Practical Experiences of Wen shi zi liao Cataloging

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PRACTICAL EXPERIENCES OF WEN SHI ZI LIAO CATALOGING

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1. Overview of Wen shi zi liao

1.1 Historical Background of Wen shi zi liao

On April 29, 1959, Zhou Enlai hosted a tea party for the members of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) who were sixty years old or older. He made a proposal to them to document their experiences in the past seventy years witnessing the changes in the nation [1]. They could write these down by themselves or tell scholars to write for them. This proposal resulted in the precious Chinese Literary and Historical Materials, also known as Wen shi zi liao.

The materials were produced by people who were directly involved in the historical events of modern China. Although not history scholars, they had first-hand experience of the events. The so-called “san-qing principles: qing li (personal participation), qing jian (eye witness), or qing wen (directly transcribed),” make the materials unique, so that they may not be reproducible once that time has gone by [2]. They provide very important original historical materials to modern Chinese history that are a supplement to formal historical materials. They may be able to clarify history facts and to reflect a different angle on historic events. For the same event, consulting Wen shi zi liao allows for the inconsistency that may exist between opinions of the authors and others. History researchers may compare and analyze them and derive a more comprehensive conclusion by themselves.

1.2 Establishment of the Wen shi zi liao Committee

CPPCC formed the Wen shi zi liao committee in July, 1959. The committee published a working procedure and suggested subjects consisting of 145 historical events and 61 historical figures for solicitation [3]. The committee issued three solicitation guidelines in 1961: “san yao (three musts), si bu (four nots), and san gei (three givings)” [4, 5, 6].

- Three Musts: must be authentic, must be concrete, and must be bold and straightforward description.
- Four Nots: need not confine to a particular form, need not be complete, need not stick to a particular viewpoint, and should not be labeled.
- Three Givings: authors should be paid, given assistance as necessary, and their requests in processing their contributions should be respected.
The purpose of the three guidelines was to provide an open-minded environment, that authors may not have worries, and therefore may produce materials according to the facts as much as possible. Authors may freely express their own viewpoints. More people from diversified groups of society may be encouraged to participate. However, there are side effects in having minimal restrictions. Authors may be subjective, impacting the concreteness of the materials. They may not have enough understanding of an event or may have a vague memory due to the passage of time. Misleading information may therefore be embedded in the materials. When using the materials, researchers should be careful and validate with different sources to minimize potential errors [7].

Beginning in 1961, CPPCC further organized subcommittees in the level of Sheng (province), Zizhiqu (autonomous region), and Xian (county). Wen shi zi liao Committee hosted the first Wen shi zi liao Workshop which laid down the foundation for future solicitations [8]. Since the first publication of Wen shi zi liao xuan ji (Journal of Literary and Historical Materials) in 1960, there have been 150 issues published by 2002. There were 23 titles of Wen shi zi liao published, mostly in politics and the military, before the Cultural Revolution in 1966.

1.3 The Evolution of Wen shi zi liao
Wen shi zi liao solicitation was suspended in 1966 due to the Cultural Revolution and was not resumed until 1978. Authors were still in fear of the Cultural Revolution movement, however. Also, in the early stage, there were restrictions on covering only historical events in the fifty years from late Qing, to the Xin hai revolution, to the establishment of the Republic, to the Bei yang Government, to Beifa, to the Guomingdang Government, to War World II, to the Deliverance War, and to the establishment of the People’s Republic of China.

The fourth Wen shi zi liao Workshop on September 1983 reiterated the principle of only seeking the facts [9, 10]. The workshop also placed emphasis on being for the nation, not for only any political movement, to remove the remaining fears from the Cultural Revolution, and paved the way to new developments in the following ten years. The direction was set to overseas solicitation, systematic and topical research, national and local collaboration, and direct publication organizations [11]. The time was extended to before the Cultural Revolution, though the actual results were still mainly in military and political areas.

In 1989, the committee chairs of the Sheng, District and Xian level CPPCC Wen shi zi liao Committees met in Beidaihe and established two new focuses [8, 12]. The first was to formally shift the time to after the establishment of the People’s of Republic of China with essentially no
restrictions. The second was to diversify the contents to cover the areas of economics, technologies, education, and cultural studies, as well as to include Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, overseas and minority districts. Economic reform has significantly changed the face of China society. The solicitation of Wen shi zi liao has since significantly extended to a rich set of materials in the areas of economics and culture.

1.4 Comparison to Di fang zhi
Di fang zhi (Chinese Gazetteer) is another set of important historical materials for researchers. Both Di fang zhi and Wen shi zi liao study the history of local events and people. Yet they are quite different in many ways. Wen shi zi liao has a time limitation, only providing modern materials, while Di fang zhi covers the whole of local history, as long as records have been kept.

Wen shi zi liao emphasizes personal participation. Contributors may not be scholars but they are mostly directly involved in the historical events. Di fang zhi is organized mostly by scholars according to existing local documentations.

Wen shi zi liao focuses on seeking for facts. It provides original materials for study that supplement formal history. Di fang zhi focuses on collecting and systematically organizing existing materials [13].

2. Wen shi zi liao Collection at the Center for Chinese Studies Library
2.1 CCSL Collection
The collection of the Center for Chinese Studies Library (CCSL) of University of California at Berkeley focuses on modern Chinese materials (post-1950) and is intended to provide research materials for scholars in North America. The Wen shi zi liao collection is one of the most important collections for studying modern Chinese history. CCSL started the Wen shi zi liao collection in early 1980 with the assistance of the Institute of American Studies of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences [14].

2.2 Early Stage Wen shi zi liao Collection Development
In the early stage, most of Wen shi zi liao were published for internal use only, and were marked as “Nei bu fa xing” (for internal publication). It was very difficult to acquire materials through commercial channels. In addition, most materials were published locally and volumes were usually limited. There was not very much organized information, making collection difficult. In 1982, Fudan University at Shanghai published a classified title index to fifty-two titles of Wen shi zi liao, from the first issue to 1981 [15]. The index compiled provincial and major cities’ Wen shi zi liao
published before 1982. CCSL's early collection was partially based on the index and focused on provincial and major cities.

2.3 Enhancement of Wen shi zi liao Collection Development

In 1988, Yantai Normal College in Shandong Sheng compiled a list of internal historical and geographical publications that was the first complete list to include national, provincial and local publications [16]. A list of all Wen shi zi liao published by the People's Political Consultative Conference nationwide at all levels, up to 1990, was published [17]. Professor Li Yongpu at Yantai's Normal College created an index to the list which was the most comprehensive reference tool for Wen shi zi liao [18]. The index covers 13,000 volumes of 2,300 Wen shi zi liao titles. Under the leadership of Mr. Zhi-ping Chen and Mrs. Annie Chang, CCSL established a leading collection with the assistance of Professor Li Yongpu. The collection is by far the largest Wen shi zi liao collection worldwide outside of China. As of August 2004, CCSL housed 2000 serial titles that have more than 13,000 volumes. The following table gives the CCSL Wen shi zi liao collection by national, provincial and county levels.
Table 1. CCSL Wen shi zi liao

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place Name</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Provinces / Special Municipalities</th>
<th>Cities / Counties</th>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anhui</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>57</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beijing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chongqing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fujian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gansu</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guangdong</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>129</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guangxi</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guizhou</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hainan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebei</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>113</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helongjiang</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hubei</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunan</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>119</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jilin</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiangsu</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiangxi</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liaoning</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neimenggu</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ningxia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qinghai</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shandong</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>137</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shanxi</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaanxi</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shanghai</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sichuan</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>173</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tianjin</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xizang</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xinjiang</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yunnan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhejiang</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>54</strong></td>
<td><strong>1658</strong></td>
<td><strong>286</strong></td>
<td><strong>2010</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


3. Cataloging Wen shi zi liao at the Center for Chinese Studies Library

3.1 Two Stage Approach to Wen shi zi liao Cataloging
Most Wen shi zi liao are in serial format and therefore have to be cataloged according to serial cataloging rules. CCSL decided to use OCLC/CJK for original cataloging and copy cataloging. We took a two stage approach to the catalog due to the complexity of Wen shi zi liao. In the first pre-cataloging stage, we did a preliminary preparation to the whole collection and organized them in a bibliographic holding list. A call number was assigned to each item in the list. In the second full cataloging stage, we then started cataloging one by one in detail according to the Cooperative Online Serials (CONSER) cataloging manual.

3.2 Bibliographic Holding List
CCSL compiled a bibliographic holding list for its Wen shi zi liao collection in a Microsoft Excel file. Each serial title or each special issue has an item and each item comprises eight fields: serial title, province, number of issues, special issue title, volumes, special issue volumes, title in Pinyin, Province in Pinyin. The bibliographic holding list is sorted by province and then by county or city name in Pinyin alphabetical order. As of August 2004, there were 6099 items of 2010 serial titles listed.

The bibliographic list provides CCSL staff with a quick search to the current holdings. CCSL staff can easily update new issues and claim missing issues. For better service to users, CCSL posted the list on its website (http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/CCSL/xls/ccsl_wszl.xls).

3.3 Call Number Assignment
A Call Number field was inserted to the bibliographic holding list. Following the list, catalogers then assigned a Call Number to each serial title according to the Library of Congress Classification Schedule. The Call Number is composed of a Classification Number and a Cutter Number. Call Numbers should follow Chinese local history numbers defined by the Library of Congress Classification Schedule as follows [19].
Table 2. Chinese Local History Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DS793.A~Z</td>
<td>Provinces, dependencies, regions, etc. (各省、自治区)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DS795</td>
<td>Beijing (北京)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DS796.A~Z</td>
<td>Chongqing, Hong Kong, Macau, Shanghai, Tianjin (重慶、香港、澳門、上海、天津)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DS797.22-88</td>
<td>Other cities, towns, counties, prefectures, arranged by province (省以下的各市縣)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For example:
- Hubei Sheng 湖北省 (Classification Number) DS797.48
- Wuhan 武漢 (Cutter Number) W847

3.4 PINYIN Rules

Some fields in OCLC/CJK MARC format that have Chinese scripts, such as the author field, the title field and the imprint field, require a parallel field. Pinyin in parallel fields should follow New Chinese Romanization Guidelines, and Romanization of Chinese geographic names in descriptive and subject headings of the Pinyin Conversion Project of Library of Congress [20, 21]. The guidelines require words to be separated except for personal names and geographic names. For example, 楚雄彝族自治州 should be Chuxiong Yizu Zizhizhou.

3.5 Uniform Titles

Wen shi zi liao is a nation-wide effort led by CPPCC. In each local district, CPPCC also formed a local committee, responsible for leading the local publication projects. Most serials use a common name as the serial title, such as “wen shi zi liao xuan ji” or “wen shi zi liaoxuan bian.” A place name is usually added to the title to indicate its local attribute.

Serial titles that do not have a place name may cause common title problems. To avoid this problem when cataloging these titles, in addition to Title field (245), a Uniform Title (130) that includes a place name “Qualifier” to clarify the local attribute was added. When users perform a search, they may be able to distinguish common titles with the added Uniform Title and Qualifier.

For example, Liaoning Sheng, Chongqing Shapingba Qu, and Sichuan Sheng Yunlian Xian all have the common title of “Wen shi zi liao xuan ji”. In the following example, we added field 130 to the Chongqing Shapingba Qu title.
3.6 Geographical Headings
In China, some places may have a common name. Every time a cataloger selects a Geographical Heading (651), the Subject Authority File should be consulted. The Subject Authority File usually adds a location name as a Qualifier (for example, province name) to distinguish different places that have a common name, or have the same Pinyin names.

For example, Changning Qu in Shanghai (上海長寧區) and Changning Xian in Sichuan Sheng (四川省長寧縣) have different Qualifiers in the Subject Authority File as follows.
   651 0 Changning Qu (Shanghai, China) $x History $v Periodicals·
   651 0 Changning Xian (Sichuan Sheng, China) $x History $v Periodicals·

Another example is the identical name in Pinyin Romanization of Jianyang Xian in Fujian Sheng (福建省建陽縣) and Jiangyang Xian in Sichuan Sheng (四川省簡陽縣). They have different Qualifiers in the Subject Authority File as follows.
   651 0 Jianyang Xian (Fujian Sheng, China) $x History $v Periodicals·
   651 0 Jianyang Xian (Sichuan Sheng, China) $x History $v Periodicals·

3.7 Title Changes
Serial titles are usually selected according to the first issue that is cataloged. Sometimes, a title may be changed. When receiving new issues with title changes, a cataloger has to decide if it is a major change or a minor change. A new record should be established for major changes. For minor changes, an Added Entry (246) should be added to the record. For example, the title “Hebei wen shi zi liao xuan ji ” (河北文史資料選輯) was simplified to “Hebei wen shi zi liao” (河北文史資料) from No. 18. This was a minor change. However, the title was changed again to “Wen shi jing hua” (文史精華) after No. 44. This was considered a major change and a new record was created.
3.8 Analytical Cataloging

Many Wen shi zi liao serials published special issues which usually focused on a special topic and have their own titles. In addition to the serial title, there should be an analytical record for each special issue. The CCSL Wen shi zi liao collection has more than 3000 volumes that need analytical cataloging. The Title field (245) should have the special issue title. The serial title should be included in the Series field (440). When selecting headings, in addition to the Geographic Headings (651), an appropriate description for the specific topic should be added to the Topical Headings (650) and the Name Headings (600, 610).

3.9 Difficulties in Wen shi zi liao Cataloging

Most counties and cities under provinces of China have Wen shi zi liao publications. There are many counties and cities that do not yet have Cutter Numbers assigned by the Library of Congress. Catalogers may either wait for a new LC Cutter number or assign a number according to the Cutter Number Table by themselves. However, the self-assigned number may be different from the later-assigned LC numbers.

The new LC Chinese local history classification gives a new span for each county level place (DS797) which is separated from its provincial level (DS793). Thus, provincial level and county level materials of a province will be shelved in different shelves. Reference librarians need to remind patrons to check both places for better results.

4. Conclusion

Wen shi zi liao is one of the primary resources in studying modern Chinese history. However, it is almost impossible to collect a complete set for an individual library. It is suggested that libraries should seek to collaborate in collecting issues.

Professor Li’s Index to Literary and Historical Materials (1992) is an excellent work for researchers who need to use Wen shi zi liao [18]. But it has been more than a decade since its publication, and an update would be of great value to researchers. The rapid progress of technology calls for a new method for indexing and searching. Web-based Wen shi zi liao in digital format would be extremely useful, but it will require tremendous resources to make it happen.

References

1. Ningxia Huizu Zizhiqu zheng xie wen shi zi liao wei yuan hui bian 寧夏回族自治區政協文史資料研究委員會編. “Zhou Enlai tong zhi Zhongguo ren min zheng zhi xie shang hui yi


