

Problems of Cataloging Chinese Books

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Since the World War II Chinese materials in American libraries have had an unprecedented growth both in the number of collections and in the size and variety of the resources. According to the survey conducted by T. H. Tsien, in 1930 there were 355,000 Chinese volumes held in the North American libraries. As of June 30, 1975, there were 4,006,108 volumes in Chinese held in 93 North American East Asian collection,¹ in addition to many small and private collections. The rapid development of Chinese collections has led library services toward more complication and more specialization in which cataloging will play an important role.

The format and the printing system of Chinese books are quite different from those of Western languages books. Compared with Japanese books which furnish all information catalogers require and also list the authors' dates of birth and death and the readings of authors' names and titles, Chinese books, especially old books, are far from satisfaction in such respects. Sometimes the title page, the colophon, the printing date and the publisher's name are not given at all. Before a book in Chinese style is to be cataloged, the cataloger must do a lot of preparatory work. Listed in this paper are some distinct problems with possible solutions which, it is hoped, will be helpful.

I. Main entry.

A. Author identification. The first problem concerns the

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main heading to be chosen for cataloging a book in Chinese style. Such books often do not bear the name of an author or editor, so that catalogers have to identify first what the book is and who the author or editor is. Catalogers should identify their real names from various bibliographical tools. If no information from the said reference books is available, all catalogers can do is to read carefully the book itself. From the preface and postscript, catalogers may reach a decision to catalog the book under an author or editor or under title. But in most prefaces and in all postscripts only the authors' pen names or posthumous names are given, rarely their real names.

B. Form of author headings. 44Bla of the *Anglo-American Cataloging Rules*, specifies to use the forms preferred by the person whenever it is known. Many Chinese diplomats' names are given in the forms they themselves preferred, such as: Sze Sao-ke Alfred, Koo Vi Kyuin Wellington, and Tong Hollington Kong, not in the systematic romanizations, Shih Chao-chi, Ku Wei-chün, and Tung Hsien-kuang. But some other famous diplomats are listed in the systematic romanizations, such as Yen Hui-ch'ing and Yeh Kung-ch'ao, not in their own forms, Yen Wei-ching Williams and Yeh K.C. George. Such inconsistency should not be maintained. Sun Yat-san and Yüan Shih-k'ai were two Presidents of China. When their names appear as the main headings, they are not given the proper designation, 'China. President'. 80A1 of the *Anglo-American cataloging rules* "Chief of state etc.," applies to most countries, but not China. It seems no reason to have such a discrimination.

C. Books done by several persons. Some Chinese books were written by persons organized as commissions under orders of emperors. Such books have been cataloged under the name of an emperor or a chief editor, or under title by various libraries. For example, a famous book, *Ta Ch'ing i t'ung chih* or *Comprehensive geography of the Ch'ing Empire*, has been cataloged under Ch'ing Kao-tsung, Emperor of China, 1711-1799, or under Chiang T'ing-hsi, 1669-1732 by some libraries.² Actually the book was first compiled by a commission appointed by Ch'ing Shêng-tsu, Emperor of China, 1654-1722. Mr. Hsü Ch'ien-hsüeh

was the Director-General of the Commission in 1687.³ Subsequently it was revised under the orders of Emperor Ch'ing Kao-tsung in 1743 and again in 1784, and of Emperor Ch'ing Jên-tsung in 1820.⁴ According to 4A2 of the *ALA cataloging rules for author and title entries*, the book should be cataloged under title because this book was done by a commission of many people and no one worked as an editor-in-chief. Hsü Ch'ien-hsüeh, the so-called Director-General, was an administrator only, and Chiang T'ing-hsi who was the first editor of the second revised edition, was not its chief editor. The so-called commission did not bear any title. As Chiu Kaiming indicated, the author heading such as: "China. Imperial Commission, date" could not be set up either.⁵ In general, such a commission included Chien li, Director-General or Superintendent; Tsung ts'ai or Tsung tsuan, Editor-in-chief; T'i tiao, Proctor; Tsuan hsiu or Pien hsiu, Editor; and so forth,⁶ If only one person is listed as Tsung tsuan or Tsung ts'ai in a commission, the book done by this commission can be cataloged under the name of Tsung tsuan or Tsung ts'ai. If there are more than one person working as Tsung tsuan or Tsung ts'ai. The book should be under title and an added entry made for the one listed as the first Tsung tsuan or Tsung ts'ai.

D. Choosing headings for Chinese classics. Chinese classics are the hardest to catalog. No author or editor is given. The text is very difficult to understand. After checking with the Library of Congress depository catalog cards in various libraries, I have found that Chinese classics are generally cataloged in two ways:

1. Main entry under title, such as in the cases of the following books:
Wu ching, Shih ching, Shu ching, I ching, Chou li, Li chi, Hsiao ching, Ssü shu, Ta hsüeh, Chung yung, Lü shih ch'un ch'iu.
2. Main entry under author, such as in the cases of the following books:

Ch'un ch'iu and *Lun yü* under Confucius, *Mêng-tzü* under Mencius, *Tso chuan* under Tso-ch'iu Ming.

To solve the problems in connection with the cataloging of Chinese classics, many references for classics can be consulted to decide which heading is appropriate for a particular book. Checking against many reference tools, I found that some of Chinese classics cataloged in the United States libraries should be reconsidered. From the following sample discussions, it may be learned that different kinds of classical books should be cataloged in different ways.

1. Main entry not under annotator. For instance, *Ch'un ch'iu* was annotated by Tso-ch'iu Ming and entitled *Tso shih ch'un ch'iu* or *Tso chuan*.⁷ *Ssü k'u tsung mu t'i yao*, therefore, lists Tso-ch'iu Ming the author of *Tso chuan*.⁸ But Chao K'uang, taking into consideration of the fact that the name of Tso-ch'iu Ming appeared in *Lun yü*, concluded that he was born earlier than Confucius and could not be the author of *Tso chuan*.⁹ Chu Hsi¹⁰ and Ts'ui Shu¹¹ maintained that the surname of the author of *Tso shih ch'un ch'iu* was Tso, not Tso-ch'iu. If his surname was Tso-ch'iu, the book should be entitled *Tso-ch'iu shih ch'un ch'iu* in the same manner as the *Ch'un ch'iu* annotated by Kung-yang Kao was entitled *Kung-yang shih ch'un ch'iu*, and the *Ch'un ch'iu* annotated by Ku-liang Ch'ih was entitled *Ku-liang shih ch'un ch'iu*. The word, Chuan, means an annotation to a Chinese classic.¹² *Tso chuan* should be cataloged under the same heading as that of the *Ch'un ch'iu* instead of the heading, Tso-ch'iu Ming, as cited above, and an added entry can be made for him as a supposed annotator or editor. By the same token, the *Kung-yang shih ch'un ch'iu* and *Ku-liang shih ch'un ch'iu* should be treated the same way.

2. Main entry under author. The *Hsiao ching*, for instance, was regarded as a Confucian book by all references.¹³ It consists of questions and answers between Confucius and his disciple, Tsêng-tzü. Both Yao Nai and Ts'ui Shu¹⁴ maintained that *Hsiao ching* was not written by Confucius; it was written by the pupils of Tsêng-tzü, who transmitted the ideas of Confucius. It

matters not whether the book was written by Confucius himself or merely a record of dialogue between Confucius and Tsêng-tzū put down by later scholars, *Hsiao ching* should be cataloged under Confucius instead of under title, with an added entry for Tsêng-tzū.

3. Main entry under supposed author. Tzū-ssū said: "Chou Wên-wang had been imprisoned in Yu-li, and then *Chou-li* was done. My grandfather had been besieged in Ch'ên, and then *Ch'un ch'iu* was completed. I myself had been suffered in Sung so that I should have some writing and then wrote the book, *Chung yung*."¹⁶ All scholars agreed that Tzū-ssū was the author of this book.¹⁷ Only Ts'ui Shu disagreed.¹⁸ It seems that the book should be cataloged under Tzū-ssū or his real name, K'ung Chi, with the added phrase, Supposed author, instead of under title.

4. Main entry under title. Some scholars said that *Lun yü*, a record of Confucius' words and deeds, was compiled by the Master's pupils.¹⁹ Liu Tsung-yüan maintained that the book must have been written by Tsêng-tzū's disciples since it described Tsêng-tzū, who was forty years younger than Confucius, dying in old age.²⁰ Liang Ch'i-ch'ao said that most chapters of *Lun yü* ended with text added by later scholars, which had nothing to do with Confucius, and some entire chapters did not list anything related to Confucius or his pupils. He also said that both *Li chi* and *Lun yü* were the same kind of books recording the words and deeds of Confucius and his pupils.²¹ Since *Li chi* is cataloged under title, it seems that *Lun yü* should be treated the same way.

5. Main entry under compiler. According to Ssü-ma Ch'ien, Lü Pu-wei asked his retainers to write down the facts they had heard and then compiled their writings into a book entitled *Lü shih ch'un ch'iu*.²² All scholars agreed that Lü Pu-wei was the compiler of this book.²³ Chang Hsüeh-ch'êng said that Huai-nan and Lü shih compiled the facts given by their retainers with correcting errors and carrying out some harmonized ideas in order to become an independent sect, and the books, *Huai-nan-*

tzū and *Lü shih ch'un ch'iu* were then compiled.²⁴ *Huai-nan-tzū* has been cataloged under the compiler, so *Lü shih ch'un ch'iu* should be treated the same way, under Lü Pu-wei instead of under title.

E. Form of classical names. If a classical book is to be cataloged under its author, the next problem is to decide which form of the author's name is to be used. As a general rule, we use the name best known to Western scholars. For example, Confucius, the latinized posthumous name, has been used instead of his real name, K'ung Ch'iu, or K'ung-tzū or K'ung Fu-tzū. By the same token, Mencius, the latinized posthumous name of Mêng K'o or Mêng-tzū, has been in use. On the other hand, many classical names have not been latinized in the same way, such as Lao-tzū, Chuang-tzū, Hsün-tzū (340-245 B.C.), Huai-nan-tzū (d. 122 B.C.), Mo Ti (fl. 400 B.C.), and Han Fei (d. 233 B.C.), used commonly by various libraries. It is not known why some classical names are written in posthumous forms (e.g., Lao-tzū, Chuang-tzū, Hsün-tzū, and Huai-nan-tzū) and some are indicated by real names (e.g., Mo Ti, and Han Fei). According to 44 Ble of the *Anglo-American cataloging rules*, the dates of birth and death are not to be given for classical names. Yet, in the examples cited above, some names are followed by dates, and some are not. Listed in all Chinese references²⁵ the book, *Huai-nan-tzū*, was written, actually compiled, by Liu An, Huai-nan-wang, who has never been named Huai-nan-tzū as given by Herbert A. Giles.²⁶

To resolve these difficulties, the following suggestions are made. First, if a classical name is available in a latinized form no doubt, this form should be used. If not, a choice between real name and posthumous name should be made. Personally, I prefer the latter when it is commonly known. In case we decide to use the posthumous names, we should use them without exceptions. Second, the classical period in China, from 2205 B.C. (Hsia dynasty) to 222 B.C. (before Ch'in Shih-huang-ti), is a very long period. For readers to know in which early period the classical author existed, I would suggest adding date of birth and death in the headings when they can be discovered with a

reasonable amount of search. Third, we have to compare the information from different sources. If some conflicts appear, we should examine them carefully and make a reasonable judgement. For example, the book, *Huai-nan-tzū*, actually not a classical book, should be cataloged under the heading, Liu An, d. 122 B.C. instead of under the form, *Huai-nan-tzū*, d. 122 B.C.

II. Issue date.

Many old Chinese books do not list the publication dates. If we can not identify the issue dates from the general references used to decide the main entries, we may get the preface dates or postscript dates instead. But most authors and editors would like to write down the characters of T'ien kan or the Ten celestial stems combined with those of Ti chih or the Twelve branches such as Chia tzū, I chou, or etc. representing the year he wrote the preface or the postscript. It is not too hard to get the exact year from checking these combined characters against the reference tools for Chinese and Western calendar.

Some Chinese scholars also liked to use the astrological names instead of the characters of the Ten celestial stems such as the name, O-fêng, representing the character, Chia, and the poetical names instead of the characters of the Twelve branches such as the name, K'un-tun, representing the character, Tzū. In other words, they used the combined names, O-fêng K'un-tun, representing the year of Chia-tzū, and so forth. Most Chinese catalogers do not understand what these astrological terms mean and describe it as "no date". This is not correct. Catalogers should find out what the astrological names and poetical names stand for from the *Chinese-English dictionary* (London, 1912), by Herbert A. Giles, or the *Tz'ü hai* (Shanghai: Chung-hua, 1941), and than figure out the real year.

III. Establishing geographical names as subjects.

When We establish a name of a place as a subject or head-

ing, sometimes problems occur. The first one is the form of the place name. Which form should be preferred? Vernacular or conventional form? Most libraries prefer the latter form which is better known to Western countries. For example, Yangtze River, the conventional form, has been used by most libraries as a subject instead of the vernacular form, Yang-tzū Chiang or Ch'ang Chiang. The form, Huai River, has been used instead of the form, Huai ho. But the form, Hwang ho, has been used for subject instead of the conventional form, Yellow River. In a standard book, Huai ho is listed without giving any conventional form as Huai River. Yellow River is listed as conventional form of the vernacular form, Huang ho, with a *see* reference from the form, Hwang ho.²⁷ It is not known what is the basis for using the form, Huai River, not the form, Yellow River, as a subject.

Another strange thing is that T'ien Shan, a great mountain in the Sinkiang Province, has been used as a subject with the form, Thian Shan mountain. "Shan" is a Chinese romanized form of the word, mountain. Thian Shan means *Thian Mountain*. We can not call it Thian Shan Mountain. The best way seems to be to follow the book, *Official Standard Names*, compiled by the U.S. Board of Geographical Names. If a place is given with conventional name in the book, we use the form as a subject. Otherwise we use its vernacular form. If this is followed without exception, there will be no conflict at all.

One more problem is the form of provincial names. In most libraries there are two forms in existence, such as:

(a) Kwangtung, China. (b) Kwangtung, China (Province)
After examining the Library of Congress depository catalog cards in various libraries, I have a rough picture as follows:

The provinces: Kansu, Shansi, Shantung, Sikang, Szechwan are given under the form (a)

The Provinces: Anhwei, Chekiang, Fukien, Honan, Hunan, Hupei, Jehol, Kiangsi, Kiangsu, Kwangtung, Kweichow are given under the form (b).

Two points should be mentioned here. First, most provinces are written in the conventional form. The province, Hu-pei, is an exception. To be consistent, the conventional form, Hupeh, should be used instead of the vernacular form, Hu-pei.²⁸ Second, these names are followed some with and some without the character, Province, in parentheses. 73C and 74A1, of the *Anglo-American Cataloging Rules*, specify that only a few provinces, named the same to others, should be distinguished as follows:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Chekiang, China (Province) | Chekiang, China (River) |
| 2. Jehol, China (Province) | Jehol China (River) |
| 3. Heilungkiang, China(Province) | Heilungkiang, China (River) ²⁹ |
| 4. Honan, China (Province) | Honan, China (Island) |
| 5. Shantung, China (province) | Shantung, China (Cape) ³⁰ |

The names of all the rest of the provinces, no conflict with other names, should be under the form (a) without adding the character, Province, in parentheses.

IV. Subjects subdivided by period.

Another problem related to some subjects subdivided by period should be discussed here. In many libraries there are subjects for history, politics and economics as follows:

1. China—History—Early to 1643.
2. China—History—Ming dynasty, 1368-1644.
3. China—Pol. & govt.—Early to 1643.
4. China—Econ. condit.—Early to 1644.

There seems no reason to explain why these subjects end with one year's difference. Based on the last year of the Ming dynasty, all the above subjects should be consistently ended with the same year, 1644.

The subjects for the history of Chinese literature are another problem. There are only three subjects in use at present. For ancient literature, the subject is "Chinese classics." For contem-

porary literature, it is "Chinese literature—20th century." All other periods are covered by the general subject, "Chinese literature—Hist. & crit." The collections of Chinese literature are greatly portioned among the East Asian collections in most American libraries, and tendencies of Chinese literature have been changed many times during the past so that subjects for the history of Chinese literature should be more subdivided by periods. Based on the books on the history of Chinese literature written by Chêng Chên-to, Liu Ta-chieh and Li Ch'ang-chih,³¹ I suggest that subjects for Chinese literature should be subdivided by periods as follows:

1. Chinese literature—Early to 222 B.C (before Ch'in dynasty) *see* Chinese classics.
2. Chinese literature—B.C. 221-265 A.D. (Ch'in, Han dynasties and Three Kingdoms: Paleography and rhyming compositions)
3. Chinese literature—265-589 (Chin dynasty and Epoch of Southern and Northern dynasties: Antithetic style of writing)
4. Chinese literature—589-960 (Sui, T'ang dynasties and Epoch of the Five dynasties: Poetry)
5. Chinese literature—960-1279 (Sung dynasties: Tz'ü or lyric poetry)
6. Chinese literature—1279-1368 (Yüan dynasty: Drama)
7. Chinese literature—1368-1644 (Ming dynasty: Novel)
8. Chinese literature—1644-1912 (Ch'ing dynasty: Novel)
9. Chinese literature—1912- (Contemporary literature)

The subject, "Chinese literature—20th century", should be cancelled.

V. Conclusion.

It is evident that cataloging Chinese books is a complicated task. In addition to the practical problems as described above, there are many other problems equally puzzling, such as the efficiency of cataloging books in Chinese, the cooperative Chinese

cataloging and the classification systems for Chinese libraries. all these and other problems need solutions. Yet, some of these problems can not be well solved by a single librarian or institute. The leading Chinese libraries should make joint effort to find the ways in which all these problems can be effectively solved.

Chinese biographical references are not comprehensive enough to be of much help to Chinese catalogers. Many libraries rely heavily on the Library of Congress cards for biographical information. But the number of authors in Library of Congress depository cards is much smaller than that in the authority file of the Library of Congress. If such authority files in the Library of Congress and in some other leading libraries can be jointly published in book form, it will be one of the most useful reference aids. Many problems concerning personal, corporate, and place names can be easily solved. The new Chinese libraries may not need to build their own authority files which will cause much trouble and require much time.

The Library of Congress *National Union Catalog*, a cumulative author list representing Library of Congress printed cards and titles reported by other American libraries, does not cover all cards of books in all Chinese libraries in the United States. A large number of Chinese books being cataloged by various libraries are identical. If we have a national union catalog for Chinese books, which shows the cards of books already cataloged by all libraries, many basic problems will not appear at all. Fortunately, the Library of Congress with the support by the Committee on East Asian Libraries has issued the monthly *Chinese Cooperative Catalog*, beginning with January, 1975.³² But only 12 East Asian libraries are chosen to participate. It will be much better if more libraries can join the cooperative program. According to the opinion of Gloria H. Hsia, Chief of Catalog Publication Division, Library of Congress, if the number of subscribers of the *Chinese Cooperative Catalog* could not reach to 100 (at present only 56), it might not be able to survive.³³

The Ohio College Library Center (OCLC) has established a computer system. One of its functions is on-line union catalog-

ing and shared cataloging. At the end of 1975, OCLC's data base contained over 2 million bibliographic records that represent cataloging provided by the LC on MARC II tapes and cataloging done by 690 participating libraries. Each time the system displays a full catalog record on a CRT (cathode ray tube) terminal, the symbols of the institutes holding the book appear at the bottom of the screen. Beginning with 1976, the system has contained the non-romanized catalog records (unfortunately only records in transliterations, not in vernacular forms). Terminal operators in some libraries are able to catalog between 15 and 20 titles an hour when records are resident in the system. If all East Asian libraries wish to participate in this center, it is believed, problems of cooperative cataloging and union cataloging will be easily solved. Also the efficiency of cataloging will be much increased.³⁴

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