2-1-1991

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Meetings and Conferences

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This article is available in Journal of East Asian Libraries: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/jeal/vol1991/iss92/8
Association for Asian Studies Joint Western and Southwestern Conference (1990: Austin, Texas)

A joint conference of the Western and the Southwestern Conferences of the Association for Asian Studies was held on October 12-13, 1990 in Austin, Texas. Included in the program was a library panel on "East Asian Library Services for the 1990s" which was organized and chaired by Ai-Hwa Wu (Arizona State University).

Three papers were presented at the panel: "Automation in East Asian Libraries: Decision Making" by Cathy Chiu (University of Colorado at Boulder), "Pinyin vs. Wade-Giles: a Librarian's View" by Ai-Hwa Wu, and "Impact of Information Technology on Library Administration: With Special Reference to East Asian Collections" by William Wong (University of Illinois). Raymond Tang (University of California at Berkeley) was the panel discussant. He provided some provocative comments and critical clarification of the papers. Then the audience was invited to engage in a lively round-table discussion.

Cathy Chiu discussed in detail some important factors to be considered by a library for automating its East Asian collection and services; these are costs, resource sharing, cataloging and reference practices, compatibility with the main library system, and card production. Ai-Hwa Wu put forward her argument in favor of using pinyin for romanization of Chinese from the perspective of "why" instead of "how". William Wong documented the shifts of the library administrative concept, budgetary allocation, and personnel alignment due to automation in libraries in general and East Asian collections in particular; such as the centralization of some traditionally decentralized East Asian library functions, the noticeable increase of the automation budget in contrast to the decrease of personnel funding budget allocation in the past twenty years, and the three administrative organization patterns of East Asian libraries by size of holdings—departmental, combined, and dispersed.

In his discussion, Raymond Tang pointed out that interlibrary cooperative programs and regional obligation play a crucial role in a library's decision in selecting an automated system. Regarding Chinese romanization systems, he reported a fifty-fifty split of opinion among his faculty members who were surveyed about their preference for pinyin or for Wade-Giles; the frustration of non-East Asian librarians in accessing romanized Chinese information; the practical problems involved, especially for a large-sized East Asian library, if a switch to pinyin occurred. He emphasized the need for a positive attitude toward the unavoidable changes caused by automation and other current trends.

Ju-yen Teng (University of Arizona) reported from the audience a recent successful development of CJK catalog record display for local systems which will break the dependence of East Asian libraries on paper cards for displaying vernacular bibliographic data.

(Ai-Hwa Wu)
First Conference of the European Association of Japanese Resources Specialists (Budapest: 1990)

The European Association of Japanese Resource Specialists (EAJRS) was established in October 1989 at Berlin, following the second International Conference on Japanese Information in Science, Technology and Commerce. EAJRS is an association of "international character formed with the purpose of promoting and fostering, by every available means, the development and dissemination of information and library resources on Japan in Europe." The Association is governed by a committee of twelve elected members, one of whom is a liaison member representing an institution in Japan. The committee members are elected at a general meeting for a period of three years. From among its members the committee elects a chairman, secretary, treasurer, and editor. The membership is open to active librarians, curators, information scientists, and academics in Europe with an interest in Japan. The annual general meeting is planned to coincide with the Conference of the European Association of Japanese Studies.

The first conference of the European Association of Japanese Resources Specialists was held at the International Cultural Institute (in Hungarian, Newzetkozi Kulturalis Intezet) in Budapest, Hungary from September 5 to 8, 1990. The conference attendees consisted of librarians and Japanese resource specialists from countries such as Austria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), Japan, and the United States (US).

This year's conference focused attention on: (1) gaining knowledge of the relatively unknown Japanese collections of Central and Eastern Europe; (2) reviewing the progress of the two European cooperative projects of a union catalog of pre-1868 Japanese materials in Europe and a union catalog of modern and current Japanese publications in European libraries; and (3) intellectual exchanges between Association members from Europe, Japan, and North America.

Dr. Zoltan Borha, the Deputy Director-General of the International Cultural Institute, together with the Counsel General of Japan in Budapest welcomed the attendees. Dr. Gordon Daniels, President of EAJRS, gave introductory remarks emphasizing that informational stock on Japan in Europe is great and librarians are key people to fulfill informational needs. The Europeans need to monitor new developments in Japan and at the same time promote more cooperative efforts among Europeans which are crucial for future development. The Association will provide an important forum for ideas, news, and information, an essential foundation for the successful development of the Association.

The agenda of the first general meeting began with the reading of the minutes of the founding workshop and the ratification of the Charter of EAJRS. The treasurer's report and the statement of the newsletter editor were followed by a discussion of future conferences. The first newsletter was distributed at the general meeting. The newsletter will be published semiannually and will contain information in the field of library and information science with special reference to Japan and Japanese studies. It will also carry book reviews. That evening all conference participants were welcomed at a reception hosted by the International Cultural Institute where attendees tasted the wines and the gourmet cooking of the Eastern Europeans.

The second day of the conference was devoted to the Japanese collections in Eastern Europe. Dr. Anton Dolin of the Oriental Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences reported on "Japanese collections in the academic research of Soviet Japanologists." Dr. Olga Moroshkina of the Institute for Scientific Information in Social Sciences reported on "Japanese collections on social sciences of the USSR Academy of Sciences." There were two reports from Czechoslovakia: one was by Dr. Libuse Bohackova of the Naprstek Museum of Prague on "Japanese art collections in Czechoslovakia" and the other was by Dr. Kata Kabelacova of the Oriental Institute of Prague on "Library and document collections of Japanese material in Czechoslovakia." Dr. Eva Apor of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences Library reported on "Japanese collections in Hungary." The Eastern European presentation made a strong impression on the audience, especially when we heard about the difficulties scholars of Japanese studies in the region had to endure. After the day's session ended, attendees had an opportunity to visit the Hopp Museum of the Eastern Asiatic Arts.

On the third day, Yasuko Makino, Mihoko Miki, and Kenji Niki together presented a series of papers titled "Japanese librarianship in the United States." Our papers consisted of an overview of Japanese librarianship in the US, cooperative collection development, shared resources and access, and networking. We were pleased that our papers provided the information about and the activities of Japanese librarians in the United States about which Europeans were anxious to know. After the session, Dr. Norbert Adami of the German Institute for Japanese Studies offered his personal view of "Japanese resources in Europe, why they are there" and Dr. Alfons Dufey of the Bavarian State Library reported on "CJK computer projects in the East Asian Department of the Bavarian State Library."

There were two reports from the members of the International Research Center for Japanese Studies in Kyoto. The first was by Ms. Satomi Nakatsu on "A who's who database for Japanese studies" and the other was by Dr. Yoshihiko Ono on "Japanese character computer input--a new approach." In the evening at the Association dinner, we had a taste of Hungarian food accompanied by live Hungarian music.

The fourth day began with a topic entitled "NACSIS-CAT: features for users, database organization and current status" by Professor Masamitsu Negishi of the National Center for Science Information System (NACSIS) located in Tokyo. A notable development for librarians outside Japan is the establishment of international networks by NACSIS. The satellite linkage between NACSIS and the National Science Foundation (NSF), Washington, D.C., was established last year, and in February 1990 the satellite linkage was extended to the British Library in London. NSF offers scientists and researchers throughout the world access to scientific as well as scholarly information from Japan.

There were three reports concerning the European Union Catalogue Pilot Project. Ms. Shirley King of the British Library Japanese Information Service reported on the history and aims of European Union lists and Mr. Noboru Koyama of the Cambridge University Library reported on the overview of the Union Catalogue of Japanese publications in Europe. Dr. Peter Kornicki of the University of Cambridge reported on "The Union Catalogue of early Japanese books in Europe: progress and finds." The Europeans' ambitious project of the union catalogs of early Japanese books in Europe began two years ago and is expected to be completed within five years. We were told that numerous early Japanese books reached Europe before Perry sailed to Japan.

There were two other reports from Japan: Mr. Kunihiko Shimada of the National Diet Library presented "The present state of JAPAN/MARC and future plans" and Mr.
Akiyoshi Kamiyama of the Diplomatic Record Office in Tokyo reported on "The collections and activities of the Gaiko Shiryokan."

The four-day conference concluded with a round table discussion with Dr. Dolin Anton (USSR), Dr. Masamitsu Negishi (Japan), and Mr. Kenji Niki (US) as discussants. By midafternoon a city tour, organized by the International Cultural Institute with a Japanese-speaking tour guide, was provided to all the conference participants.

The three of us from the United States were honored by the opportunity to attend the first conference of EAJRS. Our reports helped our European counterparts understand recent developments in Japanese librarianship in the United States. For our part, we were very much impressed with the newly-formed Association's activities, especially with their ambitious union catalog projects. We all discovered that Japan librarians share many common concerns. We believe that closer ties with our counterparts in Europe will be valuable to both European and North American organizations for future development.

(Yasuko Makino, Mihoko Miki, Kenji Niki)

Third Western Regional Japanese Library Conference (Seattle: 1990)

The conference was held in Seattle, Washington, Friday, September 28 on the University of Washington (UW) campus and Saturday, September 29 at the nearby Meany Tower Hotel. Forty librarians and faculty members, including seven observers, attended the meetings, representing twenty-one research institutions in Arizona, California, Hawaii, Montana, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and British Columbia. The conference program opened with welcoming messages from Betty Bengtson, Director of UW Libraries, and Dr. Jack Dull, Acting Director of the Jackson School of International Studies at UW. After informative sessions such as "The state of Japan collections in the Western Region" and "Review of current practice," participants were divided into four groups to identify the most pressing needs of the region. The four most important needs were: (1) improved communications among libraries; (2) personnel training for professional and clerical staff; (3) improved resource sharing capability through retrospective conversion, greater bibliographic control, and other methods; and (4) public service improvements, with interlibrary loans being identified specifically as urgent. It was decided that the Union List of Current Japanese Serials be updated and that a microform checklist of Japan and a list of international electronic network resources be compiled.

A grant from the Japan-United States Friendship Commission fully supported this conference, whose organizer and chairperson was Teruko Kyuma Chin.

(Teruko Kyuma Chin)


Kan Lai-bing, Librarian, University of Hong Kong Library, was elected president of the International Association of Orientalist Librarians (IAOL) at a membership meeting held during the 33rd International Congress of Asian and North African Studies (ICANAS), Toronto, August 19-25, 1990. Also elected were Julia L. Y. Chan, Secretary-Treasurer, and Michael J. Costin, Editor, IAOL Bulletin. Ms. Chan serves as Dental Librarian and Mr. Costin as Senior Sub-Librarian in the University of Hong Kong
Library. The three succeeded Warren Tsuneishi (Library of Congress), William Sheh Wong (University of Illinois), and Om P. Sharma (University of Michigan), who had served respectively as president, secretary-treasurer, and editor since their election at 31 ICANAS in Tokyo in 1983.

Seventeen papers were presented at five library panels organized by IAOL for 33 ICANAS under the leadership of Anna U (University of Toronto) and Jack Howard (Royal Ontario Museum). The first panel, on South Asian Libraries and Culture, included papers by James E. Agenbroad (Library of Congress) on "Difficult characters: a collection of Devanagari conjunct consonants and consonant + vowel matra combinations"; and by Felicity Shaw, Hong Kong, on "School libraries in Bhutan." The second panel, on Asian, included presentations by G. Raymond Nunn (University of Hawaii), former president of IAOL, on "Canada and Asia: a geography of archives and manuscripts"; Richard A. Gard, formerly president, Institute of World Religions, on "Bibliographical requisites in Asian religious studies"; Frank Joseph Shulman (University of Maryland) on "Academic and cultural newsletters and news-disseminating bulletins in the West concerned with East Asia"; and Karen Smith-Yoshimura (Research Libraries Group, Inc.) on "Issues in developing systems and cooperative programs to support Orientalists, libraries, and scholarship."

In the third panel, devoted to one library, Michael Albin's paper on "Middle East librarianship and research at the Library of Congress" was followed by Abdul Kohar Rony's paper on "Jawi manuscripts in the Library of Congress"; and then Warren Tsuneishi's "The Library of Congress and East Asian Collections." All three panelists are staff members of the Library of Congress. The fourth panel, on "East Asian Libraries and Collections," heard papers by Julia L. Y. Chan and Lai-bing Kan on "Resources for Hong Kong studies in Hong Kong libraries"; by Susan Prentice (Australian National Library) on "Contacts between cultures: Chinese librarians Down Under"; and by Maureen H. Donovan (Ohio State University) on "Factors influencing the demand for Japanese-language sources at academic libraries in the United States."

In the fifth and final panel, Patricia Ann Polanski (University of Hawaii) read a paper on "Russian publishing in Shanghai"; Olga Bakich, Toronto, on "Russian publishing in Harbin"; Tatsuro Yamamoto, Tokyo, on "Development of movable type printing in Vietnam under the Le dynasty: a study of the comparative history between Vietnam and Japan"; and Osamu Oba on "Imported Chinese books in late Edo period and their influences on Japan." Selected papers presented at the library panels will be published in a forthcoming issue of the IAOL Bulletin.

The University of Hong Kong accepted responsibility for organizing 34 ICANAS, which is to be convened in Hong Kong in 1993 or 1994. (The series began in Paris in 1873 with the convening of the 1st International Congress of Orientalists.) Information on membership in the International Association of Orientalist Librarians and on subscribing to the IAOL Bulletin may be obtained by writing to Ms. Julia L. Y. Chan, Secretary-Treasurer, IAOL, University of Hong Kong Dental Library, Prince Philip Dental Hospital, Hospital Road, Hong Kong. (IAOL was provisionally organized in 1967 at the 27th International Congress of Orientalists, Ann Arbor, Michigan.)

(Warren Tsuneishi)