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Don Brown and Japanese Librarianship During the Occupation Period

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Don Brown and Japanese Librarianship During the Occupation Period

Cover Page Footnote

1) Miura (2000) wrote about Keeney's achievement in Japan. 2) Miura (2011) wrote about Don Brown's role in history of librarians training in Japan. 3) Miura (2006) wrote about Burnette's activities in Japan. 4) "GHQ Information Release," 16-Aug-1946. B14/60/1, Yokohama Archives of History. 5) Proposal, "Project for Operation of a Library School in Japan," 1-June-1950, ALA Archives, RS# 2/4/6, Box.22, Basic Documents, Master File, 1950-1952. Miura and Nemoto (2001) wrote about establishment of the JLS.

Introduction

During the postwar occupation period (1945–1952), the General Headquarters Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (GHQ/SCAP) was responsible for Japanese democratic reform. The Civil Information and Education Section (CIE) promoted educational reconstruction and media policy and was also in charge of institutional design related to postwar libraries.

In studies on Japanese library history, documentary research during this period based on Japanese materials began in the 1960s with Urata and Ogawa (eds.), *Historical Documents on Establishment of Library Law*. In the 1990s, studies began using U.S. documents stored at National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) about the GHQ/SCAP policies. A series of studies focusing on CIE libraries by Kon (1992) and a review of postwar library policy by Nemoto (1999) were published.

Since the late 1990s, two approaches were attempted. One approach is to clarify the U.S. library policy toward Japan using materials stored at NARA and American Library Association (ALA) archives. Nemoto (2005) has published a series of research results funded by a Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research. There has also been a particular focus on school librarianship. Nakamura (2009) and Imai (2016) wrote their doctoral theses on postwar school library reform. And studies on the actual status of CIE libraries became active as Watanabe's study on the context of U.S. history of public relations and advertising policies (Watanabe, 2008). Another approach is to reveal the reality of the library movement through interviews with the people concerned at that time. In this approach, oral history method is supplemented by literature survey. Oshima (2004) has compiled the biographies of 20 female directors of CIE Libraries, and Bungo (2008) looked back on her experience working at CIE Libraries and American Culture Center (ACC) Library from 1948 to 1984.

In U.S. studies on library history, the autobiography of Robert L. Gitler, the first director of the Japan Library School (JLS), was published in 1999 (Gitler, 1999). Gitler retrospectively told of Japanese experience including background of the establishment of JLS in 1951. In recent years, two important academic books were published. One is about the life of Philip O. Keeney, who was the

first Library Officer of CIE and later removed from his job because he was suspected of being a communist (McReynolds & Robbins, 2009). McReynolds and Robbins reveal Philip's and his wife Mary Jane's roles of working with the Soviet Union to undermine the United States.¹ Another book looked at Japanese library policy during the occupation period under the influence of U.S. cultural diplomacy. Buckland (2021), with the assistance of Takayama, clarifies the relationship between American promotion of democracy and Japanese librarianship through involvement of key persons such as Keeney, Gitler, Don Brown, and so on.

In this essay, I will focus on Don Brown and his influence on Japanese librarianship. He was involved in the wartime investigation of Japan, then became a head of the Information Division of CIE, in charge of occupational media policy, and influenced the establishment of JLS. I will start with wartime U.S. discussion of occupation policy toward Japanese media.

1. Wartime U.S. Discussion of Occupation Policy toward Japanese Media

During World War II, the postwar occupation policy in the U.S. began to be discussed mainly at the State Department around 1942. The Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and the Office of War Information (OWI) were established in the same year. The OSS was responsible for secret intelligence activities, while the OWI was responsible for domestic and international public relations, propaganda activities, and analysis of wartime information collected from government agencies.

In August 1942, the Far Eastern Group was established in the Special Investigation Division of the State Department, and, in October 1943, the Far Eastern Advisory Commission (FEAC) was established under the Interdivisional Country and Area Committee (CAC), State Department, to discuss issues related to postwar Japan by Japanologists. In January 1944, the Post-War Programs Committee (PWC) was established to determine postwar

¹ Miura (2000) wrote about Keeney's achievements in Japan.

foreign policy, and political considerations were added to the issues discussed by the CAC. On the other hand, in the War Department, the Civil Affairs Division (CAD) was established in March 1943 to analyze military policy during the occupation. In order to coordinate such separate external analyses, the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC) was established in December 1944. SWNCC mainly discussed matters to be considered by the PWC, and its decisions became the basis of the occupation policy toward Japan.

Post-occupation media policy was discussed at PWC and SWNCC. In March 1944, George H. Blakeslee, a Japanologist, drafted “The Postwar Objectives of the United States in regard to Japan” (PWC-108, CAC-116), which included the importance of free intellectual exchange with democratic nations through publication and radio. However, this proposal was not accepted by the PWC members, who demanded a drastic reform, because it emphasized the autonomy of the Japanese side. In May, PWC-108b, a revision of PWC-108, was approved by the PWC, which puts the proactive involvement of the U.S. at the forefront. After the military occupation and disarmament of Japan, it was planned to actively initiate political and social reforms. Publications, radio, schools, and movies were mentioned as important media for spreading democratic ideas (Tsuchiya, 2009).

Also in May 1944, the “Japan: Abolition of Militarism and Strengthening Democratic Processes” (PWC-152, CAC-185) was issued. This was drafted by Hugh Borton, a Japanologist, and laid out the steps from military occupation to political reform. It argued for explaining the meaning of individual freedom in democracy through publications, radio, and film, so that militarism would never again gain power. The U.S. intention was to actively promote democratic ideas in postwar Japan, but at the same time, it was aware of the need to control the Japanese media by excluding any claims that contradicted the ideas of the Allied Powers.

After SWNCC was established in December of that year, the “Positive Policy for Reorientation of the Japanese” (SWNCC-162/D) was issued in July 1945, near the end of the war. It stated that the process of re-education of the Japanese was not confined to public education or mere institutional reform and must be aimed at the re-education of the Japanese people as a whole, not just the youth, and be injected into the minds of the Japanese people through all

available channels. The re-education here refers to sweeping away militaristic values and helping the Japanese to understand democratic ideology, and for this purpose, “all channels” were to be utilized: books, textbooks, magazines, films, radio, lectures, discussion groups, and school organizations.

In August 1945, World War II ended with the acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration, and Japan was placed under the occupation of GHQ/SCAP. The occupation continued until April 1952, when the San Francisco Peace Treaty came into effect. The occupation policy discussed during the war years was taken over by the Special Committee for the Reorientation of the Japanese People, which was established under the jurisdiction of the State Department in September, and which produced its report “Reorientation of the Japanese People” (SFE-116/4) in December.

This special committee was chaired by Borton and included the membership of George E. Taylor, who had directed psychological warfare research at OWI. Expert opinions from outside the Ministry were also sought in preparing the report, including August K. Reischauer, a Japanese studies scholar, and Navy Major Alexander H. Leighton who had conducted psychological research on the Japanese at the Japanese American internment camp during the war and later served as head of the Overseas Morale Analysis Section at OWI. The report incorporated such OWI experience and knowledge, and clearly stated that reeducation of the Japanese was a high priority long-term State Department-led policy.

OWI brought together many artists, writers, and filmmakers to create propaganda posters, promotional leaflets, films, etc., many of whom were leftist cultural figures who supported the New Deal policies in the 1930s (Yoshida, 2004). Under the Roosevelt administration, Elmer Davis, a CBS radio commentator, was selected as the director of OWI and assisted by two unique deputy directors, Archibald MacLeish, who was the Librarian of Congress, and Robert E. Sherwood, a playwright. OWI's goal was to realize a democratic society and disseminate factual information. The New Dealers' insistence on spreading the spirit of American democracy and equality as universal principles throughout the world was reflected in discussions of Japan's postwar handling of the war.

In January 1946, a report was sent to Douglas MacArthur, Allied

commander, to be used as a template for guidelines for the activities of the CIE, which was responsible for overall educational policy in occupied Japan.

CIE had both an Education Division and an Information Division to promote Japan's democratization, and the use of media such as publications, newspapers, movies, and radio was placed under the jurisdiction of the Information Division. Don Brown, who had been a newspaper journalist in Japan before the war and was involved in the intelligence strategy against Japan at OWI during the war, was appointed to the CIE Information Division and later became the director.

2. Don Brown

For a profile of Don Brown, two books by the Yokohama International Relations History Study Group and the Yokohama Archives of History (2005, 2009) are referred to here.² Donald B. Brown was born in March 1905 in Cleveland, Ohio and entered the University of Pittsburgh in 1922. He was an early editor of the college newspaper, *The Pitt Weekly (PW)*, and served as its editor-in-chief. He was also recommended as a member of a fraternity of professional journalists. Currently he has 59 clippings in the Yokohama Archives of History, among which only one was signed, writing a highly positive review of the book about modernization of the university (Yokohama International Relations History Study Group and the Yokohama Archives of History, 2005, p. 21). In an essay written during his freshman year of college, he wrote about used bookstores, describing them as full of old-fashioned adventure and the atmosphere of something to be discovered, disclosing the joy of exploring books. After graduating with distinction in 1926, he went on to graduate school for liberal arts but dropped out in 1930. He was employed by *The Japan Advertiser (JA)* on his way to study in England that same year, and he came to live in Japan.

The *JA* was an English-language newspaper launched in Yokohama in 1890, and Don Brown began his career as a reporter under the editorship of Wilfrid Fleisher. Many of the paper's reporters were also correspondents for newspapers

² Miura (2011) wrote about Don Brown's role in history of librarians training in Japan.

and news agencies in their home countries, including *The Christian Science Monitor*, a leading Boston newspaper, for which Don Brown reported. In addition to covering through official channels from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Intelligence Bureau, he also interacted with influential figures in the political world, such as Yui Yokoyama of the Genyosha, which was known as a nationalistic political organization (Yokohama International Relations History Study Group and the Yokohama Archives of History, 2005, p. 33). Brown's surviving diary entries from 1932 to 1940 contain fragmentary accounts of the situation in the Far East after the "Manchurian Incident." He also writes of his dissatisfaction with the fact that official announcements by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs differed from the facts he had reported (Yokohama International Relations History Study Group and the Yokohama Archives of History, 2005, p. 33). In October 1940, *JA* was merged into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs-leaning newspaper, *The Japan Times*, and Don Brown also left the company and returned to U.S.

After the outbreak of war between Japan and the U.S. in 1941, interest in Japan grew in the U.S. People read books such as *Report from Tokyo*, written by the former ambassador to Japan Joseph Grew. In order to train human resources who understood Japanese, Japanese language schools were established in various regions, as well as military academies for the army and navy and civil affairs training schools at major universities. In other words, "weapons" in the form of language officers were being prepared. It was a time when Don Brown's experience came to life. He joined the UP News Agency in 1941 and the New York office of the OWI in 1942, in which wartime information was collected and analyzed. OWI's representative cultural projects were (1) inviting foreign journalists to the U.S., (2) supplying books and magazines, and (3) establishing American libraries abroad. OWI viewed libraries as a pillar of information dissemination along with news organizations, publishing and distribution organizations, and entertainment facilities (movie theaters and theaters), and it is not surprising that Don Brown developed these ideas during his time as an OWI employee.

Don Brown joined the psychological warfare against Japan as the Far East Regional Specialist in the Overseas Department, where he was mainly involved in the production of propaganda leaflets. Don Brown's roles included checking

drafts of surrender leaflets for Japanese soldiers prepared by his Nisei subordinate Shuji Fujii and others, shipping and storing the completed leaflets, and communicating and coordinating with the front lines (Yokohama International Relations History Study Group and the Yokohama Archives of History, 2005, p. 67).

OWI's leaflets are white propaganda that reveals its source, the U.S. military, and is distinguished from black propaganda, which keeps its source secret. However, OWI's propaganda had the same characteristics in that it aimed to weaken the Japanese military's will to fight, weaken their resistance, and promote their surrender, as well as to influence the ethnic groups under Japanese occupation to secede from the Japanese military. At first, the text of the leaflets often directly appealed to the Japanese to surrender because resistance to the overwhelming military power of the U.S. forces would be futile. Later, however, they were more likely to praise the Japanese soldiers and admonish them not to waste their lives but to live to help rebuild a new Japan. This had the intent of psychological warfare to reduce U.S. military casualties by achieving results through non-combat means (Yokohama International Relations History Study Group and the Yokohama Archives of History, 2009, p. 65–107).

In July 1944, Brown was ordered to Brisbane, Australia, from the New York office of OWI. In Brisbane was MacArthur, who had been defeated in the Philippine campaign in 1942 and had launched an operation to recapture the Philippines from January 1944. Don Brown's objective was to help the local office launch a propaganda leaflet operation and to proceed with the leaflet production plan. There were 18 types of propaganda leaflets produced in Brisbane stored at Yokohama Archives of History, six of which dealt with MacArthur.

In December 1945, three and a half months after the acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration, Don Brown landed at Atsugi Airfield. Within CIE, which was established at the Tokyo Broadcasting Center, he was in charge of the radio, newspaper/publishing, and film departments. In July 1946, he was appointed as a head of the Information Division, where he took the lead in promoting democratic ideas in the field of the media, informing the public about the objectives of the occupation, and eliminating undemocratic ideas.

Don Brown was a taciturn man. Kazuko Ito, secretary and interpreter to

Ethel B. Weed, the Women's Affairs Officer, wrote the following about Don Brown's personality. "Brown was a man of few words and never said a word. My first impression was that there was just a person there" (Yokohama International Relations History Study Group and the Yokohama Archives of History, 2005, p. 85). Yukiko Moriyasu, a special interpreter/translator attached to Don Brown, described that, though Brown's instructions were in English, she thought it was not that he could not speak Japanese, but that he preferred not to speak Japanese. He didn't say anything unnecessary.

He stayed in Japan throughout the occupation period. After the end of the occupation, he was transferred to the External Relations Bureau of the U.S. Far Eastern Command on April 27, 1952, the day before the Peace Treaty went into effect, and worked under Director of External Relations, Donald R. Nugent, the former Director of the CIE, until around 1957. After retiring from the Far Eastern Command, he remained in Japan and devoted himself to the activities of the Japan Asia Society, a private Japanese studies organization.

3. Head of Information Division

Don Brown's interest in libraries is documented in a letter (copy) that remains in the Yokohama Archives of History. These letters are carbon copies of letters written by Don Brown to friends in the U.S. between December 1945 and April 1946. Most of the letters are addressed to his friend Robert E. Kingery, who lived in New York City. Kingery worked with Don Brown as a reporter for the *JA* newspaper in prewar Japan and was then a librarian at the New York Public Library (NYPL).

In a letter dated December 20, 1945, he wrote that the space for an "information library" on the first floor of Radio Tokyo is far from ideal. The "information library" referred to indicates the so-called CIE Library. In November, three months after the end of the war, the first CIE library was opened in Room 108 of the former Radio Tokyo Building in Uchisaiwai-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo. The Tokyo CIE Library was placed under the jurisdiction of the CIE Information Division and moved to a coffee shop in the Nitto Tea Building in Hibiya in March 1946, following the military seizure of the building.

This small reference library was open to Japanese as well as CIE personnel. In *Education in Japan*, which was published as a guide for members of the U.S. educational mission to Japan in February 1946, the purpose of the CIE library was to provide Japanese writers, scholars, bureaucrats, politicians, organizations, and the general public with reference materials and books on international relations and World War II and to inform them about the substance of activities and policies rooted in American customs, laws, society, and political institutions (CIE, 1983). By October 1948, 17 CIE libraries had been established in Tokyo, Kyoto, Nagoya, and other urban areas, and by June 1951, just before the conclusion of the Peace Treaty, six more libraries had been established, for a total of 23 libraries.

From the description in the letter, Don Brown seems to be enthusiastic about the establishment of the CIE library and was not satisfied with the size of the room allocated to him in the old broadcasting hall, and he criticized the appearance of the person in charge of the library. This person refers to Paul Burnette, who later became the first director of the Tokyo CIE Library (and later the second library director).³ To Don Brown, Burnette was an inactive figure for arrangements of the library.

Don Brown's interest in the library was probably due in part to his responsibilities as Chief of the CIE's Information Division. Though the CIE Education Division's library officers like Keeney and Burnette were responsible for policies related to the library system in Japan, the CIE Library was under the jurisdiction of the Information Division. "GHQ Information Release" in August 1946 referred to the Library of Information Division as: "Helping to carry out the democratization of Japan in accordance with the policy of the General Headquarters. For the first time in Japan's modern history, uncensored and free information was available to the Japanese people at the Tokyo CIE Library. Today, approximately 8,000 Japanese people use the English-language reference materials and books in the library every month."⁴

The CIE Information Division published the *Branch Library Bulletin* twice a month from January 1948 to December 1949, for a total of 45 issues, to communicate with CIE libraries around the country and to introduce the

³ Miura (2006) wrote about Burnette's activities in Japan.

⁴ "GHQ Information Release," 16-Aug-1946. B14/60/1, Yokohama Archives of History.

excellent activities of each branch. In September 1949, CIE Director Nugent issued plans for a CIE Information Center, which stated the following: (1) to create a model of a community service facility freely available to Japanese people, (2) to provide a comprehensive catalog of American books, magazines, newspapers, and pamphlets so that Japanese people could learn about American ideas, etc., and (3) to provide a variety of cultural activities such as documentary films, exhibitions, music recordings, discussions, and English conversation classes (Yokohama International Relations History Study Group and the Yokohama Archives of History, 2009, p.135–156).

In his recollections, Gitler also wrote that Don Brown was an old Japan hand, had worked at the NYPL for a time, having considerable knowledge of libraries, and placed great importance on them (Gitler, p. 40). Although there is no clear evidence that Don Brown worked in the NYPL, Don Brown's emphasis on libraries would be influenced by his thorough knowledge of newspapers and publishing.

4. Japan Library School

Don Brown was involved in establishing the Japan Library School (JLS) at Keio University in April 1951. In March, upon the opening of JLS, Gitler (1951) wrote an article in *Library Magazine [Toshokan Zasshi]* in which he stated that a new library school was being established through the joint efforts of the American Library Association and the General Headquarters of the Allied Powers to promote library science in Japan and to foster well-trained librarians. Although this statement seems to imply that the establishment of JLS was jointly planned and promoted by ALA and GHQ/SCAP, it was the military side that initially expressed its intention to establish a program for training librarians.

In May 1950, Verner Clapp, Chief Assistant Librarian, Library of Congress, informed John M. Cory, ALA Executive Director, that Clapp had been informed by the War Department that there was a plan to establish a library institution for teaching library science in Japan. The War Department set aside \$100,000 to finance the establishment and contacted Clapp, who had once been to Japan as a library consultant, to discuss the best course of action with library officials.

In late May, Cory and Clapp met with the War Department officers and cleared that (1) ALA was interested in a project to establish a library school in Japan, and (2) to send Robert Downs, who had visited Japan when the National Diet Library was reorganized, to Japan to do preliminary research.

According to an unsigned ALA document entitled "Proposal" dated June 1, 1950, Col. Lou G. Van Wagoner, Director of the Reorientation Branch, Office for Occupied Areas, War Department, made this proposal⁵. Gitler recollected that, in early 1950, Col. Van Wagoner, who was in Washington and responsible for CIE policy, reported that a substantial amount of the CIE budget was untapped and that if it was not spent within the fiscal year, it would just disappear. Don Brown immediately suggested that the budget be used to initiate a program to professionally educate librarians. As a result, the department in charge of reeducation in the occupied territories approached ALA to analyze the current state of library science education in Japan and to investigate the prospects for a project (Gitler, 1999, p. 43).

Don Brown communicated his intentions regarding the creation of the JLS to the War Department, which in turn approached ALA. Gitler pointed out that Don Brown's intention was that to improve the status of CIE libraries, they should first be run by the Japanese, and that an educational institution should be established to train such Japanese staff.

In the June 1 "Proposal," the University of Tokyo was selected as the first candidate for the establishment of the JLS, citing President Shigeru Manbara's contacts with American library professionals and the fact that the Rockefeller Foundation had provided the university library with materials on library science. The planned period of operation was from April 1, 1951 to June 30, 1952, with no provision for measures to be taken after the end of the occupation. It states that library personnel from the U.S. would be dispatched as faculty members but that at least one Japanese librarian would also be included.

In June, the War Department sent a cable to GHQ/SCAP stating that preparations for the JLS project had begun. After coming to Japan, in January 1951, Gitler finally decided to establish the JLS at Keio University because of its most comprehensive understanding of Western ideals. Supported by

⁵ Proposal, "Project for Operation of a Library School in Japan," 1-June-1950, ALA Archives, RS# 2/4/6, Box.22, Basic Documents, Master File, 1950-1952. Miura and Nemoto (2001) wrote about establishment of the JLS.

Rockefeller aid, JLS remained after the end of occupation (Buckland, 2021, p.105–131).

Conclusion

Don Brown had a background as a journalist, was in charge of Japan's media policy during the postwar occupation as the head of the Information Division of CIE, and also emphasized libraries as one of the channels for spreading democratic thought. He was actively involved in the establishment of the CIE Library from the early stages of the occupation, and his understanding of the importance of training of Japanese librarians directly led to the establishment of the JLS. The establishment of the JLS was a major milestone in the development of library education and the training of librarians in Japan. Don Brown contributed greatly to the Japanese librarianship.

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