

RESEARCHING ASIA IN CANADA

Geoffrey C. Stewart, University of Toronto

In an ongoing series on researching other parts of the world in Canada, this article highlights some of the resources available to scholars of East and Southeast Asia working in Canada. Though not exhaustive, it is intended to offer an indication of the types of materials that may be easily accessed by historians in Canada. Given the time, expense and logistics involved in traveling halfway around the world to conduct research, I hope that this will facilitate some projects.

The Asian Library at the University of British Columbia (<http://www.library.ubc.ca/asian/>) possesses one of the best collections of Chinese materials in Canada. It is internationally renowned and boasts holdings of over 580,000 volumes of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Indonesian texts. Copies of many of these documents may be acquired through Inter-Library Loan (ILL). Their staff has worked hard to acquire collections from all over the world, beginning with the acquisition of the Puban Collection in 1960. This collection contains 3,200 Chinese titles in 45,000 volumes of thread-stitched binding. One of the most unique and distinguished collections in North America, the Puban collection contains Confucian Classics, divisions of History, Philosophy, Literature and an Encyclopedia section. The Division of Confucian Classics is rich in classical philology with more than half of its titles relating to studies of literary exposition, phonology and etymology. The Division of History contains an extensive collection of local histories, including the 56 district gazetteers of Guangdong Province. The largest holdings are found in the Division of Literature, which contains more than 1,500 titles, including fine prints and multi-colour editions from the Ming and Qing periods. In addition to the Puban Collection, the Asian Library also holds a vast array of other Chinese sources including more than a quarter of million books, current periodicals, microform collections, and newspapers, such as the on-line version of the People's Daily (1946-2004). The library also contains the Swann collection, the Song Xuepeng collection, the Jing Yi Zhai collection and access to the Scripta Sinica database—the largest full text database of traditional Chinese classics and historical materials—and two major e-journal databases in Chinese. As well, the Asian Library offers an array of Japanese government publications, 13,000 Indonesian volumes and over 23,000 Korean monographs. UBC is one of two Canadian institutions to belong to the elite North American Korean Collection Consortium (the Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library at the University of Toronto is the other). This is a cooperative collection development program sponsored by the Korea Foundation for the purpose of sharing resources.

The University of Toronto also holds a sizeable collection of primary Asian source materials in its Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library (<http://www.library.utoronto.ca/east/>). Like the Asian Library at UBC, the East Asian Library serves as a major resource

for East Asian studies in North America that can provide copies of material through ILL. It too is very active in many inter-library co-operative East Asian research projects. Its Chinese holdings include the Mu Collection, over 40,000 works collected by the Chinese scholar Mu Hsue Hsun; and, like the Asian Library at UBC, the Siku Quanshu and Chinese Ancient Texts (CHANT) collection. The Siku Quanshu collection was compiled between 1773 and 1782 and represents the complete library in four branches of literature pertaining to 5000 years of Chinese civilization. CHANT consists of texts from Ancient China (Antiquity to the late 6th century). The East Asian Library also boasts other holdings that date from the twelfth century through to the end of the Cultural Revolution as well as the Taiwan Wen Xian Con Can, a collection of 595 Taiwanese volumes published between 1959 and 1972. Other unique fields in the Cheng Yu Tung's Chinese studies collection are Military History, Hong Kong music and film score materials from the 1940s to the 1970s, and a collection of Malaysian Chinese literature.

As the largest Japan area research collection in Canada, the Cheng Yu Tung Library also contains a rich collection of Japanese material. These holdings include works from the Edo, Meiji, Taisho and Showa periods, along with various newspaper collections such as the current runs of the *Nikka Times* (February 1980 to the present) and the *Nikkei Voice* (December 1992 to the present) along with earlier prints of *Konshu No Nippon* (June 1974 to May 1995), *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* (May 1983 to July 1990) and *Yomiuri Shinbun* (December 1978 to June 1980).

In addition to its membership in the North American Korean Collection Consortium, U of T's East Asian Library boasts a Korean collection containing substantial holdings in history, literature, philosophy, religion, anthropology and the arts. McGill University also houses an East Asian studies collection worth mentioning that has materials on China, Japan and North and South Korea in both the original scripts and western languages.

Canadian scholars of Asia are not just limited to collections available through Canadian libraries. The Carl A. Kroch Library at Cornell University has one of the largest Asian historical and literary collections in North America covering South, East and Southeast Asia. Some of this material, or duplicates, may be available through ILL. Likewise, the University of Michigan, Berkeley, UCLA and Chicago, to name a few other American institutions, have extensive Asian collections, parts of which may be accessed by ILL. Harvard University has announced plans to digitize its pre-modern collection which hopefully will be available through open access.

... continued on page 6

The internet is also the source of a vast selection of Asian materials. Vietnamese historians looking at the period of the American War may benefit from the digital collection of the Vietnam War available on-line through the Vietnam Center and Archives at Texas Tech University. The Virtual Vietnam Archive (www.vietnam.ttu.edu/virtualarchive/) contains over 3 million pages of digitized materials available over the internet. While most of it is of a personal nature from American veterans and some scholars on the war, there are some Vietnamese materials available making this an indispensable resource for anyone interested in the Vietnam Wars. Australian National University is the source of the Vietnam WWW Virtual Library, the Internet Guide to Vietnam and Vietnamese Online Resources (<http://coombs.anu.edu.au/WWWVL-Vietnam.html>), and the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore, may be accessed at <http://www.iseas.edu.sg>. Other useful websites for primary and literary sources are the National Archives of Japan (www.archives.go.jp/english/index.html), which contains some digital material; the Japan Centre for Asian Historical Records (www.jacar.go.jp/english/index.html), which has a large number of documents relating to Japanese relations with other countries between the Meiji period and 1945 available for down-

load; the Japanese Historical Text initiative (<http://sunsite3.berkeley.edu/jhti>) for Japanese literature; the Chinese Text Project (<http://chinese.dsturgeon.net/index.html>); the Library of Chinese Classics (<http://www.china-guide.com/culture/library.html>); the Book of Rites (<http://www.sacred-texts.com/cfu/liki/index.htm>); and The Yi-jing (<http://www.afpc.asso.fr/wengu/wg/wengu.php?l=Yijing>).

Finally, another goldmine for Canadians studying Asia is the Center for Research Libraries (CRL) (<http://www.crl.edu>). As Mary Lynn Stewart discussed in the premier article of this series, the CRL focuses on material from outside of the United States. It has an extensive range of Asian sources including, among other things, the Document Center of Cambodia — a digital collection of primary documents concerning the leadership of Democratic Kampuchia (Khmer Rouge) — an on-line series of Chinese pamphlets used for political communication and mass education in the early period of the People's Republic of China, and the Digital South Asia Library. Additionally, the CRL provides a digitization service for select material which may be scanned from CRL's collections and delivered directly to scholars. For more information on this see the Digitization Services section of the CRL website.

AVAILABLE IN 2009-2010

a *newly-inspired* collection
of canadian historical documents



*A few acres
of snow*



*A country
nourished on self-doubt*

A FEW ACRES OF SNOW:
*Documents in Pre-Confederation
Canadian History, third edition*

**A COUNTRY NOURISHED
ON SELF-DOUBT:**
*Documents in Post-Confederation
Canadian History, third edition*

Edited by Thomas Thorner
with Thor Frohn-Nielsen
Paperback \$49.95

*"This new edition is most welcome for
teachers and students of Canadian history
alike. The coverage is extremely thorough,
incorporating all time periods, themes,
and issues, including a judicious blend of
political, economic, social, multicultural,
immigration, and Indigenous histories."*

— DAVID McNAB, YORK UNIVERSITY

perfect for classroom use



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PRESS | HIGHER EDUCATION DIVISION

WWW.UTPHIGHEREDUCATION.COM