Establishing an International Collaborative Research Network for Pre-modern Japanese Texts: NIJL's New Project

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National Institute of Japanese Literature (NIJL)
Mar 25, 2014
Agenda

1. Result achieved to date
2. Project Outline
3. Project System
4. Plan of Execution
5. Expected Results
1. Result achieved to date

'Pre-modern Japanese texts (books) ' refers to written works produced by Japanese people prior to the modern period (up to the end of the Edo period). They are also referred to as kotenseki (古典籍) 'classical texts' or kokusho (国書) 'early Japanese books'.


The Union Catalogue of Early Japanese Books is already available in database form on the NIJL's website.

Pre-modern Japanese Texts

Information on Japanese pre-modern texts (books) is already publicly available however, at present the details provided are limited to bibliographical information such as the collection location and the type of text. This is insufficient to grasp the content of these works. The proposed database will add digitized images of these works to allow users to access the content of each text directly.

*Shizuka*, a pictorial book of *Kowaka-mai* (幸若舞, a dance song popular in 15th to 16th century)
Pre-modern Japanese Texts

Images and texts have integrated.

The Rustic Genji
(Nise Murasaki Inaka Genji 修紫田舎源氏)

Collection of Reflected Physiognomy
(Ninsō Suikyō Shū 人相水鏡集)
Pre-modern Japanese Texts

Its configuration is more meaningful.

The Genealogical chart of the Tale of Genji
(Genji Keizu 源氏系図)
2. Project Outline

This Project, centered in the National Institute for the Humanities (NIHU) of National Institute of Japanese Literature (NIJL), will partner with universities and academic institutions domestically and overseas to digitally scan and incorporate approximately 300,000 pre-modern Japanese texts*1 into the NIJL's existing bibliographical database, create a pre-modern Japanese text database, and build an International Collaborative Research Network that uses these images. This Project is expected to yield research results in not only in Japanese literary studies, but across all scholarly fields of Humanities, as well as various fields in the Natural Sciences.

*1: Pre-modern Japanese texts refers to written works produced by Japanese people up to the end of the Edo period.
(1) Building an International Collaborative Research Network

An International Collaborative Research Network will be developed to promote the use of this database in research.

In building an International Collaborative Research Network to execute this project, domestic focus will be placed on a core of twenty academic institutions, while focus overseas will be placed on institutions that have already concluded academic exchange agreements with NIJL. We will continue to expand this Network as research proceeds.

(2) Building a Database of Pre-modern Japanese Texts

We will digitally scan 300,000 of the approximately 500,000 texts known to exist in Japan and make them available in a database alongside with detailed bibliographical information. Pre-modern texts held by NIJL and the 20 core academic institutions in Japan which have been verified to be suitable for digitization (approximately 300,000) will be digitally scanned, while the remaining texts that have been deemed not suitable for scanning for any reason (uncertain location status etc.) will be excluded.
Building a Database of Pre-modern Japanese Texts

Building the Network

International Collaborative Research
3. Project System

(1) The National Institute of Japanese Literature

To execute this project, the Center for Collaborative Research on Pre-modern Texts will be established in NIJL. The Center will liaise with the core domestic academic institutions and coordinate the project as a whole.

Researchers in the field of Informatics will be brought onto the project as advisers (on a part-time basis), and they will provide expert advice on executing the Project.

(2) Base Domestic Institutions

**National Universities:** Hokkaido Univ., Tohoku Univ., Univ. of Tsukuba, Ochanomizu Univ., the Univ. of Tokyo, Nagoya Univ., Kyoto Univ., Osaka Univ., Nara Women's Univ., Kobe Univ., Hiroshima Univ., Kyushu Univ.

**Private Universities:** Keio Univ., Kokugakuin Univ., Rikkyo Univ., Waseda Univ., Otani Univ., Doshisha Univ., Ritsumeikan Univ., Kansai Univ.
(3) Overseas Research Institutions
* Institutions which have concluded academic exchange agreements with NIJL (including pending cases)

(4) The National Institutes for the Humanities (NIHU) and the Constituent Agencies
   National Museum of Japanese History
   International Research Center for Japanese Studies

(5) Other
Partnerships

< Domestic >

20 Core Institutions

Hokkaido University, Tohoku University, University of Tsukuba, Tokyo University, Ochanomizu University, Nagoya University, Kyoto University, Osaka University, Kobe University, Nara Women's University, Hiroshima University, Kyushu University, Keio University, Kokugakuin University, Rikkyo University, Waseda University, Otani University, Doshisha University, Ritsumeikan University, Kansai University

Other

Various Public and Private Universities etc.

< Overseas >

Institutions that have concluded academic exchange agreements with the NIJL

Institute of Advanced Japanese Studies – Collège de France, Columbia University, Korea University, University of Florence, Beijing Foreign Studies University, Leiden University, Venice University, University of Naples, Sapienza – Università di Roma, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, University of British Columbia, Cambridge University

(some universities with pending agreements included)

Other

Universities, Research institutes etc.

< National Institutes for the Humanities >

- National Museum of Japanese History
- International Research Center for Japanese Studies
Organizational Chart of the Center for Collaborative Research on Pre-modern Texts (to be established April 1, 2014)
4. Plan of Execution

(1) Research Period and Budget (Projected)
Research period: 2014-2023 (10 years) Operating Budget: 8.8 Billion Yen

(2) Construction of the Database
a) Building the Database System
   The first stage of the system construction will be completed by the end of 2016, and will be publicly available in 2017. The second stage of the system construction will be completed by 2021.

b) Creating the Database
   Our aim is to make the contents of pre-modern Japanese texts available in scanned data form the contents of pre-modern Japanese books to anyone in the world with an internet connection by scanned data. We will compile the scanned images of pre-modern works by field of study and convert them to text data to promote collaborative research.

c) Publicly Releasing Image.
   Images will be gradually released to the public by the way of a large-scale search portal through the Internet.
New Database for Pre-modern Japanese Texts

Bibliographic data
Catalogue of Early Japanese Books (Nihon kotenseki sōgō mokuroku database 日本古典籍総合目録データベース)
500,000 titles → Already open to public on NIJL's website

Image Data
Catalogue of Early Japanese Books in Microform or Digital (マイクロ/デジタル目録データベース)
10,000 titles (literary-based) → Already open to public on NIJL's website
300,000 titles (genre-straddling) → New project (DB for Pre-modern Japanese Texts)

Breakdown of 500,000 titles
- National Univ.: 170,000 titles (34%)
- Private Univ.: 50,000 titles (10%)
- Public Library etc.: 70,000 titles (14%)
- NIJL, on website: 10,000 titles (2%)
- Private collection etc…: 200,000 titles (40%)

New project
(3) Construction of an International Collaborative Research Network

a) Building a Network

An International Collaborative Research Network will be built through the database, which will be a large-scale search portal that provides images and bibliographical information.

The construction of this Network for both domestic and overseas institutions is projected to be complete by 2017.

b) Collaborative Research

Research that utilizes pre-modern texts is anticipated to be cross-disciplinary; specific themes will be determined upon conferring with participating institutions.

Integrated research that spans multiple academic disciplines will be promoted; for example, textual analysis to reconstruct Japanese customs and thought, the study of texts to understand tourist destinations; these are but some examples of research that fuses the study on pre-modern texts with topics of regional interest.
### Details of Execution

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<td>Build network with institutions through academic agreements</td>
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<td>Domestic</td>
<td>Build network with core academic institutions</td>
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<td>Foster integrated research across disparate fields</td>
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<td>Host International Research Symposiums etc.</td>
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<td>Begin collaborative research</td>
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<td>Provision of digitally-scanned data through classical text database</td>
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<td>Carry out research to verify text conversion of pre-modern texts</td>
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**Start inter national collaborative research #1**

**publicly seeking (by 2017)**

**Interim assessment**

- **Start digitalizing**
- **Search system renewal**
- **JPG images (downloadable and replaceable to PDF files)**
Digitally scanning
(2013~ Tsukuba University)
2014~ (2023) NIJL (up to 70,000 title)
2015~ (2023) Core University (up to 220,000 titles), Others

Collaborative Research (International and/or interdisciplinary)
Chair: NIJL
2014.04~ Theme: Integrated book studies*1 (総合書物学)
2014.04~ Theme: Cultural and Historical Studies on books and societies (書物の文化学的研究)
Chair: Open call (or request)
2014.10~ Open call (title: non-disclosure)
2014.10~2018.03 Open call (2 themes per 2 years)
2015.04~ Open call for participants for young researchers (On NIJL’s website) (10 themes per 2 years)
Chair: Core Universities
2015.04~2018.03 (5 themes)

*1: They are tentative translations. Not formal English titles.
(3) Construction of an International Collaborative Research Network

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5. Expected Results

The development of integrated research across fields.

- Building a Database of Pre-modern Japanese Texts
- Building the Network
- International Collaborative Research
5. Expected Results

(1) Results from Collaborative Research

1) Building an International Collaborative Research Network
   It has been said that research in the Humanities has become fragmentary owing to an increase in specialization*2; however, by constructing an International Collaborative Research Network through the execution of this Project, there will be an increased potential for research to develop that takes a comprehensive perspective to transcend fields and countries.

2) Generation of Integrated Research Across Disciplines
   By making the content of pre-modern texts easily accessible through the pre-modern text database to scholars outside Japanese literature, there will be added perspectives from fields that have not previously utilized such texts, thus opening new possibilities for academic research. Also, there will be new developments in interdisciplinary research arising from the collaboration of Japanese literature scholars and other fields’ researchers (including the natural sciences) in interpreting pre-modern texts.
(2) Results from Building a Database

1) Contribution to Deepening Research
   It has previously taken much effort on the part of researchers who use classical texts to search and confirm the content of these texts. By digitizing these texts, it will be possible to search and access the content from anywhere in the world, thus significantly simplifying the work of the researcher. Also, since the content of pre-modern texts will be easily accessible, we expect new developments in research for researchers who have not previously studied these texts.

2) Protection Against Threats to Cultural Treasures
   Pre-modern texts are susceptible to damage or destruction (e.g. from natural disasters). Digitizing these texts will guarantee the transmission of their wisdom to future generations.

3) Spreading Japanese Culture Overseas
   By providing images and bibliographical information through a large-scale Internet search portal like the pre-modern Japanese text database, the content of these texts will be freely accessible from anywhere in the world. By allowing anybody with an Internet connection to access these works, this project will also contribute to promoting interest in Japanese culture around the world.
(1) Results from Collaborative Research

1) Building an International Collaborative Research Network

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Thank you for your attention.

Send us your comments and suggestions.

National Institute of Japanese Literature
National Institute for the Humanities
Inter-University Research Institute Corporation

E-mail: cijinfo@nijl.ac.jp
URL: http://www.nijl.ac.jp/pages/cijproject/
日文学に携わる様々な問題に対応した基礎研究、研究プロジェクト及び共同研究を行っています。電子資料の公開、活動紹介などを開示しています。

東北地方太平洋沖地震に関する当館の活動

マイクロ形態資料のデジタル公開

お知らせ・更新情報

2014/2/10
特別展示「名著」の紹介」特別コーナーのページを新たに作成しました。

2013/7/9
特別展示「名著」の紹介」特別コーナーのページを新たに公開しました。

2014/7/8
ハートタイム講演（日本文学館の資料館見学・講演・特別公開等）について解説しました。

2014/2/6
特別展示「名著」の紹介」特別コーナーにおいて、平日2月8日から3月8日まで、「新資料」電子資料等の情報公開をデータに解説しています。

2014/2/5
...
当館のデータベースをご利用の前に、DB利用規程をお読みください。また、各データベースのページに注意書きもご確認ください。

データベース一覧

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各項目に検索語を入力して「検索」ボタンをクリックしてください。
Catalogue Top

Catalogue of early Japanese books & Catalogue of early Japanese books in microform or digital at NIIJ
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【源氏物語】

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