Welcome
Desider Vikor, Director of Collection Management & Special Collections for the Libraries

Good Afternoon! I’m Desider Vikor, Director of Collection Management & Special Collections for the Libraries.

It’s my pleasure to welcome all of you to this happy gathering. We are here because we are colleagues, students or friends of Marlene Mayo.

In the late 1970’s Marlene launched the Oral History Project on the Allied Occupation of Japan. Over the course of 14 years, Marlene interviewed 99 Americans who were engaged officially and unofficially in the Occupation. These first-hand accounts are a major permanent record of the observations and experiences of those who played a critical role during a crucial period in Japanese history and U.S.-Japan relations. Today we formally celebrate the donation by Marlene of these oral histories to the Gordon W. Prange Collection.

The oral histories provide an important supplement and corrective to the available documentary evidence. The interviews were completed with a cross-section of Americans who served officially and unofficially in Japan after the war. Among those interviewed were shapers and movers who exercised great influence in important positions. Some also became preeminent Japan experts, such as Edwin Reischauer. Marlene interviewed them all.

We have with us today one of the interviewees, Virginia Beauchamp, one of Maryland’s own. She is Professor Emerita of English and founder of the Women’s Studies Program here at Maryland. During the Allied Occupation of Japan, Prof. Beauchamp worked for the International Red Cross.

I would also like to acknowledge another special guest here today, Mr. Kazuaki Kubo, Director General of the Japan Foundation in New York. It was the Japan Foundation that funded the oral history project.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the presence of the children of Gordon W. Prange: Winnie, Polly, and Nancy. We thank them for being with us today.
In addition to the oral histories, we also take the opportunity to salute and honor Marlene for her many years of tireless support and promotion of the work and mission of the Prange Collection, to preserve and make more accessible to scholars, researchers, and students the history of Japan during the immediate years following the end of World War II. Thanks, Marlene, for all the things you have done and continue to do for the Prange Collection.

I would like to introduce our next speaker Pat Steele, Dean of Libraries, who has a few words to share with us.

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**Remarks**  
**Patricia Steele, Dean of Libraries**

“We do a number of events in the library, and I have looked forward to this one so much for a number of reasons that connect to our past and what we are doing now and how we see our future. So a few of these things that I saw in this opportunity was first to be able to recognize you on your retirement. A distinguished scholar who really has added to the luster of the Prange Collection, who through her use and interpretation, was the strongest indicator for us about the success of our collections, and I think we can all say that you’ve added greatly to the matrix for this particular collection in that regard.

This is also a chance to recognize your gifts over the years to the Prange Collection, and to celebrate this very special gift of nearly a hundred oral histories. I just asked her before I came up if she have had a chance to interview Joseph Sutton, who had been the president at one point of Indiana University, but he was in McArthur’s staff afterwards. If you went to his classes, he would tell you wonderful stories about his time there. But this is a celebration of those gifts that are so unique. As D* has mentioned, the support that the Japan Foundation gave, we appreciate your role in making this happen as well. This is groundbreaking work because it adds a dimension to the collection that’s very important to our future. The voice of the past in this has been captured, and now will be consulted and be preserved over the years, so it puts a dimension that wouldn’t have had without what must have been considerable work.

And finally, to recognize oral histories as a way that can be a model that can guide other collections that we have, such as our broadcasting collection. Because if we think of the people that could be tied through these kinds of activities and these kinds of interviews, to enrich those kinds of collections over the time I think will be very exciting. We are already talking about establishing some new oral histories in various areas, and I think you have guided us to think in that direction.
These kinds of histories add voice to our collections and create a perspective and a richness that scholars will use for decades. If I can just say a little word about special collections in general because we are in the hall of collections here at the libraries…for the McKeldin Library, we’re engaged right now in some planning to re-conceptualize what that library will be in ten or twenty years. So we are working with architects, architectural students, and students and faculty to get impressions on how people see that library being used. In this week we happened to meet with students last night and saw how they laid out the building just the way it is now and gave us a history of how it looked when it was first built. It was very, very different and much more usable than it is now. But we started asking things like how big a collection we see in that library in twenty years. There are over a million volumes in there right now. We have talked about things about the use, which has been going down precipitously and that’s the way print collections are, and how much it costs to keep a book on a shelf over $4 a year…

We are talking about all these things, but then we came around to talking about what’s probably really going to grow, aside from our digital collections, because we’re doing this transfer of paper to digital, and that’s going to have a big effect on space is used. But where that hasn’t come to play is with special collections. We told them those are going to grow, and those are the things that will define us. What we have in this world is really a digital ubiquity that’s going to be there, and so these special collections with this kind of enrichment attached to them will really define our library in the future and will make the University of Maryland distinctive in this kind of environment. I think that kind of a perspective of what a special collection is as we’re going into a very different age makes them more important. They used to be—I won’t say the stepchild of libraries—but they were always in a different place and they weren’t always integrated in ways that now they really are. So I wanted to just thank you again for this gift to us and your gift of use to the collection over the time, because you’ve modeled that as well.”

Remarks
Eleanor Kerkham, Professor Emerita, Japanese Language & Literature

Marlene Mayo’s contribution of her oral histories today is especially meaningful because she adores archives, libraries, librarians, and archivist. So much so that when she takes a vacation, whether to Japan or England, California, upper New York, Boston and Cambridge,…on and on…she just happens to think to herself, “Oh, wouldn’t it be fun to go read so-and-so’s diary or Mrs. Roosevelt’s letters, or check out the documents at the national records office in London or oral histories at Columbia.” The interesting thing is that she doesn’t realize now that she has created an invaluable trove of primary sources right here, and that if anyone wishes to visit lovely College Park on their vacation they can have an exciting time in the Prange Collection.
Of all of the many things Marlene has done to develop East Asian Studies and to show her dedication to the Prange Collection, I would like to highlight just three with which she was involved when I arrived at the University of Maryland 35 years ago. Marlene and I were in different departments, so we did not see one another that often, but we lived in the same apartment building, and we occasionally met at the mailboxes. As those of you who know Marlene know, she loves to share with others the things she is excited about at the time, so at one of our first mailbox encounters, Marlene had just returned from the National Endowment for the Humanities office in DC where she had been encouraged by the Endowment officer to apply for a grant for preserving the materials sent from Japan by Professor Prange (they were in boxes in the then, unprotected McKeldin basement). Although the head of the East Asia Collection was not enthusiastic, she took the idea to Jack Siggins, then in a higher position at McKeldin. Jack immediately saw the importance, and he quickly supplied the all technical specifications; Marlene wrote the narrative, and they obtained the first Prange preservation grant.

At the same time, Marlene was excited about Maryland’s new Art Historian, Dr. Gail Weigl, who was hired with an institutional rant from the Japan Foundation, which was written and submitted by Marlene. Gail too, having come from another large state university, University of Michigan, saw immediately the value of Marlene’s many dreams of development for East Asian Studies here at Maryland. As Chair of the East Asian Studies Committee, Marlene turned four or five of us, including Jack Siggins and Gail Weigl, into believers, and our first task was to define and pass through the many committees an East Asian Studies Certificate. Marlene also inspired Dr. Weigl to begin the argument in her department for a China Art Historian. Gail was quite articulate, and she soon convinced her colleagues that a China art historian must be hired so that they could take on graduate students. I should say that the Art Department has (with a bit of pressure from the Committee on East Asian Studies) acted splendidly in honoring the Japan Foundation grant through the years and at present we have two Japan Art History positions and the continued China position.

The third, and at the time, Marlene’s most time- and attention-consuming endeavor 35 years ago was, of course, the Japan Foundation oral history project. Marlene was meeting with the History Department’s oral history historian, Martha Ross, to sharpen her interview skills and learn the tricks of this area of historical research; she was also making out questions, both general and specific, for each interviewee and was training and guiding her own graduate student assistant. On weekends she was interviewing, first her own Occupationaire friends and acquaintances in the area, and gradually obtaining introductions and a long list of names—people in Japan, California, New York City, Virginia, Oklahoma, Boston, Washington, DC, and many other, sometimes very out-of-the-way, places. At the time I was overwhelmed with our 3/3 teaching schedule and with our then Provost’s decision to decide whether or not to abolish the Chinese and Japanese language and literature, somewhat scandal-ridden, program. Marlene became centrally involved with this administrative decision too, and as the Chair of our East Asian
Studies Committee, she almost single handedly succeeded in convincing the Provost that he must not only preserve, but must strengthen the program. I wondered then how Marlene could do all that she was doing. How could she have so much energy and such enthusiasm, not only for her own teaching and research, but also for developing an institution in the creation of a strong East Asia Program? I must confess that today, I am still wandering the same thing—how does she do it? Fortunately (or, I should say, miraculously) her worries about the Prange Collection have been answered masterfully by Amy, Eiko, their staff, Desidor, and the beautiful Hornbeck space. And some day, perhaps, her successors in the East Asian Studies Center will mold East Asian Studies at Maryland into the image she believes we could achieve.

Remarks on the Oral Histories
Virginia Beauchamp, Professor Emerita, Department of English

Marlene Mayo was ahead of most of the rest of us in understanding the value of collecting oral histories. As Women’s Studies developed, however, as an academic field, augmenting the previously all-male content of the academic curriculum, new research to discover the lives and experiences of women often turned to oral interviews. I was privileged to have served in Japan with the American National Red Cross at the end of World War II, where I was stationed with the 11th Airborne Artillery in the northern prefecture of Yamagata, a mountainous agricultural region of Japan’s main island of Honshu. The cross-cultural experiences of these former enemies were, of course, transforming.

Although the American Army under General Douglas MacArthur was restricted by a policy prohibiting fraternization with the Japanese people, many of us serving with the military, in fact, developed long-standing friendships with members of the local community.

My colleagues and I lived in the former home of a Japanese doctor, where I could look out my bedroom windows on to a beautiful formal garden. Our Red Cross club had been a flourishing book store. As program officer, I delighted in developing special programs for the G.I.’s dealing with Japanese culture, such a demonstration of tea ceremony or displays of works by Japanese artists. On one occasion several of us were invited to visit a nearby Buddhist temple, and I was able to travel on horseback high into the nearby mountains to meet the first snowfall of the season in 1946.

How wonderful it is that the Gordon Prang collection some years later came to our university, and wonderful too that we meet here to celebrate that fact today and its later addition—the set of oral memoirs of faculty and students of our time in occupied Japan that Marlene Mayo promoted and recorded so many years ago. That these voices are now available on CD’s, instead of mere
typed transcriptions, is a special privilege of the later times in which we live. They speak to us of days when a new world opened up to us when we ourselves were very, very young.

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**Featured Speaker**  
*Alicia Volk, Professor of Art History*

“Today is a national holiday in Japan as some of you may know. Every November 3rd is celebrated as culture day, or bunka no hi, a day when professionals who are active in the arts and academia are honored and given awards, or the order of culture, by the emperor. It’s a very big day in Japan. There are I believe five medals, each associated with a different ribbon of different colors.

One of them is the medal with a blue ribbon for a recipient who has somehow worked in the field of public welfare, education, further of those areas. The medal with the purple ribbon is for academic and artistic accomplishments. I think both of these areas are ones in which Marlene Mayo has excelled in her long career of—is it true, four decades? Fifty all together. What an accomplishment. I second the comments made by Eleanor earlier, you have an amazing energy.

One thing that I find very interesting is that this year in fact one of the recipients, I’m not sure which ribbon he got, but he is a historian of US-Japan relations during the occupation period of Japan, so a colleague of Professor Mayo’s, Yokibe Makoto. We are all here today celebrating the donation of the oral histories that Professor Mayo has so generously shared with us over the years and are now permanently part of the University of Maryland’s collection. Those speak so strongly to the importance of US-Japan relations and the significance that they hold for scholarship and for a deep and more complex understanding of that time, incorporating a wide variety of voices, and I think that this a really lovely coincidence that we have today.

The first bunka no hi was held in 1948 during the occupation of Japan. It was commemorating the announcement of the new post-war constitution on November 3rd in 1946. As an art historian, I can’t help but to throw in at least one mention of an art object. So some of you may be familiar with Hibiya Park and the Statue of Liberty that is in that park—a bronze statue by a Japanese artist with a female nude holding not a torch in her hands, but a musical instrument. I think this really speaks to the importance that culture played in the years of the occupation to Japanese identity and to solutions for moving forward in recreating their society and recovering after World War II while they were occupied by America and the allied forces.

But why did it take so long for scholars to start picking up on the importance of culture as a theme or importance for study in this period? That leads me to Marlene’s scholarship because Marlene is really a trendsetter and a pathbreaker in this area. Her publications are so extensive that I can’t possibly list them all, but they range from late Edo and early Meiji topics such as the
scholar Kunitake and his travels to Europe all the way through to the post-war period of civil censorship in the areas of kabuki and radio and economic policy.

There is so much to learn from you, but I decided to single out my favorite of your publications at least, one that’s dearest to my heart— it’s “War Occupation and Creativity: Japan and East Asia 1920-1960.” This is a very precious book to me; it’s a very rare look at the variety of artistic, creative forms that were practiced during the occupation in an interdisciplinary perspective, but not just the occupation but also the warriors and the decades leading up to the Pacific War. This is a very unique approach to Japanese culture at that time, and it’s been extremely important to me and my research. Ms. Sakaguchi has just mentioned that I was a recipient of one of the awards of the Prange Collection, the 20th Century Japan Research Awards, that allowed me before I actually came to Maryland, to teach and to do research on the occupation period and the Arts during that time, particularly the visual arts, which is my area of study. And it’s this book and other publications by Marlene…”

[TRANSCRIPT INCOMPLETE]

Alumni Remarks
Yuka Tsuchiya, Ehime University

It is my honor and pleasure to visit my Alma Mater, University of Maryland, and give a speech for Professor Marlene Mayo. Professor Mayo is what I call “on-shi” in Japanese, or “much obligated mentor.” It was 1989 when I first came to the United States as an international student. Although I knew I wanted to study the history of the Allied Occupation, I had no idea where to start. It was Professor Mayo who first introduced me to archival research using primary sources, such as the government records at the National Archives and Record Administration and censored magazines in the Prange Collection. It was also Professor Mayo who encouraged me to interview people. In other words, she gave me the basic “tools” for historical research, which formed the very foundation of my career as a scholar. As a Master’s student, initially I was not sure if I really wanted to pursue an academic career, or if I was able to do so at all. While I was wandering through the deep woods of archival records and the maze of the Prange Collection materials --- which were much less organized in those days, and their storage place literally looked like a maze --- I became fascinated, and addicted.

So, here I am today, still doing what Professor Mayo taught me some 22 years ago. I am currently working on the U.S. cultural diplomacy for Japan during the Cold War. Who else can be called “on-shi” or much obligated mentor than Professor Mayo? So, when Ms. Sakaguchi asked me if I could come to this ceremony and give a speech, I thought, “I must go, even if I have to cancel all my lectures, seminars, faculty meetings, and administrative responsibilities.” I told my colleagues, “You can kill me if you want, but I will go.” Well, my colleagues graciously
understood the good-old tradition to respect one’s “on-shi,” and accepted my leave. The chief administrator of my department even entrusted me with an official Ehime University souvenir.

The famous Columbia anthropologist Ruth Benedict thought that the sense of “obligation” was a source of “strange” behaviors of the Japanese people when she carried out the wartime research in the Office of War Information. Benedict’s findings were used for the U.S. postwar planning for occupied Japan. In my book (Constructing a Pro-U.S. Japan: The U.S. Information and Education Policy for Occupied Japan – a Japanese-language publication), I criticized Benedict’s study as an example of Orientalist knowledge affecting U.S. foreign policy. However, thinking of my sense of obligation to Professor Mayo, and my colleagues’ understanding of my feeling, I began to feel, “Well, maybe Benedict was right, to some degree.” Perhaps I should re-write my book now.

But I think many other scholars and students—regardless of their nationalities—feel obligated and forever thankful to Professor Mayo for her dedication to historical research and education, for her contribution to the progress of the Prange Collection’s organization and publicity, and last but not least, for the archiving and donation of the precious Oral Histories with the Americans who served in the Allied Occupied Japan. Thank you very much, Professor Mayo. I hope you will enjoy relaxing, and plenty of time for research finally.