

MY RECOLLECTIONS OF MS. NAOMI FUKUDA

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Recalling the past, I still vividly remember as if it was yesterday when I first met Ms. Naomi Fukuda at the Library of the International House of Japan located at Toizaka, Roppongi, Tokyo near Azabu-Juban, not so far away from the landmark Tokyo Tower. It was an afternoon of a weekday in the early summer of 1960, when I first came to meet my classmate, Mr. Masatoshi Shibukawa, who was a student assistant at the I-House Library (later he became Prof. of Library Science at Keio). At that time I was a student at the Japan Library School of Keio University. Mr. Shibukawa introduced me to Ms. Fukuda, Head Librarian, from whom I learned of their library history and management. After that she kindly showed me around her Library, mainly composed of foreign books and journals, mostly English ones on Japan and the Japanese. Later Ms. Fukuda introduced me to her assistant librarian, Mr. Yukio Fujino (he became Vice-President of the University of Library and Information Science, which was later merged into the University of Tsukuba), from whom I heard the following interesting anecdote regarding a lady visitor from abroad. Library users of the I-House Library were mostly foreign visitors from all over the world. When a foreign lady with a hat came into the Library, Ms. Fukuda usually instructed Mr. Fujino to ask the lady to take her hat off, because she was now in Japan (when you are in Rome, do as the Romans do). When Mr. Fujino performed this delicate and arduous task with utmost manners, the lady was at first puzzled at what he told her to do and could not figure it out. However, after she heard Mr. Fujino's courteous and patient explanation, she finally understood the situation. It must have required a considerable amount of perseverance for Mr. Fujino, who knows European and American manners and customs well, since he graduated from the Russian Literature Department at the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies and was once a Fulbright student himself at UCLA, to convey such an intricate and perplexing message to a foreign lady. However, he did it successfully! This is one good example of how Ms. Fukuda dealt with the perception gap between Japan and the West.

The library career of Ms. Naomi Fukuda is as follows: She entered the Library School at the University of Michigan in June 1939 and was graduated in August 1940. During part of this period she served her library student internship at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., under the supervision of Dr. Shiho Sakanishi, Head of the Oriental Division. She then returned to Japan and during the Pacific War period worked for the Libraries at Tokyo Imperial University (1940-42), Rikkyo University (1942-43), and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1943-45). In the postwar period right after the war (1945-48), she worked for the Library of the General Headquarters of the Supreme Commander for Allied Powers (GHQ-SCAP). When the International House of Japan was established in 1953, she was appointed as the Head Librarian of its Library until she resigned in February 1970 (Note: Administratively she was on

leave of absence from the I-House between 1968-1970). She immigrated to the U.S.A. and in 1968 and worked first(1968-69) for the Asian Collection at the University of Maryland. She later moved to Ann Arbor and began to work for the Asia Library at the University of Michigan in March 1970 and retired from the Library in June 1978. During her tenure at Michigan she also taught a Japanese bibliography course as Lecturer of the Far Eastern Languages and Literatures Department. She was a major presence in American and Japanese library worlds for over six decades, both before and after she retired from her last library at the University of Michigan, in particular due to her numerous important behind-the-scene contributions and influences not only on the library scene but also on the high government level, as you will note below.

During the preparation period preceding the establishing of the National Diet Library (NDL) in 1947, Mr. Verner W. Clapp, Chief Associate Librarian of the Library of Congress and Prof. Charles H. Brown, Honourary Librarian of Iowa State University and then President of the American Library Association (ALA) were invited to Japan as library advisers from the U.S.A., and they produced a report entitled "U.S. Library Mission to Japan, Report to Advise on the Establishment of the National Diet Library of Japan." In 1948 Prof. Robert B. Downs, who then served a dual-role as Director of the Library and Dean of the Library School of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, was also invited to Tokyo to advise on the foundation of the NDL, which was opened the same year. As a Japanese library adviser to the NDL, Ms. Fukuda played a leading role to mediate, counsel, and interpret between the U.S. advisers and the NDL with regard to the introduction of a new American library system and management to Japan. In 1950 Prof. Downs also served with the Civil Information and Education (CIE) Section at the GHQ-SCAP as its special adviser and helped conduct a feasibility study, with the assistance of Ms. Fukuda, in establishing the Japan Library School (JLS) at Keio University in order to train professional Japanese librarians. She usually played a crucial behind-the-scene role.

When I attended the 1975 Annual Meetings of the Association for Asian Studies (AAS) and its Committee on East Asian Libraries (CEAL, presently Council on East Asian Libraries), I had a happy reunion with Ms. Fukuda after so long a separation since 1962. The Sayonara Party of the AAS-CEAL was held at the Museum in the Golden Gate Park at San Francisco and I had one more happy reunion with my mentor, Prof. Robert Gitler of my alma mater, the JLS at Keio University. Mr. Don B. Brown, Head of the CIE's Information Division at the GHQ-SCAP, concerned with publications and libraries, originally made an initial proposal to establish a library school in postwar Japan because at that time library education for professional librarians at the university level did not exist. Consequently, Prof. Robert Gitler, then Dean of the Library School at the University of Washington, Seattle, was approached by the ALA as well as the GHQ-SCAP with an offer to lay the groundwork for opening the school. He recommended to them on Jan. 21, 1951 that the ALA/SCAP sponsored Japan Library School be located at Keio University. In April 1951 the JLS was successfully established with initial financial assistance from the GHQ-SCAP

and subsequent funding from the Rockefeller Foundation, teaching support from North American faculty members (a total of twenty American and one Canadian teachers taught from 1951 to 1961), supply of course materials and library resources from the ALA, and Japanese staff members and school facilities from Keio University. In Keio the JLS was officially established as the Library Science Department of the Faculty of Letters (1951-66). It later changed its name to the School of Library and Information Science (SLIS, 1967- present). Its MA course was opened in 1967, and its PhD program started from 1976. The JLS/SLIS at Keio has successfully developed since 1951, as observed herewith, and has produced about 3500 graduates as of 2007. Prof. Gitler returned to the JLS as a visiting professor in 1960. I am honoured to have been one of the students in his final class in 1961 (the 10th Class of JLS).

When Ms. Fukuda and I were chatting with Prof. Gitler, someone patted me on my shoulder. When I turned around I faced Dr. Warren M. Tsuneishi of the Library of Congress. He asked me who was the gentleman with whom I was talking. I replied that he was Prof. Gitler, my library professor at the JLS. Then, Dr. Tsuneishi said that he had heard of Prof. Gitler's name, but never met him before. Immediately, it was my pleasure to introduce Dr. Tsuneishi to Prof. Gitler. During the Pacific War time, Dr. Tsuneishi, one of the Japanese-American Nisei Veterans, and a noncommissioned information officer, was trained as a Japanese translator and interpreter at the U.S. Army Language School in San Francisco (Formerly the Military Intelligence Service Language School before June 1943., presently the Defense Language Institute Foreign Languages Center in Monterey, California, which belongs to the Ministry of Defense). In the postwar days he earned his MSLS at Colombia University (1950) and his PhD in Political Science (1960) at Yale University. He started as the Japanese Studies Librarian at Yale in 1950 and later he was Chief of the Asian Division of LC for many years until his retirement in 1993. He was professionally active in the Association for Asian Studies, the Association for Research Libraries, the American Library Association, where he joined with his library colleagues including Mr. Hideo Kaneko, Curator of the East Asian Collection at Yale, in organizing a series of five Japan-US Conferences on Libraries, 1969-1992, and in the International Association of Oriental Librarians, which he served as president, 1983-1992. Prof. John F. Howes, formerly U.S. Navy Japanese Language Officer and then a faculty member (1961-1989) of the Japanese Study Program at the University of British Columbia (UBC), also joined with us in our conversation. His major field is the "Christian History of the Meiji Period" and in particular he devoted his study on Kanzo Uchimura and Inazo Nitobe, representative Christians of modern Japan, who were educated in English in both Japan and the U.S.A. in the 1870s to '80s. He once served as an executive managing director at the I-House in the late 1950s and remembers Prof. Gitler, who first seemed to have lost his memory of Prof. Howes. However, while they were talking to each other, Prof. Gitler recalled these good old days at the I-House in connection with Ms. Fukuda at their Library. Then, gesturing to me, Prof. Howes told Prof. Gitler, "Here is one of your products in Japan." I learned a new colloquial English usage, I thought then. Later I had two good opportunities to have written book reviews of Prof. Gitler's autobiography entitled *Robert Gitler and the Japan*

Library School, which appeared in a quarterly journal: *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 74, No. 2 (2001), and of Prof. Howes' book entitled *Japan's Modern Prophet: Uchimura Kanzo (1861-1930)*, which was printed in an annual journal: *Nitobe Inazo Kenkyu*, No.15 (2005).

The Emperor of Japan conferred the Order of Sacred Treasure on Mr. Verner W. Clapp (1968) and Prof. Robert B. Downs (1983), the Order of the Precious Crown, Wistaria, on Ms. Naomi Fukuda (1984), and the Order of the Rising Sun on Prof. Robert L. Gitler (1990) and Prof. John F. Howes (2003), for their distinguished contributions to the introduction of library study and practice to postwar Japan (Clapp, Downs, Gitler, Fukuda) and of the study of Japanese Christianity to contemporary Japan (Howes).

About two years ago my new year's greetings card to Ms. Fukuda on the Ala Moana Street, Honolulu, Hawaii, was returned to me with a post office stamp of notice: "Undeliverable." Therefore, I made an inquiry about Ms. Fukuda's new address to Ms. Tokiko Y. Bazell, Japanese Librarian at the Asia Collection of the University of Hawaii. She had kindly let me know of the relocated address of Ms. Fukuda. Judging from the name of a senior's residence at a new address in Honolulu, I realized that it was probably an assisted living hospice that specialized in caring for persons of advanced age. Somewhere nearby Ms. Fukuda's old address on Ala Moana Street, Prof. Edward Seidensticker, a prominent translator and an eminent professor of Japanese literature, used to live surrounded by books.

Also, Ms. Fukuda used to attend the annual meetings of the AAS-CEAL Conference even after she retired in 1979. Sometime and somewhere in the late 1980s, when I met her at one of these meetings, she told me with her sweet smile that one day she bumped into Prof. Seidensticker at the Ala Moana Shopping Mall in Honolulu and they had a very enjoyable time over a lunch of O-Soba (Japanese buckwheat noodles) at a Japanese restaurant there. I personally met this prolific translator of the *Tale of Genji* and various works of Yasunari Kawabata, Japan's first Nobel laureate (1968), Yukio Mishima, Kafu Nagai, Junichiro Tanizaki, and so on, and also the author of an interesting book on Tokyo history, *Low City, High City: Tokyo from Edo to the Earthquake*, only once during his lifetime, but I had at that time a memorable conversation with him about the Suitengu Shrine (Shrine for the Guardian Deity of Mariners) located at Hakozaiki in Nihonbashi, downtown Tokyo on the Sumida River, where I was born and my parents took me to Suitengu where according to tradition their Shinto priest celebrated my first newborn bath with the Shrine's sacred water in order to mark my entrance into the community of Low City of Tokyo. To my great grief, he passed away at the age of 86 on August 26, 2007, two weeks after Ms. Fukuda died. He had moved in 2006 from Honolulu to Tokyo, where he had decided to make his final home. However, very unfortunately, while he was strolling around a pond near the Ueno Park, he stumbled on a sidewalk and suffered head injuries in a fall there in the early 2007 and had been hospitalized since then. I could not hide my pain when I learned of his death. I will always miss him as such a splendid cross-cultural interpreter between Japan and the world. He was decorated with the

Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star (Kun Santô Kyokujitsu Chû-Jushô) in 1975 for his distinguished service in bringing the many classical and modern literature works of Japan to English-speaking readers world-wide. He was an intimate friend of Prof. Howes at UBC, since both were in the U.S. Navy Japanese Language School at Boulder, Colorado, in the first half of the 1940s and he was one of the members of the first Japanologist group in the postwar period after World War II. They include Profs. Donald Keene (Columbia), Otis Cary (Doshisha), Ronald Dore, John F. Howes, Leon Hurvitz, Frank Langdon (UBC), and many others, who were all trained as military Japanese language officers in U.K. and the U.S.A. during WW II and became academics after the War. Ms. Fukuda, a very efficient librarian, was closely associated with all these prominent figures in the field of Japanese studies through her consultation, reference, and research services at the I-House Library in the 1950s-60s. She was able to do so not only by her Herculean efforts but also by the broad range of her personal connections with the government, academic, public and special libraries of Japan. Everyone was very much impressed with her diverse relationship with all sectors of the Japanese library world. Even more rewarding, needless to say, was the assistance that Ms. Fukuda's vast knowledge of the various subjects on Japan and her excellent bibliographical talent provided to these veteran Japan hands. She also went much further to introduce them to these libraries and their counterparts in Japan and to help their insights into trends in Japanese scholarship. She took pride in always working in an unassuming, but professional way.

Speaking of Ms. Fukuda's personality, I have an impression that she was essentially cultivated as a traditional Japanese lady with a higher education in the prewar Japanese society, even though she lived in the U.S.A. for many years as a student from 1936 to 1940, a working librarian from 1968 to 1978, and a happy retiree from 1979-2007. She was an intellectual woman of integrity. She kept her own rigid discipline at the bottom of her inner mind counsel, and used it to express her own frank opinions by speaking straight and to the point, when and if necessary. Because of her outspoken nature, some people kept her at a respectful distance. She also followed the principle of listening to her own inner voice rather than the public estimation of her. She had thorough knowledge of library systems, managements and collections of both American and Japanese libraries from the prewar days to the present time. With her such rich experiences and incisive observations of insights into various libraries on both sides of the Pacific Ocean, we would wish that during her lifetime she could have written a history book of libraries in America and Japan and of inter-cultural exchange programs of the books and librarians between the two countries by weaving her library accomplishments into a broader international librarianship setting. Such a book based on her long professional career could have become an excellent guide for the coming librarians of new succeeding generations. We regret very much that such a good opportunity for her intellectual agenda has been lost forever. If she has left some unpublished manuscripts, we hope that they will be published by those concerned with her life and work one day in the near future.

Honolulu, Hawaii, was the final place Ms. Fukuda chose to live during the last thirty years of her life, after countless crossings between Japan and the U.S.A. Everybody who knew her mourns her passing last summer, but we believe that she had fully lived to be almost one hundred, (born on Dec. 2, 1907), during which time she worked as a professional librarian and had successfully fulfilled her long library tenure for almost forty years. Her departure on August 12, 2007 was a great loss to the fields of Japanese and East Asian librarianships as well as a very sad loss to many international librarians and friends across the Pacific who became acquainted with and valued her as a reliable and valuable long-time colleague and collaborator. Ms. Fukuda committed her whole life so unselfishly to one core value, mastery for library service beyond national borders. We sincerely pray for her eternal, peaceful sleep from the bottom of our hearts. Gasshō (our hands are clasped in prayer)!

NAOMI FUKUDA (1907-2007)



Naomi Fukuda in the International House of Japan Library, 1960s.

Photograph courtesy of the International House of Japan Library.

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