

# Report from Japan Liaison

Syun Tutiya

August 6, 2004

## 1 Universities

### 1.1 “Hojinka” and its impact

National universities changed their legal status from internal organizations in the government to independently incorporated institutions in April, 2004. More accurately, “National University Corporation Law” institutes 89 national university corporations, each of which in turn establishes a university which is exactly the same as what was formerly a national university of the same name. The points of making national universities legally independent of the government include five major goals, which are summarized below, in university reform for Japanese national university system, though the law constantly refers to “Independent Administrative Agencies and Institutes Law” for covering clauses for what it does not stipulate about, which means that what the MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology) calls university reform is actually to be understood in the context of Japan’s deregulation and its financial and administrative reform from the 1990s.

The major goals targeted by the reform are:

1. autonomy of individual universities,
2. conscious approaches to “management,”
3. increased control from outside university system,
4. autonomous employment systems and
5. evaluation by the third party organizations

The real intention of the reform is clear even from these five goals, because they do not mention any attempt how the universities should promote and improve higher education and research but how they should be managed and controlled.

But do not worry so much for now. Nothing very much has changed this year and will not for the coming few years. For one thing, the government’s funding size for the whole group of national universities seems to stay virtually the same, while the methods of allocation are more competition-based than before. The major revenue source will remain the government fund rather than tuition for the time being, with newly institutionalized “law schools” alone being allowed to charge students substantially increased tuition. That is, nobody has so far fired due to this reform, as opposed to the similar cases in Thatcher’s reform in UK in 1980s, nor has any department been closed due to this reform, as opposed to the US situations, where departments are always being restructured for managerial reasons like decrease of enrolment. For another, employment, social security, salary, procurement and other systems have basically survived the reform just because we had no time to change everything, which again means that in a few years some real rationalization will take place from campus to campus.

The real impact will come later but probably in an increased intensity. See a document at the URL:

[http://www.mext.go.jp\\_b\\_menu\\_houdou\\_15\\_02\\_030222.pdf](http://www.mext.go.jp_b_menu_houdou_15_02_030222.pdf)

### 1.2 National university mergers

Simultaneously, several couples of national universities have been merged. Three distinct types of these mergers are (1) larger universities absorbing smaller neighboring smaller universities, as in the case of University of Library and Information Science, Kyushu Institute of Design and Kobe Mercantile Marine (2) medical universities joining multi-faculty universities in the same prefectures, the former being larger in budget size and perhaps in employment, and (3) two universities of similar academic foci getting together like Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology, an outcome of the merger of Tokyo University of Mercantile Marine and Tokyo University of Fisheries. The third case is not typical. There were attempts for mergers of educational universities, by which I

mean teacher training colleges, but nothing has come out of such efforts or conspiracies apparently because teacher training institutions have historically too close ties with local governments and school district authorities.

It must be noted that the mergers and “hojinka” are mutually independent, although, of course, they have something in common in terms of rationalization in the sense of a smaller number of institutions.

### 1.3 Tokyo Metropolitan University turned into dust and ashes

A much scarier story about Japanese academia is about Tokyo Metropolitan University. It has a tradition since before the war, but under the Governor Ishihara’s initiative, four higher education institutions “owned” by Tokyo’s local government were ordered to get merged. The merger planning committee proposed a plan for a newer, larger university in July, 2003. Their plan was turned down in favor of a hastily written up simple scheme based on the idea of “serving the city,” whose meaning I do not understand. The major results of this series of events is that the admired tradition of undergraduate and graduate education, particularly graduate education in the fields of the Humanities and basic natural sciences, in the university will terminate as of this year. It was not the case that nobody protested, but all efforts were in vain.

This is a sad story, but it is expected that more sad stories will follow. Most local governments currently suffer from large budget deficits. Last year a law passed the diet that enables local governments to separate its branches, namely branches which cause such deficits, from themselves, in the same spirit of the national-scale independent administrative agencies. As a result, most local governments are currently working on the remodeling of the higher education systems which they have been proud to support. The direction of rethinking is rationalization and the model is Tokyo’s case. Nobody know what is going to happen to the universities in a few years, but everybody is certain that nobody can be optimistic.

## 2 University libraries

The general statistics of Japanese university libraries are reported by the MEXT and the outline for the year 2003 was press released in early April, which is accessible by visiting its website in Japanese at the URL:

[http://www.mext.go.jp/b\\_menu/houdou/16/04/04042602.htm](http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/houdou/16/04/04042602.htm)

### 2.1 Budget situation

Library budget is not very seriously taken on campus. There are very few universities where libraries take control of the campuswide budget for purchases of books and subscription to either print or electronic journals. In most universities, faculty members control their own budget and decide on what to buy and what not, with the libraries only functioning as contractual agents, so to speak. So the impacts of “hojinka” in national universities in this connection is not visible yet except that the faculties are woefully complaining about the budget cuts. In the merged universities of the types (1) and (2), apparently budget situation is not very much affected by the merger, but in the type (3) university, the cut is so extreme that the librarians there are having a hard time. Private university libraries have obtained additional eligibility for further funds from the MEXT for electronic scholarly resources in the name of electronic journals.

### 2.2 Institutional repositories

There are growing interests among university libraries in installing institutional repositories as defined by either SPARC or Stevan Harnad. NII’s *GeNii* will harvest and store metadata from those repositories and build up a metadata database so as to navigate users to appropriate digital resources, though NII and a few university libraries have so far only succeeded in experimentally exchanging their data. Enriching the content of each repository is the most important issue for those involved in repository projects, as it takes tremendous efforts in talking to researchers on campus into committing themselves to depositing their professional papers and other achievements.

It must be noted in this context that Japanese university libraries once had a similar idea of institutional repository as a form of digital library as early as the mid 1990s, and even started to service, as exemplified by the University of Tsukuba’s TULIPS. Their efforts were not very fruitful perhaps because of the lack of philosophy that would advocate the need for such mechanism and the copyright restriction which was taken more severely than now. But it is also true that, following such a tradition, a substantial number of national and private

university libraries have already digitized a fair amount of their treasurable materials so NII's *GeNii*, which will be detailed below, will surely help overseas as well as domestic users have access to digital resources in Japan.

### 2.3 The role of the Coordinating Committee more important now

There are roughly three kinds of universities according to the characteristics of funding sources: namely national, local government funded and private. Libraries of each category form an association. In early 1980s, the increasing need for interlibrary collaboration prompted Japanese university library world to get further consolidated in the form of coordinating committee for all kinds of university libraries. At the formative stage of the Coordinating Committee, the main focus was interlibrary loan of non-returnables, which we called "interlibrary copying service," which, though, drew attention from copyright owners in late 1980s, when they were more than ever serious about collecting fees from copyright users including universities, in particular. The Coordinating Committee have had to handle the negotiation processes with the Japanese Center for Reproductive Rights since 1987. The negotiation virtually terminated this year, the result of which will be detailed below.

## 3 National Institute of Informatics(NII)

Along with national universities, inter-university cooperative institutions like NII have been legally incorporated, as seen in the attachment referred to in section 1 of this report. NII has been incorporated together with other 3 remotely related research institutions on mathematical science, polar science and genetics into the Research Organization of Information and Systems in April, 2004. Two former library related divisions, *viz.* contents and database divisions, have been merged into one big "contents" division at the same time.

### 3.1 Shared Catalog for Online Journals

Professor Miyazawa reported in January meeting this year that NII is considering a future plan for Gakusomoku with special reference to bibliographical and holding information of online journals. This fiscal year has seen some progresses on this front. NII acquired a list of online journals and is asking for data from publishers and libraries, and within this fiscal year, it is expected that within the fiscal year 2004 NII will start to provide libraries of bibliographical and "holding" information for libraries so ILL requesting will be smoother.

### 3.2 Promotion of society journals

Inspired by the ideas that led to SPARC at ARL, the Japanese government took the problem of serials prices so seriously as to assist society journals published by Japanese societies to be more competitive and sustainable. The assistance is being done by way of NII and university libraries. Libraries take the initiative enlightening faculties and researchers on campus with background knowledge of current serials price mechanism and what people could do about it. NII takes advantage of the budget to choose, on application bases, and help society journals more internationally competitive by providing consultation service in terms of aggregation and platform, digitization and business model. It also works with JST's J-STAGE which hosts more than 100 online journals. The totality of these activities are thought to be a Japanese and Asian counterpart to SPARC and SPARC Europe.

### 3.3 GeNii

In principle, NII has been considered to be the central clearing house of library related information for Japanese scholarly libraries. To achieve the goal, it hosts NACSIS-IR database service, but its closed service model with a set of separate and dissociated databases is obviously outdated in the age of World Wide Web, so remodeling has been under way for some time now. The upshot of the remodeling is to restructure its database services into a one-stop portal for Japanese scholarly information, making an integrated and hyperlinked use of bibliographical and contents data like full-text articles in NII-ELS and institutional repositories, IP information, reports for government funded research projects etc. The system is called *GeNii* for "Global environment for Networked intellectual information," with NII embedded in the acronym. *GeNii* will officially start in April, 2005, open to the world free of charge. The URL for the website is <http://ge.nii.ac.jp/>. It is expected to grow into NII's flagship service.

### 3.4 Problems with the Union Catalog

The increase of GIF based international ILL transaction involving more university libraries has induced some librarians to look more closely into the NACSIS-ILL data, eventually realizing the deterioration of quality of bibliographical data on NACSIS-CAT. Currently NACSIS-CAT accommodates 7 million bibliographical records with 70 million holding records for books and 0.3 million and 4 million for serials. For the fiscal year 2003, NACSIS-ILL processed 1.12 million requests for non-returnables, fulfilling 94.4% of them, and 0.1 million for returnables, fulfilling 88.4%. From April, 2004, NII started its own payment clearing system for all kinds of 512 participating libraries, as a result of “hojinka,” in some sense. 80% of the transactions are charged and paid by way of this new system after three months, with an increased transactions on the part of private university libraries.

However, a closer look at the practical operations recorded in the system has suggested a few worries to some people. 7.3% of the newly added records in the past year were deleted as duplicated. More than 30% of holding records for serials were not updated. More than 15% of ILL requests were pardoned, with 30% for books. Based on the Coordinating Committee platform, NII and libraries are doing serious research into the causes of such deteriorated performances, and will take some measures to recover. That is another piece of evidence for the improvement in the coordination architecture for Japanese university libraries. It is worth pointing out here in the context of NCC that these problems have been brought to our awareness for the first time after keeping track of GIF statistics.

## 4 National Diet Library(NDL)

### 4.1 Authority Control Project Yet to Realize

Professor Miyazawa reported in the January meeting this year about the possible launch of NDL-led authority control project nation wide, but regrettably the project did not take off at NDL.

### 4.2 NDL Digital Library Medium Term Plan for 2004

This year, NDL announced NDL Vision 2004, specifying as priority areas four areas: Enhancement of legislative support function, Creation of digital archives, Improvement of access to information resources, Promotion of cooperation. Prior to this Vision statement, NDL's *Digital Library Medium Term Plan for 2004* was made public in February, to be consistent UNESCO's Charter on the Preservation of the Digital Heritage, October, 2003 and Japan's e-Japan Initiative since 2000. According to the Plan, the main objectives of NDL' Digital Library are construction of digital archive, navigational interfaces and tools for information resources and portal functionalities for the digital archive.

NDL's Vision 2004 is available at the following URL:

[http://www.ndl.go.jp/en/aboutus/vision\\_2004.html](http://www.ndl.go.jp/en/aboutus/vision_2004.html)

and the Medium Term Plan is available only in Japanese at:

[http://www.ndl.go.jp/jp/aboutus/elib\\_plan2004.html](http://www.ndl.go.jp/jp/aboutus/elib_plan2004.html)

### 4.3 Digital Archive

Under the e-Japan initiative, the government organizes a digital archive project for the digital preservation of Japanese cultural heritage so far stored in the museums. NDL is supposed to lead the project.

### 4.4 Depositing networked resources

One of NDL's major functions is that of the nation's deposit library. The Legal Depositing Council has been working on the digital resources including “packaged products,” *viz.* CD-ROMs and DVDs, and “network resources,” *viz.* information provided mainly over the web. Publication of the former category has been legally deposited since recently but the discussion of what to legally mandate the authors and publishers to deposit and how is still going on, and the conclusion is yet to come.

## 4.5 Council on Organization of Materials on Science and Technology

In February, 2004, Council on Organization of Materials on Science and Technology had the 44th meeting and started to discuss the role of NDL in the arena of science, technology and medical information.

## 5 Copyright issues

### 5.1 Electric and electronic transmission licensed for university libraries for free

University libraries began to discuss reproductive right issues in 1987, when the preparatory committee for the then prospective Japan Reproductive Rights Center approached universities. There were two main cases copyright owners made: use of self-service copying machine and interlibrary copying service. The former was not permitted, they claimed, because the restriction to copyright owners' exclusive reproductive right as stipulated in the clause 31 of Japanese copyright law only permits libraries, but not users, to reproduce. The former was a form of service in which one library requests another to reproduce, but the relevant clause allows libraries to reproduce upon request only from users not from libraries. Besides, they claimed, if reproduced copies were sent by facsimile, it would be an infringement of owners' exclusive right of public transmission. The discussion between JRRC, which represented copyright owners, and university libraries continued fruitlessly more than 10 years from late 80s to just after the turn of the century. In December, 2002, both parties finally came to a stage where JRRC did not formally claim for their reproductive right in cases of self-service copying machines, given university libraries' uniform principles for the operation of copying service using such machines. It was a time when the public transmission right in internet society was being discussed in the government's Council on copyright. In discussions outside of the Council, copyright owners agreed with university libraries that it was necessary to use fax and the transmission over the Internet to promote scholarship, and decided to license university libraries to exchange reproductions among university libraries by way of any means whatsoever, including postage, facsimile and email-attachment, on condition that users themselves receive a printed reproduction on paper. The contracts were signed in March, 2004 between the Coordinating Committee and both JCLS, which represents Elsevier Science in Japan, and Academic Copyright Clearance Association, which generically represents CCC in Japan. Now university libraries are free to use technological achievements in their cooperation.

### 5.2 Public lending right debate once heated and now cooling down

Professor Miyazawa reported in January about the public lending right debate heating up. In February, 2004, copyright owners' and library organizations had a forum to evaluate the results of the survey jointly done by Japan Book Publishers Association and Japan Library Association, in pursuit of mutually agreeable understanding about library lending. University libraries stayed silent behind the scene, presuming that visible conflicts were between public libraries and fiction and non-fiction authors for the popular market. Copyright owners' requests included the legislation in favor of public lending right and libraries' discretionary practices about duplicated copies and embargo on lending immediately after publication. The survey results clearly indicated that there are fewer cases of problematic duplicated copies for lending purposes than authors claimed in the past discussion, and that, on the contrary, the libraries are running short of budget for purchasing books, let alone paying lending fees. After the February meeting, there have not been visible or audible claims from the copyright owners' side. The government's council for copyright issues seems to have decided not to take any immediate or positive action for the introduction of public lending right.

## 6 Global ILL Framework

In the GIF scheme, requests from Japanese university libraries were just over 1000 from April 2003 to March 2004, while those from North American libraries were 800. This is a good achievement, though there were so many cancellations the reasons for which need to be analyzed.

NII was approached by KERIS as to the possible cooperation in international ILL between KERIS's and NII's ILL systems, using ISO-ILL Protocol. Japanese university libraries were invited to together discuss the plan for implementation. After a formal meeting last year and email followups, finally, as of now, both parties agreed to start in the fall of 2004.