Libraries and Institutions

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Former Japanese Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita Visits Gordon W. Prange Collection at the University of Maryland at College Park

A newspaper columnist's suggestion that he look at a special collection of Japanese-language publications housed at the University of Maryland at College Park Libraries led to the visit on March 10th of former Prime Minister of Japan Noboru Takeshita.

Takeshita, currently a member of the lower house of the Japanese Diet and head of the largest faction in Japan's Liberal Democratic Party, served as Prime Minister of Japan from 1987 to 1989. He viewed the Gordon W. Prange Collection at College Park with his wife and several representatives from the Japanese Embassy including Japanese Ambassador to the United State, Ryohei Murata. Also on hand were Mrs. Anne Prange, widow of Gordon W. Prange, and a number of university and library officials. Takeshita and his wife arrived that morning in the United States for trade discussions with senior State Department officials.

The Prange Collection is the most comprehensive single collection in the world of Japanese-language publications for the years 1945-1949. It includes virtually everything published during those postwar years—books and pamphlets, newspapers, and periodicals on all subjects. Because severe shortages often forced publishers to use poor quality paper during those years, Japanese-language publications from this period are extremely rare. With holdings in Japan incomplete for these years, many of the volumes in the Prange Collection are the only copies still in existence.

It was a column in the Asahi Shinbun, a major Japanese daily newspaper, that sparked Takeshita's interest in the Prange Collection. The columnist described his own visit to the College Park campus to see the Prange Collection and how he had "heard that it was a very precious resource, but never expected it to be so valuable." He wrote, "What touches me is the ardor, so evident on each page, of people of that time, despite the poor quality of the publications." The columnist then appealed to Prime Minister Takeshita to take a special interest in the Prange Collection because it is "an invaluable resource for the Japanese...the publications by the 'Seinendan' in various areas are especially good...and you say that your starting point in becoming a politician was due to your 'Seinendan' activities." The term 'Seinendan' used in the newspaper refers to asso-
ciations for young men and women that were found throughout Japan in the postwar years.

During his visit to the library's Prange Collection, the former prime minister was especially interested in materials relating to the "Seiendan," asked some questions about censorship during the postwar years, and wondered how the materials came to the College Park campus, according to Frank Joseph Shulman, Curator of the East Asia and Gordon W. Prange Collections. The former prime minister said he had been very much interested in the collection after reading about it but simply could never find the time for a visit until now.

The Japanese visitors were told that the late Gordon W. Prange, Professor of History at the University of Maryland at College Park, served as Chief Historian on General Douglas MacArthur's staff from 1945 to 1951. During Prange's years in Japan, he arranged for the University to acquire the files of the Civil Censorship Detachment of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, which received copies of everything published from 1945 to 1949. The collection was named in his honor prior to his death in 1980. Professor Prange is well known for his five major works on the war in the Pacific published after his death. The holdings of the collection are vast—over 100,000 titles representing more than a million items including an estimated 70,000 book and pamphlet titles, 17,000 newspaper titles, and 15,000 magazine and periodical titles.

Shulman and members of his staff—Kenneth W. Tanaka, Hisayo Murakami, Sally Abernethy, and Connie Tomita Galmeijer—prepared a special exhibit for the visitors comprised of magazines, newspapers, and books in the Prange Collection published in Shimane Prefecture; the former prime minister spent his early years in Shimane Prefecture. The library staff also prepared a 62-page commemorative booklet containing selected listings of publications and photocopies of representative materials. Bound copies were presented to the former prime minister, the ambassador, and other dignitaries. The Takeshita visit to the Prange Collection received extensive coverage in the Japanese media, several reporters covering the event in person.

(Frank Joseph Shulman)

University of Washington East Asia Library Acquires Full-Text Data Base of the Standard Chinese Dynastic Histories

The East Asia Library of the University of Washington, with support from the Henry M. Jackson Foundation and the University libraries, has purchased a full-text data base that currently consists of every character in the pre-Sui dynastic histories. Within a year the data base will include all of the standard histories. This electronic concordance, produced by the Computer Center and the Institute of History and Philology, both of Academia Sinica, allows quick searches of any character in any standard history. For example, the 1.53 million characters of the Hou Han Shu were recently searched in 83 seconds for all references to fa ("means") and li ("law"). All sentences (over six hundred of them) containing either one of those characters were then printed; the printout included the page number where the full passage could be found in the Ting-wen edition.

The East Asia Language and Area Center of the University of Washington can provide funds up to a maximum of $600 toward travel by air after August 15 this year for a limited number of scholars who want to be introduced to and to use this data base. To ap-
ply send a description of your research project (about five pages), how you propose to use the data base, the approximate date of your visit, and travel estimates to Jack L. Dull, Director, East Asia Language and Area Center, Jackson School, DR-05, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195; phone: (206) 543-4373; FAX: (206) 685-0668. DEADLINES: July 1 for those who want to use the system for pre-Sui research; November 15 for those who want to use the Sui through Ch'ing part of the data base. If you are paying your own expenses (and Seattle is very pleasant in the summer), come anytime, but do let us know when you will arrive.

(Yeen-mei Wu)

Harvard-Yenching Library Establishes the Chiang Ching-kuo Memorial Fund

The Harvard Club of the Republic of China on Taiwan has established a Chiang Ching-kuo Memorial Fund at the Harvard-Yenching Library with a pledge of $500,000. The pledge was presented to Harvard University President Derek Bok on March 23 by Arthur Chen, A.M.P. '78, and C. V. Chen, S.J.D. '72, respectively President and Honorary President of the Harvard Club, at a luncheon Mr. Bok hosted in their honor.

The Fund, named in memory of the late President of the Republic of China, is the third book fund established by the Harvard Club at the Harvard-Yenching Library. The fund's income will be used to purchase research materials on the history and development of the Republic of China before 1949 on the Chinese mainland and after 1949 on Taiwan. It will also be used for acquiring materials on the history and development of the Kuomintang, the Nationalist Party, since its founding in 1894 by Dr. Sun Yat-sen. Research aids on the materials so collected, together with Harvard-Yenching Library's existing collections in these two subject areas, will be compiled and published by the Library.

Eugene W. Wu, Librarian of the Harvard-Yenching Library, said, "We are extremely grateful to the Harvard Club of the Republic of China for its continuing and generous support of the Harvard-Yenching Library. The Chiang Ching-kuo Memorial Fund will make possible the development over time of the most comprehensive collection of primary and secondary sources for the study of the Republic of China and of the Kuomintang in the Western world."

The Harvard-Yenching Library was founded in 1928 as the Chinese-Japanese Library of the Harvard-Yenching Institute at Harvard University. It adopted its present name in 1967 to reflect the expansion of its collections to covering all of East Asia, and became a unit of the Harvard College Library in 1976. It is the largest East Asian collection at an American university, with approximately 750,000 volumes of books, 12,000 periodicals, 500 newspapers, and over 25,000 reels of microfilm in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, Tibetan, Manchu, Mongolian, and western languages. The Library's manuscript collection dates from the ninth century and its rare book collection from the twelfth century. It also maintains collections of rubbings, photographs, slides, and personal papers. The most recent addition to the Library's collections is the Charles L. and Lois Smith Special Collection on Contemporary China, which includes the Tiananmen Archives.

(Excerpted from Harvard University Library Notes, no. 973 (April 12, 1990), pp. 1,4.)
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Asian Library Receives Shih-liang Chien Collection of Chinese-Language Books

The Asian Library has been selected as the recipient of an important collection of current Chinese-language publications in Asian studies. These 400 titles in 600 volumes were chosen for a special book exhibition at the 1990 annual conference of the Association for Asian Studies held in Chicago on April 5 to 8. They represent the state of the art in the publishing industry of the Republic of China. They are gifts of the Government Information Office and the National Central Library in Taipei, Taiwan. Although the collection covers a wide range of fields, it is especially noteworthy for major monographic works on Chinese art, literature, and history as well as culture, religion, social development, and other studies in the humanities.

On the eve of the birth of a new Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, this rich resource of current Chinese materials is an especially welcome addition to the Library. It substantially enriches the East Asian collections and will contribute to the growth and success of this newly established academic program in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

This notable gift marks the third major donation from the Republic of China given in honor of the late Dr. Shih-liang Chien 錢里光, a distinguished 1934 alumnus of the University of Illinois. Dr. Chien's son, then the representative of the Coordination Council for North American Affairs, established this memorial collection in February 1988 when he presented University Chancellor Weir with a rare facsimile of the eighteenth-century 500-volume Ch'ih-tsao t'ang ch'in ting su k'u chu'ian shu hui yao 慶定堂欽定四庫全書續編 (Digest of the Great Encyclopedia of the Four Treasuries). In July 1988 the Government Information Office in Taiwan donated an additional 500-volume collection to the Chien Collection. All these materials are marked with a special Chien Collection bookplate honoring Dr. Chien and recognizing the generosity of the donors from Taiwan.

(William Wong)