

ルーヴァン方丈記

tales from my ten foot square in Leuven

Arjan van der Werf

INTRODUCTION

While we are a small and relatively recent addition to the world of Japanese Studies, most of you — thanks to the active participation of professor Vande Walle, Hans Coppens and others at these meetings of the EAJRS — will at least have heard of the Japanology Section and the East-Asian Library at the University of Leuven.

In the absence of a clear introduction to our library — apart from the presentation on Japanese materials we do not have due to the split up of our university in the late 1960s — I thought it proper to bring you up to speed about the developments in recent years and the status quo of our library. Even our website at present does not provide very much information. Therefore this will not be an academic or technical introduction of some fancy database, collection or technical feature at our library; I will rather try to introduce who we are, how we came to be and what we can provide.

COLLEGIUM TRILINGUE

As early as 1517 the College of the Three Languages was established at the university for the study of Latin, Greek and Hebrew. This was an independent college within the university, but it mainly provided the students of theology with a sound knowledge of Latin Greek and Hebrew for the interpretation of the Bible.

Off and on, depending on the professors employed at the college, the curriculum was broadened to include Arabic, Aramaic, Syriac and other Middle Eastern languages, still mainly to serve the study of theology.

ORIENTAL STUDIES

In the late 19th century and early 20th century interest was slowly broadened to the Persian and Indian region — still mainly for religious and philosophical reasons — and even China, Japan and Korea — mainly due to the personal interests of individual researchers.

Oriental studies now emerged more institutionalized at both the faculty of theology and the faculty of arts. At the end of the 20th century it was represented administratively as Oriental and Slavonic

studies — meaning everything east of Germany — with independent sections for Japan and China. Nowadays these sections have a more independent administrative position within the faculty of arts.

JAPANESE DONATION

The origins of Japanese studies at the University of Leuven are closely related to the destruction by fire of the library in 1914. As early as 1915 — still during WW-I — the French called upon the allied forces to rebuild the library of the University of Leuven. The Japanese immediately joined in this initiative. In 1919 wheels were effectively set in motion by organizing an international committee with a Japanese national committee of 15 persons.

The Japanese finally decided on a donation of books, rather than money, and these books were to represent and explain Japan's unique culture. The last shipment of a total of almost 14000 works arrived in Leuven in 1926.

SATSUMA CHAIR

Key figure in the operation was Adachi Mineichirō, Minister to Belgium and later Ambassador, who seems to have kept the communications open between the university and the Japanese committee. He also introduced Baron Satsuma Jihee, a Tokyo based industrialist who donated a chair for the study of the history of Japanese civilization. The chair was inaugurated in 1928 and still exists today, with series of lectures from visiting professors, lecturers, and researchers on a wide variety of topics in the 'History of Japanese Civilization'.

With this chair the university considered the Orient to be covered enough to create the degree of "Licentiate of Oriental Philology and Philosophy", resulting in the Orientalist Institute in 1936.

WW-II

With the German invasion of Belgium in 1940 the library was struck again, and the collection of 900,000 volumes burned to the ground. Miraculously, the Japanese donation of the 1920s survived the fire.

"3 STRIKES, YOU'RE OUT!"

The division of the university in a Dutch speaking campus and a French speaking campus in the late 1960s is often called the 3rd fire of the library. Books were divided between the two universities based on even or odd shelfmark numbers (with consideration to books clearly belonging to a series, such as encyclopedias). It is redundant to state that this operation is disastrous for any library, especially for emerging collections, such as the Japanese studies collection.

'Fortunately' the entire Japanese donation of the 1920s stayed together and moved as a whole to Louvain-La-Neuve together with the French speaking professors. All we have left in Leuven of the

donation is a vase, which, incidentally, is not part of the official library resurrection donation, but a gift from prince regent Hirohito who visited Belgium and the ruins of the university library in 1921; this gift was sent together with the donation.

The Satsuma chair was also divided between Leuven and Louvain-La-Neuve, but was only sporadically occupied on the Flemish side.

1970s-1980s

In the late 70s Professor Vande Walle entered and rapidly expanded the courses on Japan. By 1986 a full 4-year program for Japanese studies had been developed, and in 1995 a second chair was added with course on modern Japan, politics and economy.

This is about the situation we have today.

LIBRARY

Together with the development of the Japanese studies course, the collection of books also grew steadily. In absence of the Japanese collection of 14,000 volumes donated in the 1920s, no large-sized location was needed to house the collection. Still the Chinese studies and Japanese studies collection, together, was large too large to be housed in the library of the Faculty of Arts, and it received a separate location within the Central Library of the university. This room, then called the Chinese-Japanese Library currently serves as the reading room of the East-Asian Library.

In 1996 the collection of the documentation center of the China-Europe Institute, also in Leuven, merged with the Chinese section of the library. The Chinese-Japanese library was now renamed East-Asian Library, its current name, and in need of space a stack room above the reading room was made available.

In 1997 already, this space turned out to be insufficient, and parts of the attic of the Central Library were added to the East Asian Library, year after year, even though the Central Library itself was, and is, in dire need of space.

Currently the Japanese collection contains about 13,000 volumes and they are located as follows:

- Reading room: reference materials, series and latest issues of periodicals.
- Stack room: monographs, latest acquisitions and materials most likely to be used. Back issues of running periodicals and most-often consulted periodicals.
- Attic: the remainder. Materials less likely to be used, halted periodicals, virtually everything in Korean, and unprocessed materials (for the Japanese collection about 4000 volumes of which 90% in Japanese).

This division in itself is not without logic, and we do try to keep up with the interests of the users, so the right books are at the right location.

PROBLEMS

LOCATION

It is probably the common problem of libraries all over the world, that, before long lack of space is a major concern and collections get moved around all the time. In the case of our library the slow migration from a single book room, to a combination of reading room and stack room, and certainly the slow invasion of the attic has proved fatal for the accessibility of the collection — both the Japanese and the Chinese, not to mention the Korean.

From the outset, the East Asian library was intended as an open-stacks library, and we still are. Users can browse freely through the books and find what they need and bring it to the checkout counter themselves. This saves time for the library staff and avoids hiring extra personnel to retrieve materials from closed stack rooms.

The problem here is that we actually only pretend to be an open-stacks library. The attic is off limits for the users and can only be accessed on request. This is because the stairs leading to the attic also give entrance to the stacks of the Central Library, which are absolutely off-limits for general users. On request people can receive the key and go up into the attic.

This means that for a comprehensive overview of the materials we hold on a specific subject, people will have to check all three locations — reading room, stacks and attic (and even a 4th location for AV materials) — and from experience we know they do not.

CATALOG AND CLASSIFICATION

This problem could be solved easily if there were a central location with a catalog — preferably electronic — with indexes on title, author, subject and so on. Users could then be able to easily create lists of materials they need and then go and fetch them at the specified location within our library.

Unfortunately there is no such location — not electronic and not on paper.

The cause of this, again, is the slow transformation from a one-room library to one with three different locations.

CLASSIFICATION AND SHELFNUMBERS

For classification of materials we have been using the well-known Harvard-Yenching Classification by Alfred Kaiming Chiu, in the 1943 edition with the amendments made in 1976.

We classify books on subject according to this table and add the first four letters of the author's family name and the year of publication to create a shelf number.

Therefore a book on Japanese philosophy in general by John Jones in 1995 will be get shelf number 1430 JONE 1995. And in the old days it would receive an index card on name title and the classification number, and additional cards for subjects closely related to the work. For example if John Jones's work also were to have an extensive section on Confucianism it would also receive a

card for 1442 with a reference to the actual shelf number. Pretty straightforward cataloguing and classification. All this was common practice up to the 1990s and the physical card index is still located in our reading room.

But there are some problems with Harvard-Yenching in my opinion when it is applied to a Japanese studies library, or ours in particular:

1. Virtually all of the 10000 main entries (0100-9999) are assigned leaving little room for addition or alteration.
2. 70%, or more, is aimed at China and the world in general and only 30% is aimed at Japan and Korea (with Korea often being pushed away in sub numbers or not mentioned at all)
3. Many subjects have a tremendous amount of detail and can be divided even further according to at least 11 different tables depending on the nature of the main subject, even though that same aspect may already be mentioned in the main table.
4. This amount of detail creates "doubles" (e.g. 4420ff Industry and enterprise under "Economics" and virtually the same list at 8400 Manufactures and industries under "Agriculture and technology")

What to do with for example with books on dress and clothing? Do they fall under:??

Social sciences > Customs and manners > dress, costume and make-up

Social sciences > Economy > Industry and enterprise > Textile manufacturers

Arts and crafts > Costume accessories and glyptic art

Arts and crafts > Needlework and textile art

Agriculture and technology > Home economics and domestic science > Clothes

Agriculture and technology > Handicrafts and artisan trades > Dressmaking trades

Agriculture and technology > Manufactures > Textile industries

Are cooking books and recipes

Social sciences > Customs and manners > Food

or

Agriculture and technology > Home economics and domestic science > Food and cookery

?

5. Several subjects in the main table have no division according to country, whereby our way of creating shelf numbers resulted in sections which would be separated according to country and others not, creating obvious confusion.
6. Our copy of 1943 is outdated to say the least. Obviously the section on Japanese history ends around the start of the Pacific War in 1941, and Korean history ends with the Japanese annexation (3489), without any spare entries before going over to Korean geography (3490). Things like the internet have to be inserted arbitrarily at places where there is room (in our case under "Technology" and not under "Social sciences > communication" even though most books we hold about the internet deal with the social aspects and not with technology).
7. Only a summary of the classification table (of over 350 pages) was made available to the public, on paper. This summary included the China and world categories as well but not, for example, the 11 tables of division. This, of course, was a mistake on our side.

Early on the Sinology section of our library parted with the HY classification and adopted another classification scheme. Potentially this provided room in the classification table (70%) for some expansion, addition and alteration, certainly for books concerning Korea. Unfortunately this has not been done; and even the "Chinese subjects" remained in the summary of the classification table presented to the public, creating confusion.

The "tremendous amount of detail" on certain subjects and the "double entries", could have been resolved by deciding not to use certain numbers, or to redirect clearly to other numbers. Over the years some attempts at reform have been made but none were executed thoroughly, or were simply ignored or overlooked by others.

It must be said that time, and change of staff is crucial as well. There has always been only one half-time position for the Japanese section, sometimes assisted by *arubaito* students. All have had their own way of interpreting the classification system. Index cards were made by typewriter, or written by hand for Japanese materials, leaving not much time for much needed reorganization. (There are still about 1500 books, mostly Japanese, that were donated in the 90s that still need to be catalogued). In the 1990s the library catalogue was automated, whereby registering books in the system became a priority, leaving even less time to reorganize the library.

In the days of paper-index-cards-only and open-stacks-only, the situation remained workable:

- If a user wanted a specific title or author, he/she would go to the alphabetical card index, find the shelf number and retrieve the book. Even with the closed stacks in the attic this was not so much a problem, because the existence of the book in the library was known.
- If a user wanted books on a specific subject, things become a little bit trickier. The proper way would be to consult the classification table and then check the card-index for titles and possible cross-references. In practice, however people would get the classification number, which corresponds with the shelf number and would proceed directly to the stacks to see what we hold, missing out on material with a different main classification number and the material in the closed stacks.
- The double numbers of Japanese and Korean subject was resolved by physically placing the books on Korea on different shelves than those on Japan. Some misplacements do still occur when returning books to the shelves, but these are quite obvious.

At this point we could still blame the user for not finding what he or she needed.

AUTOMATION

In the 1990s western language materials were entered into an OPAC-system as well as on the paper index cards. While the index cards contain additional subject headings in the form of the Harvard Yenching classification numbers, the digital entries do not. They only have the main classification number in the holding description, as that is the first part of the shelf number. Thereby it is difficult to search on subject in the OPAC system. Still users could be referred to the paper index cards.

Library of Congress subject headings were entered — not always available in a first edition — but not systematically: *chūto hanpa*.

SPCAT

Initially works in Japanese and Korean were entered into the OPAC as well, in romanized form. This was halted when the library joined NACSIS Webcat. The idea was that a local stand-alone search engine (SPCAT) would retrieve the registered holdings from Webcat and that these could be searched locally and ideally through the interface of the University Libraries OPAC. This was unsuccessful. The university itself, however, did foresee the possibility of entering Japanese into its own OPAC system "in the not too distant future." Webcat therefore remained the place to register our Japanese holdings, maybe only temporary, but most likely as an addition to our own OPAC, as a contribution to the union catalogue.

Because all materials were now entered into an OPAC system, the card index was discontinued, because it was thought that soon everything would be in one OPAC system. Especially the change to the ALEPH software in 2005 was promising. There would be no more *mojibake* or indexing problems, and the system is in use by libraries in China without problems with CJK characters. But now in 2008 we are still not allowed to enter Japanese or Chinese into the system.

Why?

The IT people who are tweaking the library software in Belgium for some reason have not yet activated specific functionality in the software. Of course these people get requests and demands from all libraries participating (Leuven University is not the only one using Aleph) and therefore the request from two librarians — until recently just one — in a small and specialized library is likely to "get lost". Other libraries dealing with non-roman symbols seem to be satisfied with their materials being registered only in romanized version; we get no backing from them.

Anticipating the slow adaptation of the library software to accommodate CJK characters, my colleague in charge of the Sinology section of the library, early on started to maintain a MS Access database, in addition to a full card index, in order to have electronic data which can be imported easily into Aleph once we are allowed to enter CJK into the library catalogue.

Similarly, I have started a database for the Japanese holdings based on new acquisitions but as I only started 2 years ago and am employed only half time, this is not yet very spectacular. We are hoping that when the day comes we can download bibliographical and holding information in batch from NII and migrate this to Aleph.

CURRENT SITUATION

When I entered in December 2006 the situation had reached a point where something had to be done before the library would become unworkable. The previous librarian in charge had effectively left the library several years earlier, when the situation was still workable and had been succeeded by staff that stayed on for several months or maybe one year — again employed only half time or less — too short a period to get a grasp on the situation.

In addition there was an upcoming donation to the library of about 2500 volumes from a Japanese private library which really speeded up my decision to do something before the collection grew too large.

I have been in charge of the collection for almost 2 years now — part time again — and I still have not found a solution for all the problem areas. This is also one of the reasons for this presentation here today: please help! I will truly value your input.

MY DOINGS SO FAR

First off, I decided to make a digital copy the classification table because the copied paper version with all its handwritten notes had become unreadable and unworkable. Fortunately one of my predecessors had made an MS Excel sheet summary — the summary available to the users of the library — which saved me a lot of typing. Then I stripped this of unused entries — the roughly 70% reserved for China and world — and made an HTML file of it with notes for (future) revisions. This can be seen at

<http://preprod.arjan.be/>

Here you can see how much of Harvard Yenching is not related to Japan and Korea, and this may call the entire classification table into question. But with about 10,000 volumes on the shelves at the time and me being employed only half time, I did not think it wise to introduce a new system. Besides that, the Harvard Yenching table is used successfully in other Japanese studies libraries.

The cleaned-up version — the status quo — without the empty numbers but with several redirections and mergers in place can be seen at

<http://lsin.arjan.be/>

This is the actual classification table we work with at the moment — still including several notes and references. The 11 tables of subdivision have been reduced to 3.

KOREA

In the original Harvard-Yenching table Korea is very cramped. Especially the works on modern history are tucked away in endless sub numbers, or placed on new locations, depending on the taste of the librarian in charge. In other subjects Korean works are placed at the main number of the entire Harvard Yenching table with sub number 49 of the original division table 2, even though that table is not applicable or an entirely different table is applicable to that section.

It soon became very clear that virtually all books on Korea had to be renumbered and replaced.

Therefore I created a new classification table for Korea based on the cleaned-up Harvard Yenching table. This can be seen at:

<http://lsin.arjan.be/korea/>

Before implementing this new classification, I decided to run a trial with internet sites and resources (effectively my bookmarks on Korea — and Japan. See <http://www.arjan.be/>).

FIND A BOOK?

As stated before, up to the late 1990s we could "blame" a user if specific materials were not found. But now the situation has changed, and I cannot be 100% sure that we do not hold certain materials. First there is a backlog of about 4000 items — including the recently acquired Inabata collection. When users nowadays come for materials they have to search in several locations:

TITLE OR AUTHOR?

For western works: if you have a title or specific author, good news; you can go to the OPAC and this will give you 100% guarantee whether we have the item or not.

Japanese works: if a work has been acquired by our library before 2000 please refer to the card index. If a work has been acquired after 2000 check NACSIS-WEBCAT

Korean works: Check the OPAC, the card index, and all physical locations: reading room, open stacks and closed stacks. (Lack of knowledge on the Korean language has caused material to be placed unregistered on an assumed subject).

SUBJECT?

Western works: try to find as many classification numbers in the HY Lovaniensia table related to your subject and go to the card index. The card index may give you more cross-reference numbers related to the subject. Now go to the reading room and open stacks to find materials you need. Also look at classification numbers that have no holdings according to the card index because the card index only holds materials acquired before the year 2000. Then, to get a complete view of what we hold, ask the key to the attic to see the remainder (which is actually 2/3 of our collection). And to be really exhaustive, search the OPAC on Library of Congress subject headings you may find in the material found.

Japanese works: again, try to find as many classification numbers in the HY Lovaniensia table related to your subject and go to the card index, try to find more and check all on all locations. As NACSIS-WEBCAT does not really have an option to search on subject, this is all you can do. Besides, if you do manage to search on subject, through title words, or free words in NACSIS, the chance that we hold a copy is remote — us being a small library with only a limited number of registered holdings being registered in NACSIS-WEBCAT (3500/100,000,000). EU-CAT gives better odds (with the possibility to search on shelf numbers)

Korean works: The same story: find as many classification numbers as you can and search the stacks. Here there is even no computerized system that will help you along.

POST-CONFERENCE NOTES:

Two major improvements have resulted from the above presentation in Lisbon.

- The University of Cambridge was kind enough to include us in their collection of SPCAT databases (extractions from NACSIS per library) and host it at their servers. This has been

welcomed and praised highly by staff and students and not in the least by myself — thanks Koyama san! Hopefully this catalogue can migrate to our servers in the near future.

- Even though entry of Japanese materials is still not allowed in our system, we now can enter the Harvard-Yenching classification numbers in our OPAC-system, creating a new central catalogue for the materials for Japanese studies (in progress). Still Japanese and Western materials have to be searched separately, but no-longer at several locations: the OPAC for Western and SPCAT for Japanese

The thing now is to speed up registration of the back-log, and press the integration into the Aleph-system. Hopefully I will be able to present you with a success story on that in the near future.