Notes From The Library

Celebrating Special Collections: Scholarship and Beauty

On June 6, 2002, the Library celebrated the opening of the Special Collections Room with its 6th Colloquium on Information Science, celebrating Special Collections: Scholarship and Beauty. The Colloquium focused on our Special Collections: *China in Maps* and *History of Science and Technology*.

Opening the first session, Prof. Zhang Longxi of the City University of Hong Kong gave a fascinating talk, *Maps, Poems and the Power of Representation*. Roderick Barron, an antique maps specialist, spoke of the history of Western map making from Medieval times to the 18th century, using maps from the Library's collection as examples.

Next, Mr. David Ting, Head of the Office of the European Commission, and HKUST's President Chu formally opened the Map Exhibition and the Special Collections Room.

Starting the second session, Prof. Fung Kam Wing of the University of Hong Kong spoke of the exchange of scientific knowledge between China, the Arab world, and Europe from the Tang dynasty up to the Qing. He concluded with remarks on some important works that UST Library has in its Special Collections, Latin translations of Chinese works of the Ming that first gave Europe examples of Chinese medicine.

The last speaker, Mr. Jonathan A. Hill, regaled the audience with an amusing story of adventures in the rare book trade and his part in the arrest of an international book thief, and concluded with a discussion of some of the important first and early editions in science and technology that are now housed in the Special Collections Room: a first edition of Ptolemy from 1528, Euclid from 1537, Newton, Bernoulli, and other greats. It is "a collection unique between California and Moscow", Mr. Hill declared.

The complete texts of all the speakers are available on the Library web server (*http://library.ust.hk/info/colloq/jun2002/*).

Browsing the Library's Additions Online - The New Acquisitions List

The New Acquisitions List (*http://library.ust.hk/res/newbooks/*) recently released by the Library will provide users a weekly snapshot of our collection. You may wonder how these items are selected and added to the Library collection. In general, books come to the Library through three different channels. Over 60% of the items are from various book approval plans with vendors in North America, Europe and China Mainland. This process is in place to make certain that important works published by major publishers, learned societies and universities in subject areas pertinent to our faculty's research and teaching are being sent to us in a timely manner. Some 30% are items selected by bibliographers in the Library or materials recommended by faculty members. This ensures that both our faculty and professional staff have input in the collection building process. A small number are gift items donated to the Library by faculty, private citizens and institutions.

The New Acquisitions List, currently featured in our homepage (*http://library.ust.hk/*) allows users to browse each week's additions by title and class/call number. If you are interested in certain items, you can either place a hold on the item or go and fetch the book on the New Book Display Shelves or the Library stacks on LG3 or LG4. Presently, new book and media items of the last two months are in the database.

Prof. Zhang Longxi on Maps, Poems, and the Power of Representation

> *"If power is about space, spaces were created through the exercise of power. Cartography could be seen as central to this process"* - Jeremy Black

Professor Zhang recounted the historical episode of Jing Ke's assassination of the King of Qin (荊軻刺秦王 －圖窮匕見) to begin his discussion on the value of maps even from the very ancient days in China. Allusions to the military importance of maps are easily found in Chinese literature. Similarly in the West, maps were used for effective movement of troops and intelligent work throughout the history.

Inspired by the new discoveries and conquests in the 16th century, cartography was also a popular motif in art and literature. Prof. Zhang cited poems by John Donne, paintings by Vermeer, and also John Million's Paradise Lost. There are many vivid references to maps, scientific discoveries, and map-making.

Prof. Zhang made a special reference to Hartman Schedel's world maps of 1493 in the HKUST Special Collection "as a good example of the medieval mappamundi". Ignoring the cartographical precision, they become powerful means to create a certain image of the world in the viewer's mind. Chinese maps before the 16th century show a similar tendency. Chinese map-makers depicted the world not so much with

scientific accuracy but with dominant ideologies and cultural interests.

In recent decades, scholars have become increasingly interested in studying the artistic and cultural nature of cartography. Denis Wood in his book, *The Power of Maps*, maintains that moral and political questions are more interesting than scientific ones. However, Prof. Zhang argues that "maps are valuable precisely for their accuracy and usefulness". Prof. Zhang concluded his paper by saying that "A more helpful attitude is a balanced approach in appreciating both science and whatever beyond science, both knowledge and imagination, or as the Colloquium calls for - the appreciation of Scholarship and Beauty."

INTERNET: Software Aggregators

Some of you may recall an online program called "Archie" which served as a search engine for software, data files, and other information available from FTP servers around the world.

Today there are dozens of Web sites which collect information on computer software for you to consider, and to simplify the location and downloading of it.

When exploring these sites, look for some of the following features: Most popular downloads, overall and by category; Good descriptions; User reviews and/or ratings; Site editor ratings; Comparisons with other software by category; Direct download links; Personalization options (e-mail newsletters, notification of updated or new entries in favorite categories, etc.).

Also see how reliable and fast access to the site is; and explore whether you tend to agree with the other reviewers; How frequently is the site updated?; are Mirror Sites available, especially for non-U.S. locations?

Here are some of the directories focusing on software for at least the most common Windows and Macintosh platforms: Download.com - *http://downloads-zdnet.com.com/*; Versiontracker - *http://www.versiontracker.com/* (my personal favorite); Tucows.com - *http://www.tucows.com/* (includes categories for Linux, BeOS, OS/2, various PDA systems, and gaming consoles); and Cnet - *http://download.com.com/*

Another site I like is NoNags - *http://www.nonags.com/* (Windows only, but makes a point of not including, overpriced, and overly-advertising-based software - a good site with several international mirrors).

Keep in mind that there are a variety of software review and download sites which are dedicated to specific individual operating Systems, from Amiga to Unix variants.

We don't have space here to go into many others, but note the "Solaris Freeware Project" at *http://www.sunfreeware.com/* - this is *the* place to find literally thousands of free programs if you have a Solaris-based workstation.

If the sites above don't provide what you need, hop over to Google (*http://www.google.com/*) or the "Software Directory Directory" (*http://boole.stanford.edu/nerdsheaven.html*) and start searching for the ones that focus on your system!

MEDIA: Language Learning

According to Ethnologue, there were over 6,800 living languages on the face of the earth in the year 2000. While you cannot learn them all, we have resources in the Library's Media Resources unit to help make you multilingual.

The bulk of the material for language learning in the collection is in the form of "kits" that combine audio-tapes with text. These include European languages like French, German, Russian, Portuguese, and Spanish and Asian languages like Japanese, Hindi, Indonesian, Tagalog, Thai, and Vietnamese.

The most popular languages for self-study are English and Putonghua. Conversational English and TOEFL materials are available in classification number PE1128. Putonghua materials are in PL1125-PL1129. For those who wish to learn Cantonese, they can look at PL1733-PL1739.

The Library also collects language learning in CD-ROM format, for example *Berlitz's Passport to 31 Languages* (Media P53.28 .P38 1998), and *Power Chinese* (Media PL1125.E6 P69 1997), a CD-ROM that teaches both spoken and written Putonghua.

Another popular format is videocassette, with series like *Dragon's tongue: communicating in Chinese* (Media PL1129.E5 D734 1990 v. 1-19), *Destinos: Introduction to Spanish* (Media PC4112 .D47 1992 v. 1-26) and *Deutsch Direkt!* (Media PF3065 .D4 1989 v. 1-5).

Last, but not least, don't neglect feature films. Enjoying a movie in a foreign language is a pleasurable way to grow familiar with a new language and culture. HKUST Library has a collection of "classic" movies in Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Russian.

Training of Librarians from Mainland and ...

In April, Mary Ann Ingua, College Librarian of the University of the Philippines, Los Banos, had a one-month attachment program at the Library under the sponsorship of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA). In her evaluation report, Ms Ingua recounted the fruitful experience she had with the Library, and in particular, the extensive knowledge she acquired in the application of information technology to all aspects of library applications.

Shortly afterwards, Beijing Institute of Technology Library (北京理工大學圖書館) sent their Heads of Systems and Acquisitions to HKUST Library for a three-month training under their new "Non-local Staff Training Program (館員外出學習計劃)". During this time, our Library staff spent much time and effort to orient them on library policies and operations as well as provide them with hands-on exercises in various library modules. Both librarians felt that they gained substantial insight in library management and considered this intensive training a truly unique and invaluable experience.

Systems Update - "Millennium"

During the Summer, the Library acquired a more powerful server to run the Library Online Catalogs software. This is the first step in a three-year process of upgrading all our Library Online Catalog

software modules to their new "Millennium" versions. These new modules from Innovative Interfaces, Inc., have been completely rewritten using the Java programming language, which allows many improvements in backend and staff-based operations, along with improved platform independence and product scalability.

The first new module, to be installed this Fall or Winter, will be that used by our catalogers. This phased upgrade will also enable some significant enhancements in the catalog records and in the user interface.

If you are interested in learning more about the "Millennium" software, take a look at Innovative's web site at *http://www.iii.com/html/products/products.shtml*

International Recognition

In the years since the founding of the University, the HKUST Library has gained a great deal of status and respect for the quality of the collections and services available to our users. Recently we have received additional recognition from two software developers and content providers.

The June 2002 issue of Innovative Interfaces' *INNTOUCH* magazine had a full-page article on the Library's 10th Anniversary, including mention of our ongoing collaboration with them in software development (XML MetaServer, etc.). The article is available at *http://www.iii.com/pdf/inntouch/inntouch_6-02.pdf*

Also this Summer, the Walter de Gruyter publishing house in Berlin invited the HKUST Library to be one of the famous and beautiful libraries around the world, a photo essay.

OUR WEB: New Subject Guides
http://library.ust.hk/subj-guides.html

In addition to continuously updating and maintaining the existing Subject Guides on our Web site, the Library constantly watches for new research trends and for other topics of possible interest.

Recently, we have compiled Subject Guides on current topics like *E-Commerce*, *Stocks & Investment*, *Logistics & Transportation* and *Technology Management*.

In the Humanities we also have two new additions: *Anthropology* and *Literature*.

For general reference, *Writing Guides & Manuals* pulls together resources on style manuals for various disciplines and reference guides for different sorts of writing; while *Searching Information in Chinese* is self-explanatory.

About ninety guides are now listed. Over fifty are for specific subjects or topics while the rest are for individual courses. We welcome suggestions. If you have ideas for new topics, please email us at library@ust.hk