

National Diet Library Newsletter

No. 171, Feb. 2010

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Lecture and Discussion by Dr. Ismail Serageldin
“From Papyrus to PDF:
The Rebirth of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina”

Lecture: From Papyrus to PDF: The Rebirth of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina

On October 2, 2009, an open lecture meeting [From Papyrus to PDF: The Rebirth of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina] was held in the Tokyo Main Library, inviting Dr. Ismail Serageldin, Director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. Following the lecture meeting, there was an open discussion by Dr. Serageldin and Dr. Makoto Nagao, Librarian of the NDL.

Dr. Serageldin began his lecture by introducing the Ancient Library of Alexandria, and proceeded to elaborate how the Bibliotheca Alexandrina (BA) is trying to resurrect the spirit and aspiration of its predecessor in the digital age.

Here are outlines of his lecture and the discussion held in the Tokyo Main Library.

The Ancient Library

The story of the Ancient Library of Alexandria starts with the conquest of Alexander the Great. He was not just a conqueror: being a student of Aristotle, he had the vision of the world culture in that new empire.



After his death, it was left to one of his successors, Ptolemy I Soter, who ruled Egypt, to implement his vision. Upon the advice of Demetrius of Phaleron, he created a temple dedicated to the Muses, called the Mouseion, which was a part academy, a part library and a part "think-tank". Under Ptolemy II, the Museion grew exponentially, and its library aspired to collect all the books of the world. Thus the library started as a part of a far bigger academic enterprise even though the name of "library" was paramount.

The library held over 700,000 scrolls, 7–8 scrolls being the equivalent of a book of 300 octavo pages. This made it the largest library ever in proportion to the world knowledge at this time. As the Library grew they built two additional libraries.

Little remains physically of the Ancient Library now. The Library was destroyed in a slow gradual decline over four centuries and by three major events including Alexandrian War between Cleopatra supported by Julius Caesar, and her brother. What remained by the end of 4th century were a few private papers in the hands of scholars for one more generation until the tragedy of Hypatia, another great lady scholar to grace the history of Alexandria. Upon her death by a Christian mob, all the scholars fled the city, marking the end of Alexandrian world class scholarship and the beginning of the Dark Ages.

We owe much to Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak, the first lady of Egypt who made it a personal campaign to revive the Library of Alexandria. She now chairs the BA Board of Trustees.

The Library As We Knew It

At the time Mrs. Mubarak started talking about rebuilding the Library, it was assumed that great libraries were repositories of books with vast reading rooms where knowledge was divided up into individual volumes. Although the value of a book remains unchanged, we began to see changes: carrels appearing with computers, old card catalogues giving way to the new form: the OPAC (Online Public Access Catalog), as everything becomes digital.

The New Digital Technology

The Internet is the most transformative innovation of the last century that really changed the world. However, its very contestable quality and largely variable content remain a problem. The Digital Future is unstoppable; the question is to think about how we can play our role constructively within it.

Now, Google. It is not only a great search engine, but it also has a massive book digitization program which impacts on the whole notion of publishing and what the future will look like. We can also expect electronic books to make a comeback.

The implication for libraries? They will become content providers in the new digital era, as well as organizers of coherent bodies of knowledge. Now with that background, how did we create the new Library of Alexandria?

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The New Library of Alexandria

For the reconstruction of the library, we held a competition that resulted into the design and construction of a landmark building.

The building's curve is covered on the outside with an elegant granite wall engraved with letters of alphabets from all over the world to remind us to be open to the cultures of the world. As we intend to reclaim the spirit of its ancient predecessor, it has to be much more than a library. There is a center for Internet archive, a conference center, a planetarium, museums and art galleries and research institutes. We receive a lot of visitors: annually, 1.2 million visitors including 400,000 reader visits, over 300 million hits on our website, 700 events, not counting educational courses and 316 art school activities but including concerts, international gatherings and book fairs. We have also become a hub for national, regional and international collaboration networks. Thus the Library is a complex of library institutions that interact together, starting with a hybrid library where computers and traditional reading tables co-exist.

We have specialized libraries: the Library for the Blind and Visually-Impaired, the Children's Library (5-11 years old), the Young People's Library (12-16 years old), the Multi-Media (AV-Music) Library, Rare Books, and we also have microforms.

We have four museums: the Sadat Museum, Manuscript Museum, Antiquities Museum and Science Museum combined with the planetarium and the exploratorium. We also have nine permanent exhibitions and four temporary exhibitions.

In addition, we have several institutes; Manuscripts, Calligraphy and Writing, Special Studies (a virtual center connecting people all around the world with researchers and scientists of Egypt), Documentation which has patented Culturama, ISIS (International School of Information Science), Art Center which handles schooling for children, Alex-Med which studies the role of Alexandria in the Mediterranean both ancient and modern. There is also the Dialogue Forum which mobilizes Egypt's intellectuals to uphold Human Rights and Freedom of Expression when they are under attack.

We also host the Arab Info Mall, an Arab civil society meeting point interconnecting 1,500 NGOs. We are creating new research centers such as an institute for Hellenistic studies to study the glorious history of the city of Alexandria and its legendary Ancient Library.

But we need to reach further, hence the mass media. We have two weekly TV programs: one is a discussion program that I do, and the other is a weekly program on what's new at the Library. We decided that the BA needs its own TV Studio and now it is under construction. (Update on the matter: BA has been able to set-up a full-fledged cutting-edge studio in a record time. The studio is now successfully operating to screen, edit and produce many episodes of the library's weekly programs. BA is now preparing for a new TV Science Series which will focus on tracing the development of different fields of science throughout the years as well as on highlighting most influential scientists throughout history and their main contributions to science. The new TV Science Series named "Horizons" will be fully produced in the new studio facility at the BA.)

Generally speaking, the BA is becoming a venue for eminent intellectuals, political figures and Nobel laureates from all over the world. We founded a new institution: the Academia

Bibliotheca Alexandrinae with 40 founders, 20 of them Nobel Laureates.

But being born digital means commitment to access to all information for all people at all times! Therefore, we have created the biggest digital library of Arabic materials in the world, which has now reached more than 125,000 books all online.

Being born digital also means honoring the past, celebrating the present and embracing the future. For honoring the past, we have such projects as the Digital Manuscripts Library, Archeological Map of Egypt, the Natural Heritage of Egypt and Arabic Music National Database. We also have the Memory of Modern Egypt program which is similar to the World Digital Library except that it is available only in Arabic.

We celebrate the present by working with others such as the Million Book Project in which we digitized 120,000 books, by maintaining the Internet Archive to ensure that it will never disappear, and by working on Access To Knowledge initiatives. We are also trying to design Science Supercourses that are made freely available worldwide online and on DVDs. We are also customizing the Development Gateway with the World Bank for the Arab World.

Now we embrace the future by defending our values against obscurantism, fanaticism and xenophobia. We strengthen the role of women wherever we can, and we link people together by the Arab Info Mall. We also help teach children better with the National Academy of Sciences of France by Arabizing the LAMAP website, the Academy's educational website promoting scientific investigation within the framework of primary school education.

(The LAMAP is a French website initiated in 1996 by Georges Charpak, Nobel laureate of physics in 1992, to provide essential resources necessary for the development of science teaching.)

We are also eager to acquire tools for tomorrow. We are working with the UN University in Tokyo on the UNDL (Universal Networking Digital Language) which enables all people to generate information and have access to cultural knowledge in their native languages through an automatic translation system. We also have the second prototype Espresso Book Machine to provide a print-on-demand service within the library of selected digital materials. All you have to do is to overcome the copyright issue. It allows us to reissue out-of-print classics.

An Infrastructure For Science

We have systematically created an infrastructure for science. We offer 45,000 journals online in full-text, large computing capability provided by our own supercomputer, a very developed analytical center which we call the VISTA (Virtual Immersive Science & Technology Applications), large storage capacity for Internet archiving, and last but not least large-bandwidth connectivity which allows us to connect to the rest of the science world.

The World Digital Library

We are very proud to be, with the National Diet Library and the Library of Congress (LC), a part of the World Digital Library (WDL). It was really a visionary initiative by James Billington,

the Librarian of the Congress supported by UNESCO. The aim is to create a meeting point for cultures around the world and make the different cultural materials available for free on the Internet. We are much honored that the WDL Agreement asked the Library of Alexandria to work on technical issues of the central hub.

The site offers advanced search and browse features in seven languages and the content itself is in more than two dozen languages. It was officially launched in April 2009 and is accessible online at www.wdl.org.

Thus the BA, which is born digital, is proud to join the builders of a better future. By providing universal access to all knowledge for all people at all times, working all together, there is so much that we can do for a whole generation and for the whole world.

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Dr. Nagao: It seems the ancient spirit of the Mouseion has been resurrected. Now, may I ask you the size of the budgets and personnel in the BA?

Dr. Serageldin: The BA has about 2,000 staff working in Cairo and Alexandria. We have 220 in security, 100 or so in house-keeping; the remaining staff are at average age of 30, 51% of them are women. Secondly, we pay regular Egyptian salaries for the staff; the young engineer earns around \$300 a month. We run the whole place, all these programs and things at \$20 million a year.

Dr. Nagao: Do you have any IT team? If you do, what is the role they play in the scheme of the BA? Are they librarians proficient in IT or are they different categories of staff, with librarians not directly involved in IT fields?

Dr. Serageldin: That is an important question. We have probably the best IT team in Egypt. There are around 300 engineers devoted purely to IT. We have over 2,800 computers in the building to be maintained and VISTA, Culturama also use computerized systems. They also provide assistance to the LC on the WDL. There is a complementarity of roles between

librarians and IT staff in which librarians request IT staff to add some features to the system and the latter oblige. The IT staff also work with scientists on some virtual reality systems.

Dr. Nagao: How enviable. My next question is on digitization. Do you administer digitization program as a regular operation or do you outsource it?

Dr. Serageldin: We do it in the Library. In fact, we are extremely good at it. When we worked on the Million Book Project, we had 2% of equipment deployed but we produced 5% of the work.

Dr. Nagao: Let me add that the Million Book Project was run by Carnegie Mellon University to digitize about one million books. Now I would like to ask how much role do digitized materials play in school education in Egypt?

Dr. Serageldin: What we have done is Arabizing of materials on the LAMAP, the website of the National Academy of Science in France. But it is intended to be used by teachers, the same thing again with the Supercourse. But we have not reached the stage of using digitized materials in school.

Dr. Nagao: We cannot introduce lending of digitized data from the NDL to public libraries and schools because of copyright law. Is it possible to digitally transmit copyrighted materials in Egypt?

Dr. Serageldin: No. Our current arrangement is that out of 125,000 materials available on the Internet, out-of-copyright materials are available fully, 5% of non-out-of-copyright ones can be read and the rest can be ordered to be copied. We will print it by the Espresso Book Machine. I have an agreement with publishers, printers and authors. My vision of the future is that we should have everything available online but people must pay for download, either to a personal reader or into a printed copy.

Ideally printing machines will be as ubiquitous as ATMs for banks, with pre-approved arrangements to benefit author, publisher and other stakeholders. But at present, I am having a tough time in reaching an agreement with publisher after publisher.

Dr. Nagao: The situation is the same in Japan. Are printing machines that can copy books already a common sight in Egypt?

Dr. Serageldin: Not yet, but we are almost there. OnDemandBooks is negotiating directly with Google which has millions of books. I expect a lot of movement on this issue within 5-10 years.

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Dr. Nagao: I think access to digitized library materials must be provided within a framework in which publishers and authors do not lose out. I proposed a business model to protect their interest two years ago. Is this the direction Egypt is looking at?

Dr. Serageldin: Yes, it is. I also know an alternative which is the Norwegian approach; the government levies a tax and pays the sum to authors, thereby making a number of books free. There is another model deserving to be looked at on translation. There is a provision in

Egyptian law which enables unpermitted translation of a material following three years of refusal by copyright holders. The U.S. is pressing us to change it. But I had debates on the matter and found that it is publishers, not authors, who are objecting it. But then, we give them 3 years to do it themselves.

Dr. Nagao: A similar discussion is going forward in Japan. Now that you mentioned Google, there are incendiary issues surrounding the company in Japan as well as the U.S. and Europe. Especially in France, there is disquiet over the alleged linguistic supremacy of English. They argue that such preference fosters dominance of the English language and is detrimental to cultural diversity. Do you have similar arguments in Arab-speaking countries?

Dr. Serageldin: Not quite. There is a general feeling that Arabic e-content is so weak right now that the chance of getting it on non-Arabic search engines is limited. But I come back to the WDL. I think that is the way to present all the cultures of the world together. There is no reason why it will not host hundreds of millions of items in 50 years' time. The way it will be structured and navigated is respectful of other cultures, builds upon diversity and respects the uniqueness of each language.

Dr. Nagao: I am wondering who will take the role of organizing and structuring the knowledge stored in the WDL?

Dr. Serageldin: Under the new charter drafted for the whole WDL, there will be a governing body with a rotating membership tasked to look at the issue. Secondly, there is a brilliant feature of the WDL: it focused from the beginning not just on searching but on browsing. Like regular libraries where you can look at a cluster of books around the one you pick, the WDL navigates you around the related subject.

Dr. Nagao: I appreciate your unique viewpoint on browsing. Now, there is another transnational endeavor to establish a digital library: Europeana. What is the relationship between the WDL and Europeana?

Dr. Serageldin: There is no official relationship and in certain ways, Europeana is a competitor. In any case, Europeana faces much more difficult technical problems with language: they have volumes of work growing exponentially on the one hand, and 27 languages of the European Union to represent on the other. I think they can co-exist for awhile. But I am more interested in the WDL as it allows me to see the whole world.

Dr. Nagao: Speaking of languages, the NDL too has just started discussion with the National Libraries of China and Korea to coordinate search interfaces and share resources as we all belong to the Chinese Character Cultural Sphere. Is there a similar initiative on collaboration in Arab-speaking countries?

Dr. Serageldin: In fact, we are right now working on the Arabic Union Catalog. Although our own cataloging is recognized as one of the most authoritative in the Arabic countries, we need to standardize it with other countries'. We are also looking at the idea that we collaborate on digitization of our own materials.

Dr. Nagao: There is a high expectation for digitization. As we are awarded a supplementary budget to carry out large-scale digitization, there is a demand from the visually-handicapped

people that we convert books into DAISY, a digital talking book format.

Dr. Serageldin: We have a program supported by the Islamic Development Bank of Jeddah for bringing a machine to convert text to sound, and we are looking at the possibility of programming a text-to-sound digital reader which is 98% accurate. But people seem to prefer a human voice reading. We have large number of voluntary readers who brings in emotions and inflections. This is where we are now.

Dr. Nagao: Do you provide digital materials for disabled people via public libraries? In Japan, copyright law has been changed recently so that public libraries can produce digitized materials and make them available at other libraries. I expect it to initiate a surge in the transmission of the digital materials between public libraries.

Dr. Serageldin: I do hope so. Meanwhile, until we get to that point, one thing the BA can do is to distribute DVDs containing materials for free like we did for the Supercourse. We sent thousands of DVDs to the deans of medical schools with a request to make five copies for each staff member, resulting in 500,000 DVDs going around the world. I think we can do the same with audio-books.

Dr. Nagao: I find this Supercourse fascinating. Do you provide it to each stage of education from elementary school to university?

Dr. Serageldin: It is for community of practice, which means high school to graduate school. The key thing is we can make available very up-to-date lectures by experts in easily usable format for free. It is targeted at teachers who are free to use the teaching materials on DVD per se or arrange them to their liking.

Dr. Nagao: Now let us change the topic. The BA is a comprehensive cultural institute containing museums and archives alongside the library. In Japan, we have no such equivalent and MLA (Museums, Libraries and Archives) partnership is an often-discussed topic. In other words, we need to integrate the services of each institute as our services become more and more digital. Does the BA have any clues as to providing such total service?

Dr. Serageldin: What we know is that tools are complementary and there is an administrative difficulty in organizing all those materials because the staff in charge, be it librarians, curators, scientists or IT engineers, come from different institutional backgrounds.

Currently we have agreements with seven museums to create the GEM (Great Egyptian Museum) . It is based on the idea that they will digitize all their collections on Egypt. The first step is to make that information available together. The next step is to link the artefacts in the museum to relevant literature. These are all promises we have hardly embarked upon. But what we can barely dream of today will be a solid reality within a few years considering the rapid advance of computing capacity. Obstacles are institutional cultures, copyrights, agreements and the like.

My concluding statement is this: those who try to defend the old system of copyright are dinosaurs. You cannot defend an old business model against new technology. New technology always wins. Sooner or later, people must come together. The frustration is, it is

done haphazardly by young people outside the law. It must be done by thoughtful people within a legal framework to advance the best of culture. I think it is our duty. There is a lot of fighting ahead of us but we are going to win.

The report of this lecture and discussion will also be published in NDL Monthly Bulletin no. 587, February (in Japanese).

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The 12th Mutual Visit Program between the National Diet Library and the National Library of Korea held in November 2009

The 12th mutual visit program of the National Diet Library (NDL) and the [National Library of Korea \(NLK\)](#) was held in Seoul from November 2 to 9, 2009. Headed by Mr. Takehiko Sato, Director of the Digital Library Division, Kansai-kan of the National Diet Library, the delegation consisted of the following other members: Mr. Akihiro Kawanishi, Assistant Director, Digital Information Planning Office, Administrative Department, Ms. Atsuko Ito, Assistant Director, Book Service Division, Public Services Department, and Ms. Yoshimi Amino, Resources and Information Division, International Library of Children's Literature.



Seminar I

The main theme of this year's program was "Contents and Services of Digital Libraries." Seminar I with keynote speeches and Seminar II under the main theme were held at the NLK's [national digital library \(dibrary\)](#) which was opened in May 2009. In addition, an exchange program on both libraries' services for children and other related activities was held at the National Library for Children and Young Adults and Ms. Amino attended.

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Seminar I : Keynote speeches	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Digital Age and the National Library of Korea in Transformation" by Mr. Si-Young Moon, Director, Library Management and Cooperation Division, NLK
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<p>November 3, 2009</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 『 Digital Library Projects of the National Diet Library and Development of New Services』 by Mr. Takehiko Sato, NDL
<p>Seminar II-1 : Reports on the Main Theme November 4, 2009</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 『 Expanding Digital Contents and Managing a Portal』 by Mr. Shin Ho Lee, Deputy Director, Digital Library Planning Division, NLK • 『 Digitization of the National Diet Library』 by Mr. Akihiro Kawanishi, NDL
<p>Seminar II-2 : Reports on the Main Theme November 5, 2009</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 『 Digital Library Information Services of the National Library of Korea』 by Ms. Kyung Ae Lee, Deputy Chief, Digital Library Service Division, NLK • 『 User Services in Digital Age』 by Ms. Atsuko Ito, NDL
<p>Seminar at the National Library for Children and Young Adults November 4, 2009</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 『 Main Operations of the National Library for Children and Young Adults』 by Ms. Cha Gyeong-lye, Planning and Cooperation Division, National Library for Children and Young Adults, NLK (read by Ms. Jung-Hee Kim, Planning and Cooperation Division of the same library) • 『 Overviews on the International Library of Children』 s Literature』 by Ms. Yoshimi Amino, NDL

The delegation also visited the [National Library for Children and Young Adults](#) of NLK, as well as the [National Assembly Library](#) and other related institutions.



NDL delegation in front of the NLK building

The details of digital library services in Korea reported in this mutual visit program will be published in the NDL Bulletin no. 588, March 2010 (in Japanese).

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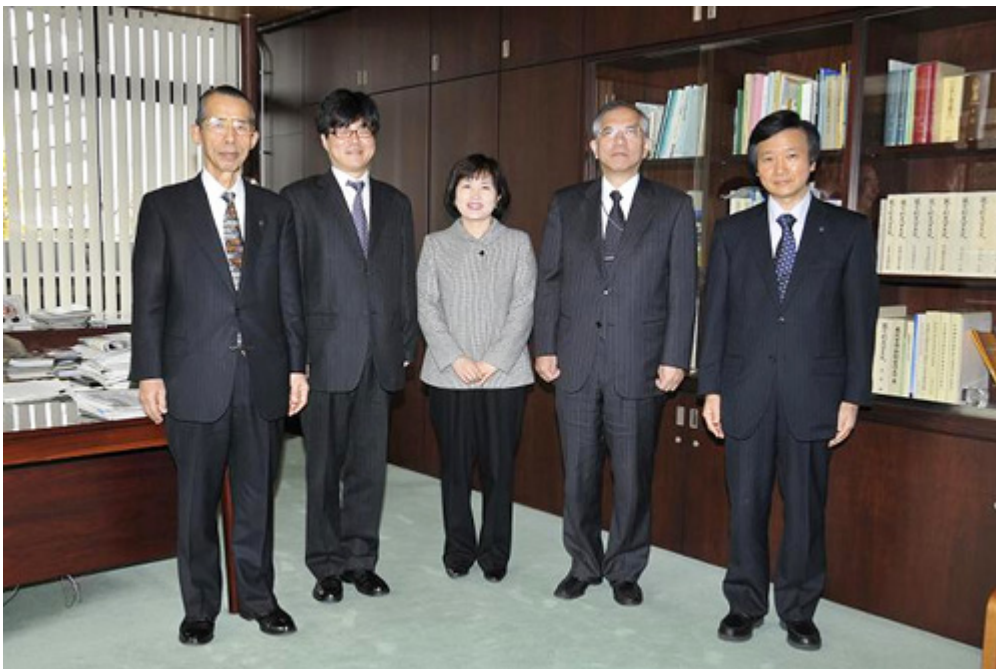
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National Diet Library Newsletter

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The 1st Mutual Visit Program between the National Diet Library, the National Assembly Library of Korea and the National Assembly Research Service



NAL and NARS delegation and NDL executive members (from left: Dr. Nagao (Librarian), Dr. You, Ms. Oh, Mr. Yoshinaga (Deputy Librarian), Mr. Yamaguchi (Director General, Research and Legislative Reference Bureau))

The first mutual visit program with the National Assembly Library (NAL) and the National Assembly Research Service (NARS) of Korea was held from December 14 to 20, 2009 at the Tokyo Main Library of the National Diet Library (NDL). Two staff members from each organization, Ms. Hyun-Sook Oh, Deputy Director, Law Library Division, Parliamentary Information Office of NAL, and Dr. Woong-jo You, Legislative Researcher, Foreign Affairs and Security Team of NARS, visited Tokyo for the program.

Started in 2000 as a staff-training program, the mutual visit program between the NDL and the NAL had been conducted every year since 2003. With the organization reform of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea, NARS was established in 2007 to strengthen the legislative service for the assembly. In response to this, NDL, NAL and NARS agreed to have a mutual visit program, further developing the program being conducted between NDL and NAL. As the two-year agreement for the mutual visit program between the two parties expired in 2009, a new agreement between NDL and NAL, NDL and NARS was concluded for the next four years in autumn 2009.

In 2009 program, staff from each organization visited the NDL and the following main sessions were successfully completed.

Tuesday, December 15, 2009

Paper session I: Acquisition of materials and information in Internet environment and development of services

- NAL report from Ms. Hyun-Sook Oh
- NDL report from Mr. Hiroshi Nagasaki, Assistant Director, Parliamentary Documents and Official Publications Division, Research and Legislative Reference Bureau

Thursday, December 17, 2009

Paper session II: The present state and challenges of ODA in each country

- NARS report from Dr. Woong-jo You
- NDL report from Mr. Daisuke Ueda, Researcher, Trade and Industry Division, Research and Legislative Reference Bureau

In Session I, Ms. Oh introduced the acquisition and utilization of Internet materials and services in NAL which answer the needs of assembly members. Mr. Nagasaki presented issues of the discontinuation of publication of foreign materials acquired by international exchange and deposit, and reported about the collection of Internet resources based on legislation by NDL. These reports were followed by a question-answer session where they discussed role sharing between NAL and the National Library of Korea on digitization of materials, and issues of risk caused by acquiring digital materials as substitutes for paper materials.

In Session II, Dr. You outlined the present state and challenges of ODA in Korea, and Mr. Ueda reported the character and challenges of ODA in Japan after defining ODA. Based on these two reports, questions were actively asked about various issues such as the difference of the principle of ODA in the two countries and the position of Republic of the Korea on assistance to North Korea.

In addition to these sessions, the delegation had meetings with the staff of the Parliamentary Documents and Official Publications Division (Ms. Oh) and the Trade and Industry Division, Foreign Affairs and National Defense Division (Dr. You). At the end of the program, the delegation and the NDL staff talked about future programs.

The next program is scheduled to be held in Seoul with two delegates dispatched from the NDL.

[▶Reports of past programs in the NDL Newsletter](#)



NDL Statistics FY2008 NDL in figures– excerpts from the Annual Report of the NDL

This article is a translation of the article in Japanese of the same title in the NDL Monthly Bulletin No. 584 (November 2009).



The following figures show the main statistics of the NDL activities, services and organization, excerpted from the [Annual Report of the National Diet Library FY2008](#) (Japanese only).

These are some important figures on the NDL (as of March 31, 2009).

Contents

- [Personnel, Finances and Facilities](#)
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- [Services available on NDL website](#)
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Personnel, Finances and Facilities

- Cost of acquiring materials: about 2,630 million yen
of which compensation for publications deposit: about 390 million yen
- Total budget and settlement of accounts

Budget: about 21.783 billion yen

Settlement of accounts: about 21.640 billion yen

- The amount was used for payroll, running expenses, construction of stacks to accommodate increasing materials and land purchase in addition to acquisition of library materials.
- Number of staff: **908** (male **49%**, female **51%**)
 - Proportion of women in Senior Specialist and managerial posts is **31%**.
- Total area of reading rooms: **24,837m²**
 - Tokyo Main Library: **18,983m²**
 - Detached Library in the Diet: **562m²**
 - Kansai-kan of the NDL: **4,265m²** ILCL (International Library of Children's Literature): **1,027m²**
 - The Tokyo Main Library has [nine Special Materials Rooms and six Reading Rooms](#).

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Acquisition, cataloging and preservation

- Number of materials newly acquired in FY2008: 1,143,618 items
 - Books: **247,083** volumes
 - Periodicals and newspapers: **634,574** items
 - Non-book materials: **261,961** items
 - Microfilms and microfiches: **171,235**
 - Visual materials: **15,209**
 - Recorded materials: **16,357**
 - Machine-readable materials (CDs, DVDs, etc.): **10,472**
 - Maps: **17,077**
 - Doctoral dissertations: **17,380**
 - Manuscripts: **3,453**
 - Braille resources and large print editions: **1,061**
 - etc..
- Websites ([WARP](#)): **2,788** titles
 - In addition to books and periodicals, we collect materials of other kinds. Since FY2002, we have also been collecting Internet information including websites of public institutions and events.

- International exchange
 - Acquisition
 - Books: **4,633** volumes
 - Periodicals: **2,202** titles
 - Non-book materials: **7,721** items

- Delivery
 - Books: **22,424** volumes
 - Periodicals: **11,832** titles
 - Non-book materials: **2,911** items

In accordance with two conventions of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), we exchange official publications and other materials related to the partner countries with 955 institutions in 157 nations and two regions.

- Microfilming
 - Microfilms: **3,446** reels
 - Microfiches: **93,144** sheets

We microfilm materials and serve them to users in place of originals so that we can prevent original materials from deteriorating.

- Cataloging: 1,472,532 data
 - Books: **188,182**
 - Periodicals and newspapers: **5,628**
 - Non-book materials: **531,934**
 - Japanese Periodicals Index: **751,908**

We create bibliographic data such as titles, author names, etc. and location information, publish [Japanese National Bibliography Weekly List](#) (Japanese only) and make them available on our website.

- Data updating of periodicals and newspapers (title change etc.): **14,757**
- Collections: 35,648,652 items
 - Books: **9,290,198** volumes
 - Periodicals and newspapers: **13,091,355** items
 - Non-book materials: **13,267,099** items

- Microforms: **8,745,523**
- Visual materials: **248,645**
- Recorded materials: **631,963**
- Machine-readable materials (CDs, DVDs, etc.): **86,178**
- Maps: **525,912**
- Doctoral dissertations: **506,817**
- Manuscripts: **295,053**
- Braille resources and large print editions: **29,304**
- etc.....
- We collect these materials by various methods such as [legal deposit](#), purchase, donation and exchange.

The number of items by facility is as follows:

Tokyo Main Library: **24,133,343** items

Kansai-kan of the NDL: **10,284,606** items

ILCL: **451,211** items

Websites (WARP): **19,665** titles

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Services available on NDL website

- Bibliographic data searchable on the [NDL-OPAC](#) and [NDL Asian Language Materials OPAC](#): 9,984,742 records
 - Japanese Periodicals Index: 9,326,654 articles
 - NDL-OPAC is the National Diet Library Online Public Access Catalog.

- Titles available on the [Digital Library from the Meiji Era](#): 101,375 titles (148,134 volumes)

Provides digitized images of books from the NDL collection which were published in the Meiji (1868–1912) and Taisho (1912–1926) eras.

- Number of accesses to our website: 31,980,521 (87,618 per day)

Online catalogs, various databases such as Full-text Database System for the Minutes of the Diet, and search guides which help you find information are available via the NDL website.

- Bibliographic data searchable on the [Union Catalog of Children's Literature](#): 753,768 records

- Number of new data: **14,934**

Provides holding data and specialized information (synopsis, bibliographic notes and prize information) by participation of major related institutions in Japan.

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Services for the National Diet

- Research on request: 46,664 cases

Based on requests for research by the Diet members and others, we conduct research on national issues and domestic and foreign affairs, analysis and evaluation of legislative bills.

Related article: [Services for the National Diet – providing legislative support](#)

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Services for the executive and judicial branches

- Loan services: 10,431 items

Based on the Branch Libraries System, there are branch libraries of the NDL in the government ministries and agencies and the Supreme Court. Through this branch library network, we provide library services and exchange materials.

Related article: [National Diet Library's network with libraries in the executive and judicial agencies: Branch Library System](#)

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Services for the public

- On-site users: 651,898 people
 - Tokyo Main Library: **457,140**
 - Kansai-kan of the NDL: **58,977**
 - ILCL: **135,781**

The Tokyo Main Library and the Kansai-kan both opened 278 days and the ILCL opened 286 days in FY2008.

- [Reference services](#): 554,903 casess
 - Tokyo Main Library: **494,152**
 - Kansai-kan of the NDL: **53,953**
 - ILCL: **6,798**

We provide services orally or by documents and telephone.

- Reading services: 2,552,315 items
 - Tokyo Main Library: **2,408,264**
 - Kansai-kan of the NDL: **105,589**
 - ILCL: **38,462**

Reading services requested on-site.

- Guided tours: 6,187 participants
 - Tokyo Main Library: **2,022**
 - Kansai-kan of the NDL: **2,107**
 - ILCL: **2,058**

To apply for guided tours, please see [tours of the Tokyo Main Library](#), [tours of the Kansai-kan](#) and [tours of the ILCL \(in Japanese\)](#).

- [Interlibrary loans](#): 28,870 items
 - Tokyo Main Library: **12,919**
 - Kansai-kan of the NDL: **3,310**
 - ILCL: **12,641**

Including interlibrary loans to other libraries, Book Sets Lending Service to School Libraries, loan services for exhibitions

- [Photoduplication requests from remote users](#): 287,224 cases
 - Tokyo Main Library: **160,119**
 - Kansai-kan of the NDL: **125,842**
 - ILCL: **1,263**

Photoduplication service available via the website and others without visiting the NDL.

- On-site photoduplication requests: 888,496 cases
 - Tokyo Main Library: **811,015**
 - Kansai-kan of the NDL: **70,183**
 - ILCL: **7,298**

*The statistics from FY2002 to FY2007 are available in [the past newsletter articles](#).



Yapon mohbiri
– the sole magazine introducing Japan
to Muslim countries of the world

Shunsuke Hayashi
Asian Resources Division, Kansai-kan

This article is a translation of the article in Japanese of the same title in NDL Monthly Bulletin No. 582 (September 2009).

In Japan between two World Wars, there were many Tatars, Turkic-speaking Muslims from the Volga-Ural region of Russia, who came as refugees from the disorders after the Russian Revolution in 1917. In Japan at that period, there was a movement toward cooperation with Muslim countries around the world through the Tatars in Japan.



Photo 1: Front cover
 Funded by the South Manchuria Railways Co.
 and Morimura group,
 the types used were imported from Turkey
 where the use of Arabic characters was
 prohibited at that time.



Photo 2: Preface
 Primary heading is written in both Tatar
 (Yapon möxbire) and Arabic
 (al-Mukhbir al-Yabānī), but the text of
 articles is written only in Tatar.



Photo 3: Part of contributing authors' photos Mitsuru Toyama is at the center, and Ryozo Ioki is at the upper right.

The photos from 1 to 4 are from the inaugural issue of Yapon mohbiri (literally means “Japan intelligencer”), the first magazine in Japan printed from Arabic script movable types, which was published in Tokyo by Tatars in April, 1931. This magazine is written in Tatar, the mother language of the Tatars. The purpose of the publication appears in the preface as follows, “to give information about Muslims who live in Japan and to pave the way to the friendship between Japan and Muslims” (Photo 2).

The Tokyo'da Mätbää-i İslamiyâ (called “Mohammedan Printing Office in Tokyo” in English; “Tokyo Kaikyo Insatsusho 東京回教印刷所” in Japanese), which printed this magazine, was supported by an organization of Tatars in Japan named the Tokyo'da Mäxällä-i İslamiyâ (“Tokyo Kaikyodan 東京回教団”; means “Muslim Neighborhood in Tokyo”) headed by

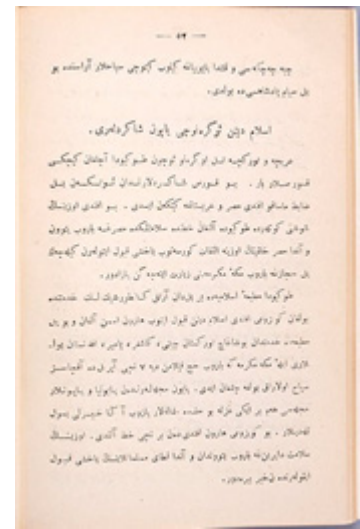


Photo 4: Sample of articles This article introduces Mr. Masako, a Japanese who learned Arabic in Tokyo and went to Egypt to study Islam.

Muhammed Gabdulhay Kurbangali who had fought for the White army (anti-Bolshevik forces) during the civil war after the Russian Revolution. Kurbangali came to Japan in 1924, organized the Tatars who lived in Tokyo and made a great effort for the construction of the Tokyo Mosque (“Tokyo Kaikyo Jiin 東京回教寺院”, the present-day Tokyo Camii & Turkish Culture Center in Shibuya-ku, Tokyo). As part of his activities, the Tokyo'da Mätbää-i İslamiyâ was established to print in Arabic characters.

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Photo 5: The first Koran (Qur'an) printed and published in Japan by the Tokyo'da Mätbää-i İslamiyâ in 1934 (NDL call no.: 196-139)

Such publications in Arabic were distributed to 33 countries to advertise Muslims' activities in Japan to Muslim countries.

Behind Kurbangali's vigorous activities in Japan, there was support from Japanese political, bureaucratic, military and journalistic circles. According to reminiscences of Saburo Shimano (a researcher responsible for Russian affairs in the East Asiatic Economic Investigation Bureau, South Manchuria Railways Co.) who was an advisor to Kurbangali, Kurbangali was assisted by many important figures: Ryozo Ioki, a journalist known as a nationalist; Mitsuru Toyama, a leader of “Aija-shugi”—the nationalist movement relating to Pan-Asianism and expansionism in the first half of the 20th century; politicians such as Tsuyoshi Inukai, Takejiro Tokonami and Yosuke Matsuoka; and other influential persons. It seems that Kurbangali asserted that by supporting Muslims in the construction of mosques and Arabic-script printing presses, Japan could advertise overseas its deep understanding of Islam and achieve cooperation with Muslim countries.

The publication of Yapon mohbiri was probably planned with the support for Kurbangali and as a part of his publicity campaign.

People who sent words of congratulations to the inaugural issue include men of rank and great scholars such as Yoshio Sakatani, former Minister of Finance; anthropologist Ryuzo Torii; Gaishi Nagaoka, former Deputy Chief of the Army General Staff; and Mitsuru Toyama (Photo 3). Ryozo Ioki wrote an article about the friendship between Japan and Muslims. From the bureaucratic circles, it carried articles by the director of the International Trade Administration Bureau of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the commissioner of the Japan Tourist Bureau (predecessor of the JTB Corp.). It seems that they seriously intended to achieve cooperation between Japan and Muslim countries through this magazine.

Printed copies of Yapon mohbiri were distributed to Muslims around the world. Unfortunately, however, it is doubtful whether the magazine achieved the expected favorable effect. Although the characters are the same, the languages of Muslims in the world, Arabic, Persian, Urdu, etc., are so diverse that they cannot communicate with each other. Tatar,

which was used in this magazine, is a Turkic language, and it seems that the readers were limited to Turkic-speaking Muslims who lived around Turkey and Russia.

Although Yapon mohbiri was published until the 1940s, most of the Tatars left Japan after World War II and very few Arabic-script publications printed by the Tatars remained in Japan. The National Diet Library holds only a single copy of Yapon mohbiri, which is the inaugural issue introduced in this article.

Yapon mohbiri, issue No. 1, April 1931, NDL call no.: Z51-A481 (This material is stored in the Kansai-kan.)

Reference:

- Hisao Komatsu, Ibrahimu Nihon e no tabi, Tosui shobo, 2008.
- Akira Matsunaga, Zainichi Tataru jin, Toyo shobo, 2009.
- Mantetsu-kai et al., Shimano Saburo, Hara shobo, 1984

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About 300 titles added to the Digital Library of Children's Literature

The Digital Library of Children's Literature covers digitized and copyright-cleared pre-1955 children's literature held by the International Library of Children's Literature and Tokyo Main Library in full-content images and provides them on the web.

As of the end of December 2009, 293 titles had been added, with the total of 1,980 titles open for the viewing.

Newly added items include Yoshio Toyoshima's first children's story collection Yume no Tamago (lit. Egg of Dreams) along with children's literature like Sunao Tokunaga's Jinza-don no Kusatori (lit. Mr. Jinza's Weeding) which is based on his childhood experience, and picture books such as Bunshu Iguchi's Pita Pan no Bouken (lit. Adventure of Peter Pan) (1949)



Photo 1: Front cover
Yume no Tamago
Authored by Yoshio Toyoshima
Illustrated by Jun Suzuki
Published by Akai Torisha in 1927



Photo 2: Front cover
Jinza-don no Kusatori
Authored by Sunao Tokunaga
Published by Kokka-do Nichidosha in 1943

Some children's literature of the Meiji-Taisho eras (1868-1926) is covered by the [Digital Library from the Meiji Era](#). Please refer to that also.

URL: <http://kodomo4.kodomo.go.jp/web/ippangz/html/TOP.html>

Contact: International Library of Children's Literature

Resources and Information Division

Information Services Section
Tel: 03(3827)2053 (pilot number)
+81-3-3827-2053

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Turkish materials are now searchable by NDL Asian Language Materials OPAC

Bibliographic data of Turkish materials, 1,084 titles (1,717 volumes), held at the Kansai-kan of the National Diet Library were added to the [NDL Asian Language Materials OPAC](#).

The majority of the Turkish materials are in the field of humanities such as history and literature, including works of famous authors such as Orhan Pamuk, Nobel laureate in literature. 140 titles written in Arabic characters (Ottoman Turkish) which were published before the reform of the writing system in 1928 are also included. Materials can be searched from both original script and transcription into Roman script.

With this addition, bibliographic data of 13 languages including Chinese, Korean, Mongolian, Indonesian, Malay, Vietnamese, Thai, Hindi, Sanskrit, Urdu, Persian, and Arabic became available.

Enter [Y782] in the call number box to view the list of Turkish materials.

*Asian language periodicals other than Chinese and Korean can be searched via the [NDL-OPAC](#) (National Diet Library Online Public Access Catalog) using roman script.



Search Result [Brief Display]



A list of simple bibliographic records (books and serials) is displayed. To see more details, click on a record

Sort [media](#) [book / serial](#) [title ▲](#) [author](#) [series](#) [publisher](#) [year](#) [category](#)

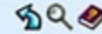
Total 10 hits@Serial
0 - 10 of 10

Condition: [Word Author(s)]Ahmet Refik

No.	OUTPUT	Media	Book Serial	Imc	Brief Disp.
1	<input type="checkbox"/>		B		Anadolu'da Türk aşiretleri (968-1200) / Ahmet Refik -- Devlet Matbaası, 1930. Kansai-kan :closed stack/books Y782-A23 84Y15874 on the shelf
2	<input type="checkbox"/>		B		Hicri on birinci asrda İstanbul hayatı (1000-1100) / Ahmet Refik -- Devlet Matbaası, 1931. -- (Türk Tarih Encümeni Külliyyatı : adet 20). Kansai-kan :closed stack/books Y782-A24 84Y07542 on the shelf
3	<input type="checkbox"/>		B		Hicri on ikinci asrda İstanbul hayatı (1100-1200) / Ahmet Refik -- Devlet Matbaası, 1930. -- (Türk Tarih Encümeni Külliyyatı : adet 17). Kansai-kan :closed stack/books Y782-A29 83Y21914 on the shelf
4	<input type="checkbox"/>		B		İrtençisi, Emir Hürrem Hanşah, Hat (1000-961) / Ahmed Refik -- مطبعة آري [1917] 1333 -- [تاريخ عثمانی اندلسی کتافی : 6 عدد] Kansai-kan :closed stack/books Y782-A20 86Y00545 on the shelf
5	<input type="checkbox"/>		B		[تاریخ فارسینده تورکلر (657-699) / احمد رفیق -- کتابخانہ, 1927. -- تکثیر صدر اردو تورک جاتی] Kansai-kan :closed stack/books Y782-A30 85Y19043 on the shelf
6	<input type="checkbox"/>		B		[تورک تارخین / احمد رفیق : 1 جلد -- کتابخانہ, 1923] 1. Kansai-kan :closed stack/books Y782-A22 85Y19046 on the shelf
7	<input type="checkbox"/>		B		[تورات مطب. 1928. -- تورک تاریخ اندلسی کتافی : عدد 10, 14. 2 جلد سلطان تاریخی / سلطان عثمانی محمد آغا : 1 جلد] 1. Kansai-kan :closed stack/books Y782-F6 84Y01978 on the shelf 2. Kansai-kan :closed stack/books Y782-F6 84Y01979 on the shelf
8	<input type="checkbox"/>		B		[سلطان جم (900-984) / احمد رفیق -- کتابخانہ, 1923. -- تکثیر صدر اردو تورک جاتی] Kansai-kan :closed stack/books Y782-A21 85Y19045 on the shelf
9	<input type="checkbox"/>		B		[عدد الحدیثی و نور سلطان : حیات خصوصیت و سیاستی / محمدری عثمانی نوری : جلد 1-3 -- کتابخانہ, 1327 [1911]] 3-[1] جلد Kansai-kan :closed stack/books Y782-O13 85Y19084 on the shelf
10	<input type="checkbox"/>		B		[سلاطین عثمانیہ صدر ایفشار / احمد رفیق -- مطبعة آري [1916] 1332 -- [تاريخ عثمانی اندلسی کتافی : عدد 1] Kansai-kan :closed stack/books Y782-A62 85Y19044 on the shelf

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NDL Asian Language Materials OPAC: search result of the Turkish materials

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Selected list of articles from NDL periodicals (Text in Japanese)

National Diet Library Monthly Bulletin (Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan Geppo)

If you click the volume number of each issue, you can read the full-text of NDL Monthly Bulletin. The text is provided in PDF format* (Japanese only).

*To see the full-text (PDF), you will need Adobe Acrobat Reader (free download). Click [here](#) to download. ([Adobe Website](#))

No. 586, January2010 [[PDF Format, 3.64MB](#)]

- Book of the month – from NDL collections: A scene of hikifuda, fliers for the New Year
- Talks with the Librarian of NDL (13)
The former President of the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Dr. Jean-Noël Jeanneney: Cultural diversity and transmission of knowledge
- Internet et la culture: une chance ou un péril? (The Internet and culture: opportunity or danger?) [related article](#)
- Digital exhibition “Japan-Netherlands Exchange in the Edo Period” Relations between Japan and the Netherlands [related article](#)
- Illustrated guide to the work of NDL: Digital exhibition
- Research studies on preservation in the Netherlands: Report from the National Library of the Netherlands
- Digitization of collections: Preserving and utilizing the materials [related article](#)
- <Announcements>
 - Children’s Books Going Overseas from Japan: Exhibition Commemorating the 10th Anniversary of the Opening of the International Library of Children’s Literature and the National Year of Reading
 - About 300 titles added to the Digital Library of Children’s Literature [related article](#)
 - Kaleidoscope of Books (3) Profiles of handsome characters
 - Books in Turkish now searchable on the NDL Asian Language Materials OPAC [related article](#)
 - Book notice publications from NDL

No. 585, December2009 [[PDF Format, 3.32MB](#)]

- Book of the month – from NDL collections– Oranda gunso zu [related article](#)
- Talks with the Librarian of NDL (12)
Ms. Kyoko Matsuoka, Scholar of children’ s literature
Reading is communication with books
- Libraries create futures: Building on cultural heritage World Library and Information Congress: 75th IFLA General Conference and Assembly
- Development of international cooperative relations – Government Libraries Section and liaison meeting on international cooperation
- Preservation from various angles
- Stacks of the NDL (7)
Use of bookshelves adjusted to materials (last of series)
- <Announcements>
 - Digital exhibition “Japan–Netherlands Exchange in the Edo Period” now available on the NDL website
 - Discontinuance of reader service of original materials because of mass digitization
 - Small exhibition in the Kansai–kan (4) The Winter Olympics
 - End of enlarged print service to photographic paper
 - Book notice – publications from NDL

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