Meetings and Conferences

Chi Wang
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I. Library Development Seminar Held in Taipei

A three-day 1980 Library Development Seminar, co-sponsored by the National Central Library and the Library Association of China, was held at the National Central Library, Taipei, December 1-3, 1980. It was attended by over 80 librarians and scholars from Taiwan and foreign countries.

The main themes of the Seminar were library cooperation and the development of library service, with the following sub-themes: (a) National construction and library development (b) library cooperation and the interchange of information (c) perspectives on library automation and (d) the present status of library education and its future development.

At the opening ceremony at the NCL on the morning of December 1, opening remarks were given by Mr. Chu Hui-shen, Minister of Education, and Dr. Chiang Fu-tsung, Director, National Palace Museum, who also opened the exhibits. On the same afternoon, in the Conference Hall, Taiwan Normal University, the first session on National Construction and Library Development was held, with Professor Yen Wen-yu, Library Science Department, Fu Jen University, presiding. Sessions on the following day were those on "Library Cooperation", and "Library Education", chaired by Professor Shen Pao-huan, National Taiwan University, and Professor Lan Chien-chang, Library Science Department, Fu Jen University, respectively. Then on December 3, there was a morning session on "Library Automation", the chairman of which was Professor Li Te-chu, Library Science Department, National Taiwan University, one of the developers of the Chinese MARC. The closing session on that afternoon was a general discussion by participants, with concluding remarks given by Mr. Wang Chen-ku, Director, NCL.

Other sponsored activities of the conference were scheduled for December 4-7. On the first two days, December 4-5, participants from foreign countries visited Southern Taiwan; on December 6, participants were invited to visit the National Palace Museum; and finally, on December 7, foreign participants were also invited to attend the 27th Annual Meeting of the Library Association of China.

Participants from foreign countries included the following:

From the U.S.:

Professor David Y. Hu, East Asian Collection, Ohio State University Library;
Mr. Karl Lo, Head, East Asian Library, University of Washington, Seattle, who served as Vice-chairman of the Panel on Library Automation;
Mr. Weiyang Wan, Head, Asian Library, University of Michigan Library, who served as Vice-chairman of the Panel on Library Education; and
Dr. Chi Wang, Library of Congress, who served as Vice-chairman of the Panel on Library Cooperation.
From Canada:

Miss Tung King Ng, Head, Asian Studies Division, University of British Columbia Library.

From Australia:

Mr. Sing-wu Wang, Chief, Orientalia Section, National Australian Library, Canberra, who served as Vice-chairman of the Panel on National Construction and Library Development.

From Hong Kong:

Miss Lai-bing Kan, University Librarian, Chinese University of Hong Kong, who served as Vice-chairperson of the Panel on Library Cooperation; Mr. Paul W. T. Poon, Librarian, New Asia College Library, Chinese University of Hong Kong; and Mr. Ching Liu, Librarian, United College Library, Chinese University of Hong Kong.

The papers delivered at the Seminar will be published in the near future by the NCL.

The seminar was a tremendous success; and the sessions on library automation development were particularly impressive. I am sure that all who attended greatly benefited from the experience and from the opportunity of exchanging views and information and of establishing new personal contacts and renewing old ones.

(Chi Wang)

II. International Workshop on Chinese Library Automation

An International Workshop on Chinese Library Automation was held on February 14-19, 1981, in Taipei, jointly sponsored by the Academia Sinica's Committee for Scientific and Scholarly Cooperation with the United States, the Library Association of China, and the American Council of Learned Societies. The workshop was attended by some 250 librarians, computer scientists, and linguists, about thirty of whom came from abroad. The objective of the workshop was to examine the Chinese language--its theoretical concerns and usage--and the information requirements of today, in order that new approaches to library services may be formulated. There were two main events during the workshop: 1) The introduction of the Chinese Character Code for Information Interchange (CCCII) and the Chinese MARC; and 2) the presentation of major papers on computers and the Chinese language and on Chinese cataloging rules, as well as case reports of automation projects in Taiwan.

Various speakers during the workshop remarked on the new era in information services and its dependence on the automation of the Chinese language. Hence, the character code, the Chinese MARC, and new Chinese cataloging rules are being developed to meet these imminent requirements.
The Chinese Character Code for Information Interchange (CCCII) is a set of three seven-bit, or eight-bit, vectors that represents some 35,000 Chinese characters. The design of the set, which has met the International Organization of Standards specifications, is based on a three-dimensional concept. Through this design, characters from one linguistic region can be automatically translated to characters of different graphic patterns used in another linguistic region. For example, while the character 了 may be coded in the traditional form of 了 during input, it may be decoded in the Malaysian-Chinese form of 了 for output. The reverse would also hold. The designers of the code are hoping to expand the total character set to a possible maximum of 80,000 characters. However, a repertoire of some 35,000 characters seems ample for bibliographic control of materials published at all times and in most graphic forms of Chinese characters.

The codes and the graphic patterns of characters are now being loaded into a machine-readable database with several phonetic and graphic indexes to each character. When completed, the characters may be retrieved by three-corner, four-corner, stroke count, Wade-Giles, or other systems or combinations thereof. Most phonetic systems can be translated back and forth mechanically. The research and the resultant database are not only a breakthrough in library automation, but they also serve as a monumental landmark in the classification of Chinese characters.

The Chinese MARC is designed to be compatible with the UNI-MARC. At the time of the workshop, some 1,200 titles had been input into the Chinese MARC format for testing. The results were deemed satisfactory, but further tests will be conducted with larger databases. One of the potential tests would be a catalog of rare books in which much of the peculiar nature of Chinese bibliographies would appear and would therefore provide a valid test for the viability of the Chinese MARC.

In his keynote speech, former President C. K. Yen of the Republic of China emphasized the Chinese researchers' conviction that the results presented at the workshop should be shared with the international community. According to C. K. Wang, Director of the National Central Library and Chair of the workshop, the designers of the CCCII, the Chinese MARC, and the Chinese cataloging rules are contemplating forming a special group to coordinate such sharing and cooperation in response to this conviction. When that group is formed, it will be announced to the international community.

In the meantime, persons interested in information on the CCCII may write to Prof. C. C. Hsieh, Department of Electronic Engineering, National Taiwan Institute of Technology. For information on the Chinese MARC, contact Prof. Lucy Lee, Department of Library Science, National Taiwan University. One may contact Prof. C. C. Lan, Department of Library Science, Catholic Fu Jen University concerning Chinese cataloging rules. Dr. C. C. Yang, at the Institute for Information Industry, will respond to questions on hardware, software, and other system developments in Taiwan.

The following participants from the United States attended the conference:

Susie S. Cheng, Assistant Library Specialist, Asia Collection, University of Hawaii Library.

Nelson N. S. Chou, Librarian, East Asian Library, Rutgers, the State University.

Raymond Debuse, Manager, Development and Library Services, Washington Library Network.

Helena Wong Gin, Manager, East Asian Language Support, Computer Systems Development Department, Research Libraries Group, Inc.

John W. Haeger, Director for Program Coordination, Research Libraries Group, Inc.

Robert Hayes, Dean, Graduate Library School, University of California at Los Angeles.

Hideo Kaneko, Curator, East Asian Collection, Yale University Library.

Hwa Wei Lee, Director, Ohio University Libraries.

Karl Lo, Librarian, East Asia Library, University of Washington Library.


Shizue Matsuda, Librarian for East Asian Studies, Indiana University Library.

Barbara Roland, Chief, Automation Planning and Liaison Office, Library of Congress.

Deborah Sham, Catalog Publications Division, Library of Congress.

Eugene Wu, Librarian, Harvard-Yenching Library, Harvard University.

Bibliography


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