**Defining the Issues for Technical Services**

Position Paper Prepared by
 Hideyuki Morimoto, *University of California - Berkeley*
In consultation with Mr. Scott Edward Harrison, *University of Washington*

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## I. Review of Achievements since Hoover

Some progress has been made in view of the technical services goals set out at the 1991 Stanford Conference; however, much still remains unachieved to date.

From the point of view of quantity, data from shelflist cards for Japanese language titles have been retrospectively converted into machine-readable format at many North American libraries (Stanford Conference, Task Force no. 6). Some large Japanese-language collections still have many titles unconverted; and many Japanese-language retrospective conversion records, particularly those processed by contract vendors, are of poor enough quality to hinder ready retrieval not only by users but also by seasoned library staff members.

While holdings information was often available online on a local level for North American libraries in 1991, it was felt that availability of such data in an aggregated manner either in bibliographic utilities or elsewhere would aid both efficient interlibrary lending operations and coordinated collection development (Task Force no. 5, short term goal 3). For serial titles, some libraries contributed their summary holdings data to bibliographic utilities; and some efforts have been made within the NCC for maintaining such information at an NCC-designated host site.

The RLG project of the early 1990s of having each member library enter expensive desiderata titles in RLIN for ready identification did not see fruition. Recently, some RLG libraries have been entering order and/or in-process records in RLIN for their own acquisition control purposes, which somewhat facilitates diversification of collected titles among Japanese studies collections in North America. Some libraries have also been searching neighboring institutions' publicly-accessible local order record files to minimize unnecessary duplicative purchases from Japan. For easy-to-process titles, the availability of bibliographical information has increased both within North America and from Japan through the Internet (Task Force no. 7). However, highly specialized titles are often obscured by poor quality retrospective conversion processing.

## II. General Setting

In the meanwhile, the general setting in which technical services operations of Japanese studies information material are performed has changed.[1] [2] [3]Points often mentioned in this connection

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[1] Lei Zeng, "Quality Control of Chinese-Language Records Using Rule-Based Data Validation System. Part 1, An Evaluation of the Quality of Chinese-Language Records in the OCLC OLUC Database," Cataloging and Classification Quarterly 16 (1993): 25-66.

include: deprofessionalization;[4] quality degradation of library operations to lead to disservice to patrons;[5] and decline in the availability of readily usable copy-assisted cataloging source records.[67]

## III. Issues

Some issues have been identified by practicing Japanese studies librarians in North America for further discussion. Traditional versus new material supply vendors in the North American scene have surfaced since the 1991 Stanford Conference.[89] The long-standing matter of preservation and reformatting has received heightened attention as material digitization has become more and more feasible and prevalent.[10]

Much has been tried in the field of cataloging standards. However, some have also argued that the global AACR2 and cataloging harmonization have thus far been unduly Eurocentric,[11] which is conspicuous in the BL-LC agreement[12] and REUSE Project.[13]

Although many bibliographic records based on Japanese cataloging standards have been loaded in North American bibliographic utility databases, those bibliographic records originating from Japan are not readily usable without performing extensive editing and checking in North America because there have been no systematic attempts to harmonize the Japanese cataloging standards and North American ones or to devise automated switching mechanism between Japanese and North American authority records and classification numbers. The noteworthy

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[2] Jai-hsya Tsao, "The Quality and Timeliness of Chinese and Japanese Monographic Records in the RLIN Database," Library Resources & Technical Services 38 (1994): 60-63.

[3] Fung-yin K. Simpson, "Quality Control of Chinese Monographic Records: A Case Study," Journal of East Asian Libraries 116 (October 1998): 31-40.

[4] Marcelino Ugalde, and Kathryn Etcheverria, "Mendigainera: Scaling the Peak of the Basque Library Backlog," Library Resources & Technical Services 42 (2): 304-312 (October 1998)

[5] Cecilia S. Sercan, "Where Has All the Copies Gone: Latin American Imprints in the RLIN Database," Library Resources & Technical Services 38 (1): 56-59 (January 1994)

[6] Jacqueline Byrd, "A Cooperative Cataloging Proposal for Slavic and East European Languages and the Language of the Former Soviet Union," Cataloging & Classification Quarterly 17 (1993): 87-96.

[7] Sercan.

[8] Katsuko T. Hotelling, "A Study of Japanese Vendor Services in North America," Committee on East Asian Libraries Bulletin 102 (February 1994): 1-8.

[9] Sachié Noguchi, Acquisition of Library Materials on Japanese Studies

[10] Bradley L. Schaffner, and Brian J. Baird, "Into the Dustbin of History?: the Evaluation and Preservation of Slavic Materials," College & Research Libraries 60 (2): 144-151 (March 1999)

[11] Jay H. Lambrecht, "International Cooperation in Cataloging: Progress and Constraints," Advances in Librarianship 19 (1995): 217-238.

[12] "Meeting with British Library Representative," LC Cataloging Newsline 6 (7) (June 1998)

[13] Bernhard Eversberg, et al., "REUSE: A Contribution to the Enhancement of International Bibliographic Compatibility,"

differences in these two cataloging standards and conventions relate to: word division; missing romanization/imbalanced pair fields; item-level versus title-level cataloging; choice of main entries; simplified versus traditional Chinese characters; name/series authority records; subject authority records; and classification schemes.[14]

When these enumerated issues are borne in mind, it becomes even more apparent that there largely remain long-standing unremoved obstacles to information resource sharing and access provision to patrons from the technical services point of view. They are:

1. Incomplete and poor quality retrospective conversion of Japanese-language titles from manual shelflist cards into machine readable format
2. Sporadic availability of holdings records for serials (including monographic series) and multipart items
3. Lack of concerted efforts in cataloging of special as well as rare titles, and
4. Insufficient release of on-order/in-process records beyond local confines.

## IV. Recommendations

The North American Coordinating Council on Japanese Library Resources needs to:

1. Develop clearly delineated and prioritized technical services goals for the next decade
2. Establish viable action plans
3. Secure necessary resources to achieve the goals.

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[14] ideyuki Morimoto, "WINE Records Loaded in WorldCat : Their Compatibility with LC Practices for Japanese-Language Monographic Title Cataloguing = Les enregistrements WINE chargés au WorldCat : leur compatibilité avec la catalographie mise à la place pour des monographies japonaises auprès de la Bibliothèque du Congrès des Etats-Unis," in Proceedings of the 9th Annual Conference of the European Association of Japanese Resource Specialists (Louvain: European Association of Japanese Resource Specialists, to be published). Defining the Issues for Technical Services