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Editorial Note

Committee on East Asian Libraries

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EDITORIAL NOTE

In this issue of the Bulletin we direct our readers' attention to a number of reports, essays, and documents relating to recent important activities and developments of concern to East Asian librarians. In the area of library automation, we have included the summary notes on the ACLS Conference on East Asian Character Processing in Automated Bibliographic Systems, held last November at Stanford, California, as well as the paper presented to this conference by Professor Kazuhiko Nakayama on Japanese language information processing at Tsukuba University.

On the question of Chinese romanization, recent issues of the Bulletin have published statements, representing the views of CEAL and of individual East Asian librarians, which have either criticized the Library of Congress decision to switch from Wade-Giles to pinyin romanization in 1981 or have argued that such a decision would be premature. With a view to airing both sides of this question, we have included in this issue an article by Beatrice Ohta and Ben Tucker, both of the Library of Congress, which argues in favor of adopting pinyin. Also on the subject of Chinese romanization we note the report from Karl Lo (under Organizations and Institutions) on the development of a program at the University of Washington for the computerized conversion of pinyin to the Wade-Giles system of romanization.

As a special feature we have included reports from members of three separate groups of recent travellers to the People's Republic of China: the LC-led U.S. Library Delegation that visited China September 10-30, 1979; the group of eleven East Asian librarians that toured China during September, 1979; and a delegation of American publishers and booksellers that went to China in the Spring of 1979. Their observations on Chinese libraries and the book trade may be found in this issue under "Special Reports".

In recent issues, the Bulletin has welcomed articles describing specialized East Asia holdings in smaller or less well known library and archival collections. Using an approach somewhat different from these descriptive essays, Edward Martinique, in an article included in this issue, discusses the techniques employed to analyze East Asian materials in the collections of the University of North Carolina library at Chapel Hill.