

Conference Report: Chinese Digital Publishing and Digital Libraries (CDPDL), 15-20 June 2015, Xi'an China

by Hueimin Chen, Monash University Library

I attended the 2015 international conference on Chinese Digital publishing and digital libraries (CDPDL) on 15-20 June 2015 in Xi'an China. About five hundred people attended the conference, of which about one hundred were from overseas university libraries.

This is an annual conference organised by Tongfang knowledge Network Technology Corporation and hosted by China Academic Journals Electronic Publishing House, also called CNKI or China National knowledge Infrastructure. Monash Library subscribes to some CNKI databases.

The topics of the conference included how to improve Chinese database searching and promote database usage, digital publishing, repository construction, fragmented knowledge discovery, as well as service and other subjects.

The conference was in two parts, including presentations and discussion. Presenters included the university librarian of Cambridge University, Anne Jarvis, the head of Hong Kong University Library, Peter Sidorko, and librarians from other universities. Publisher CEOs also gave presentations and shared their experiences of using e-resources to promote Chinese studies.

I attended the Chinese ebook and database publishing discussion sessions and requested Chinese ebook publication information from different publishers as Monash Library needs to start buying Chinese ebooks. I also took this opportunity to personally discuss our library's Chinese database search and download issues with our Chinese database vendor CNKI.

During the conference, the delegates visited Shanxi provincial library, which is the oldest public library in the western region of China. It has a department for repairing damaged rare books which attracted our interest. I was amazed to see new university graduates learning from the masters how to repair fragile, damaged, insect-eroded papers and books and to know that they were taking this up as their daily profession. This inspired me tremendously because most young Chinese are only interested in sitting in front of computers rather than performing manual physical tasks like working with old books.

Although a wide range of information about Chinese studies and research via digital resources was shared by libraries and publishers at the conference, digital publishing and digital libraries seemed to be still a very hot topic. Hearing about other libraries' experiences around the world, I feel that our library's e-publishing, e-resources and repository experience is in advance of many other libraries. Our library's rich e-resources made me so proud to be a Monash University Library delegate attending the conference.



A new university graduate is repairing the fragile, damaged books at Shanxi Province Library.



At the conference.



In the background is the square of the Giant Wild Goose Pagoda which lies at the foot of the pagoda and is the largest Tang Dynasty themed square in Xi'an city.



In the background of the above photo is the “Giant Wild Goose Pagoda” which was built about 1400 years ago during the Tang Dynasty and located in Xi’an, the capital city of Shanxi province. The purpose of the Giant Wild Goose Pagoda was to store the Store the Sanskrit Buddhist Scriptures that Xuan Zang, a Chinese Buddhist Monk, brought back from India.



In the background is the Shanxi provincial library. It was established in 1909 and is the oldest public library in the western region of China and located in Xi’an city.