

 PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

東亞圖書館
East Asian Library
and the *Gest Collection*

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NEWS AND NOTES:
FOR THE FRIENDS OF THE GEST LIBRARY

ANNUAL REPORT 1992-1993
GEST ORIENTAL LIBRARY AND EAST ASIAN COLLECTIONS

By the end of June 1993, the total holdings of Gest Library stood at 510,704 volumes, including 91,535 in Forrestal storage. A total of \$530,051 was expended for both monographs and serials in the fiscal year 1992-1993: \$279,893 for Japanese materials, \$219,183 for Chinese, \$21,634 for Western, and \$9,341 for Korean.

The leaky roof on the third-floor stack area has finally been repaired, and the protective plastic sheeting is gone from the top of the book stacks. We are fortunate in having escaped the wrath of the Great Storm of 1993.

We did, however, suffer a serious blow in the illness of our Chinese-Japanese cataloguer, Franklin Wang, who suffered a stroke in January and took long-term disability in July. We miss him.

Technical Services. The total number of volumes and reels catalogued and added showed an increase of 1 percent over last year, with a 1.7 percent increase in Chinese cataloguing, a 2.4 percent increase in Japanese, and a 40 percent increase in Korean cataloguing. Mr. Wang's illness and absence drastically reduced original- and serials-cataloguing figures for this year. Compared to last year, original cataloguing decreased by 23 percent and serials cataloguing by 80 percent. The overall number of new titles catalogued decreased by 16 percent, with a 21 percent and 11 percent decrease in Chinese and Japanese cataloguing respectively, but a heartening 63 percent increase in Korean cataloguing. This year's figures, nevertheless, still represent the fourth highest ever for new titles catalogued and the third highest ever for total volumes and reels catalogued and added.

The overall cataloguing pattern for the past year was 20 percent original

(compared to 22 percent last year), 42 percent LC copy (36 percent last year), and 38 percent RLIN-member copy (42 percent last year).

Since acquisition figures continue to outpace cataloguing figures, cataloguing arrearage showed an increase for the fifth consecutive year, with 3,700 volumes and reels adding to the arrearage, for a total of 17,610; the majority of these consist of the Chinese backlog, which now numbers 13,010.

As a Chinese NACO (National Cooperative Cataloguing Operation) participant, we contributed 639 original headings and updated 100 existing ones last year. The extra workload strains our limited resources, but we are committed to this national cooperative effort and will begin Japanese NACO training as soon as we have our new Chinese-Japanese cataloguer with us.

We filed 37,846 cards into the Gest public catalogue, but a stubborn Chinese filing backlog remains. We have urged NOTIS (Northwestern Online Total Integrated System) to put priority on developing CJK (Chinese, Japanese, Korean) vernacular-character display capability for the online catalogue so that we may be relieved of the double catalogue maintenance burden. Toward this aim, we have formed a NOTIS CJK User's Interest Group with other East Asian librarians to work for the realization of having a CJK capacity on NOTIS.

Collection Development. So far there are still no true automated systems with CJK capabilities on the market for acquisitions. We are monitoring this situation closely, but, a truly CJK system for acquisitions is probably still two to three years in the future.

In 1992-1993, Gest Library acquired 8,638 volumes of Chinese monographs (excluding periodicals, maps, and microforms), an increase of 1,416 volumes over 1991-1992. This represents a 19.6 percent increase compared with last year's 2.6 percent increase over 1990-1991.

Two factors produced this sudden increase. First, the Chinese publishing industry has increased its output. At the Committee on East Asian Libraries (CEAL) annual meeting in Los Angeles last March, a representative of the Chinese book trade mentioned that about ninety thousand titles had been published in 1992. Second, as the economy becomes increasingly market oriented, Chinese book suppliers have become more decentralized and competitive, which has opened up many sources for hitherto unavailable materials. The number of book catalogues received from China has increased perceptibly during the past year. Some dealers, however, although skilled at sending out catalogues, have yet to master the art of supplying and maintaining good service.

The distribution of our acquisition expenditures for Chinese materials is as follows: China, 38 percent; Taiwan, 24 percent; Hong Kong, 35 percent; and the United States, 4 percent.

China's economy is overheated, with the inflation rate at 17 percent, although the local currency has dropped in value vis-à-vis the U.S. dollar. Both Taiwan and Hong Kong have a much higher rate of inflation than the United States, which has driven up the price of books, journals, binding, and postage.

The Japanese publishing industry suffered a serious setback as the result of recession caused by the collapse of the so-called bubble economy. Bankruptcies among medium-sized publishers were rampant, and close to a thousand bookstores have gone out of business. A sharp drop in advertising revenue has weakened the financial condition of many periodicals.

Trade-book prices have shown an average annual increase of 4 percent over the past few years, but research, academic, and reprint works have increased on average by 20–30 percent.

The dollar dropped to a record low of one hundred yen to the dollar on August 13, although it has risen a little since then. Compared with a year ago, our purchasing power for Japanese acquisitions is down 20 percent. This terrible weakness caused us to purchase the lowest number of volumes for the Japanese collection since 1990. In spite of a steady increase of funding from the university administration, the number of volumes purchased in fiscal year 1992–1993 dropped 13 percent from the last fiscal year.

Subscription prices for Japanese journals have showed a steady annual increase of 12 percent since 1990, but several journals increased their subscription rate as much as 60 percent over the year before.

Support from the U.S. – Japan Friendship Commission, which lasted over a decade, ceased this year. Fortunately, the East Asian Studies Department has generously provided us with a Title VI grant.

We added 581 Korean volumes to the library, including gifts from the National Assembly Library and from other public and academic libraries in Korea.

In June 1993, librarians from six major Korean collections in the United States — Berkeley, Columbia, Harvard, Hawaii, Washington (Seattle), and UCLA — plus two observers, one each from Princeton and Yale, convened at Seattle to discuss cooperative acquisition, collection development, resource sharing, and the like.

Public Services. Circulation statistics have gone up from 24,770 a year ago to the current 27,466, a 9.8 percent increase. These figures include 8,784 for Western-language materials. They clearly show that our Western collection is in great demand, and we will have to formulate a plan to accommodate this demand and to improve the collection's housing. Interlibrary loan requests from other institutions have increased 60 percent, from 422 in 1991–1992 to 674 in 1992–1993. The increase in requests for Japanese materials has been dramatic, from 144 to 240. Our borrowing requests stayed about the same (from 176 to 178).

We are planning to automate our antiquated manual circulation system next fall. This surely will provide better service to our users.

Professional Development. Gest staff members continue to be active in the American Libraries Associations (ALA), CEAL, the Center for Research Libraries (CRL), and the Research Libraries Group (RLG).

Charmian Cheng remains head of Public Services.

Martin Heijdra is currently serving as the CEAL representative to the Bibliography of Asian Studies, a member of the CEAL Subcommittee on Library Technology, and a member of the CEAL Subcommittee on Chinese Materials. He attended the RLG Chinese Rare Books Catalog Project International Advisory Committee meeting held in Princeton in early March. He also published an article on the movable-type Tangut Tripitaka volume in the Gest Rare Book Room in the important journal *Wenwu* (Cultural relics).

Soowon Kim is serving as a member of the Subcommittee on Korean Materials, CEAL. She was also an observer at the Conference on Korean Collection Development held in Seattle in June.

Antony Marr remains a member of the Advisory Panel for East Asian Materials at the Center for Research Libraries, and is a board member of the Center for Chinese Research Materials.

Mariko Shimomura continues to serve on the CEAL Subcommittee on Technical Processing.

Iping Wei continues to serve as the Princeton liaison to the RLG Chinese Rare Books Catalog Project, and as a member of the Princeton University Library's NOTIS Data Conversion Team and the NOTIS Index Specification Team. She is also a member of the OPAC (Online Public Access Catalogue) References Committee and the Authorities Group. She also attended the RLG Chinese Rare Books Catalog Project International Advisory Committee meeting.

All six librarians attended the AAS-CEAL annual meeting in Los Angeles. Martin Heijdra took part in the annual meeting of the American Historical Association in Washington, D.C.

Visitors. During the past year a total of 86 nonlocal visitors did research, used materials, or toured the library. They came from the following countries: China, 27; the United States, 27; Japan, 19; Taiwan, 10; Australia, 1; India, 1; and Russia, 1.

FRIENDS OF THE GEST LIBRARY

The Friends of the Gest Library is a group of private individuals dedicated to the idea that an East Asian library resource like the Gest Oriental Library (the East Asian Research Library at Princeton University) must be known, supported, and encouraged in order to enrich both the aesthetic knowledge of East Asia and the growth of scholarship and contemporary information concerning that part of the world. Many individuals have already been active for years in guiding the Gest Library, and contributing their time and resources ad hoc. In 1986 they formed the Friends of the Gest Library in order to broaden the Library's support and foster communication among other interested parties.

As a group, the Friends sponsor colloquia and exhibitions on East Asian books, calligraphy, art, and their historical relationships. They secure gifts and bequests for the Library in order to add to its holdings items and collections of great worth. They disseminate information about the Library (and about other East Asian libraries) so that members and nonmembers alike can benefit from its resources.

JOINING THE FRIENDS

Membership is open to those subscribing annually thirty dollars or more. With that membership fee is included a yearly subscription to the *East Asian Library Journal*. Members will be invited to attend special exhibitions, lectures, and discussions that occur under the aegis of the Friends. Checks are payable to the Trustees of Princeton University and should be mailed to:

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