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**A Librarian's Visit
to China**

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In October, 1981, at the invitation of the Chinese government, I took part in a conference held in Beijing, Wuhan, and Guangzhou celebrating the 70th Anniversary of the 1911 Revolution. About 140 Chinese scholars and 43 scholars from other countries, including 14 from the United States, participated in the event.

The conference opened with a plenary session commemorating the 1911 Revolution in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, but the main academic sessions were held in Wuhan, during which papers were presented dealing with various aspects of the 1911 Revolution. Topics ranged from the role of the Chinese bourgeois class in the revolution to the relationship between the revolutionary party and Chinese secret societies.

In between the meetings and visits to museums and revolutionary sites, I made arrangements to visit libraries in each of the metropolitan areas of Beijing, Wuhan, and Guangzhou.

My first visit was to the University of Peking Library. I was met by Guo Songnian, deputy director of the library. Guo discussed the establishment of the library in 1902, its 3.3 million holdings, and its 22 departmental libraries. He went into some detail discussing the importance of exchange, which began at the University of Peking Library in 1953. By 1981 Peking had exchanges with over 300 institutions in fifty countries. Most of the exchanges are with Japan, the United States, and West Germany. Peking is interested especially in receiving publications in the fields of philosophy, economics, sociology, and all of the social sciences.

My next visit was to the National Library of China, the equivalent

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of our Library of Congress. I was greeted by Huang Zungui, head of the Department of Reading Rooms and Lending Service, and Jiang Bin-xin, staff member in the Foreign Relations Department. The library currently has a collection of some 10 million books and serials. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the National Library had established exchange relations with over 3,000 institutions in many countries. In 1980 they received approximately 3,000 periodical titles and 10,000 monographic and pamphlet titles on exchange. We discussed various problems of exchange and what changes could be made to improve working relations. Over and over the emphasis was on China striving for modernization, the need for the introduction of new technologies, the establishment of library networks, and especially the need to acquire new knowledge through exchange of publications.

The next stop was Wuhan in central China, where I visited Wuhan University Library. In a vast contrast to the National Library, Wuhan has established only sixteen exchanges with libraries throughout the world. In the past, exchanges were set up only within China, but since 1979 the emphasis has been on foreign countries. During the Cultural Revolution of 1966-1976 when

Books to China

China today is embarked on one of the greatest educational efforts in its history. To support this effort, the Foundation for Books to China has organized an extensive program of publications assistance to educational institutions in the People's Republic. The Foundation has sent over 160,000 volumes in 1981 and hopes to exceed that number in 1982.

They are seeking donations of academic books and journals for Chinese institutions in most fields in the sciences, social sciences, and humanities. Publications for donation should be in at least fair physical condition, reasonably free of religious or political propaganda, and published within the last fifteen years. Journal sets should be in runs of at least two years in length. Send any publications only after prior discussion of the quantity and quality of the materials available for donation.

The Foundation is a tax-exempt, non-profit organization, and its work has the approval and active cooperation of the educational authorities in China. For further information, or to offer publications for donation, contact: Dale Bratton, Executive Director, The Foundation for Books to China, 601 California Street, San Francisco, CA 94108; (405) 765-0664.

the university and the library were closed, all exchange arrangements were terminated, producing a large gap in Western language holdings. Acquiring materials from this period is now one of their primary goals.

Wuhan University also has one of the oldest library schools in the country. Founded in 1920, it now graduates over 100 students annually as part of a four-year program for a bachelor's degree. The school had seventeen graduate students in 1981 and twenty-five faculty.

Wuhan has set up an exchange with library science faculty at Simmons College in Boston. Last year Wuhan sent two lecturers to Simmons for advanced study, and in return they invited the president of Simmons College to China to lecture on library administrative management. The school's deputy director, Sun Binyang, commented that Wuhan's level of management could be improved by applying the management techniques and new technology available in many foreign universities. She said their main objective is to modernize and improve the level of teaching and enhance their staff.

My next visit was to the Provincial Library of Hubei in Wuhan, which functions as a provincial public library. In the thirty-three years after the establishment of the People's Republic of China, the Provincial Library has been expanding. By 1981 the holdings included 2.2 million volumes,

500,000 of which were Chinese classics (rare books printed before 1911), and 130,000 of which were foreign language books primarily in Russian and English. Hubei maintains exchanges with over 1,000 units within China and they have established programs with several libraries in Ohio, Australia, and Japan.

My last stop was Guangzhou (Canton) where I visited Zhongshan University Library. The old library building had long ago proven inadequate to meet the increasing need for study and storage space, and many of their 2.5 million volumes are stored in dormitories and old campus buildings. A new library building currently under construction will accommodate 1,200 seats and make their holdings more accessible.

Currently Zhongshan has exchanges with 63 overseas universities and other academic institutions. Publications used for exchange include books and journals published by their own university as well as commercially produced texts. Their most prolific exchange is with Japan, followed by the United States, Australia, England, France, and Germany. Zhongshan needs books in the fields of sociology, anthropology, and law. As with other libraries I visited, Zhongshan's budget is not sufficient to buy the books and journals they need. Exchange is an extremely important acquisition tool.

From my visits to the Chinese libraries and my



Reading Room area, Zhongshan University Library, Canton.

previous research into the subject, I am convinced more than ever of the importance and utility of international exchange, especially for libraries in developing countries where resources are scarce.

My visit to China was both personally and professionally rewarding. The contacts and exchanges that I established with Chinese librarians and scholars enabled me to gain much insight into their libraries and the problems they face in obtaining even basic academic materials. ■■

RBMS PRECONFERENCE

The Twenty-Third ACRL Rare Books and Manuscripts Preconference, "Growth in the Face of Adversity: The Business of Special Collections in the 1980s," will be held July 6-9, 1982, at the University City Holiday Inn, Philadelphia.

Focusing on the practical work that librarians perform in a variety of institutional settings, the program will consider the prospects facing special collections in the straitened economic circumstances characteristic of the 1980s. Particular emphasis will be on smaller collections and the ways in which their staffs might work within their larger institutional environment.

Keynote speaker will be David H. Stam, Andrew W. Mellon director of the Research Libraries, New York Public Library. Other speakers are: Samuel A. Streit, Brown University; David Farmer, University of Tulsa; Edwin Wolf II, Library Company of Philadelphia; Lynda C. Claassen, Library of Congress; Ann Gwyn, Johns Hopkins University; Eleanor H. Pinkham, Kalamazoo College; and James Tanis, Bryn Mawr College.

The Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America will sponsor the opening reception in conjunction with registration on Tuesday evening, July 6. The Van Pelt Library of the University of Pennsylvania has invited participants to a reception in their Special Collections on Wednesday evening, and the Library Company of Philadelphia, 1314 Locust Street, will also host a reception on Thursday evening.

A variety of seminars are also planned as part of the preconference program. Seminar topics include: the small special collections library; deaccession; conservation; grant application procedures and accounting requirements; marking special materials; teaching the history of books and printing; exhibitions; sampling collections for conservation needs; and formats for automated manuscript cataloging.

Preconference registration will be limited to the first 250 applicants and should be sent in by May 31. The registration fee of \$90 for ACRL members, or \$140 for non-members, includes lunches on July 7 and 9, and entry to the pre-

ference receptions and to all papers and seminars. Late registrations will be accepted on a space-available basis with an additional fee of \$15.

The preconference hotel is the University City Holiday Inn, 36th and Walnut Streets, close to the University of Pennsylvania in West Philadelphia. This hotel is also an ALA conference hotel and reservations are made by using the ALA housing form in the January *American Libraries*. Participants are urged to register early for the hotel; ALA regulations require a first come, first served approach to room assignment.

Additional information and registration forms for the preconference may be obtained from: RBMS Preconference, ACRL/ALA, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611. ■■

HUMANITIES GRANTS STILL AVAILABLE

The 1983 budget submitted by the Reagan Administration to Congress has requested funding \$3.4 million for the Research Resources Program of the National Endowment for the Humanities. This level of funding, identical to that of fiscal year 1982, will enable the program to continue its support for projects to make research materials in the humanities available to the public.

The program makes awards for the preparation of catalogs, inventories, registers, guides, bibliographies, and other finding aids for collections of documents, printed works, and non-print materials of significant value for advanced research in the humanities. It also funds archival surveys, model conservation and preservation projects, and projects to improve the ways in which librarians and archivists care for and make available research materials of interest to humanist scholars.

The deadline for submission of applications is *June 1, 1982*. Potential applicants should first call or write the Research Resources Program, Mail Stop 350, National Endowment for the Humanities, 806 15th St. NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 724-0341. ■■

Directory Available

ACRL now has available its *Directory of Extended Library Campus Personnel*. Copies are free to members; non-members may order them for \$1 each. All orders should include a self-addressed mailing label and 50¢ for postage and handling. Send requests to ACRL/ALA, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611. Also available at the same rate are offprints of "Guidelines for Extended Campus Library Services" (*C&RL News*, March 1982).