

KOREAN STUDIES AT THE DAWN OF THE MILLENNIUM

Andrew Gosling
Chief Librarian, Asian Collections
National Library of Australia

There was a strong library component at the recent Korean Studies Association of Australasia Conference. Entitled "Korean Studies at the Dawn of the Millennium" this was the Association's Second Biennial Conference, and was held at Monash University in Melbourne from 24 to 25 September. Despite the recent tragic events in the United States and the airline problems within Australia the conference was well attended by scholars, librarians and others from Australia, Korea and elsewhere. The National Library was represented by Andrew Gosling, Chief Librarian, Asian Collections and Jung-Hee Fry, Officer-in-Charge, Korean Unit.

The conference included sessions on anthropology and sociology; art and music; business and economics; education; history; language and linguistics; libraries; literature; North Korea and politics. Dr Young-A Cho of Monash and her committee had organized the event extremely well. The printed volume of papers was available to participants at the time of registration and all papers including those from the library panel are also on the web at www.arts.monash.edu.au/korean/ksaa/conference/programme.html.

The library session, which included three papers, was organized by Jung-Sim Kim, Korean Studies Librarian at Monash University Library and chaired by Andrew Gosling as President of the East Asian Library Resources Group of Australia (EALRGA).

Andrew Gosling's "Korean collections and services at the National Library of Australia : a national asset" traced the development of the National Library's Korean holdings from their beginnings in the 1950s up to the present. They are by far the most comprehensive in the country. The paper then examined the National Library's role in the context of Australia's growing interest in Korean studies and library resources since the late 1980s.

The paper by *Assistant Professor Jung-ran Park* of Indiana State University was entitled " Information retrieval of Korean materials using the CJK bibliographic system : issues and problems". Unfortunately, Professor Park was unable to attend the conference, following the events of 11 September. Her paper was read by Dennis Kishere, acting head of Monash University Library's Asian Studies Research Library. The paper's focus was on the inherent drawbacks of the widely-used McCune-Reischauer Romanization scheme for Korean, as well as word division practices, which impede the full exploitation of the automated East Asian script library systems used in North America. Professor Park also stressed the importance of scholars and other library users becoming aware of these issues and difficulties.

Jung-Sim Kim presented a paper "Korean library resources in Australian academic libraries: the Monash University Library case in particular". After the National Library Monash has the second largest Korean collection in Australia. This has been developed since the early 1990s. Jung-Sim described the print, microform and electronic collections at Monash's Korean Studies Research Library, and the excellent Korean Studies Resources website she has developed (<www.lib.monash.edu.au/subjects/korean/index.html>).

Prior to the library session Jung-Sim organized a library tour. This was well attended by conference participants who were very interested to see Monash University's Korean collection and their Asian Studies Research Library in general.

Librarians will no doubt be actively involved once more at the next biennial conference of the Korean Studies Association of Australasia in 2003.

Andrew Gosling
Chief Librarian, Asian Collections
National Library of Australia
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