
From Reading Guidance to Thought Control: Wartime Japanese Libraries

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ABSTRACT

Japanese public libraries failed to make a significant impact with either the state or the people for close to a half century after their introduction in the 1860s. The state was under too much pressure to modernize and militarize to see any value in funding a recreational facility that served personal needs, and librarians did little to market themselves to the people to increase their support base. It was not until the state began to see a role for librarians to provide ideological thought guidance through reading material that libraries began to receive more attention and support. But the library community was hesitant to abandon traditional library services (based on free reading by individuals) in favor of social education (guided reading of mandatory texts), and as a result libraries were not effective vehicles in the state's moral suasion campaigns to ensure that all citizens were fully committed to the war effort.

INTRODUCTION

When midlevel officers in the Japanese army took "direct action" in Manchuria in September 1931, blowing up part of the South Manchurian Railway and blaming it on the Chinese so that they would have a good excuse to declare war, the Japanese nation entered into a period later known as the Fifteen Year War (1931–45). The uncontrolled impulses of various branches of the military, acting in the name of the emperor, could neither be restrained nor outwardly criticized, and they continued to propel the country toward full-scale war. Direct action by young military zealots at home led to a series of assassination attempts between 1932 and 1936,



Figure 1. Photograph of a circulating collection for the families of deceased soldiers. (Courtesy of the Mainichi Newspapers.)

culminating with the February 26 Incident, in which the list of assassinated officials included the current and previous prime ministers and one of the three top generals. Japan officially entered into war with China in July of 1937, began its formal campaign for a New World Order in 1940, and declared war on the Allied nations through the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December of 1941. Against the larger, mightier, and richer Western powers, the Japanese leaders decided that its best weapon was the spiritual unity of the nation and that reading guidance would play an important role in ensuring that all Japanese were united in the war effort. Finally, the leaders of the Japanese library movement found themselves on centerstage receiving the attention and support that they had long sought, but they were playing a very different role than they had originally imagined.

Between the “opening” of the country in the 1860s and the end of the war in 1945, the Japanese nation had spent most of the time either preparing for or engaged in social and military conflicts. Fear of social unrest and the influence of “dangerous thoughts” contained in reading material continued to plague the Japanese government and contributed to increasingly strict censorship and thought-control legislation throughout the entire

period.¹ Unsupervised reading groups, beginning with the Freedom and People's Rights Movement in the 1870s, resurfaced after the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–5 among the socialists and anarchists; they appeared again after the First World War among proletarian and communist sympathizers and continued to form across the country and stock private libraries with banned books. The Japanese government looked for ways that it could control dissent and improve the mental health of the nation by engaging the cooperation and leadership of the Japan Library Association.

According to Sheldon Garon, the Ministry of the Interior and (to a lesser extent) the Ministry of Education actively sought the cooperation of various civic organizations and local bureaucracy to promote moral suasion campaigns designed to manage various social problems; they hoped through these campaigns "to spiritually guide the people's sentiments and elevate and improve public morals." In most cases, the organizations were willing to comply even when the government's aims conflicted with their own. Garon claims:

Yet far from obstructing official efforts, these tensions may be one of the keys to understanding the efficiency of Japanese social management. The intermediary activists in this study have not always blindly obeyed the dictates of the state. Often they have acted from their own managerial impulses or in pursuit of what they deemed to be in their own interests. Whatever the motivation, their active collaboration more often than not strengthened the state's capacity to regulate society to a greater degree than if a small cadre of bureaucrats had simply imposed its will from above. (Garon, 1997, p. 236)

A recent book by Tôjô Fuminori on the politics of libraries in Japan (2006), which examines library development through the lens of celebrations and commemorative events, seems to support the Garon hypothesis. An examination of the reading guidance movement in Japan will help to elucidate the dilemma faced by Japanese library leaders as they struggled to get recognition and funding from the state to support library development while at the same time protecting what they believed to be the fundamental spirit of librarianship. Compared to their American colleagues, Japanese librarians actually contributed very little to the war movement. Many of the lower-level library staff, poorly paid and poorly trained, hid behind routine work. Some refused to compromise their principles and left the field. Others, like Nakata Kunizô, recognized that the state of war necessitates compromise in order to protect what they valued as long as possible. Nakata Kunizô struggled long and hard to create an environment where rural youth could learn to become readers and through self-education prepare themselves to be intelligent citizens. By the time the country had entered the final phase of total war, however, Nakata's concepts of self-education

through carefully selected book collections had been refashioned to serve the needs of the state. Yet, despite the clear advantages of cooperating with the various moral suasion campaigns, the reading guidance movement was not enthusiastically implemented nationwide.

How well prepared was the library community to answer the call to take a leadership role? For more than fifty years, from the introduction of the Western concept of libraries in the late 1860s until the needs of the nation necessitated a more "Japanese" form of libraries, the role of public libraries was to acquire, catalog, and make available good reading material. The Japan Library Association (JLA) formed in 1892, only sixteen years after the founding of the American Library Association (ALA), held its first national conference in 1906, began publishing its official journal the *Toshokan Zasshi* (The Library Journal) in 1907, and formed a committee in 1914 to recommend books appropriate for public libraries (Welch, 1976, pp. 162–63). But public library movements had failed to make much of an impact with either the state or the people. Most libraries had closed stacks and charged entrance fees. Librarians, as the emperor's emissaries, were often rude and patronizing to the public and scared away all but the most dedicated users. Most libraries were so poorly funded that in 1930 more than 95.2 percent of the 4,609 public libraries were unable to buy sixty books in a year (Takeuchi, 1979, p. 273). Furthermore, the police regularly made the rounds to collect reader's slips and arrest people who were suspected of thought crimes. While the Ministry of Education would pay lip service to the role of public libraries, it was not convinced of the value of providing governmental funds to support what it considered a private activity (reading for personal reasons).

THE 1920S: SEEKING A MORE ACTIVE ROLE FOR LIBRARIES

The decade of the 1920s may be characterized as a period of transition for the Japan Library Association. The JLA celebrated its thirtieth anniversary in 1922. Many of the founding members and library elite, graduates of the Tokyo Imperial University, were coming to the end of their careers. As they looked back at the past decades, most expressed frustration with how poorly libraries were funded and that they still were not appropriately acknowledged as professionals. A revision to the Ordinance of Library Governmental Personnel in 1921, for example, allowed the transfer of senior government officials and teachers into the top administrative posts of libraries while the rest of the library staff were treated as clerks (Takeuchi, 1979, p. 89). It put into effect a divided system of administration, where librarians could not become directors and directors rarely if ever had any library experience. The most blatant example of this was when the Ministry of Education chose to replace Tanaka Inagi, director of the Imperial Library and founder of the Japan Library Association, with a Normal school prin-

cial named Matsumoto Kiichi who had no previous library experience. Official protests from the JLA and the threat of a strike by Imperial Library Employees had no effect on the decision (Tôjô, 2006, p. 67).

When the Ministry of Education finally took an interest in supporting the work of public libraries it was because an official in the Ministry of Education, Norisugi Kaju, had been inspired by the American Library Association's Read to Win campaign during World War I and saw a more effective role for public libraries. He began to pressure the JLA to take a leadership role in providing ideological guidance to help solve the "thought problems" that were beginning to rock the nation (Norisugi, 1921, p. 7). During the previous decades, the number of small libraries created as commemorative events and the number of private libraries had grown rapidly, but neither the JLA nor the Japanese government were pleased with the developments. While some large cities, such as Osaka and Tokyo, developed extensive and progressive libraries services, they were the exception rather than the rule. In the countryside, Young Men's Associations and other private groups were building their own libraries and sponsoring reading circles.²

Beginning in 1921 the Ministry of Education asked JLA conference members how libraries could be more effective social education institutions and assist the government in gaining better control over youths and adults. Several library leaders were firmly opposed to libraries trying to imitate schools and mandating reading in particular. The JLA evaded the issue by suggesting more support for children's libraries because adults would not use libraries if they are not taught to do so as children.³ In 1924, at the Japan Library Association annual meeting, the Ministry of Education was more explicit in requesting a "policy to deepen the effect of libraries on the ideological guidance of the people." Once again, the majority of librarians refused to take the request seriously (Ishii, 1975, p. 165).

By 1926 the atmosphere at the annual meeting had changed considerably. For one thing, the Peace Preservation Law of 1925 had given police free reign to investigate and interrogate anyone suspected of attempting to overthrow the current form of government. Beginning with radical student organizations, the thought police arrested hundreds of students and seized research materials from well-known professors such as Kawakami Hajime (Mitchell, 1976, p. 73). The effect of the new powers of the thought police reverberated throughout the country, and all government employees were called on to meet the crisis. At its annual meeting in 1928, the JLA could no longer sidestep the issue of its role in providing ideological guidance. Two major areas came under discussion at this meeting: censorship and providing reading guidance. In the initial draft of the response, the JLA suggested that all libraries remove and destroy "dangerous materials" in their collections and censor their selections much more carefully in the future. Nakata Kunizô spoke out against making judgments on whether books

were “good” or “bad” and suggested that such a response was shortsighted and would have a negative effect on later generations. The revised version was toned down sufficiently to ask that the government do a better job of censoring publications so that “dangerous materials” do not accidentally make their way onto the library’s shelves (Nihon, 1929, p. 189). A representative from the Ministry of Education criticized the amended response and reprimanded librarians for taking too passive a role as educators. Since many librarians did not feel qualified to (or interested) in getting involved with “thought improvement,” one suggestion was to hire a reader’s advisory specialist who could keep a careful eye on thought problems.

NAKATA’S VISION OF READING GUIDANCE

While Nakata was the only one to stand up and criticize thoughtless censorship in libraries, he was also one of the only library directors outside of the large urban areas to be active in outreach and reading guidance. Unlike most librarians who were being dragged kicking and screaming into social education, Nakata came into librarianship through his pioneering efforts with social education and reading guidance, and he was strongly influenced by his university training in Nishida philosophy. Hired as a social education supervisor by the prefecture of Ishikawa in 1925 and unhappy with the lack of opportunities for lifelong learning open to young men and women and with their lack of understanding about the importance of self-education, Nakata devised a plan that would provide an equivalent to a middle school education through the careful use of guided reading. First he set out to learn more about the reading habits of the people in his jurisdiction. He not only surveyed reading interests in the libraries but also went into homes and looked at what kinds of materials people purchased. Then he spoke to them about what kinds of reading interests they had and whether libraries were meeting those needs and interests.

Nakata saw a clear difference between “school education” and “library education.” School education is based on teaching, while library education is based on learning. With school education, students gather based on the topic being taught, while with library education people with a desire to learn gather to learn the skills and motivation that will allow them to pursue lifelong education. School education uses set books, is taught at set times, and takes place in a classroom and primarily through lectures, while library education covers a broad range of topics to encourage the reader to develop a desire to study and occurs at any time in any place through the words of the author. The end result of school education is the mastery of a set number of subjects, while library education provides independence so that the reader can go on to learn more about any topic he or she chooses (Maruyama, 1971, p. 46).

Nakata believed in the power of careful selection. In the early years he

often chose texts that were too difficult for the readers. He created three different levels of library collections so that readers could gradually work their way up to more difficult materials. Collection A was designed for people up to the age of twenty who had completed compulsory education so that they could attain the equivalent of a middle school education. Collection B built on A and was intended to give them the equivalent of a high school education. Collection C was intended for anyone who wanted to study different aspects of culture more deeply. Within each level, he divided the collections into different topics: (1) civic culture, (2) cultivation of aesthetics, (3) cultivation of scientific knowledge, and (4) improving economic and social lifestyle. What kinds of materials were included? A report in 1933 shows that participants in his reading groups were reading Tolstoy, Tagore, Marx, Engels, and Kropotkin, along with a wide range of Japanese writers (Kajii, 1977, p. 461).

THE 1930S: FINDING AN APPROPRIATE ROLE FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES

In the summer of 1931 members of the Japanese Army in Manchuria blew up part of the South Manchurian Railway and blamed it on Chinese insurgents, creating an opportunity for the army to take control of Manchuria. Japan officially entered into a period of emergency, and police control tightened significantly. Within the library world, many of the liberal-minded, Western-trained librarians had either moved into Japan-occupied colonial libraries or private libraries where they had slightly more freedom. Within the Japan Library Association leadership had changed from “pure” librarians to social educators. Matsumoto, first introduced to the library world when he was installed as director of the Imperial Library in 1923, had been elected president of the JLA in 1928 but was dislodged in 1930 when the membership voted in one of the senior librarians. In what could only have been orchestrated at the highest level of government, Matsumoto was invited to give a lecture to the emperor on the mission of libraries in 1931.⁴ It was the first time that any member of the library profession had been so honored, and the invitation gave the library community hope that they would finally receive the recognition that they deserved. Matsumoto was reelected president of the JLA soon after, and the Ministry of Education began to talk about revising the library laws, improving librarians’ qualifications, and placing more importance on the role of libraries in the social education movement. In July 1933 Matsumoto announced in *Toshokan Zasshi* that the JLA would move its administrative offices into the Ministry of Education building along with other social education organizations to facilitate its work on behalf of the state.⁵

Draft versions of the revised legislation had promised pay increases for librarians, mandatory legislation of public libraries, and a centralized

library system. Expectations ran high, and when the long-awaited library legislation revisions were published, they did include a number of changes that had been recommended by the JLA. But mandatory establishment of libraries was not one. Even worse, the salaries and rank of library staff were reduced. Least controversial was the establishment of a central library system, which was responsible for providing oversight for all libraries within its prefecture.⁶ Prefectural governors were to appoint the library director, and since the Ministry of the Interior appointed prefectural governors, it meant that the Ministry of the Interior had its people in key positions in all prefectural libraries. Apparently, few librarians spoke out against the role of inspection because they believed that the poor quality of book selection evident in private libraries reflected badly on all libraries (Koreeda, 1986, p. 40). Furthermore, many librarians believed that the fact that not only local police but also the “thought police” and military police routinely entered the library to remove banned books and check for antiwar activity was proof that librarians were not treated as responsible government officials. One library director took his new role very seriously and published his findings in *Toshokan Zasshi* in 1934 (Nakata, 1934). Otobe Senzaburô, director of the central library in Nagano, complained about all the left-wing books he discovered in the private libraries run by the Young Men’s Associations in his prefecture (Otobe, 1934, p. 244). This could have hardly come as a surprise to anyone, however, since more than 208 teachers in Nagano had been caught in the sweep to remove “reds” from the school system the year before, and many of them had been supervising small library collections.

One clause caused considerable debate: the one concerning the central purpose of libraries. Rather than the Japan Library Association’s proposal that “the library’s purpose is to collect books for the public to read and assist in their cultural development,” the revised legislation stated that “libraries may serve as supplemental facilities for social education.” Matsumoto Kiichi celebrated the revised legislation for providing libraries with a chance to shed their passive role as a storehouse of books and reinvent themselves as centers for whatever activities are necessary for social education (Matsumoto, 1933, p. 276). While many voices grumbled quietly, the main voice of opposition came once again from Nakata Kunizô. A discussion at the national conference is revealing. Matsuo Tomoo, from the Ministry of Education, suggested that appropriate activities could include sponsoring judo classes in the library if other facilities were unavailable. When Nakata pointed out that since the legislation used the term “may” it was an option and not an obligation, Matsuo called him “unpatriotic,” which could have (and probably did) cause him to be put under surveillance by the thought police.⁷

Nakata (1934) and Matsuo (1934) took their disagreement to the pages of the *Toshokan Zasshi* in a series of essays. Matsuo suggested that in the countryside, where the population was not particularly literate, it would make more sense for libraries to become part of a larger social education

facility and that the employees should take on whatever tasks are needed.⁸ Nakata's article was entitled "Let the Library Develop as a Library," in which he worried that the library's role in facilitating the valuable mission of learning through books was in danger of being lost. Since Nakata refused to back down, the result of the debate was the establishment of a committee to investigate appropriate social education activities for libraries. Naturally both Nakata and Matsuo were asked to serve on the committee, along with seven other prominent librarians.

According to Takei Gonnai, careful examination of the work of the committee is essential to understanding how reading guidance turned into thought control before the end of the war and the fundamental role of libraries evolved during wartime (Takei, 1960, pp. 202–3). The committee published three draft proposals in *Toshokan Zasshi* before submitting its final report in 1937. In the end, a toothless report concluded that library activities could be labeled as being either direct or indirect. Direct activities involved reading and books and were activities that librarians should undertake if at all possible. Indirect activities did not particularly involve libraries or books but could be done within the library if the librarian had any free time. Indirect activities, it was added, should be considered as a means of drawing new people into the library. Nakata's influence on reading guidance was evident, however, as the committee recommended three different levels of library service depending on the type of library user.

Type 1. Those who come voluntarily to the library, select the books they want to read, and have the ability to understand what they are reading.

Type 2. Those who have the ability to read and are able to educate themselves through reading but do not know how to use the library or select the books they want to read.

Type 3. People with a certain degree of knowledge but who have not realized the need for self-study, or those who do realize the need for self-study but social conditions do not allow them to fulfill the need.

According to the report, public libraries need to pay the most attention to the second and third types of users. In particular, the report gave concrete advice on how to appeal to type 2 people, such as:

- supply multiple copies of important books;
- adopt an open shelf system;
- operate easy to use catalogs, and provide advice to users on proper use of the catalogs;
- set library hours that are convenient;
- simplify lending procedures;
- establish branch libraries and lending collections; and
- expand reading consultation work and increase contact time between staff and users (Takei, 1960, p. 289).

The committee finished its report by asking for mandatory establishment of libraries; minimum standards for staffing, collections, and budgets; library education programs; and state subsidies for library costs (Takei, 1960, p. 290). But the final report came so long after the initial debate that the political situation had changed significantly.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL MOBILIZATION COLLECTIONS, 1937

In May 1937 the Ministry of Education published *Kokutai no hongî* (Principles of the National Polity), which stressed the unique identity of the Japanese and the sanctity of the nationalist imperial state where individualism was extremely difficult (and certainly undesirable) and service to the state the supreme virtue (Hunter, 1984, p. 99). The *Kokutai no hongî* became the principle ethics text in schools, and the government looked for a way that it could ensure that the text would also be read by all adults. Copies were distributed to all schools and libraries, and study groups were formed under the supervision of teachers who had been provided with government-approved commentaries so that there would be no misunderstanding and no deviation (*Sources*, 1958, p. 278). The introduction to the text begins as follows:

The various ideological and social evils of present-day Japan are the result of ignoring the fundamental and running after the trivial, of lack of judgement, and a failure to digest things thoroughly; and this is due to the fact that since the days of Meiji so many aspects of European and American culture, systems, and learning, have been imported, and that, too rapidly (*Sources*, 1958, p. 279).

In the summer of 1937 Japan formally declared war on China, and in the fall of 1937 the Konoe cabinet announced a campaign to support the war effort called the National Spiritual Mobilization Movement (*Kokumin Seishin Sôdôin*). Libraries looked for positive ways to participate in the National Spiritual Mobilization Movement, and the Japan Library Association proposed the purchase and distribution of small circulating collections of "appropriate materials." The Ministry of Education supported the plan and provided a subsidy of 350 yen to each central library and a catalog of recommended books from which to make their selections. Some central libraries sent circulating collections to military hospitals, and others were made available free of charge to the families of deceased soldiers. Other libraries responded by sponsoring exhibitions of war-related materials, creating lending collections, and doing some propaganda. One slogan that received attention was "The fruits of national spirit are in your library!" (Nagasue, 1984, p. 320). The slogan for National Library Week was "National Spiritual Mobilization Members: Read! To Mobilize National Strength" (Kakinuma, 1974, p. 93).

At the same time voluntary participation in moral suasion campaigns

took on a different air when a section chief of Police Affairs (part of the Ministry of the Interior) was appointed as the Head of Social Education in 1937 (Takeuchi, 1979, p. 12). Furthermore, in 1938 General Araki Sadao was appointed the Minister of Education, finally providing for a complete penetration of the military in all aspects of education. Youth vocational centers and youth training centers had been established in 1935 because military exams to new conscripts had proven that young men with no more than an elementary education performed poorly on aptitude tests. But since few youths voluntarily attended improvement courses, the Ministry of Education decided to make attendance compulsory beginning in 1939 (MEXT, n.d.).

1940: THE NEW ORDER AND LIBRARIES

By 1940 rationing was in effect in all areas of life, from paper to fuel to food. The annual meeting of the Japan Library Association was discontinued because of travel restrictions and reformulated the next year in a slightly different format. National Library Week, previously under the auspices of the JLA, had been replaced by "Reading Promotion Week" and taken out of the hands of the JLA (Tôjô, 2006, p. 77). In December 1941 Japan's declaration of war on the Western world further pushed Japanese librarians into developing a more "Japanese" form of librarianship. The New Order in East Asia (*Tôa shinchitsujo*) called for a leadership role for Japan within Asia (later known as the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere) to liberate Asia from communist and Western threats under the political, economic, and military supervision of Japan. To quote from the plan for the "New World Order":

Occidental individualism and materialism shall be rejected and a moral world view, the basic principle of whose morality shall be the Imperial Way, shall be established. The ultimate object to be achieved is not the exploitation but co-prosperity and mutual help, not competitive conflict but mutual assistance and mild peace, not a formal view of equality but a view of order based on righteous classification, not an idea of rights but an idea of service, and not several world views but one unified world view (*Sources*, 1958, p. 298).

As always, the Ministry of Japan had asked the JLA to consider concrete roles that the library could play in developing the "New Order." One suggestion made by the JLA was to have the government create a reading list of recommended readings and distribute the list and copies of the titles to all libraries. The libraries would then supervise the reading of these titles by all citizens (Nagasue, 1984, p. 320).

The *Toshokan Zasshi* published two articles by librarians on how libraries could function under the New Order. Akioka Goro, for example, stressed that the libraries had an important role to play in the re-education of adults who had been raised under philosophies of liberalism and individualism (Akioka,

1941, p. 149). Furthermore, given the severe paper shortages, libraries were the most effective way for a large number of people to have access to the limited amount of reading material. Akioka also proposed establishing an exam based on subjects covered in the “good citizen’s reading collection” and offering certificates of completion. Tanaka Inagi had made a similar suggestion in 1908 as a way of attracting the Ministry of Education’s interest in public libraries as social education centers (Tanaka, 1908, p. 7).

In May 1941 the JLA celebrated its fiftieth anniversary. At its celebration, the invited speaker called for the JLA to join forces with other organizations under the umbrella of the Imperial Rule Assistance Organization to bring culture to the rural areas through the reading guidance movement. Librarians were encouraged once again to be active participants in the New Order and to free themselves from the confines and isolation of library buildings to take a more active role. The call for action continued the next year when the Ministry of Education insisted that given the seriousness of the situation, all out war on all fronts, librarians could no longer hide behind calls for improved funding or library legislation. They had to become active and they had to become involved in re-educating adults. The reading guidance movement used librarians’ knowledge and skills, made maximum use of a small number of books, and freed them from the confines (and costs) of the physical library building.

While no one was willing to go on record as being opposed to the plan, one librarian made the pointed suggestion that “there seemed to be a great deal of pressure from above” (Koyama, 1942, p. 423). Ono Noriaki, a very well respected academic librarian, pointed out a number of flaws in the plan. Given the current paper shortages, by the time libraries read about books being recommended, they are out of print. Furthermore, library legislation did not give librarians the authority to serve as social educators, and even if the librarians saw themselves that way, the public did not. Taking his argument one step too far, Ono claimed that if the government did not have sufficient funds to build libraries or maintain library buildings, then how could it expect to have enough funds to wage war. It was at this point that the chairman squelched all further comments and his own were not published (Nihon 1942, p. 418).

In the end, the JLA requested that the library’s nationalistic mission be written into library legislation, as well as (once again) mandatory establishment of libraries in all towns, cities, and prefectures. Furthermore, libraries should be renamed “national libraries” (*kokumin toshokan*) because they are imbued with the same charge as national schools (*kokumin gakkō*). And, in order to spread the national mandatory reading program, the JLA requested that the government increase the number of “mandatory reading” materials published, further control supervision of the commercial publishing industry so that unsuitable materials were no longer published, and establish a single organization to recommend appropriate reading

materials so that librarians were no longer confused by which recommendations to follow (*Toshokan Zasshi*, 1942, p. 429). The Ministry of Education took these suggestions seriously, and by February 1943 public libraries were on the priority list to receive newly published recommended texts.

Until the spring of 1942, despite the continual pushing for libraries to become more active, the Ministry of Education was still focusing its attention on central/prefectural libraries promoting reading through the use of small circulating collections. But during a meeting with central library directors, Nakata took several high-ranking Ministry of Education officials to see the reading guidance work of Kajii Shigeo, one of Nakata's protégés. They were clearly impressed, and by September of 1942 the Ministry of Education and Japan Library Association had jointly produced guidelines for providing reading guidance, held the first conference specifically on reading guidance, and provided funds to five prefectural/central libraries to set up reading guidance programs. Reading guidance, once intended for young men, would be broadened to serve all adults. More importantly, reading was no longer a private or personal action (as in selfish); it was a government-mandated contribution to the war effort and intended to increase one's awareness as a citizen community effort (Maruyama, 1971, p. 50). People did not read for their own needs but for the needs of the community. Librarians would be sent out to the factories and villages with small collections of approved books, thus eliminating the need for library facilities. Factories were obligated to set aside time for their reading guidance programs. One-on-one consultation or small group guidance would ensure that the reader had properly understood the content and significance of the text and limited participants to reading one text per month so they would not become confused by too much information (*Toshokan Zasshi*, 1942, p. 377).

Unlike Nakata's original plan, this new plan focused on improving aptitude and teamwork spirit. Furthermore, it was to prepare all citizens for their future roles as the emperor's soldiers and advisors for the other members of the New World Order (Koreeda, 1986, pp. 36–43). According to a Ministry of Education report on reading guidance in rural areas, recommended texts included biographies of famous Japanese militarists and politicians, *War and the Body*, and the *Way of the Subjects*. Instructors included principals, schoolteachers, and librarians (Monbushô no Chihô, 1943). Since most librarians were not comfortable in the role of "teacher," they tended to assume the managerial role (arranging for rooms, paperwork, and coordinating) rather than the guidance role.

Nakata published an article in the November issue of *Toshokan Zasshi* explaining how the JLA planned to deal with the campaign to increase reading across the nation. Nakata stated that the membership had spent the previous year debating the best method for increasing reading and had finally decided on the course of reading guidance. The effectiveness of the campaign differed widely between prefectures depending on the leadership

of the director of the central library (Nakata, 1943b). Otobe Senzaburô, the director of the Nagano Prefectural Library, published article after article in the magazine *Dokusho Shinshû* (*Shinshû Reads*) on the role of reading to support the war effort (Koreeda, 1983, pp. 176–77). Toyama Prefectural Library received funds to purchase 11,500 volumes, which were transported in 365 boxes and sent to 110 of its 213 towns, villages, and cities for the use of over 190 organizations (Hôjô, 1965, p. 282).

Despite the overt controls (censorship, paper restrictions, thought police) and dangers of criticizing any public decision, in January 1943 Shibuya Kunitada (librarian at Yokohama Municipal Library, promoted to library director at Maebashi Municipal Library in September of that year) published an article in *Toshokan Zasshi* in which he criticized the approach taken by most librarians concerning reading guidance. Shibuya subtitled his essay “from the perspective of a ‘pure’ librarian.” Shibuya considered himself a “pure” librarian in comparison with Nakata Kunizô, who had abandoned the librarian “ship” (Nagasue, 1984, p. 334). Shibuya believed that reading guidance had assumed too prominent a place in the library world, and that many librarians were jumping on the bandwagon without really believing in its value in order to ingratiate themselves with the government and to secure funding for their libraries. Shibuya argued that the current approach to mandating the reading of a set number of texts would turn libraries into schools and library books into textbooks. As Nakata had pointed out a decade earlier, most librarians believed that library users needed to be free to choose their own reading materials according to their own interests” (Nagasue, 1984, p. 9).

At the time Nakata was editor of *Toshokan Zasshi*, so he must have supported the article’s publication even though he was the main target of criticism. Indeed, Shibuya’s comments were a reflection of the beliefs of many, and Nakata probably felt it was important for the membership to air their opinions. The Ministry of Education reacted swiftly to this article, however, by warning Nakata (as editor of the journal) that no such articles should be printed in the future because it would create misunderstanding of the reading guidance movement (Nakata, 1943a, p. 4). Nakata did not immediately answer Shibuya’s charges. Instead the subsequent issues were full of reports of reading guidance activities across the countryside. Finally, Nakata found a way to answer Shibuya indirectly through an article that was addressed to a Chinese librarian interested in reading guidance and published his article in the October 1943 issue. Nakata pointed out that Shibuya put too much emphasis on individual free choice and that the system allows for individual selection of texts from within the collection. Furthermore, he advised Shibuya that continuing to push for individualism at this point would likely end his career as a public librarian. Certainly, he knew what he was talking about, since it came to light long after he died that he had been arrested on charges of *lèse-majesté* in 1937 for having made

critical comments about the behavior of Japanese soldiers in China to a small group of librarians (Yamazaki, 1986).

Plans for training people to provide reading guidance went forward. The Ministry of Education and Imperial Rule Assistance Association decided to co-sponsor two three-week training camps scheduled for February and March 1944, with the goal of combining spiritual training and knowledge. An advertisement published in the January 1944 issue of *Toshokan Zasshi* (Monbosho narabi, 1944, p. 36) included the following information:

Thought Drill for Guiding Reading Circles

Dates: 11 Feb. to 4 March (session 1) and 8 March to 30 March (session 2)

Participants: prefectural and central library directors, librarians, and other persons involved with reading guidance with the recommendation of their prefectural governor.

Lectures: *Kokutai no Hongi* (Fundamentals of our national polity)

Daily schedule:

5:00	wake up
5:00–6:30	morning preparation
6:30–7:00	breakfast
7:00–9:00	self-study
9:00	opening ceremony
9:00–12:00	lectures
12:00–1:00	lunch
1:00–2:00	self-study
2:00–4:30	work in the fields
4:30–5:30	afternoon preparation (meditation, cleaning, routines)
5:30–7:00	dinner and bath
7:00–9:00	discussion
9:00	closing ceremony

There are no published reports on the results of the February session and the March training session was cancelled, likely due to the Tokyo air raids that began in March 1944. *Toshokan Zasshi* published its last issue in September 1944. While some public libraries in large cities continued to function during the last year of the war, most had been burned out or shut down because materials and manpower were needed elsewhere.

CONCLUSIONS

Horiuchi Koson was one of the young leaders of the reading guidance movement during the war. In 1950 he reflected on his experiences during the war and attempted to address the criticisms that he and other supporters of the movement received during the occupation period. Horiuchi claimed that launching the national reading guidance movement in 1941 was likely the Ministry of Education's biggest achievement during the war, and the fact that the Imperial Rule Assistance Organization and other major social management groups came together to support the JLA's reading guidance movement rather than compete for their own projects was a huge bonus,

even if much of it was just for show (Horiuchi, 1950). He regretted the fact that by the time the movement really got organized, it was too late to have much of an effect because the intended participants (young men) were all off on the war front and everyone left on the home front was either working in factories or scrambling for food. But overall he did not regret his involvement in the reading guidance movement because he believed that the basic path it took finally put libraries squarely in the center of the cultural movement, helped to keep libraries alive, provided some reading sustenance to the people who sought it, and keep some sense of culture alive during a very difficult period.

Despite the fact that many members of the Japan Library Association continued to oppose censorship and mandating reading throughout the period, Sheldon Garon's hypothesis that social management organizations collaborated with the government in spite of misgivings because it helped them to achieve their own goals seems to be valid for the Japanese library experience. In the case of the Japan Library Association, cooperation with the state was partially orchestrated by the Ministry of Education and Ministry of the Interior, which placed social educators in strategic positions. In particular, two social educators in their role as library directors represent eager collaboration and reluctant collaboration. Although Matsumoto Kichi served in the highest library post in the country for more than twenty years and as president of the Japan Library Association for a decade, there is very little written about him and his real thoughts on libraries during the war. He represents the eager collaborationist and sought to reshape the Japan Library Association to be more attentive to the needs of the state. In the area of reading guidance, he reflects his initial training as an educator and believed that young men had the desire to read but not the skills to select appropriate materials.

Nakata Kunizô, on the other hand, represents the reluctant collaborationist. He opposed heavy-handed governmental interference and believed firmly in the value of self-education and allowing books to serve as teachers. Nakata came under suspicion during the war for his liberal beliefs and after the war for his role in the reading guidance movement (Ichimura, 1966, p. 257). Unlike Matsumoto, there are many articles about Nakata's contributions to Japanese library development and how his "reading collection" concept became fodder for thought control. Despite the fact that the reading guidance movement is generally attributed to Nakata, the wartime model was very different than his original model. When the Ministry of Education adopted Nakata's text-centered "reading collection" model for its own purposes it changed it into a teacher-focused reading guidance model where readers were told how to interpret the content of the books. How Nakata felt about this change is unknown. As with the news of his arrest and subsequent supervision by the thought police, Nakata kept his feelings to himself.

NOTES

1. The best research done in English on Japanese censorship during the period is by Richard H. Mitchell (1976, 1983). This article follows the Japanese tradition of listing family name before personal name.
2. There are several excellent accounts of the development of libraries established by Young Men's Associations. One example (Koreeda, 1983) clearly explains the changes throughout the period.
3. The relationship between libraries and schools was not congenial throughout most of the period of 1868 to 1945. Most teachers were opposed to children reading outside of the proscribed textbooks because it confused their minds. Some schools issued blanket bans against visiting libraries. One of the reasons typically given for the lack of development of public libraries is because children were not taught how to use libraries while they were in school, therefore they could not be expected to use libraries as adults (Ôta, 1921).
4. Other than an announcement made by Matsumoto in the pages of the *Toshokan Zasshi*, there is no record of what he actually said to the emperor. The National Diet Library (postwar version of the Imperial Library) does not have a copy.
5. Announcement from Matsumoto published in *Toshokan Zasshi* (July 1933), 55.
6. According to Welch, Japanese librarians would have kept the centralized systematic approach to library service in the postwar period had the occupation forces not been strongly opposed to it (Welch, 1976, p. 65).
7. The legislation was Imperial (enacted under the name of the emperor), therefore any disrespect to the wording or the intent of the legislation could be deemed *lèse-majesté* (treason).
8. It is important to point out that this social education facility did come to fruition early in the postwar period (*kôminkan*).

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