2 week period.

Photocopying

Library users can make inexpensive copies of library materials within the limits imposed by Japanese copyright law.

Disclaimer

This profile is based on Japan Foundation promotional material and personal observation. Every attempt has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information presented; however, no responsibility can be taken for any inaccuracies.