

A SURVEY OF THE UCLA EAST ASIAN LIBRARY: COLLECTION AND ACCESS

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East Asian collections constitute an important part of many major university research libraries. East Asian libraries are usually college and university research libraries by nature, with special collections in East Asian languages, mainly Chinese, Japanese and Korean vernacular materials. In principle, the operation and management of an East Asian library is similar to that of other research libraries; however, because of the distinct features of its collections, the East Asian library has some special characteristics which are different from other research libraries. Taking the East Asian Library of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), as an example, this paper introduces and analyses some basic aspects of East Asian collections and access to the collections. The discussion is relevant to East Asian libraries in the United States and other countries.

UCLA EAST ASIAN COLLECTIONS

The East Asian Library is one of twelve branch libraries at the University of California, Los Angeles. The full name of the UCLA East Asian Library is "Richard C. Rudolph East Asian Library", named in memory of Richard C. Rudolph, a pioneer of the collection. Richard C. Rudolph was a faculty member of UCLA. At the end of World War II, Rudolph went to China, and collected, for the University, quite a few Chinese publications and documents, which started the East Asian Collections at UCLA.

The collection of the UCLA East Asian Library is currently ranked twelfth among all East Asian collections in North America (see Table 1). The UCLA Library is among the fastest growing East Asian libraries. With its speed of growth, which is ranked the sixth in North America, it is expected to be one of the top ten collections in the near future.

Table 1: Statistics of East Asian Collections in North America

A. Collections in Volumes in 1992-1993*

| Rank | Institution | Total Holdings | Microforms | Current Serials |
|------|---------------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. | Library of Congress | 1,598,262 | 37,947 | 21,767 |
| 2. | Harvard | 818,838 | 57,408 | 4,201 |
| 3. | UC-Berkeley | 672,074 | 19,695 | 4,053 |
| 4. | Columbia | 606,880 | 14,325 | 3,557 |
| 5. | Michigan | 578,917 | 59,444 | 2,712 |
| 6. | Yale | 559,976 | 6,699 | 2,402 |
| 7. | Princeton | 537,588 | 26,559 | 3,050 |
| 8. | Chicago | 495,320 | 22,853 | 3,710 |
| 9. | Cornell | 388,164 | 17,426 | 2,315 |
| 10. | Stanford | 377,542 | 28,299 | 1,155 |
| 11. | Washington | 376,081 | 14,596 | 2,551 |
| 12. | British Columbia | 350,955 | 22,429 | 2,439 |
| 13. | UCLA | 334,191 | 7,175 | 2,857 |
| 14. | Hawaii | 275,356 | 14,961 | 1,901 |
| 15. | Toronto | 259,841 | 9,190 | 339 |

* These statistics were provided by the Committee on East Asian Libraries (CEAL), the US Association for Asian Studies.

B. New Additions in 1992-1993

| Rank | Institution | Additions | Materials Budget US\$ | Cataloguing Backlog |
|------|---------------------|---------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. | UC-Irvine | 28,865 | \$180,000 | 51,134 |
| 2. | Library of Congress | 25,422 | .. | .. |
| 3. | Harvard | 21,809 | \$521,778 | 38,000 |
| 4. | Michigan | 17,094 | \$473,534 | 6,250 |
| 5. | Yale | 15,461 | \$363,030 | 31,000 |
| 6. | UCLA | 13,923 | \$408,318 | 38,270 |
| 7. | Princeton | 13,888 | \$530,051 | 17,610 |
| 8. | Toronto | 11,198 | \$133,500 | 10,450 |
| 9. | Washington | 11,022 | \$271,994 | .. |
| 10. | British Columbia | 9,011 | \$180,237 | 393 |
| 11. | Chicago | 8,873 | \$291,264 | 25,430 |
| 12. | Columbia | 8,534 | \$461,170 | 9,398 |
| 13. | Cornell | 8,194 | \$314,733 | 3,770 |
| 14. | Ohio State | 8,061 | \$167,563 | 16,453 |
| 15. | Indiana | 7,750 | \$143,449 | 6,200 |

The publishing industry of East Asian language materials has been the biggest in the world. For example, China alone published over 90,000 titles in 1992, and has become the largest publishing country in the world. Japan is another major publishing power. Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong all have strong publishing industries. The East Asian libraries collect just a small portion of the huge amount of published materials, which are mainly academic research materials for the humanities and social sciences.

ACCESS

Access is extremely important in any library. No matter how many materials a library collects, a collection is useless if the materials are unknown and inaccessible. Therefore, the author considers accessibility to be a major indicator of a collection.

The UCLA East Asian Library shares access with other branch libraries on campus; however, it has some means of access which are exclusive to it. It is fair to say that every item in the Library is covered by some form of access, but there is no uniform means of access across campus to cover all the collections. I should like to discuss means of access. Since access varies between East Asian libraries, I have chosen the UCLA East Asian Library as an example on which to base discussion of related issues.

Table 2: Information access in the UCLA East Asian Library

| Facility | Automated access | Manual access |
|----------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Bibliographies | N/A | Books, Manuals, Microfiches |
| Catalogues | ORION, MELVYL (OCLC) | Cards, Books |
| Concordances | [CD-ROM] | Books |
| Indexes | [CD-ROM] | Books |
| Abstracts | N/A | Printed Materials |

Bibliographies

Bibliography has a long history in East Asia. The first Chinese bibliography, *Qilue* (Seven Categories), was compiled by Liu Xin in around 20 AD, and the existing earliest bibliography, *Han shu: yi wen zhi* (Han History: Bibliography), was compiled by Ban Gu in around 70 AD. Almost all Chinese dynasties compiled bibliographies, and Chinese history was always the largest category in

these bibliographies. All such bibliographies were reprinted in the last twenty years and available in almost all United States East Asian libraries.

There are two comprehensive modern bibliographies available in East Asian libraries. One is a yearly bibliography published by the Chinese government bureau which monitors publishing affairs. Being similar to the trade and national bibliography in the United States, this bibliography records every officially published book each year, and classifies all books by subject. It is easy for the patron to ascertain how many and which books have been published in his/area of interest. The problem is that the library does not receive this bibliography until about two years after the year of publication. Other comprehensive bibliographies are related to period, field, subject, institution or a mixture. There is an international bibliographic program for rare Chinese books, run in cooperation by China, Japan and other Asian and European countries, and the United States. Some of the information from this program is available in the East Asian libraries. Library professionals and other staff also compile various subject-related bibliographies, such as bibliographies of Chinese yearbooks or of recently published Chinese local gazetteers.

Most selective bibliographies take a subject approach, such as Chinese history. There are dozens of selective bibliographies in both Chinese and Japanese.

The UCLA East Asian Library provides both comprehensive and selective bibliographies. The Library provides bibliographic self-service to those yearly comprehensive bibliographies. Subject-related bibliographic service is offered only at the patrons' request. However, when I asked seven patrons, most of whom were graduate students, none of them knew that they could obtain bibliographic advice from the Library.

In addition to the bibliographies mentioned above, all of which are printed or handwritten materials, there are bibliographies on microfiche. Three kinds of microfiche are used in the Library. They consist of: serials bibliographies, colour-coded with white tags; monograph bibliographies by name and title, coded with green tags; and subject bibliographies, coded with yellow tags. However, it appears that these bibliographies are seldom used, and few people pay attention to the microfiche.

Catalogues

Catalogue access in the UCLA East Asian Library is similar to that of other branch libraries. Online and card catalogues are both available to patrons; ORION and MELVYL online systems each provide catalogue service for the East Asian collections. Patrons can also use the card catalogue. However, there are major problems.

First, there are language problems. Chinese, Japanese and Korean need to be romanised for cataloguing. The Library, like all other East Asian collections in North America, uses Wade-Giles to romanise Chinese script. The Wade-Giles system was invented in the early eighteenth century as a guide to pronunciation for English speakers. It has been widely used in libraries in the English-speaking world, but rarely used to teach the Chinese language. A more popular romanisation for Chinese is the Pinyin system, which was invented in China in 1958 and is now accepted as the official romanisation system by most other countries in the world, including the United Nations, and United States and Canada. Very few patrons use online searching - they use the card catalogue more because cards contain Chinese script in addition to the access points in Wade-Giles. Actually, OCLC offers online searching with Chinese characters, but this is restricted to use by library staff. While Japanese and Korean have fewer problems with romanisation, there are problems with word-division. Online searching is based on 'words' separated by spaces, but spaces are not used in East Asian scripts. The large number of possible combinations for the same group of characters makes searching extremely frustrating for staff. Thus, the online catalogue is less popular in the East Asian Library than in the other branch libraries on campus.

Secondly, neither the online catalogue nor the card catalogue represent the Library's complete holdings. Many books acquired since 1990, when the Library began to use online processing, have not yet been catalogued, and are not available on the online catalogue. Moreover, many books which were received through the online system still remain uncatalogued, and are not available in the card catalogue. This backlog of materials reached 37,600 volumes in 1991-92, and comes second only to Harvard's 38,000 volumes among US East Asian collections.

I should also mention another kind of catalogue available in the Library: the printed East Asian catalogues of the Library of Congress, Harvard-Yenching Library, Hoover Institute Library, UC Berkeley Library, etc. These catalogues are reprints of the card catalogues of the above libraries. The books listed in the catalogues are mostly classical and rare books, most of which are not available through any online system, including OCLC. These large book catalogues are not easy to use because of their differing methods of compilation. For example, the catalogue from UC Berkeley uses the Radical Search Method, which it is doubtful if anyone in the UCLA East Asian Library really knows how to use.

Patrons can search for East Asian collections in other libraries in North America through Gopher over the Internet. Since this is a general service rather than one specifically for East Asian collections, it will not be discussed in this paper.

Concordances

Many patrons are unfamiliar with concordances. There are CD-ROM files of concordances published in China, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan, available in East Asian libraries. The UCLA East Asian Library is interested in this new information technology, but unable to acquire it because of financial hardship.

The only concordance available in the Library is for the classics. For example, the Commercial Press in Hong Kong is publishing a large set of concordances of Chinese classics in 120 volumes, twelve of which have been published so far. The Library has all the published volumes. This concordance set also has a CD-ROM version, but the Library cannot currently afford to purchase it. Several of the graduate students in Chinese History and East Asian Languages and Culture were asked if they knew of the availability of concordance; none of them knew of its existence in the Library. Only Professor Benjamin Elman in Chinese Intellectual and Cultural History knew of this title, and considered it to be a very basic tool in the field.

Indexes

Because of budget cuts, the UCLA East Asian Library is unable to strengthen its collection of indexes by the addition of CD-ROM titles. The only type of index available in the Library is printed materials, especially books. These books cover many areas of East Asian studies. The emphasis of these indexes is on serials and, to a lesser extent, monographs.

There are two kinds of indexes in the Library. One is a comprehensive index of certain major publications, especially newspapers and magazines, for example the index of *Shenbao* (Shanghai Daily), which was the first Chinese newspaper to be published in China for more than half a century until the communist revolution. Patrons can easily find articles in the index. Since the Library has collected a whole set of this newspaper, the index encourages people to use the newspaper as a source of research materials.

The other kind of index is a selective index on particular topics. Most indexes in the Library belong to this category. Some indexes list only articles published in major academic serials, but others include both serials and monographs. In Chinese studies alone, the indexes cover the areas of ancient history, imperial history, modern history, contemporary history, historical geography, modern literature, printing, Buddhist arts, and so on. The indexing of Japanese materials is even better than that of Chinese materials.

The problem in using indexes is similar to that of using bibliographies and concordances. Most patrons are unaware of the availability of these indexes in

the Library. Five of six graduate students asked were unaware that the Library held them. The sixth student was aware they existed but had never used them.

Abstracts and Reviews

Abstracts and reviews are also an important means of access to books and journal literature in East Asian libraries. Since the number of publications is growing rapidly, abstracts and reviews are assuming greater importance. Major East Asian countries have started automating abstracts. However, once again, most patrons are unaware of their existence and availability.

The largest set of abstracts in the Library is published regularly by the People's University in China. It covers over 110 subjects, and abstracts articles from more than 5,000 magazines and journals. The Library subscribes to 2,700 magazines and journals, of which over sixty percent are Chinese serials. Thus, the abstract becomes an important supplement to the Library's collection. The abstract is also an information indicator. There is no time to browse all serials to discover useful information; abstracts are a means of discovering the existence of articles and assessing their relevance before deciding on the need to go to the original documents.

However, the management of abstracts needs improvement. For example, the subscription to the large set of abstracts mentioned above was cancelled in 1988, but none appears to know why. For a while, when a few patrons asked for the abstracting journal, library staff answered that it had not arrived. So, from 1989 to 1992, the collecting of this abstracting journal was zero. There may be no chance of recovering from this loss. Subscription was resumed in 1992, and 1991 back issues were also acquired. The Library is working to acquire outstanding back issues.

In general, the UCLA East Asian Library, along with many East Asian libraries in the United States, has major access to the East Asian collections; however, access is not as good as access to the general collection.

COMMENTS

The collections in East Asian libraries are growing faster than many other library collections in the United States. A major reason for the growth is that East Asian studies have become increasingly important in the country. Of course, the information professionals of the East Asian libraries also made a great contribution to this importance.

However, we should also pay attention to shortcomings. A library collection becomes good only when it is accessible. There are still a number of problems related to access. Some aspects need to be improved significantly.

Firstly, libraries should inform patrons more about the availability of their collections and the various means of access to information. Too many patrons do not know that there are bibliographies, catalogues, concordances, indexes, abstracts and reviews in the library which can provide access to the collections. In the UCLA East Asian Library, I think that not even all librarians and other library staff know about the collections and access. Because of budgetary shortages and lack of human resources, thousands of books are sleeping in the basements, waiting to be catalogued. To most, if not all, patrons, these books are inaccessible. The only way to retrieve these new books is by title searches on ORION. If the user does not know the title or how to romanise Chinese characters, these books are irretrievable until they are catalogued two years later. The Library has the responsibility of informing users regarding the collections and access to them.

Secondly, the Library should educate patrons in accessing information. Since it is impossible for the Library alone to change the romanisation system, it should teach patrons how to convert Pinyin romanisation into Wade-Giles and *vice versa*. In addition, the Library should also instruct patrons in the use of the different information systems: if a user is looking for a recently published book, he or she should check online sources in ORION first; in contrast, if he or she is looking for a classics book published hundred of years ago, he or she should go to the card catalogue or special book catalogues for such materials. The patron needs this kind of information.

Some shortcomings cannot be overcome by the Library on its own, such as romanisation and lack of financial resources. But the Library can improve in other areas. Of the above suggestions, the step that can be taken is so-called 'BI': bibliographic instruction or user education.

While the two above problems are related to specific libraries, the third problem is much more pervasive. East Asian collections are non-English, or ethnic, collections. There is the important issue of how to romanise the languages and how to create subject headings for the collections. Unfortunately, there are some biases which create difficulties of access to the collections.

All libraries in the United States romanise Chinese script into Wade-Giles. As previously mentioned, Wade-Giles system was invented two hundred years ago as an aid to pronunciation for English speakers only. The Pinyin romanisation system is now officially accepted by most countries in the world, and Wade-Giles is not used much outside libraries in the English-speaking world. It is therefore not suitable as an international standard.

Moreover, if we turn to Chinese geographic names as subject headings, we find other variations in romanisation for Chinese which are neither Pinyin nor Wade-Giles. For example, the name of China's capital is "Beijing" in Pinyin, and "Pei-ching" in Wade-Giles, but the subject heading is spelled "Peking". In the past, "Peking" has been the English word for the capital, but has almost completely been superseded by "Beijing", although the Library of Congress Subject Heading (LCSH) has not changed. There are many more instances: a city with over a million people near Shanghai is called "Suzhou" in Pinyin or "Su-chou" in Wade-Giles, but it is "Soochow" in the subject headings, an old spelling which is surely superseded and is based on earlier editions of English dictionaries such as Websters. It is time that Library of Congress Subject Headings were updated, since the older forms of the English place names are not known to modern library patrons. The names date back a couple of hundred years to pronunciations of Chinese dialects which are quite different from contemporary Chinese pronunciation. Although LCSH has been through several revisions and expansions, Chinese geographical name headings remain unchanged, and suggest a Eurocentric attitude. Can anyone say there is no bias involved?

CONCLUSION

The collections and access to them are important to East Asian libraries, as outlined in the foregoing. However, there are more aspects concerning the management of East Asian libraries, such as technical services from acquisition to cataloguing, and public services from circulation to reference, and collection development and preservation. Because of the limits of this paper, I cannot discuss these aspects here, but plan to survey them later. I intend to present a general picture of East Asian libraries in the United States, covering all aspects from technical services to public services and from collection management to personnel management in the near future.