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ARTICLES

NATIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONTROL OF CURRENT PUBLICATIONS IN CHINA

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Overall Picture of Current Chinese Publications

Let us first look at the overall picture of current Chinese publications before we proceed to explore means of gaining a national bibliographic control, if indeed that is possible. According to the paper "Zhongguo sishi nianlaide chuban gaikuang (A Survey of Forty Years of Chinese Publishing)" given by Fang Hou-shu 方厚枢, editor of Zhongguo chuban nianjian 中国出版年鉴 (China Publishing Yearbook) at the Seminar on the Collection, Processing and Usage of Chinese Books, August 23-25, 1989 in Beijing, "...there were 1,537 newspapers, 5,865 periodicals, 536 publishers, 620 printers, 12,157 state-managed bookstores. There were a half-million people involved in the news, information, and publishing industries." In 1978, there were 105 publishers, whereas in 1989 there were 536 active publishers.

National Publishers:

1. Publishers directly reporting to Xinwen chuban shu 新闻出版署 (Bureau of News Information and Publishing) 20
2. Government and party organizations, social groups 156
3. Major university presses 20
4. Armed forces 14

Total 210

Local Publishers:

1. General publishers 66
2. University presses 70
3. Specialized publishers 190

Total 326
Output of publications, 1949-1988:

1. Philosophy, social sciences 107,030
2. Science and technology 198,338
3. Literature and arts 163,906
4. Education and culture 113,397

Total 582,671

There was a phenomenal rise in book production after the chaotic period of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). In 1967, only 2,925 titles were published, with only 36 being textbooks. The year 1969 was the nadir with only 1,907 titles of books, 720 titles of textbooks, 42 newspapers, and 20 periodicals published. After the Cultural Revolution, publications grew by leaps and bounds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Books</th>
<th>Periodicals</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>14,989</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>17,212</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>21,621</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>25,601</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>31,784</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>40,075</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>45,603</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>66,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>2,800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>3,907</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>5,865</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nearly one hundred publishers are nowadays primarily, or to a certain degree, involved in publishing antiquarian classical works. Sixty are involved in publishing art works. Since 1979, more than 3,000 dictionaries have been published. Since 1984, more than 1,500 collectanea have been to press. As of 1988, more than 4,500 classical texts in literature, history, philosophy, and languages have been printed and more than 160 yearbooks have been produced. In the last ten years, 14 publishers have been engaged in publishing foreign-language materials, including papers and proceedings from academic and research institutions. From 1980 to 1986, 3,575 foreign-language titles were published.

Regional and local publishers have lately become very active and enterprising. Every province or autonomous region has its own publishing establishments and its own Difangzhi weiyuanhui (The Committee on Local Histories), responsible for compiling and publishing local documents. Since 1980, more than 3,000 xian zhi (county histories) have been published.

Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan chubanshe (the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Press) alone has been publishing a notable number of scholarly works. The Academy has over 3,000 researchers and is now publishing 75 periodicals.
and the ambitiously large series entitled *Dangdai Zhongguo congshu* (Contemporary China series).

The First National Archives in Beijing, the Second National Archives in Nanjing, and regional archives in Shanghai, Shenyang, Chongqing, Chengdu, and other cities are sorting out primary source materials for microfilming and publishing. The National Center of Microfilming is coordinating microfilming and reproduction programs. The university presses turn out fine scholarly publications which often are sold out very quickly.

Unofficial magazines, demonstration circulars, protest statements, big character posters, and poems of lament also exist. In fact, in Taiwan a series called *Dalu dixia kanwu huibian* (A Collection of Chinese Mainland Underground Publications) already has published 20 volumes and continues to grow. One finds mimeographed single sheets sold at ten or twenty cents each at street corners in China. For example, "Zuixin xiaoxi (The Latest News)" was just one of such publications sold on the street in front of the Nanjing Hotel. It carries seventeen handwritten entries including "Why did Hu Yaobang Resign?", "The Inside Story of the Death of Liu Shaoqi," and "The Current Status of Hua Guofeng." Such are the pieces to be found in "Xiaodao xiaoxi (Narrow Path Information)," a sort of grapevine gossip news sheet.

"Minjian jiu dao (Common Folks Channel)" publications are difficult to track down. Many of them are not published in the Chinese mainland but are smuggled or brought in from Hong Kong, Macao, and even from Taiwan. They include martial arts sagas, sentimental romances, detective stories, pornographic exposés, erotic materials under the cover of estheticism, human aberrations in the name of human nature, fengshui superstitions, and fortune-telling. These items are sold in trains, transportation depots, and at roadside stalls. Sociologists and other researchers find such materials informative in revealing the tenor of the times and of particular environments.

In the last few years, efforts have been begun to publish large monographic sets such as *Zhongguo dabaike quanshu* (Chinese Great Encyclopedia) with a projection of seventy volumes and *Zhongguo meishu quanji* (A Collectanea of Chinese Art) in sixty volumes. There is also the huge set of *Zhonghua dazangjing* (The Chinese Tripitaka) and the voluminous series of local gazetteers. In addition, there are expensive microfilm collections of Dunhuang archival materials, old newspapers, and out-of-print periodicals. Furthermore, there are computer software products dealing with Tang poetry and the novel, *Hung lou meng* (Dream of the Red Chamber).

For foreign scholars, there is always the problem of how to cope with "neibu faxing (internal distribution)" materials. "Internal distribution" materials are not necessarily secret or classified materials in the Western sense. Eugene Wu of the Harvard-Yenching Library has mentioned that "some university presses in China have recently further complicated the situation. In an effort to keep some of their publications away from central distribution abroad by the government-designated export corporations, they have resorted to using the "neibu" label to gain control over
their own distribution overseas."¹ There are several categories of "internal distribution" materials:

1. "Guonei faxing 国内发行 " or "Xian guonei faxing 现国内发行." Materials for domestic distribution only, generally available, but not for export.

2. "Neibu faxing 内部发行." "Internal distribution" materials for use by almost all government officials or cadres who can show identification permits or letters of recommendation. Included here are Cankao xiaoxi 参考消息 (Reference News) which carries domestic and foreign news for officials and cadres in general and Neibu cankao ziliao 内部参考资料 (Internal Reference Source Materials) which provides two 70- to 80-page volumes a day, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon, of unabridged translations of foreign news, reports, and commentaries for high officials and party leaders. There are also the "sanzi yibao 三自一包 (self-compiled, self-printed, and self-distributed" publications by the Zhengxie 政协 ([All China] Political Consultative [Cultural and Historical Data Committees]), societies, unions, and professional groups. They need only to apply for a general publication number for each publication they produce.

3. "Neibu kongzhi faxing 内部控制发行." Internal controlled distribution for use by high-level party members, government officials, or a limited number of experts; for example, titles such as Lushan huixi shilu 庐山会议实录 (The Veritable Records of the Lushan Conference), the unabridged edition of Jinpingmei 金瓶梅 (The Golden Lotus), works dealing with the social problems of prostitutes and juvenile delinquents, and translations that involve copyright. Some of them are later allowed wider distribution.

The explosion of publications is fueled by a wide range of publishers that includes centrally-controlled national presses; provincial, regional, and municipal presses; university and institutional presses; and society and professional group presses. This situation is further complicated by an additional "internal distribution" system. Therefore, national bibliographic control of current Chinese publications is a very challenging task.

National Bibliographies and Reference Tools

Having thus reviewed the current scene of Chinese publishing enterprises, we may feel dismayed at the task of attempting to gain national bibliographic control over source materials. Yet, the war is not lost. A decent, even highly satisfactory, control is achievable if we call upon our patience and resourcefulness. Actually, there are a number of fine national bibliographies, general and specialized indexes, and subject-oriented bibliographies and yearbooks to help us. Of course, personal contacts with experts and colleagues in China can lead to hidden resources, albeit in a roundabout way. For up-to-date information, various weekly, biweekly, and monthly "shuxun 书讯 (book news)" publications are important.

Titles of this type include *Sheke xinshumu* (New Books in Social Sciences), *Beijing tushu xinxi bao* (Beijing Book News), *Tianjin shuxun* (Tianjin Book News), *Shanghai xinshumu* (Shanghai New Booklist), *Quanguo guji xinshumu* (National New Booklist on Classical Works), *Quanguo waiwen xinshumu* (National New Booklist on Foreign Language Publications), *Wenyibao* (Literature and Art News), *Wenxuebao* (Literature News), and other similar, timely book newsletters. These are not cataloged for the library collection, but are looked at by bibliographers and selectors to keep them up-to-date. Because these booklists will later be superseded by cumulative book catalogs and because of office space and handling problems, they are quickly discarded, except for a few with extra information on publishing trends and new publishing projects. They provide lists of titles of what is currently available or soon forthcoming. The disadvantages of these newsletters is that they are fragmented and largely repetitive of other similar newsletters. The regional ones are interesting for their coverage of local publications. The information in the book newsletters from Guangzhou and Chengdu, for example, are different from that found in the ones from Tianjin and Shanghai.

For more thorough and sustained checking, we resort to the following titles:

1. *Baokan wenzhai kapian* (Annotation cards on articles in newspapers and magazines), 1985-. They are made by Zhongguo renmin daxue shubao ziliao zhongxin (Center for Monographic and Serial Materials, People's University of China). So far twenty-six subject fields in the humanities and social sciences are available.

2. *Baokan ziliao suoyin* (Index to Source Materials in Newspapers and Magazines), 1985-. This is compiled from *Fuyin baokan ziliao* (Reprints from Chinese Periodicals and Newspapers), covers 102 subject categories, and is published by the same Center for Monographic and Serial Materials, People's University of China. See item no. 4, *Fuyin baokan ziliao*, below.

3. *Chinese Publications on Microforms*, 1981-. Issued by Zhongguo suwei chubanwu jinchukou gongsi (China National Microform Import and Export Corporation). This is a very limited list but one that is growing. It is aimed at preservation as well as reprinting rare books, old newspapers and periodicals, archival collections, deteriorating documents, and local histories.

4. *Fuyin baokan ziliao* (Reprints from Chinese Periodicals and Newspapers), 1978-. Issued by the Center for Monographic and Serial Materials, People's University of China. This is one of the most important series of publications containing articles culled from about 1,700 Chinese periodicals and newspapers in China. Many of these periodicals and newspapers are unavailable outside of China, since they are designated for "internal distribution" only. In fact, it was the policy of the Chinese government before 1980 not to export this series at all, despite repeated requests from many foreign institutions. It represents a fairly comprehensive and in-depth coverage of source materials for Chinese studies in the humanities and social sciences. The series covers more than one hundred subject fields. The number of subject fields varies depending on whether a particular field has enough material or not. Therefore, a field may be subsumed under another field or a new field may be created. Most of the
subject fields are constant. However, it is possible that articles from major well-known journals are not repeated here and articles too long are not included here but merely listed in Baokan ziliao suoyin, item no 2 above.

5. 1949-1979 fanyi chuban waiguo gudian wenxue zhuzuo mulu 1949-1979 翻译出版外国古典文学著作目录. This title is compiled by Zhongguo Banben tushuguan (The National Editions Library), Beijing, 1980. This catalog of foreign classical literature in translation represents catalogs of similar kind that appear from time to time.

6. Masters theses and doctoral dissertations on humanities and social sciences enjoy a special file of library cards in the Library of the Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing where they have been compiled since 1983. They are filed by author, title, and subject. No printed book catalog of this collection has been published. Before 1983, there were no masters or Ph.D. degrees conferred. This file is more up-to-date than is Zhongguo guojia shumu which claims to list theses and dissertations as well as published material.

7. Mingguo shiqi zongshumu, 1911-1949 民国时期总目, 1911-1949. Compiled by Beijing tushuguan 北京图书馆, Beijing: Shumu wenxian chubanshe, 1987. The publishing of this kind of retrospective catalog is very much in demand currently, an evidence of the efforts being made to improve bibliographic control. Similarly, indexes to literature, archaeology, art, history, philosophy, economics, and so on by major subject journals are helpful to a certain degree. They are issued more frequently than the more comprehensive national bibliographies and keep scholars informed of trends, issues, and major events in the field covered.

8. Zhongguo baokan daquan 中国报刊大全 (A Complete Catalog of Chinese Newspapers and Periodicals). Beijing: Renmin youdian chubanshe 人民邮电出版社 (People's Post and Communications Publishing House), 1987. The most complete listing of Chinese newspapers and periodicals published in the People's Republic of China. The 1987 edition consists of two volumes including, for the first time, 2,896 titles that are not distributed through the post offices. It provides full bibliographic information and detailed annotations. Lately, several other guides like this are being published. This title is more informative about the date of the first issue, history, contents, readership, and so on. The 1987 Quanguo baokan neirong huibian 全国报刊内容汇编 (National Guide to Contents of Newspapers and Periodicals) by the Beijing Post Office is also useful for library selection work.


10. Quanguo xinshumu 全国新书目 (New Books Catalog of the People's Republic of China). Compiled by Zhongguo banben tushuguan, 1950-. Issued monthly with an annual cumulation entitled Quanguo zongshumu 全国总目 (Cumulative National Bibliography). These two titles are the most comprehensive national bibliographies in China. Primarily they list publications deposited at the National Editions Library including books, serials, reprints,
official publications and reports, maps, musical scores, children's books, translations, pictorial works, works in braille, minority and foreign language books published in the People's Republic of China. Government publications are not specially identified. It should be particularly noted that "neibu faxing" titles are not included. All titles included in these two bibliographies must have a "Tongyi shuhao " (general publication number), since the National Editions Library serves somewhat as a copyright library. The coverage is claimed to be 95 to 98 percent of all publications deposited with the library. Formerly the library required two copies to be deposited there but now only one copy is required because of the shortage of space in the library. Yet expensive and rare publications such as Beiyejing (Palm Leaf Sutra) at a cost of $2,000 and Han Xizai yeyantu (Han Xizai's Banquet) at $1,800 are difficult to collect. There is no law that enforces depositing. Some publishers persist in not sending free deposits. However, "neibu" publications are listed in Quanguo neibufaxing tushu zongmu which is for internal distribution only.

11. Quanguo gaodeng yuanxiao shehui kexue xuebaozongmulu (National College and University Social Sciences Journals index) is compiled by Jilin daxue shehui kexue xuebaoshubanshe (Jilin University Press), 1906-1949, 1977-1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984 volumes are available. Most likely, no American library has the complete run. In the 1984 volume, more than 15,000 essays from 238 higher education academic journals were indexed. The 1984 volume was published in 1986. Later volumes should soon be available. This is a scholarly reference tool.


15. Zhongguo chuban nianjian (China Publishers Yearbook), Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan (Commercial Press), 1980. It provides: (1) major events in the industry, (2) surveys, (3) a review of publishing conditions, (4) documents relating to publishing, (5) publishers' directories, (6) lists of newly-published books and reference works, (7) lists of newly-published newspapers and periodicals, and (8) publishing statistics. The first three sections contain articles by authorities or specialists in various fields.
16. *Zhongguo dangdai qikan zonglan* 中国当代期刊总览 (Manual of Current Periodicals of China). Haerbin: Heilongjiang renmin chubanshe, 1987. A substantial two-volume set that lists all the periodicals registered and published in 1986. A feature of this guide is that all the periodicals are arranged by geographic regions and are further divided into fifteen subject fields. It provides information on the aim, specialty, evolution, audience, publisher, volume, telephone, address, price, frequency, and other information in twenty categories. There is a subject index and a stroke index. Scholars should be delighted with the subject feature.

17. *Zhongguo guji shanben shumu* 中国古籍善本书目 (National Union Catalog of Chinese Rare Books) has been under compilation in a nationwide cooperative effort since 1980 with preparatory meetings going back to 1978. In 1980, a total of 138,471 catalog cards of Chinese rare books were collected from 781 libraries, museums, archives, documentation centers, and academic institutions. The catalog will have five divisions: Jing (classics), Shi (histories), Zi (philosophers), Ji (belles lettres), and Cong (collectanea), the Chinese traditional way of classification. The first volume, on the Chinese classics, was published in 1986. The remaining volumes are yet to come.

18. *Zhongguo guojia shumu* 中国国家书目 (Chinese National Bibliography). Compiled by *Zhongguo guojia shumu bianweihui* 中国国家书目编委会 (The Chinese National Bibliography Editorial Committee) of Beijing tushuguan, (Beijing: Shumu wenxian chubanshe 文献出版社, 1987), in two volumes. It was planned that this title was to be published monthly and cumulated annually as a national bibliography. This pilot edition covers only Chinese books and serials published on the Chinese mainland in 1985, thereby falling short of the goal to include Chinese-language publications outside of mainland China as well. The main volume, in 1,373 pages, is arranged in thirty-eight subject categories. The index volume consists of the title and author indexes. The goal is to eventually produce a national bibliography more up to international standards and to improve the way *Quanguo xinshumu* is compiled. Foreign scholars ask why the National Library of China and the National Editions Library cannot combine their efforts to publish a national bibliography together with more speed, more comprehensive coverage, and more accumulation. So far, the National Editions Library only publishes *Quanguo xinshumu* monthly.

19. *Zuixin Zhongguo qikan quanlan* 最新中国期刊全览 (The Latest Guide to Current Chinese Periodicals), (Beijing: Xiandai chubanshe, 1989), 785 pages. This lists current periodicals up to October 1988. A noteworthy feature is that the descriptions of the periodicals are provided by the publishers themselves. The titles are arranged by location and subject, with an index by title.

**Present Prospects**

*Zhongguo chuban faxing kexue yanjiusuo* 中国出版发行科学研究 (China Publication and Distribution Institute) was established in March 1985 and has published *Zhongguo chuban nianjian* 中国出版年鉴 (China Publishers Yearbook); *Chuban faxing yanjiu* 出版发行研究 (Publishing and Distribution Studies), a monthly; and *Chuban cankao* 出版参考 (Publishing Reference), a semi-monthly publication. Provincial and municipal organizations dealing with publications are also developing vigorously. With the added tool of automation, we hope all such endeavors will help to build a better national bibliographic control.