

Archivists Respond to the Great East Japan Earthquake

YAYOI TSUTSUI

Abstract: The purpose of this presentation is to share the information of archivists' response to the Great East Japan Earthquake of March 11, 2011 and ask your wisdom to solve the problems. Archivists in Japan have worked hard to rescue the archival materials and record the memory of this disaster. The existing NPOs rise up quickly. Rekishishiryonet (Network for Historical Materials) coordinates archivists and historians rescuing damaged historical materials in private homes or temples. Their reports are translated into English by Etsuko Watanabe. Film Preservation Society offers the inquiry service on damaged AV materials. Several voluntary organizations are newly established. One example is saveMLAK, the wiki-site providing damage and relief information on museums, libraries, archives, and Kominkan (community centers), launched by those professionals.

Japan Society of Archives Institutions works for the Rescue Committee organized by Agency for Cultural Affairs. As part of this cooperation National Institute of Japanese Literature restores public records of Kamaishi city. Gunma Prefectural Archives acts similarly. National Archives of Japan expressed the sympathy to the victims and archives in disaster areas. NAJ, being extremely busy with enforcement of the law for the management of public records, will start operation to save the contents of damaged active public records.

Keeping the memory of the disaster is tried in several ways. Some U.S institutions have undertaken digital archiving because of the copyright law in Japan. The coordination of these movements and the importance of archivists' society, which is not organized in Japan yet, should be discussed.

About the author:

Yayoi Tsutsui is a part-time student of Gakushuin University and working as a contract staff of a company for Corporate History. She also works for the saveMLAK as a volunteer. She becomes a member of Japan Society of Archives Institutions and the Japanese Network for Historical Materials as well as Japan Society for Archival Studies and Japan Art Documentation Society.

She earned the degree of Master of Arts in Archival Science from Gakushuin University, the first graduate school of Archival Science in Japan, in March 2010. She has served on staff at the University Museum of the University of Tokyo, and the Shibusawa Memorial Foundation. She has been involved in the construction of a number of exhibitions and databases. Yayoi Tsutsui received her Certificate of Museum Studies from Harvard University Extension School in 2001 and her Bachelor of Arts from International Christian University in 1980. She joined SAA in 2009 and attended the annual conferences in Austin and Washington D.C. She is a member of the Archival History Roundtable and the Museum Archives Section.