

EAST ASIAN LIBRARY RESOURCES GROUP OF AUSTRALIA

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Accomplishment of National Library Chinese Serial Card Catalogue Conversion Project

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A great Library milestone was achieved in the Asian Collections Branch in June: the complete recataloguing of over 2500 Chinese periodicals and newspapers previously entered only in the card catalogue. These titles are now fully catalogued online with all relevant holdings and location details. Their internal acquisitions records, the Visible Index cards, are no longer needed and have been discarded.

Serials cataloguing require a lot of experience and patience to untangle details like the history of title changes and what issues are actually on the shelf. If the titles are in Chinese there is the double effort of recording details in Chinese characters as well as English language. Mrs Ching Sun a former member of staff and highly experienced cataloguer was employed on a contract to take on this conversion task. Ching worked for two days a week for 15 months, working initially from the VI (visible index) cards, then going to the shelf and finally completing full records for all titles examined. She was often to be seen surrounded by trolleys of material brought from the shelf or painstakingly checking every box of newspaper microfilm. She completed the task in record time: with astounding productivity she created 1600 records for items which previous had no bibliographic record, and extensively upgraded 900 other records. A total of 2973 VI (Visible Index) cards were discarded and the VI cabinet has been donated to the Library 'museum'. Although Ching is retired and intends to stay that way, she said she enjoyed being able to fully concentrate on the project and improve the collections. Thanks to her work, the entire Chinese serials collection is now accessible through the OPAC.



Former Chinese librarian – Mrs Ching Sun with the converted paper cards
Photo: Courtesy of Ms Di Ouyang