

# Portraits in the Alice Roosevelt Longworth Collection and the Imperial Household Archives' Documents: Benefits of the New Public Records Management Law in Japan

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**Abstract:** The Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives of Smithsonian Institution holds the Alice Roosevelt Longworth Collection of Photographs from the 1905 Taft Mission to Asia, in which I had a chance to see Asian Imperials' portraits on the occasion of the repository tour during SAA 2010. This presentation focuses on the portraits of Meiji Emperor and Empress and some photographs in the collection and shows the facts from the archival materials in the Imperial Household Archives in Japan.

In April 2011, the management law of public records and archives was enforced. It changed the Imperial Household Archives tremendously. Formerly, it was only for researchers and required a one-month ahead request. Now the documents generated after 1868 are in separate custody, which follows the guideline of National Archives. I proposed to access some documents related the Taft Mission. The following information is revealed; their itinerary and time schedule, members of the mission, gifts, an episode on the photo-frames, the Crown Princess's photo story (it was her first portrait just taken, and Alice was the first receiver of her photo), music played in the banquet at the Imperial Palace, the Crown Princess dress for the reception, a secret report on Alice's activities by Governor of Kanagawa, and so on.

The archival materials in the Imperial Household are generally in good condition. We learn about the event happened more than a hundred year ago so vividly. This is a wonderful impact of the new law.

## About the author:

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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, Washington D.C. and Chicago. She is a member of the Archival History Roundtable and the Museum Archives Section.