Meetings and Conferences

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MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

I. American Library Association

During the annual summer meeting of the American Library Association in Detroit in June 1977, meetings were held of the ALA RTSD CCS Ad Hoc Subcommittees on Subject Analysis and Descriptive Cataloging of African and Asian Materials.

A. Subject Analysis Subcommittee

The Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Subject Analysis of African and Asian Materials of the ALA RTSD CCS Subject Analysis Committee met at the Cobo Hall at 4:30-6:00 p.m. on June 17 to hear reports from members on work progress during the recent months. Attending the meeting were Chairperson Arline Zuckerman of UCLA, Elizabeth A. Widenman of Columbia (representing Africa), Allen Cohen of Pennsylvania State University (representing Southeast Asia), Henry Scholberg of the University of Minnesota (representing South Asia), Yung-hsiang Lai of Harvard and Thomas H. Lee of Yale (both representing East Asia).

The Subcommittee was established in 1976 and charged with such responsibilities as "to identify areas of classification systems and subject headings for African and Asian materials which are in the greatest need of change; to establish priorities for making these changes; and to report these findings to the Subject Analysis Committee for transmittal to the appropriate organizations best able to make the change." Initial meetings had been held at the ALA Midwinter Conference in Washington, D.C., on January 31 and February 1, 1977, and a decision was then made to solicit and collect opinions and input from area specialists and librarians concerning changes and additions to the LC classification, LC subject headings, and Dewey classification, through the distribution of solicitation letters and questionnaires.

The Subcommittee realized at the present meeting that it has not received sufficient responses to form meaningful recommendations at this time, and therefore it proposed that its term be extended from one year to two years, ending in June 1978. Each member was then asked to send out follow-up letters and more questionnaires, and to be prepared to give interim reports on their findings at the ALA Midwinter Conference in January 1978.

While representatives of other areas were complaining of the scanty information and materials received from the sources they contacted, representatives of East Asia were able to present to the meeting comparatively more and better organized materials for the Subcommittee to work on. This is due to the wide support of CEAL members and the effort of the CEAL Subcommittee on Technical Processing (CEAL/STP). Based on responses received from CEAL members since he distributed the questionnaires at the CEAL Annual Meeting in New York last March, Mr. Lee compiled a 5-page summary of suggestions, which was divided into two parts: classification and subject headings. Each part was further divided into sections of general and specific suggestions. This summary was distributed at the meeting as a tentative working list, subject to future revision. Mr. Lai also prepared and presented to the Subcommittee a 5-page working list,
filled with subject headings which he thought LC should consider to add or change within its systems. The two lists, prepared by Mr. Lee and Mr. Lai, will be incorporated into one at a later date, with the purpose of having them published in the CEAL Bulletin to attract comments.

Mary K. Pietris of LC, Chairperson of the Subject Analysis Committee who was sitting in at the meeting, disclosed that LC has decided to eschew further changes in its old subject headings, pending the close of its card catalogs. She suggested that the Subcommittee put more emphasis on the suggestion of new headings rather than changes of old ones. Ms. Pietris also suggested that when proposing new headings, members of the Subcommittee would try to provide sample titles for which these headings are needed.

B. Descriptive Cataloging Subcommittee

The Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Descriptive Cataloging of African and Asian Materials of the ALA RTSD CCS Descriptive Cataloging Committee scheduled two meetings: one on East Asia to hear reports from area representatives Effie Y. H. Chen of Princeton and Thomas H. Lee of Yale and the other on Africana and South Asia to hear reports from area representatives David Michener of Northwestern University and Henry Scholberg of the University of Minnesota.

The meeting on East Asia was held on June 17 at 2:00-4:00 p.m. in the Cadillac Hotel Shelby Room, and was attended by Subcommittee Chairperson Frances Ladd of the University of Rochester, Effie Chen, Thomas Lee, and a few visitors. On behalf of CEAL/STP, Mrs. Chen had prepared a very comprehensive summary of problems in East Asian cataloging and in each case provided some alternatives of solution. This summary was based on input which CEAL/STP had so far received from CEAL members. Hoping to receive more suggestions later and to give the materials collected more thought, Mrs. Chen presented the summary to the meeting with the statement that it be considered not as a final but as a tentative document, pending revision and possible enlargement at a later date. The summary was well-received at the meeting and CEAL/STP plans to publish it in the CEAL Bulletin for public examination by all members of the East Asian library community, before it is edited into its final form and submitted either at the ALA Midwinter Conference in January 1978 or at the ALA Annual Conference in the summer of 1978.


II. CULCON. American Panel. Library Subcommittee

The Library Subcommittee held three meetings during the period 1975-76, the first two of a preparatory nature, and the third to discuss priorities. The first, convened in Kyoto on October 27, 1975, was in fact a joint preliminary meeting of two preparatory groups exploring a whole range of possible activities, from interchange of personnel and publications, to interlibrary cooperation, documentation centers for the two countries, and specialized bibliographies. The second, convened on May 10, 1976 in Washington, D.C., considered

-20-
the "Draft Statement of Mission (Revised)" for the Library Exchanges Subcommittees to be taken up by CULCON VIII (Washington, May 26-28, 1976). The third, held on December 12, 1976, at the Library of Congress, focused on specific projects desired by American libraries with special attention to Japanese collections. The American Library Subcommittee has also met informally twice with the Japanese Materials Subcommittee, Committee on East Asian Libraries, Association for Asian Studies, during the latter's annual conventions in March 1976 and March 1977, and has maintained close touch with the International Relations Liaison Committee with Japanese libraries of the American Library Association.

The possible availability of funding from the Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission clearly influenced the thinking of the American Library Subcommittee during its December 1976 meeting. The basis of discussion was that part of H. Mack Horton's report dealing with the "Status of the Library Subcommittee." Horton listed the following as high priority needs: 1) the further development of Japanese collections; 2) establishment of documentation centers; 3) acquisition of government documents and hard-to-procure publications; 4) regional collections, interlibrary cooperation, and computerized bibliographic controls; 5) exchange of library personnel; and 6) preparation of bibliographies.

It was agreed that the Library Subcommittee submit recommendations to the Friendship Commission and there was a strong feeling expressed that priority should be given to the development of "major collections" in accordance with the letter of the law establishing the Commission. It was urged, on the other hand, that the CULCON Library Subcommittee make its recommendations in the overall CULCON context of promoting educational interchange at all levels.

The discussion also pointed to the need to develop quality collections for the study of Japan, as stated in the final communique of CULCON VIII. Other topics explored included updating the Michigan University bibliographical series; funding to solve problems in the computerized processing of bibliographic data incorporating Chinese characters; documentation centers; and translation projects.

On the question of translations, a topic of special interest to the Japan Ranel, we are undertaking a preliminary study of translation aids available in the U.S. This study will investigate the availability of bibliographies of translations, identify existing general and specialized translation journals, and determine existing organizational mechanisms supporting translations and their dissemination.

(Warren Tsuneishi)