

4. EALGA Activities

Report of the Annual General meeting of the East-Asian Librarians Group of Australia held on Thursday, 28 August 1980 at 4.00 p.m. in the Griffith University Library during the 3rd National Conference of the Asian Studies Association of Australia.

Present: Mr. Chan, ANU (in the Chair), Mrs. Cherry, University of Sydney, Mrs. Hu, University of Melbourne, Mr. Li, University of Adelaide, Mrs. Beow, Griffith University, Mrs. Prentice, ANU, Mr. Wang, National Library of Australia, Miss Wylie, Griffith University.

After the seminar at which Mr. Wang presented a report on recent developments in Chinese libraries based on his recent visit to the People's Republic of China as part of the National Library delegation and Mr. Chan presented a review of Chinese publishing during the last eight years, Mr. Chan announced the agenda for the official business which included the following items for discussion.

1. Automation of Asian-script cataloguing
2. Romanization: Wade-Giles vs. Pinyin
3. Inter-library loan practice

The first two items were discussed in conjunction. Representatives of each of the libraries outlined the current situation in regard to automation romanization in their respective institutions. Mrs Hu reported that based on LC's original decision to change to Pinyin romanization, Melbourne University had decided to incorporate East Asian materials into CAVAL in Pinyin. However, the situation was again under review as a result of LC's recent reversal of that decision. Academic staff would have some influence on the decision as to which romanization scheme should be adopted but whichever romanization system was favoured, romanized entries for East Asian materials would be included in CAVAL with a manual file presumably being maintained simultaneously.

Mr. Chan emphasized the fact that LC's decision to continue its use of Wade-Giles was crucial to current developments in Australia in view of the heavy dependence on LC cataloguing copy in Australian libraries, particularly the major collections. Arguments that the British Library had adopted Pinyin were irrelevant since Australian cataloguing practice was more akin to American cataloguing practice than British cataloguing practice. Moreover, shrinking British budgets dictated highly selective acquisition of materials. Neither was the standard of British cataloguing acceptable for Australian Libraries. China herself now seriously doubts that Pinyin can ever successfully replace characters.

Mr. Wang distributed copies of a paper he had prepared entitled Romanization for the Chinese language. The National Library had made no decision at this stage to automate the cataloguing of its East Asian materials. Since it was heavily reliant on LC cataloguing copy it would continue the use of Wade-Giles romanization for the foreseeable future in line with LC's recent decision to retain Wade-Giles.

Mr. Li distributed copies of a bibliography he had compiled: Computers and East-Asian libraries: a selected bibliography. At Adelaide University only

the Undergraduate catalogue had been computerized at this stage. As the number of Chinese titles in the Undergraduate Collection is minimal, they do not constitute a problem. Mr. Li felt that to attempt to automate Chinese cataloguing without characters would be courting disaster particularly for libraries which collected Chinese classics because of the preponderance of homophones in the language. Adelaide University already used Pinyin romanization and would continue to do so. It adhered to the current standard for word division and followed LC practice for proper names.

Mr. Wang commented that Chinese serials would be incorporated into SALSSAE using Wade-Giles romanization. After the arrival of the new Japanese librarian in October, the National Library hoped to press ahead with the computerization of the Serials List.

In answer to a question from Mrs. Hu, Mr. Li clarified that nearly all Adelaide's Chinese material was housed in the Research Collection. He considered the problem to be negligible since the number of books thus affected was in the order of 10 to 20, the majority of which were dictionaries.

Mr. Chan suggested to Mrs. Hu the use of the shelf list as a manual file in conjunction with the automated catalogue.

Mrs. Prentice outlined the current situation at the ANU. The automated catalogue excluded entries for serials and Asian language materials. Separate card catalogues were maintained for East Asian materials. The Technical Services Division were currently heavily involved in the conversion to AACR 2 and were unlikely to be able to address themselves to the enormous problems inherent in the automation of East Asian materials in the near future. She personally felt that the inclusion of characters in the cataloguing data was an absolute necessity and that automation of East Asian materials at this stage was therefore premature. Since ANU was heavily dependent on LC cataloguing copy, ANU would continue to use Wade-Giles at least for the foreseeable future.

Mrs. Leow reported that Griffith University Library had no plans to automate its catalogue at the present time. Griffith was in the same position as Adelaide in its use of the Pinyin romanization. However, there were some differences in word division practice, e.g. personal names were joined together as one word. Pinyin romanization of some personal names, e.g. Mao Zedong clashed with the form used in Western language catalogues. However this could be overcome with X references.

Mrs. Cherry said Sydney University was adopting a wait and see policy. There were no plans for automated cataloguing at present. With only one cataloguer, the main priority was to catch up with cataloguing arrears. Since Sydney University was also dependent on LC cataloguing copy it would continue to use Wade-Giles in keeping with LC's recent decision.

The meeting then turned its attention to inter-library loan practice. Mr. Wang asked that all inter-library loan requests to the National Library for East Asian materials be specifically directed to Orientalia to minimize delays. He explained that it was not the National Library's policy to make periodicals and newspapers available on inter-library loan unless they

were microfilm editions. He also pointed out that the National Library's published lists of East Asian periodicals holdings were now out of date and suggested that requesting libraries not rely on these. The National Library was able to provide details of both National and International holdings. The photocopy charge was a flat rate for 100 pages or less. An articles of 3 pages would therefore cost the same as one of 100 pages. Copyright considerations would make it impossible to copy whole issues.

Mrs. Prentice outlined the ANU's practice which was much the same as the National Library's. The ANU did not lend serials, newspapers (unless on microfilm), reference works, or parts of large sets. However, photocopies of specific journal articles could be provided and photocopies of tables of contents if appropriate. She drew attention to inaccuracies in citations and hoped that these could be reduced in order to minimize the strains they imposed on the lending libraries. Telex requests were full of errors which caused considerable delays and confusion.

Mrs. Hu remarked that such errors were probably not the responsibility of the requesting library but rather the keyboard operators. Melbourne University checked all requests for monographs in the National Union Catalogue of East Asian monographs. However, serials posed a greater problem because of the lack of up-to-date serials holdings. It was her policy to limit requests for checks of holdings to the National Library.

Mr. Chan thanked those present for attending. The meeting adjourned at 6 p.m.

5. Editor's Note

The Editor is extremely sorry for the delay in the publication of this issue. No. 6 of this Newsletter will be published in December 1981. Contributions to the next issue are cordially invited. Please address all correspondence to the following:

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