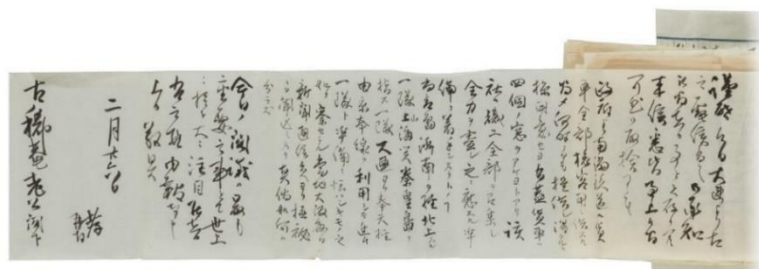
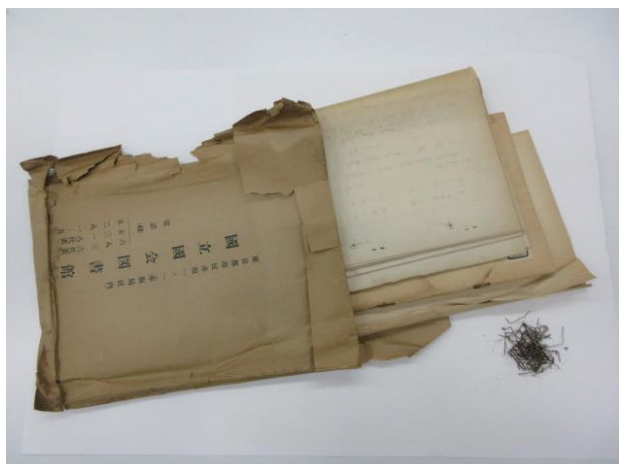


National Diet Library Newsletter

No. 259, October 2024



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Selections from NDL collections

Materials in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room: The MOROHASHI Noboru Papers

Modern Japanese Political Documents Division, Reader Services and Collections Department

This article is a partial translation of the article in Japanese in [NDL Monthly Bulletin No. 739 \(November 2022\)](#).

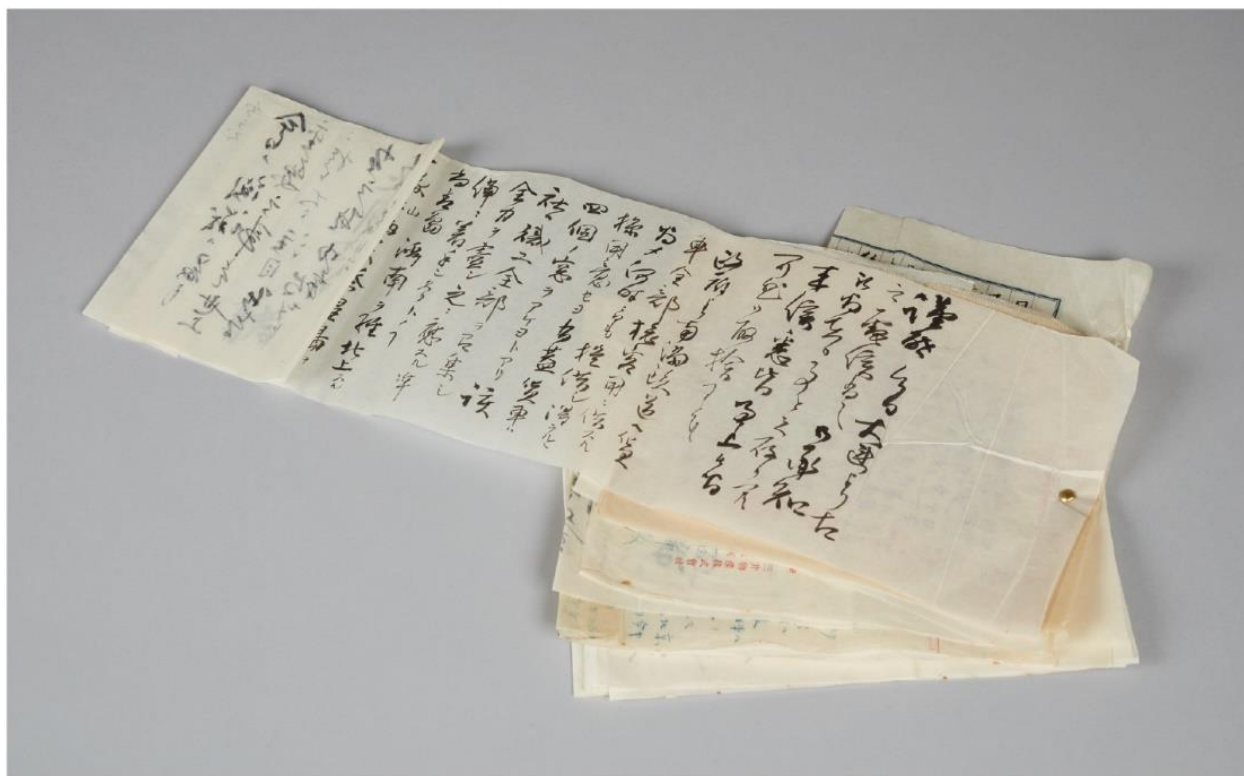


Image 1: [Letters of MASUDA Takashi regarding the Twenty-One Demands]
NDL Call No. MOROHASHI Noboru Papers 15.

Introduction

The National Diet Library holds approximately 420,000 documents on modern Japanese political history, including the personal papers of politicians, high-ranking officials, and military officers, dating from the end of the Tokugawa Shogunate to the present day. This article is one of a series introducing materials available at [the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room](#) in the Tokyo Main Library.

These materials on modern Japanese political history primarily comprise documents that were donated by the families of prominent figures, and are made available to the public after they have been organized and catalogued by the NDL. We hope that this article will provide readers with a glimpse into the appeal of this invaluable collection, which supports scholarly research in political history and related fields.

The MOROHASHI Noboru Papers

(19 items, available since August 2021)

The MOROHASHI Noboru Papers consists of 19 documents that belonged to MOROHASHI Noboru, who served in the Ministry of Home Affairs from the Taisho era to the Showa era. The papers mainly include materials related to the Privy Council, where he served, and to YAMAGATA Aritomo, who was the chairman of the Privy Council.

Image 1 is a compilation of letters from MASUDA Takashi, an advisor to Mitsui Gomei Kaisha, to Yamagata regarding the Twenty-One Demands.

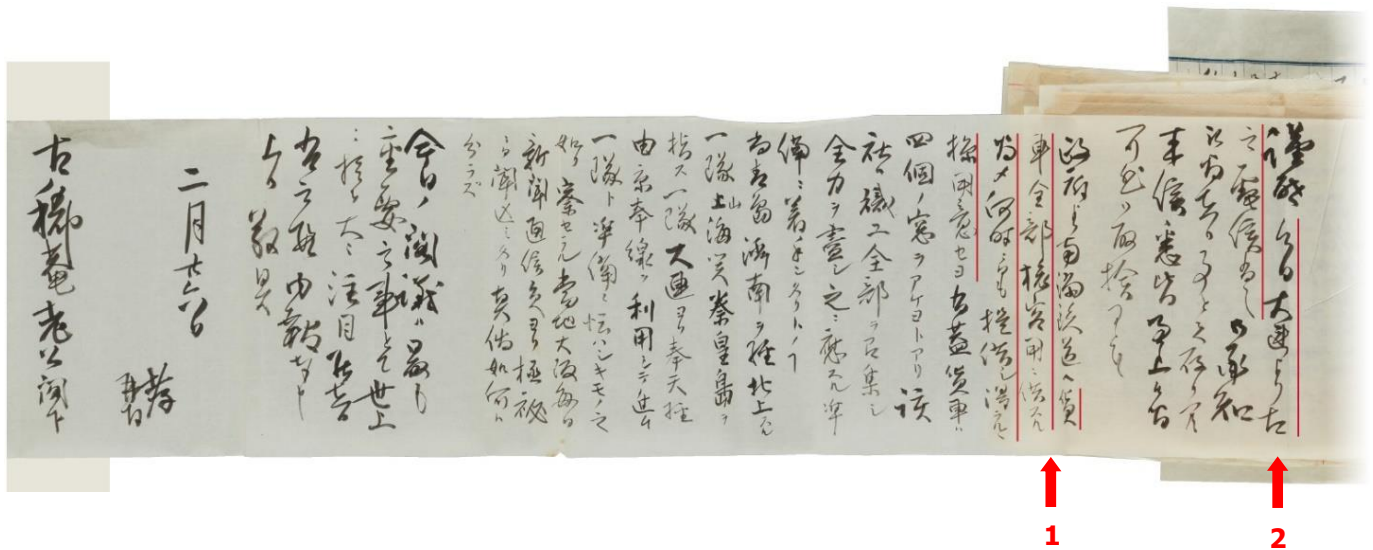


Image 2: Letter from Masuda Takashi to Yamagata Aritomo, dated February 26, [1915] .
NDL Call No. MOROHASHI Noboru Papers 15-1.

According to a letter dated February 26, 1915 (Image 2), the Japanese government requested the South Manchuria Railway Company (Manchuria Railway) prepare all freight cars for passenger use at any time (↑1). It is believed that this request was made in preparation for the potential evacuation of Japanese nationals in the area, given the heightened tensions within China and the challenges faced in negotiating the Twenty-One Demands. As per the initial statement of this letter, "A telegram has been received from Dalian today," Masuda was informed by a Mitsui Trading Company employee in Dalian (↑2). Other letters include additional attachments such as telegraphic messages from branches in Beijing, Changchun, Tianjin, etc. (Image 3), and provide a clear description of the situation in each region and the status of negotiations between the governments.

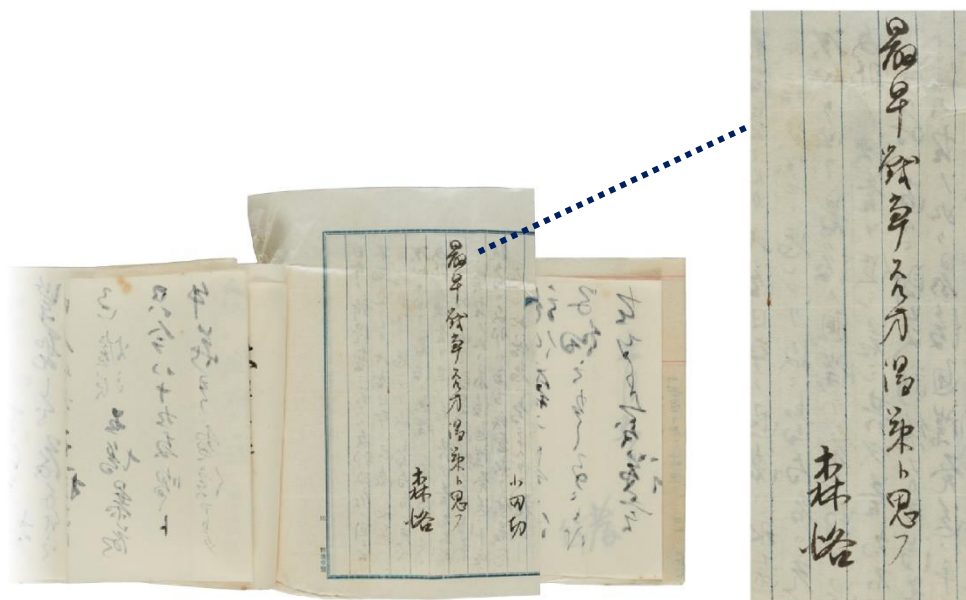


Image 3: Attachment to the letter from Masuda Takashi to Yamagata Aritomo, dated May 5, [1915] .
NDL Call No. MOROHASHI Noboru Papers 15-4.

A telegram from MORI Tsutomu, head of the Tianjin branch, attached to Masuda's letter of May 5. As the negotiations dragged on for more than three months, more and more aggressive arguments were raised in Japan, including the argument for open war based on the military power stationed on the mainland. This sentence means "It may be worth considering the option of going to war."

Now, why did Masuda, a private citizen, pass on information about the government's request to the Manchurian Railway to Yamagata? KATO Takaaki, Minister of Foreign Affairs for the second Okuma cabinet, had ceased the customary circulation of diplomatic documents to *genro* (elder statesman) in order to pursue diplomacy independent of the influence of *genro* including Yamagata. As a result, Yamagata was unable to obtain sufficient information from the government on the diplomatic process surrounding the Twenty-One Demands, which had been possible in the past.

At the time this letter was written, Yamagata and Masuda both had private residences in Odawara, Kanagawa Prefecture – called Kokian and Soundai, respectively – and were literally neighbors who interacted through their hobbies such as tea ceremony. These materials provide valuable insight into the personal connections and information network that supported Yamagata's political influence during this time.



Morohashi Noboru

MOROHASHI Noboru (1899-1999)

Born in 1899 in Niigata. After graduating from the Imperial University of Tokyo, he worked as a bureaucrat in the Ministry of Home Affairs throughout Japan from 1923, serving as a *Hyojokan* (councillor) of the Administrative Court and a secretary of the Privy Council. After his retirement, he served as the director of the Faculty of Law of Teikyo University.

This portrait is from *Kizokuin yoran. 1946 (12) (3)*. Kizokuin Jimukyoku. 1947. NDL Call No. BZ-1-1 Available via the [NDL Digital Collections](#)



Masuda Takashi

MASUDA Takashi (1848-1938)

Born in 1848 in Niigata. He was a businessman who supported Mitsui Bussan (Mitsui Trading Company) during its formative years and played a significant role in the Mitsui zaibatsu, including the successful bidding for the Miike Coal Mines. He was also recognized for his expertise in tea ceremony, for which he was known by the pen name Donno.

This portrait is from Portraits of Modern Japanese Historical Figures.

(<https://www.ndl.go.jp/portrait/e/datas/331/>)

(Translated by OGAWA Kanako)

Related articles from the NDL Newsletter:

- [Materials available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(1\)](#) (No. 200, June 2015)
- [Materials available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(2\)](#) (No. 201, August 2015)
- [Materials available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(3\)](#) (No. 202, October 2015)
- [Materials available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(4\)](#) (No. 203, December 2015)
- [Materials available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(5\)](#) (No. 220, October 2018)
- [Materials available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(6\)](#) (No. 221, December 2018)
- [Materials newly available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(7\)](#) (No. 225, August 2019)
- [Materials newly available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(8\)](#) (No. 226, October 2019)
- [Materials newly available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(9\)](#) (No. 233, November 2020)

- [Materials newly available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(10\)](#) (No. 235, January 2021)
- [Materials newly available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(11\)](#) (No. 241, October 2021)
- [Materials newly available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room \(12\)](#) (No. 242, December 2021)
- [Materials available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room: The YAMAGATA Aritomo Papers](#) (No. 251, June 2023)
- [Materials available in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room: The MOTONO Ichiro and Seiichi Papers](#) (No. 252, August 2023)
- [Materials in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room: The UZAWA Fusaaki Papers](#) (No. 254, December 2023)
- [Materials in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room: The America–Japan Society Papers](#) (No. 255, February 2024)
- [Materials in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room: The KAWAKAMI Jotaro Papers](#) (No. 256, April 2024)
- [Materials in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room: *Shunpoko iboku* \[Scroll Book of Letters from ITO Hirobumi to MAKIMURA Masanao\]](#) (No. 257, June 2024)
- [Materials in the Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room: The UTSUNOMIYA Taro Papers](#) (No. 258, August 2024)

Related content from the National Diet Library Website

- [Research Navi](#): Summary of Modern Japanese political history materials (in Japanese)

Selections from NDL collections

Thirty-Six Female Immortals of Poetry: A growing passion for education in old Edo

KUSHIKU Ayako, Humanities, Maps, Rare Books and Old Materials Division, Reader Services and Collections Department

This article is a translation of the article in Japanese in NDL Monthly Bulletin No. 747/No. 748 (July/August 2023).



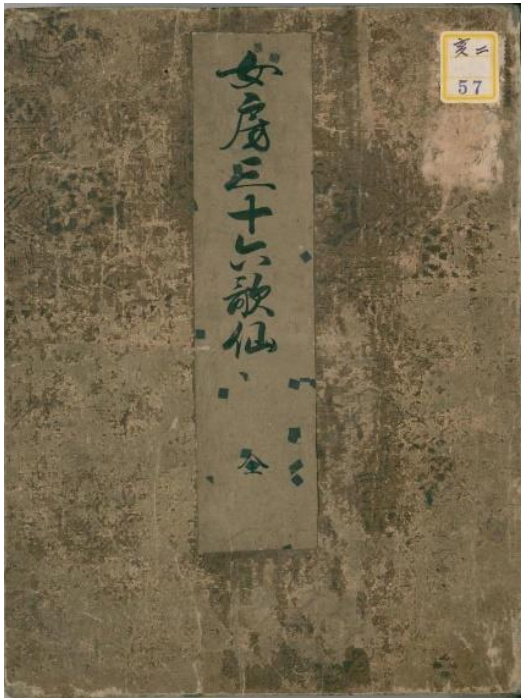
The name, age, and address shown in the lower right-hand corner of this two page spread reveal that the stunning calligraphy of the right-hand page was done by a six-year-old girl. This book also includes calligraphy done by a 10-year-old girl with the same address and surname, presumably a sister. Undoubtedly, their parents felt great pride in their daughters' achievements.

Hosoi, Chobunsai. *Nyobo sanjurokkasen*, Eijudo Nishimuraya Yohachi, 1801. Available via [the NDL Digital Collections](#).

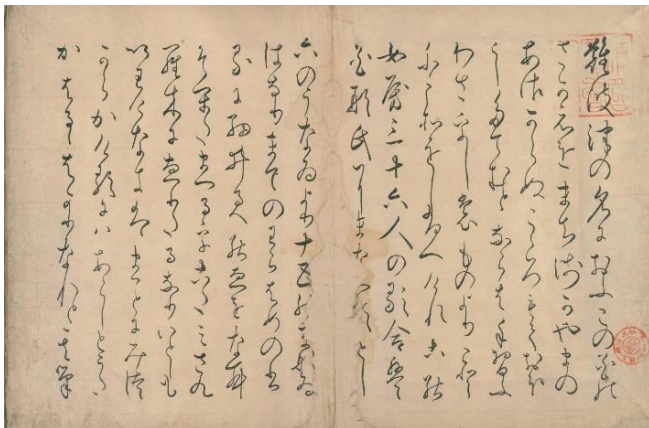
Introduction

Nyobo sanjurokkasen (Thirty-six Female Immortals of Poetry) is a picture book published during the late Edo period. Each two-page spread of the book features a waka poem accompanied by an illustration of the poet, and the poems are transcribed by 36 girls, aged six to fifteen, who were students of a calligraphy school in Hasegawa-cho, Nihonbashi, Tokyo. The students have included their names, ages, and addresses on the page, making this book analogous to a present-day collection of outstanding works by the students of a calligraphy class. The book as a whole, however, is of a much higher standard than what we might have imagined for a collection of student works today.

The first thing that catches the eye when you open this book is the elegantly cursive form of the girls' calligraphy. And while the pages might appear to be handwritten, they are actually woodblock prints. The expertise of the artisans who transferred the girls' handwriting to woodblock prints is absolutely stunning. Each of the poems is accompanied by a gorgeous *nishiki-e* of the poets, who were court ladies of the Heian and Kamakura periods. The *nishiki-e* were prepared by CHOBUNSAI Eishi (1756–1829), a well-known ukiyo-e artist. This alone is an extraordinary luxury for a collection of student works from a local calligraphy school. But the book also includes a preface by the renowned poet and calligrapher KATO Chikage (1735–1808) as well as a frontispiece by KATSUSHIKA Hokusai (1760–1849).



Front page



Preface by KATO Chikage



Frontispiece by KATSUSHIKA Hokusai

During the Edo period, publishers issued numerous picture books featuring exceptionally talented waka poets such as the *Thirty-six Immortals of Poetry* and the poets of the *One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets*. This particular book, however, is notable for being highly extravagant, and its publication was likely financed in advance by collecting a subscription fee from the girl's parents.

NISHIMURAYA Yohachi, the publisher of the book, also published two large nishiki-e by TORII Kiyonaga (1752–1815). Each depicted a precocious calligrapher, one aged seven and one aged nine.¹ This suggests that there was a demand for publications featuring talented young men and women. And it also raises the question of why people were so interested in such publications during the Edo period.



Depicted here is the storefront of Eijudo Nishimuraya, where the book was published. The store was in Bakuro-cho, not far from Hasegawa-cho, Nihonbashi, where the calligraphy school that the girls attended was located. The girls' addresses were also concentrated in the Nihonbashi area, which suggests that they could easily walk to the school.

TORII, Kiyonaga [illustrator]. *Saishiki mitsunoasa*. Eijudo. One item. Available via [the NDL Digital Collections](#).

One likely reason was the strong enthusiasm for education that was prevalent at the time. All throughout Edo were many private schools, known as *terakoya*, where children eagerly learned to read and write. Girls, in particular, were likely to receive lessons in dancing and playing the shamisen as well as reading and writing. The satirical novel *Ukiyo buro* (At the public bathhouse), by SHIKITEI Sanba (1776–1822), vividly portrays the daily lives of common people and contains the following description of the busy life of a girl in Edo:

"No sooner do I wake up in the morning than I go to the calligraphy school to get ready for my lesson. After that I have morning shamisen practice. Then I go home, have breakfast, go to dance practice, and practice calligraphy.

¹ *Gyokukashi no sekigaki* and *Minamoto no Shigeyuki no sekigaki*. Nishimuraya Yohachi, 1783.

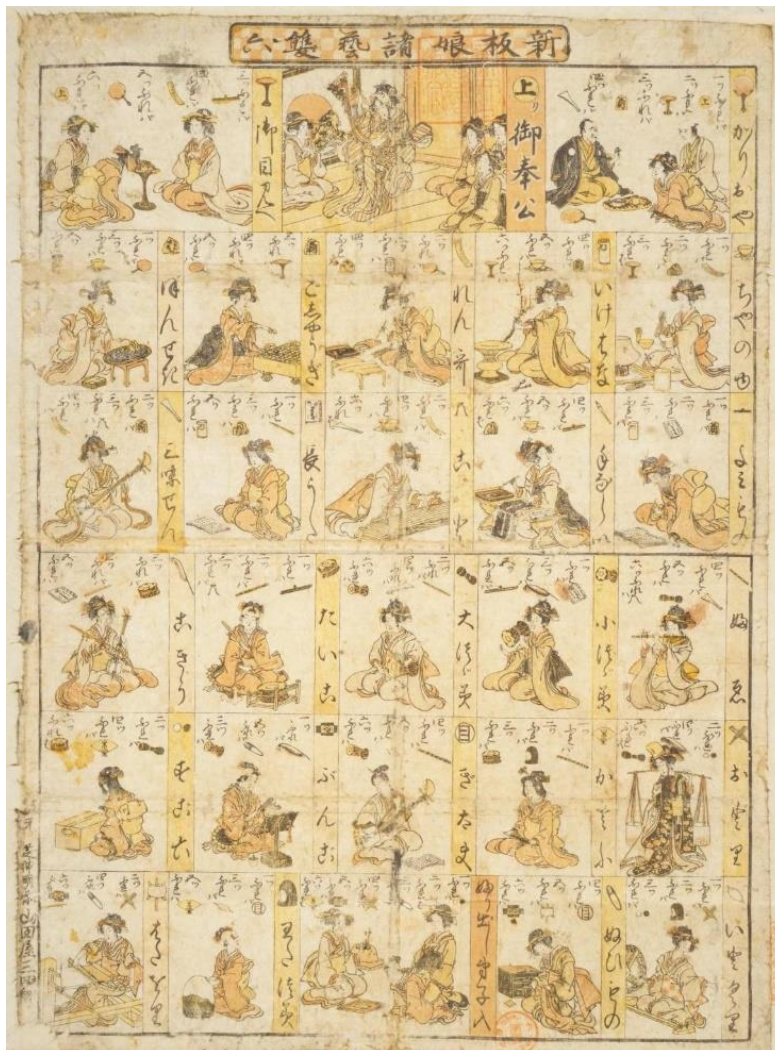
Next, I have a snack, go to the public bathhouse, and then immediately go to koto practice. Once that is over, I go home and review my shamisen and dance lessons, after which I have a little free time to relax. But later in the evening, I review my koto lesson again.²

From morning to night, with hardly time to catch their collective breath, girls received a variety of lessons. You might wonder what inspired these girls to work so hard. *Morisada manko* is an essay on Edo-period manners and customs that was written over a period of about 30 years beginning in 1837. It states that girls learning the

shamisen and koto had been a common practice for close to a century. It also describes the Edo as follows:

In Edo, the child of a commoner must always be skilled in at least one art if they are to serve the family of a samurai. And unless a young person has a skill that enables them to serve the family of a samurai, it will be difficult to make a good marriage.³

Serving the family of a samurai was key to finding a good marriage partner, and to serve the family of a samurai, one had to excel at some art.



This Edo-era board game illustrates the many skills that were necessary to serve the family of a samurai. The starting line at the bottom center is where all apprentices start, while the finish line at the top center represents entering the service of the family of a samurai. Each square depicts one of the many skills necessary to rise to the top, including sewing, dancing, playing the shamisen, performing the tea ceremony, and playing shogi. Clearly, there was much to learn before one could enter the service of the family of a samurai.

Shinpan musume shogei sugoroku. Yamadaya Sanshiro. One sheet. Available via [the NDL Digital Collections](#).

² *Nihon koten bungaku taikei*. 63. *Ukiyo buro*. Iwanami Shoten, 1957, p.185. NDL Call No. [918-N6852](#)

³ KITAGAWA, Morisada. USAMI, Hideki, rev. *Kinsei fuzokushi : Morisada manko*. Iwanami Shoten, 1999, p.436. NDL Call No. [GB341-G11](#)

Given that a child's future was dependent on how well they performed their lessons, it is hardly surprising that both the child and the parents would invest a significant effort. Perhaps the reason why a book like this was published was that there would be demand for such a book from children who worked hard every day to make a better future for themselves, and from the parents who supported them.

Unfortunately, we know nothing of what life held in store for the 36 girls whose magnificent calligraphy is preserved in this book. All we can do is hope that they all went on to lead fulfilling lives in their communities.

A peek into a calligraphy lesson



A motherly figure is talking to a child who is learning calligraphy. In the background, the hanging scroll on the left says "Learn one character a day, 360 characters a year, one character is worth a thousand pieces of gold," while the hanging in the middle says "Calligraphy is like pushing a car up a hill, if you slack off, you will easily fall back." These words seem to reflect the high level of enthusiasm for education that was prevalent at the time.

UTAGAWA, Yoshitora, illustration. *Haruno asobi tenarai shusse sugoroku*, Maruya Tetsujiro. One sheet. Available via [the NDL Digital Collections](#).



The picture depicts a calligraphy lesson. Lessons like this were likely a large part of daily life for the girls of *Nyobo sanjurokkasen*.

[KATSUKAWA, Shuncho, illustration]. *Ehon sakaegusa*, Izumiya Ichi[bee], 1790. Two volumes. Available via [the NDL Digital Collections](#).

(Translated by OGAWA Kanako)

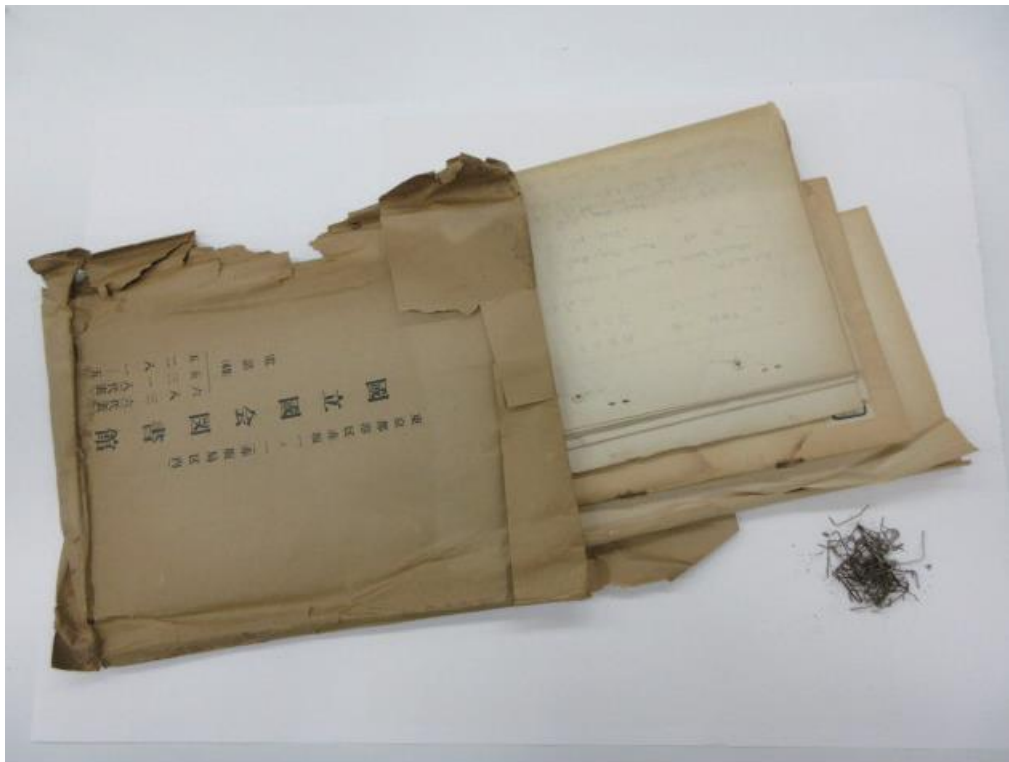
Reference (in Japanese):

- SUZUKI, Jun. *Tachibana chikage no kenkyu*. Perikansha, 2006. NDL Call No. [KG244-H46](#).
- Kokubungaku Kenkyu Shiryokan ed. Chesuta Biti Raiburarii ed. *Chesuta biti raiburarii emaki ehon kaidai mokuroku. Kaidai*. Bensei Shuppan, 2002. NDL Call No. [K3-G204](#).
- Ukiyoe ni egakareta kodomotachi (Children depicted in ukiyo-E prints)*. Chibashi bijutsukan, [2014]. NDL Call No. [KC16-L1008](#).
- ICHIKAWA, Hiroaki. ISHIYAMA, Hidekazu. *Zusetsu edo no manabi*. Kawade Shobo Shinsha, 2006. NDL Call No. [FB13-H29](#).

Articles by NDL staff

Digitizing doctoral dissertations

Public Services Division, Kansai-kan of the National Diet Library

This article is a translation of the article in Japanese in NDL Monthly Bulletin No. 751 (November, 2023).

A doctoral dissertation stored in an envelope made of acidic paper. At the bottom right are the staples that were removed from the package.

Stored at the Kansai-kan of the National Diet Library in Kyoto Prefecture are 600,000 Japanese doctoral dissertations dating back to as early as 1923. Dissertations were initially stored at the former Ministry of Education, but in 1935 were transferred to the Imperial Library. And after WWII, the job of storing dissertations was taken over by the National Diet Library. This invaluable collection includes virtually every doctoral dissertation that was accepted by a university in Japan.

A great many of these dissertations comprise a primary thesis as well as a number of supporting theses, and numerous reference papers. Each dissertation is stored individually in an envelope to prevent the various component parts from getting lost. Some of these dissertations are bound in hardcover, while others are handwritten manuscripts and even cuttings of articles from journals all bound together with twisted paper string or staples. There are even old dissertations comprising paper of different sizes, laid one atop the other in a T-shape and bound together either from the side or from the top. Just after the end of WWII, when dissertations were still handled by the Imperial Library, but everything was in a state of confusion, dissertations were sometimes

folded in half or tied together with string and piled on the floor. Most of the dissertations produced prior to the end of WWII were created using acidic paper and now suffer significant deterioration. Digitizing these dissertations is an urgent task, both in terms of preserving the documents and utilizing their information, but preparing them for digitization is no mean feat.

The job begins by removing a dissertation from its storage envelope and verifying the number of documents inside. We check each individual page, recording the size and number of pages to be digitized and then inspecting for damage and deterioration. This process is intended to ready the dissertations for easy scanning. But we often find torn pages or discolored and brittle pages that crumble when touched. Conditions vary widely and there is no end to stained or moldy pages, photographs that are stuck together, yellowed cellophane tape that is peeling away, creased pages, or rusty staples and paperclips that have stained the pages. Thus we must repair damaged pages, remove any trace of mold by gently wiping it away without damaging the page, reattach loose photographs with glue, iron out creases, and remove rusty staples and paperclips so that they can

be replaced by stainless steel staples or thread.

So, here we sit, day after day, pulling out rusty staples in the hope that digitization will make this invaluable research of our forebearers accessible to as many of our patrons as possible.

(Translated by NOZAWA Asuka)

Related articles from the NDL Newsletter:

- [Doctoral dissertations at the National Diet Library](#) (No. 206, June 2016)
- [New methods for acquisition and provision of doctoral dissertations](#) (No.192, December 2013)
- [Acquisition of Doctoral Dissertations in Japan](#) (No.189, June 2013)

Events

The 24th Mutual Visit Program between the National Diet Library and the National Library of Korea

The 24th mutual visit program between the National Diet Library (NDL) and the National Library of Korea (NLK) was held in Seoul from July 8 to 13, 2024. This year's delegation from the NDL was headed by Mr. OZAWA Kota, director of the Planning Division in the Administrative Department, and included Mr. IKEDA Koichi, assistant director of the Digital Information Planning Division in the

Digital Information Department, and Ms. OGUMA Aki from the Planning and Cooperation Division at the International Library of Children's Literature (ILCL).

Highlights from the program are shown in the table below. Each session featured detailed presentations followed by lively discussions during Q&A.

Opening Session (Keynote Speeches)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recent achievements and challenges at the NLK Ms. LEE Hyunju, director of the Collection Development Division, NLK Recent achievements and challenges at the NDL, 2023–2024 Mr. OZAWA Kota, director of the Planning Division in the Administrative Department, NDL
Session	<p>Digital Culture Heritage in Our Countries: Korean Memory and Japan Search</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Korean Memory as the focus of collaboration and cooperation in the development of Korean digital cultural heritage Ms. SONG Jihye, deputy director of the Digital Initiatives Division, NLK Collaboration and cooperation at Japan Search Mr. IKEDA Koichi, assistant director of the Digital Information Planning Division in the Digital Information Department, NDL
Session at the National Library for Children and Young Adults	<p>Current issues in children's and young adult services: Services that utilize advanced technologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services at the National Library for Children and Young Adults (NLCY) using advanced technology Ms. MIN Dongmi, Planning and Cooperation Division, NLCY Development and Use of Digital Content at the ILCL, NDL Ms. OGUMA Aki, Planning and Cooperation Division, ILCL, NDL

Program



Senior officials of the NLK and NDL delegation



Session at the NLK

The opening session featured keynote speeches by representatives of both libraries. Mr. Ozawa gave an overview of progress made and challenges faced by the NDL during the activities targeted by the National Diet Library, Vision 2021–2025: The Digital Shift at the National Diet Library. Ms. Lee described major activities and challenges at the NLK, including the development of Korean Memory, the promotion of a mid-to-long-term plan for a new bibliographic structure application called National Bibliography 2030. In subsequent sessions,

experts from both libraries reported on their recent activities and progress, and meaningful discussions were held on issues of mutual interest.

In between and after these sessions, the delegation visited the National Library for the Disabled, Gunpo-si Children's Library, Gangbuk Culture Information Library, Songpa Public Library, Jongno Public Library, and other related institutions.



New technology integration content at NLK

Reference:

- [Chronology of Mutual Visit Programs between the National Diet Library and the National Library of Korea](#)

Related articles from the NDL Newsletter:

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

Selected list of articles from NDL periodicals

The NDL Monthly Bulletin No. 761/762, September/October 2024

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 (in Japanese).

[No. 761/762, September/October 2024 \(PDF: 6.26 MB\)](#)

- <Book of the month — from NDL collections>
Travel encounters transcend place and time: *Pioneering in the Far East*
- Exhibition
Open, roll, and appear: The world of picture scrolls
- Travel writing on world libraries
Libraries in Korea: Exploring prewar Japanese-language books
- <Tidbits of information on NDL>
Inside story of Training program on Asian information
- <Books not commercially available>
Kindai muraezu · *chizu no sekai: Meiji no chizu wa do tsukuraretaka: Naganoken ezū* · *chizu kyōdo kenkyū hokokusho*
- <NDL Topics>