

IFLA/PAC Regional Centre for Asia

Report of Activities

The National Diet Library (NDL) has a mission to hand down national cultural properties to future generations as the sole national and legal deposit library in Japan. We have been promoting preservation work in cooperation with a wide range of libraries inside and outside of Japan. In 1989 the NDL was appointed IFLA/PAC Regional Centre for Asia. Since then, we have been engaging in a variety of efforts based on “IFLA/PAC Action Plan” and “IFLA·PAC Action Plan for Asian Regional Centres 2006-2008”, to promote preservation and conservation activities.

For example, we have been engaged in distribution of IFLA publications, contribution to IFLA publications, translation of IFLA publication, training, raising awareness, development of cooperation network. In addition, we have been making research on paper as PAC Tokyo’s field of excellence, and promoting the IPM as PAC Tokyo’s task.

Recently disasters happened many times because of climate change, so a disaster plan for materials has become more important. Digital preservation too, is a new task. We should also cooperate with archives and museums, for the preservation of cultural properties. We need to participate in the events held by organizations other than libraries, in order to promote libraries.

I am going to introduce the NDL’s activities concerned with these issues. I would like to tell you especially about the activities on the four elements, air, water, earth and fire, the theme of this conference.

1 . Publications and information sending

(1) Distribution of IFLA/PAC publications

We distribute International Preservation News to the libraries, institutions, and preservation specialists in the area covered: at present Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, North Korea, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Taiwan.

(2) Contribution to IFLA/PAC publications

We contributed the following report to “International Preservation News” No.48.

Ongoing study on the conservation of paper and books : evaluating of paper deterioration and strengthening of deteriorated papers. By Naoko SONODA, Masazumi SEKI, Takayuki OKAYAMA and Hajime OHTANI – A slightly modified version of the paper prepared for Advances in Paper Conservation Research, held at the British Library Conference Centre, March 2009.

(3) Translation of IFLA Publication and others into Japanese

We translated and published the following: "Library Disaster Planning" (1995), "IFLA

Principles for the Care and Handling of Library Materials (1998), "Care, Handling, and Storage of Photographs" (2002), "A Blue Shield for the Protection of Our Endangered Cultural Heritage" (2003).

We recently translated "IFLA Disaster Manual Preparedness and Planning" (2006) and will put it on the NDL website.

2 . Training

(1) The Preservation and Conservation Training Program

Every year, the NDL holds a one-day training program which aims to provide Japanese librarians with basic theory of preservation and elementary techniques for mending deteriorated materials. Each time we limit the number of participants to about 20 people and hold the training program twice, because we would like to teach them very well. Most of the participants have replied to the questionnaires after the course, that the program is very helpful.

(2) Remote training program

The NDL has been providing an e-learning program via the Internet (3 months) on preservation and conservation for library staff since 2006, because there has been great interest in the Preservation and Conservation Training Program held yearly in the NDL, that the number of applicants so far always greatly exceeded the limit of participants. Under the theme "Basic theory of preservation and conservation", there are lectures about the methods, the environment and the measures of preservation in the program. We have conducted this e-learning 4 times, so the cumulative total number of participants has reached about 1,000, which included librarians abroad, such as librarians specializing in Japanese literature. Most of the participants have replied to the questionnaires after the course, that the e-learning was suitable for their level, satisfying and useful so far.

<<https://tlms-p.ndl.go.jp/library/html/portal.html>>

The NDL has been providing an e-learning program about digitization of materials since 2007. Under the theme "The basis of digitization of materials", there are lectures about the progress and the present situation of digitization of materials, the planning and the flow chart of digitization of materials, and basic knowledge about methods of digitization. In 2009 we provided the third e-learning to 200 participants for about 3 months. This program is also very popular.

(3) Other training program

Every year the NDL provides a preservation training program to staff members of its branch libraries in Japanese government offices and the Supreme Court.

In the annual training program on rare books, which is co-hosted by the National Institute of Japanese Literature and the NDL, a staff member of the Preservation Division attends as an instructor for a subject titled "How to Handle and Preserve Japanese-style Books".

3 . Dispatch of instructors

The NDL dispatches instructors on request from libraries inside and outside Japan. In Japan the NDL dispatches a staff member of the Preservation Division as the instructor of a seminar on preservation and conservation at the request of the library and the library associations in the regions.

While we have not received any requests for the last few years, we have in the past

dispatched our staff members to foreign libraries by request, including the National Library of Indonesia, the Solo Royal Library, Indonesia, the University of Maryland in the US and the Bodleian Library in the UK.

4 . Acceptance of trainees

The NDL accepts trainees on request from libraries inside and outside Japan. Every year the NDL accepts students as trainees from universities in Japan. The Preservation Division provides them with experience of preservation as part of their curriculum. In 2008, we accepted two preservation specialists as trainees from the National Library of Korea. In 2009 the NDL accepted a trainee from the National Library of China on based of the cooperation program between the NLC and the NDL, and we provided a training program on preservation as part of the curriculum. Now we are preparing to accept a French student for training in binding and conservation for 6 weeks this year.

5 . Raising awareness

(1) Preservation Forum

Almost annually since 1990, we have held a forum open to the public, on the latest topics of preservation. This forum, which deals with professional, practical and lively issues at the time in Japan, rather than academic themes, offers an opportunity to exchange information in a wide community that includes archives, museums, companies related to preservation, and researchers.

Last year, inviting Dr. Porck, a researcher of preservation of the Koninklijke Bibliotheek the Holland Royal Library, based on the agreement on cooperation between the Koninklijke Bibliotheek and the NDL, and we held 2 forums. The titles were “The Preservation Research Projects in Holland” and “The Special Collection of the Holland Royal Library, History of Paper”

In addition, Dr. Porck mentioned that a small fire broke out in the stock of the Koninklijke Bibliotheek just before he left for Japan and that hundreds books in the special collection were damaged by soot. He said the following: The library treated the soot damage early and promptly, it is important to have a disaster plan made on the assumption that any disasters can happen, and to let every staff member know the disaster plan very well, and to hold staff training in coping with disasters. The audience was surprised that a fire had broken out in the Koninklijke Bibliotheek, and it raised the audience's awareness about disaster.

(2) Participation in the Tokyo International Book Fair

The NDL participates not only in events related to libraries but also in a variety of events such as the 16th Tokyo International Book Fair last July. We presented the mission of preservation and the role of the IFLA PAC Centre for Asia in our booth at the fair.

(3) Participation in the Children’s Tour Day

Every summer, the NDL invites children who are interested in the NDL to see our work, together with national governmental offices. The Preservation Section, described as a “Hospital for books” explained about preservation and conservation to children and given them some practice in making book jackets.

6 . Cooperation

(1) Cooperation with Preservation Organization

The NDL contributes to the activities of the Japan Library Association by delegating a staff member of the Preservation Division to the Preservation Committee.

The NDL delegates also a staff member of the Preservation Division to the Standing Committee of the Preservation and Conservation Section of IFLA.

(2) Social Meeting for Experts in Preservation

This meeting, held by inviting experts on preservation and conservation, is an opportunity to exchange information and experience across the boundaries of categories of libraries. We hold the meeting once a year, currently commissioning six people including the head of the Preservation Committee in the Japan Library Association, preservation experts in archives and museum work, a researcher. In January we held this meeting to exchange information and experience about disaster.

(3) Preservation Conference of China, Korea, Japan

Preservation Conferences of China, Korea and Japan have been conducted since 2004. We have shared our experiences in mainly paper preservation, with each other at the conferences. The conferences have been really fruitful and stimulating for all of us, I think.

(4) The 16th CDNLAO (Conference of the Directors of National Libraries – Asia Oceania)

The 16th CDNLAO was held in October 2008 at the NDL in Tokyo, under the theme “Cooperation in a Knowledge-based Society”. This conference was attended by 23 directors (or representatives) of the national libraries. Two special reports were made, “Report on the Recovery of Library Services in the Sichuan earthquake-hit area” by Ms. Zhang Yafang, former Deputy Librarian of the National Library of China, and “For Disaster Recovery, we need to be able to: Protect Content, and Recover Access” by Dr. N Varaprasad, Chief of Management of the National Library Board, Singapore. The conference reached agreement that the members would cooperate in four areas of digitization, such as long-term preservation of digital information among national libraries. As stated, this conference was interesting from the standpoint of preservation.

<<http://www.ndl.go.jp/en/publication/cdnlaocdbackno.html>>

<http://www.ndl.go.jp/en/publication/ndl_newsletter/164/642.html>

7 . Research on paper (Field of excellence)

(1) pH testing

In 2008 the NDL announced the result of the 19th pH testing of current Japanese publications held by the NDL. Acid-free paper use was 96.1 % in monographs, 95.1% in periodicals and over 95% in total.

We have conducted the test since 1986, to promote the use of acid-free paper. Considering that the rate of acid-free paper was over 95% in total, the original goal to promote the use of acid-free paper has been achieved, and the NDL decided to stop the pH testing.

(2) Examination of deterioration of Japanese books

The NDL made a survey to examine the deterioration of 2000 books published in Japan between 1950 and 1990, 400 items for each decade, in FY 2005 and the FY 2006. In this survey, we examined 41 aspects of these books, such as acidity, physical strength, degree of discoloration of paper, and degree of spread and binding conditions of books, in

order to find out whether or not these books are suitable for ordinary use such as reading and photocopying.

We made a presentation on the survey at the China, Korea and Japan Preservation Conference held in Seoul in 2008.

<http://www.ndl.go.jp/en/publication/ndl_newsletter/162/623report_muramoto.pdf>

(3) Deacidification

Last year the Preservation Division conducted research on experimental deacidification of materials by two methods, the Book Keeper Method and the Dry Ammonia Ethylene Oxide Process. After that the division conducted the sensory evaluation of smell, touch, degree of discoloration, carried out by NDL staff members. Now the research of validity and safety has been outsourced. We will publish the results of the research this year.

8 . Promote IPM

We took up integrated pest management (IPM) as a theme at the Preservation Forum to introduce the concept of IPM in libraries, archives, and so on in 2001. For IPM, we have been monitored the storage regularly, recorded the presence of insects and pests, and set sticky traps. And we gave a report of the monitoring research of the storage and invited a specialist to give a report about IPM in libraries, archives, and so on at the Preservation Forum to spread the concept of IPM in 2008.

At the end of 2007, we found books mildewed in the stock of the Tokyo Main Building. Since then we have coped with mold, continuing to measure the temperature and humidity by using data-loggers, setting dehumidifiers in the stock, and visually monitoring the storage regularly, supported by researchers.

In 2008 we held a social meeting for experts in preservation on the theme of “The management of environment for preservation”. Discussing mainly mold, we learned that communication and sharing information between the preservation side and other departments in each institution was very important to improve the environment for preservation, and that library staff have to be alert to cope with the mold .

So we decided to hold a meeting regularly, which all members concerned in the NDL attend, to improve of the storages. The first meeting was held last August. We have already achieved some results. Ms. Muramoto will make a detailed report about this issue tomorrow.

9. The NDL principle to protect materials from disaster

The NDL formulated the principle to protect materials from disaster. This principle is based on the following; human life is most important, and preventive measures, prioritizing of materials, the record of damaged materials and use of the records, promptness and specialty, cooperation among three facilities in the NDL, and cooperation with related institutions inside and outside of Japan.

Let me explain the background. We have in place a plan for the prevention of fire, earthquake and other disasters, mainly considering the safety of human life and buildings. Training has been regularly held according to this plan and the buildings and the equipment have been controlled by the plan and the law, so far. Happily, the NDL has not experienced disaster such as fire and flood to its materials at all.

We have held an international conference, a forum on disaster, translated and published IFLA publications on disaster, made a manual on restoration of water affected materials, and held training. But we could not make a disaster plan. I think it was because disasters are related to a number of fields, so drawing up a comprehensive disaster plan is really difficult. So we decided to make it a principle to protect materials from disaster, and under this principle we will improve existing manuals, make new manuals and compile them into our disaster plan. This process has already begun to raise the NDL staff's awareness about disaster.

10. Preservation reformatting

The NDL has made a plan for preservation reformatting, covering FY 2009-FY 2011. In this plan, the method of reformatting the library collection is basically digitizing. Deteriorated materials, materials used frequently in the library and through ILL, and rare materials are to have priority to be reformatted (digitized).

The NDL will digitize approximately 900,000 materials such as books, serials, old rare books, doctoral theses, children's books, and official gazettes, on a supplementary budget for two years, on the base of the plan for preservation reformatting, covering FY 2009 - FY 2011.

11. Preservation of digital materials

So far I have spoken mainly about preservation of materials. Next, I am going to make a report our research and cooperation for digital preservation.

(1) Research on obsolete audio-visual media

The NDL has conducted a survey on the holding, characteristics, situation of deterioration, need for digitization, bibliographic situation, and others, concerning these obsolete audio -visual media such as VHD, open reel tapes, Laser Discs and cassette tapes in order to ensure the long-term use of the content of these media in the future. In FY 2010 the NDL will make a policy on digitization of these obsolete audio- visual media; what should be digitized, and the priority.

(2) Research on the distribution, use, and preservation of e-books

The NDL conducted a survey on the distribution, use, and preservation of e-books in connection with libraries, from July 2008 to March 2009, because recently the market for digital books has been expanding rapidly and people have begun to take notice of e-books. This research concluded the following: long-term preservation of e-books was an urgent task but publishers and contents- providers were not so interested in it; the role of libraries was important and cooperation among publishers, contents-providers, and libraries was necessary for the long-term preservation of e- books.

When the NDL held a meeting to report this research, there were about 300 participants from publishing companies, printing companies, and e-book-related businesses such as IT companies.

<<http://current.ndl.go.jp/node/14445>>

(3) Cooperation with libraries, archives, museums in digital archiving projects

The NDL has set up a digital information resources round table in Japan, in order to strengthen cooperation and to discuss the common issues this year.

(4) Cooperation on digital archiving project between China, Korea and Japan

As for international cooperation on digital archiving projects, at a meeting, just after CDNLAO in 2008, three national libraries, as the National Library of Korea, the National Library of China and the National Diet Library reached an agreement on cooperation on the long-term preservation of digital information. Since then, the discuss about this has been conducting among three national libraries.

<http://www.ndl.go.jp/en/publication/ndl_newsletter/164/643.html>

(5) Cooperation with international organizations

The NDL has been conducting cooperation and liaising with international organizations such as the Digital Preservation Europe (DPE) and the International Internet Preservation Consortium. For example, as an experiment in 2008 DPE project staff and the staff of the Digital Library Division of the NDL successfully assessed the risks and risk mitigation strategies for our digital library system, using DRAMBORA.(Digital Repository Audit Method Based on Risk Assessment, <<http://www.repositoryaudit.eu/>>. DRAMBORA is a methodology and online tool developed jointly by the EU-funded project DPE and the UK Digital Curation Centre, in order to evaluate digital libraries and digital repositories management for long-term preservation. As an additional outcome of this cooperation, we translated for the first time DRAMBORA into Japanese. The translation will be made available on both the DRAMBORA and DPE websites and the NDL website in FY 2010.

A staff member of the Digital Library Division has been researching to develop the multilingual support function of “NucthWAX”, software of full-text search, which the IIPC is developing and spreading.

12. Development of human resources

As mentioned above, in order to cope with a variety of preservation issues, from traditional preservation to digital preservation, development of human resources is necessary. So the NDL provides staff members with opportunities for various kinds of training inside and out of Japan. Now a staff member of the Preservation Division has been learning of all the preservation activities including leather binding in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France since last September, subsidized by the Library Advancement Foundation. The NDL also sent a staff member of the Digital Library Division to Leiden Graduate School to study the publication and sharing of cultural heritage in digital environment.

Closing

That’s all, but we have a lot of other issues which we have not proceeded with. In order to cope with various kinds of issues recently, it is necessary to develop cooperation widely across the boundaries of the library. This goes without saying.

If we look back on exchange and cooperation among Australia, China, Korea and Japan, it has been fruitful and stimulating for all of us, I think. I sincerely hope that the cooperation network among Australia, China, Korea and Japan will become closer, and that preservation in the Asia Oceania region furthermore will go from to strength to strength.