

Shi Zhang. The Development of Modern Chinese Libraries with the Help of Westerners. A Master's paper for the M.S. in L.S. degree. April, 2021. 65 pages. Advisor: Ronald Edward Bergquist

The purpose of the paper is to examine the historical development of libraries and librarianship in China with assistance from Westerners from Europe and North America. The paper traces back to the origin of libraries in China, examines the traditional libraries in China, and discusses different practices of modern libraries introduced in China by generations of Westerners. This article discusses how the politic, economic, and cultural background of Imperial China hindered the emergence of public libraries. It particularly discusses how Westerners, especially missionaries from Christian Churches, infused the ideology of public libraries and finally founded the modern library system and library science in China.

Headings:

Public Libraries – China -- History

Libraries -- History

China -- History

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN CHINESE LIBRARIES WITH THE HELP  
OF WESTERNERS

by  
Shi Zhang

A Master's paper submitted to the faculty  
of the School of Information and Library Science  
of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Science in  
Library Science.

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

April, 2021

Approved by:

---

Ronald Edward Bergquist

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	2
Literature Review .....	3
Research Questions: .....	10
Methods:.....	11
Part I: Prosperity and Limitation of Traditional Libraries in Imperial China .....	12
Part II. The Origin of Foreign Missionaries and Introduction to Western Libraries.....	21
Part III. The Russian Orthodox Missionary and the Library in China in Qing Dynasty .....	30
Part IV. Introducing the Western Modern Library from Late Qing (c. 1840-1912) to Republic of China (1912–1949).....	33
Part V. The Development of Libraries in the People’s Republic of China (1949- now) .....	49
Part.VI. The Goal of Librarianship Through Time.....	52
Part VII. Suggestions for Chinese Libraries .....	55
Part VIII. Conclusion .....	58
Bibliography .....	59

## Introduction

China, a brilliant civilization in world history, has a long history of keeping knowledge with written records in various materials, and China developed the early form of the library which served to collect, preserve, and manage written materials. Libraries have played an essential role in preserving the history and literature and carrying on Chinese civilization.

Though, in imperial times, the Chinese had grown an advanced book collection, they didn't develop the modern sense of the library system, as such libraries were mainly utilized by the social élite, including government officials, wealthy scholars, monks from different religions, and so on. As Dr W. A. P. Martin (American Presbyterian missionary and translator in China, 1817-1916) commented, "The very characters for library (in China) mean a place for *hiding* books." (Wood, 1907, p. 86) The main role of libraries during imperial times was to collect and preserve books and other material rather than to share the books to the public.

And yet, Dr Martin was confident that "If a circulating library can be started it will introduce a new force, which, like radium, will shine in the dark without being exhausted." (Wood, 1907, p. 86) It was Westerners from Europe and America who introduced the "new force", as they introduced the modern library system to the Chinese. From the early practice of the Jesuit missionaries who introduced books to spread Christianity in the late Ming and early Qing Dynasties (approximately the first half of the

17<sup>th</sup> century), to Russian Orthodox missionaries who founded libraries as a part of intercultural communication with the Chinese (Qing) government, to Protestant missionaries who organized libraries for education and social welfare to the Chinese people. With the gradual practice of Westerners and help from open-minded Chinese intellectuals following their guidance, the modern library system was finally established and flourished in China. Their efforts still benefit modern Chinese. According to China's National Bureau of Statistics, by 2020, there are 3203 public libraries in China, and there are 15 universities which set up Departments of Information and Library Science.

This paper will focus on the development of modern Chinese libraries with the assistance from Westerners, how Westerners offered their help, and the influence of modern libraries to enlighten and educate Chinese people. It will trace back to the history of libraries in Imperial China and try to discuss why the traditional libraries failed to develop into a public library system. Then it will examine the course of how generations of Westerners introduced the Western ideology of library and library science into China gradually, and how eventually modern library system and library science were set up in China. Final, the paper will discuss the goal of librarianship and suggestions of what the Chinese libraries should learn from the world trends in librarianship.

## **Literature Review**

Previous studies have examined the long history of the library in China, about why Imperial China failed to develop public libraries, and how Westerners infused the notion of the modern library and library science to the Chinese people.

Examples of Research in English:

***Historical Development of Library Education in China*** by Sharon Chien Lin offers an overview of the “brief history of the modern library movement and the development of library education in China”. The paper notes that during imperial times, librarianship was merely preserving and cataloging books, so there was no professional library education, and how Mary Elizabeth Wood from America introduced and promoted the concept of modern librarianship. It also briefly mentions the influence of the Soviet Union on the concept of librarianship during the early years of the People’s Republic of China (approximately during the 1950s).

***The Absence of Public Libraries in Imperial China: An Alternative Interpretation of Chinese Writing*** by Junli Diao, traces the history of “libraries” in Imperial China to back before the missionaries from the West introduced the modern library system. Libraries back in the imperial times “simply functioned as repositories of historical and classic documents for the purpose of collection and preservation, with access limited to royal families or the educated ruling classes.” The paper uses the topic “from Chinese writing and its cultural, social, and political impact” to explore “why public libraries did not automatically emerge from Chinese civilization”. The author tries to prove that “Imperial Chinese culture had a natural inability to generate a true public sphere for its people”, and thus the spirit of liberty and freedom in public libraries was introduced by “Western missionaries and forward-thinking Chinese intellectuals” in the late Imperial China (approximately second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century).

***To Change China: Western Advisers in China, 1620–1960*** by Jonathan Spence is a collection of lives of several western advisers in China and their contribution to China.

The book, however, only mentions modern libraries in China in a few paragraphs. One example is John Fryer's contribution to the Shanghai Polytechnic Institution and Reading Room; another is the Yale-in-China's (modern Yale-China Association) promotion of modern knowledge and thoughts through libraries. Though Spence doesn't fully examine the practice and influence of the development of modern libraries in China, he is able to examine the difficulties foreigners faced in China due to cultural conflicts and to the complex situation in China. Those difficulties show how the modern library in China developed at a slow pace and it took several generations of endeavor to promote the idea of public library and education to the general people.

*Library work in a Chinese city* is a speech presented by Mary Elizabeth Wood at the ALA Annual Conference in 1907. Ms. Wood, the founder of the Boone Library School, the first modern library school in China, made great contributions to promote and improve the education of modern library science. She reported her experience in Boone College Library, and her goal to spread the influence of the library by expanding the scale of the library. She stressed the importance of developing the modern library system in China to help enlighten the people. This is a first-hand report on the early stage of how the modern libraries and librarianship developed in Wuchang, China, which shows that the Chinese welcomed libraries, and libraries would benefit the people.

*The Boxer indemnity and the library movement in China* is a collection of documents and a paper, also by Mary Elizabeth Wood in 1924. The documents show that she appealed to the American government to return the rest of the Boxer indemnity and contribute the money to the modern library industry in China. Among the documents, in

the paper *Recent Library Development in China*, she updated her experience in China, and how the modern libraries in China developed through the years. This is a precious first-hand source on the development of the modern library system in China. The paper pointed out that the Chinese were eager learners of the West and strived to take a modern perspective on the modern library system.

***The Queen of the Modern Library Movement in China: Mary Elizabeth Wood*** by Jing Zheng et.al. examines the great contributions by the American library expert, Mary Elizabeth Wood, to Chinese library development. The paper traces Wood's story of setting up the Boone Library in Wuhan, introducing the American public library system and modern library science into China, by practicing the pedagogy in China and funding her students to study in the U.S. "It is Wood who introduced the modern American public library spirit into China, opened the gate of Chinese library science, and promoted Chinese library science." This paper works as a general outline of Wood's life and contribution to modern library science in China.

***The development of library and information science in China (1840–2009)*** by Yao Zhang gives "an overview of the development of Chinese libraries and library and information science (LIS) in China during 1840 to 2009". The author covers the long history of how modern library system and library science developed in China. The author mainly discusses the social, economic, scientific, and political climate in China that influenced the development of libraries and education of LIS.

After years of developing the modern library system based on the guidelines from the modern library system of the West, the Chinese were able to develop their own library



system. The following books and papers are examples of research by Chinese scholars in Chinese.

Examples of research in Chinese

***The History of Libraries and Books in China*** edited by Xie Zhuohua is a comprehensive and detailed book on the history of libraries and books in China (from Shang Dynasty to 1949). In the later sections, the author(s) briefly discuss the contribution of Western missionaries. In general, the book mainly discusses the Chinese endeavor to develop the national library industry, in which Westerners were described as minor or indirect actors, providing technology and introducing ideology of library science and management strategy.

***A Brief History of Modern Library in China*** by Wu Xi is a book that covers the general events in the history of libraries in China, from the origins of Chinese traditional libraries to the shift to modern libraries under the influence and contribution of Westerners directly or indirectly.

***Foreign Missionaries and the Development of Modern Libraries in China*** by Qi Cheng and Ma Nan focuses mainly on the influence of how the ideology of modern library science along with other modern ideologies spread during the long periods of learning from the western thoughts. This book offers a collection of the general events of foreign communication in China concerning library and librarianship, of how Westerners introduced the ideology and guided the development and management of the early modern libraries in China, and how open-minded Chinese intellectuals helped to enlighten the Chinese people. The authors endeavor to go through the various documents,

records, and books to collect and sort out scattered fragments of information on the contribution of Westerners and western thoughts on the development of library science in China. Also, the book includes a rich reference and citation of primary sources and secondary researches to prove and develop the topic. Though as a collection of materials, the book might lack innovation and it might miss certain historical events, it is still a great foundation on the contribution of the Westerner to the modern library industry in China.

#### Materials on Russian Contributions, in both Chinese and English

In addition to the contribution of the missionaries and librarians from West Europe and America, the contribution of Russians should not be ignored. The following papers examined how Russian missionaries and experts helped the Chinese to enrich the library collection.

***A Brief History of the Orthodox Mission in Beijing*** composed by Father Avraamy(V. V. Chasovnikov) was originally published in Russian in 1916, and it was translated into Chinese in 2017. The book serves as an important original record of the history of the Russian Orthodox mission in Beijing, China. In the book, the author mainly collects the intercultural communication history of the Russians in China from the official records. From the book, as the Russian church ordered the mission to organize a library in Beijing, the author records how the missionaries contributed to the “Asian Library” by collecting books in Chinese, Mongolian, Manchu, Tibetan, receiving donations from Catholic libraries and the Chinese government, among other donors. Though the information about the history of Orthodox libraries is scattered among the pages, the book still serves as an important source.

***Russian Orthodox Mission in Beijing and Sino-Russian Books Exchange in the Qing Dynasty*** by Xiao Yuqiu was written in Chinese. It stresses the Russian Orthodox mission's influence in China. As other papers mainly examine the influence of Catholic or Protestant missions in their practice in library science, this paper introduces the Russian Orthodox missionaries' role in collecting Chinese books for Russia and establishing the library in Beijing. The paper traces the history of Russian missionaries who collected Chinese books to contribute to the library collection in Russian libraries, and in return, the mission library in Beijing. This paper stresses the influence of promoting cultural communication between China and Russia through books. From the paper, though the Russian contributed rich book collections in science, technology, and culture, they didn't introduce the modern library system to the Chinese. Though Russia might have a closer relationship with China diplomatically and culturally than other western countries, they failed to have greater influence in helping the Chinese develop the modern library system.

Similarly, ***Traces of Russian Libraries in China*** by Mark Gamsa was written in English. The paper focuses on the contribution of Russians to the development of libraries in China. With a general history of Russian libraries in China, the paper examines a library in Harbin, which was formed by the Russian-speaking community in Harbin, a center of Russian settlement and emigration in Manchuria during the first half of the twentieth century. The paper's regional focus on minority groups in China at a turbulent time is unique, and it sorts out the development of education and library service in a place where different cultures conflicted and merged with each other, as a response and contribution to "the rising interest in Russian émigré bibliography." (Gamsa, 2006 ,p.208 )

*A Study on Sino-Soviet's Exchanging in Librarianship and Its Influence in the Year of 1950* by Fan Xingkun was written in Chinese. It introduces the basic situation of the communication in librarianship between People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union after 1949, of how the Soviet Union's library management theory and practice influence the foundation of the development of public libraries during the new era in Chinese history. In general, the Chinese adapted the library guideline and management strategy of the Soviet Union, translated documents on library science from Russian. Russia also sent experts to guide the development in libraries, and China organized delegates or students to learn from the U.S.S.R. This paper focuses on the special alliance during a special time and offered specific methods and further influence of the communication.

The readings can show evidence of how, though China had developed an advanced system of collecting and preserving books during the imperial times, the Chinese couldn't develop a modern library system as the Westerners did due to the traditional mindset. Through the effort from western missionaries and educators, the Chinese learned to apply the modern sense of the library system to China and develop their own system of the modern library to collect, preserve and share knowledge among the public.

### **Research Questions:**

How did the Chinese develop the modern library system with assistance from the Westerners?

How does the history of libraries in China reflect the history of cultural communication between China and the West?

### **Methods:**

The method of this paper is basically “historiography”, an examination of diverse kinds of primary and secondary resources for information about the history of the modern library in China, basically from the Western perspective. As defined by Zoe Lowery in *Historiography*, historiography, in most cases, “refers to the writing of history, especially the writing of history based on looking critically at sources, how particular details have been selected from the authentic materials in those sources, and how those details are synthesized into a narrative that can stand up to critical examination.”(Lowery,2015, p. viii)

This paper is mainly based on primary sources of historical writings, and secondary sources from previous studies and research, to explore the historical development of the modern library in China.

The primary sources were acquired from websites, photos or videos, and other resources of western-funded libraries for records and descriptions by those who are in charge. Some examples are, for instance, the official records from Bibliotheca Zi-Ka-Wei (one of the early missionary libraries in China), and the Boone Library School (the first school to offer courses on modern library science). Also, diaries or journals of the missionaries, documents from local history archive were sought out to examine the development of libraries in China.

For secondary sources, scholarly databases were searched for secondary resources on articles and researches on the topic of the history of China's libraries and focused on the part where the Westerners contributed. Databases for sources include JSTOR, ProQuest, Google Scholar, EBSCO, National Library Reference Consultation Alliance of China, China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI). The keywords used included Chinese Library, modern Library, development policy, comparison, library history, missionaries in China, educators in China.

## **Part I: Prosperity and Limitation of Traditional Libraries in Imperial China**

### **1. Development of Traditional Libraries in Imperial China**

China has a long and rich cultural history. Before paper was invented, the Chinese people "recorded the words on bamboo tablets and textiles, carved them on metal and steles or plates, for the reference of future generations." (*Mo Zi, Universal Love III*).

According to archaeology discoveries and historical records, the origin of preserving written documents can be traced back to the Shang dynasty (approximately 1600 – 1064 BCE). The earliest form of document was invented to record the politics, economy, and religious oracles. Consequently, in order to preserve and manage the documents, the earliest form of the governmental library was established in the court. The Zhou Dynasty (West Zhou, c. 1100– 771 BCE; East Zhou, 770 -256 BCE) inherited Shang's library management, and further expanded the scale of the official collections.

Qin unified China in 221 BCE, and the Emperor of Qin took strict methods on culture: standardization of writings and censorship. In 213 BCE, as historical texts recorded, in order to strengthen the rule, the Emperor decided to burn the books and execute the scholars. This proved to be a catastrophe for the book collections, as numerous books were destroyed.

After Qin was overthrown, and Han Dynasty (202 BCE – 220 CE), took power, the Emperors ordered a systematic recovery of works of antiquity. The officials were ordered to collect books among private collections, which were later transferred to the imperial collection. Scholar Liu Xiang (c. 77-6 BCE) was appointed to classify the books, and after years of hard work, he compiled the first known bibliography in the imperial collection, the *Bielu* (Separate Records). Later his son Liu Xin produced an abridged version, the *Qilve* (Seven Epitomes). Though only fragments of both works survive and have been passed down to current days, they were the early catalog for the Chinese collection.

In the succeeding dynasties, the imperial government continued to expand the imperial libraries, by collecting the works and records. In the Tang Dynasty (618—907), with the invention of woodblock printing, the production of books was more efficient, and the price became less prohibitive. As a result, private libraries became popular. In the Song Dynasty (960—1279), book collection became prosperous in government and in private ones, which continued to following dynasties. There were examples of book collectors opening their libraries to scholars (Lin, 1998, p.4), and such practice passed down in the future generation. It's arguable that “although libraries in those days were not public or

free to all, people, they were public in the sense that they were open to the educated public” (Lin, 1998, p.4).

During the Ming (1368 - 1644) and the Qing Dynasties (1644 - 1912.), traditional libraries came to a prime. Officially, Ming and Qing emperors commissioned the completion of encyclopedias of written work: Ming Yongle Emperor’s <sup>1</sup>rule *Yongle Encyclopedia* (compiled from 1403 to 1408), and Qing Qianlong Emperor’s <sup>2</sup>*Complete Library in Four Sections* (first edition compiled from 1773 to 1782). Both encyclopedias marked the prime of official libraries in the comprehensiveness of the collection.

With the wave of commercial prosperity and increasing urbanization during middle and late Ming, the educated class, or the “literati”, grew largely (Dardess, 2012, p.87), leading to the thriving of private libraries. Growth in private libraries reached a peak in Qing Dynasty. Chinese traditional bibliography also developed to its peak during Qing, as intellectual and book collector Sun Congtian (1692-1767) composed *Summary on Book Collection*, which systematically summarized different aspect of book collecting, from purchase, identification, cataloging, etc. (Ma & Qi, 2016, p.10)

However, the prosperity of traditional libraries came to a decline during the turbulent time in late Qing Dynasty (1840-1912). When British and French forces invaded Beijing in 1860, they plundered and destroyed the official book deposit in Hanlin Academy; and during the revolts of Heavenly Kingdom (1851 -1864), private libraries in Jiangsu and Zhejiang were greatly damaged, and the book resources were looted. Under the economic invasion of the Western imperialism countries, the traditional natural economy in China

---

<sup>1</sup> ruled from 1403 - 1424

<sup>2</sup> ruled from 1735 - 1796



gradually collapsed. Consequently, officials and intellectuals could no longer sustain their libraries, and private libraries gradually declined. (Qi & Ma, 2016, p.20)

Traditional Chinese libraries still served as depositories to preserve books from the past, rather than distributing the resources to the public. And librarianship and bibliography during Imperial Time mainly stressed the function of “bookkeeping” and “preservation”, to the extent of “hiding” books.

## **2. Types of traditional libraries in Imperial China**

In this section, different types of traditional libraries in Imperial China will be discussed in more details.

Though during the imperial times, China enjoyed a high level of cultural life, these kinds of libraries failed to meet the modern definition of public libraries and lacked the potential to develop into modern ones. At that time, libraries were restricted to preserve books, to ensure that books were inherited through time, and books were not supposed to be shared to the public. As the name “藏书楼” (cangshulou) suggests, libraries mainly served as “depository for books” during that time. (Lin, 1998, p. xx) In general, the libraries in Imperial China can be classified as the following categories: government, academic, private, and monastery libraries.

Governmental libraries, by definition, mainly served the royal family and officials. The books and documents were only accessible to the royal family, scholars, officials, both in central and local government. The royals who were fond of books also kept a large collection of books, and yet their collections mainly showed their interest and manifested

their power and wealth, rather than for the benefit of the people. With only a few exceptions, some emperors might open their libraries for the students, as a sign to demonstrate their kindness and encouragement to them, and yet such practices were far from social welfare. (Diao, 2007, p.202) Additionally, the government libraries were also under the administration of the official government, and the books would be under strict censorship to moderate the thoughts of people. During the compilation of *Complete Library in Four Sections*, a large number of books were banned, distorted, or destroyed. (You & Zhou, 2016) Hence, governmental libraries could only serve the ruling class or scholars for better management politically and socially. Because of the stagnant environment of government libraries, where the “librarians” were mainly officials of lower ranks who lacked the capability to manage the collection, the management of the libraries were loose, and “librarianship” was largely limited (Qi & Ma, 2016, p. 10).

Academics during the imperial times could be considered as an outreach of politics, for the Academies of the classics mainly focused on training the students to attend the civil examination to become civil servants for the country. As Prof. Dardess commented, the exam system during Ming Dynasty, “sustained the system because year after year it captured the hopes, dreams, and ideals of China’s young and potentially most capable talents”. (Dardess, 2012, p. 68) Such a utilitarianism attitude suggests that the educational system in China was self-restricted and discourages the spirit of “open”, which is essential for establishing public libraries for the people. As Prof. Diao pointed out, “the Academies of Classical Learning were gradually brought under government control and became part of the official educational system” (Diao, 2007, p.202), which suggests

tighter control over the knowledge and books. In conclusion, the academic libraries also lacked the spirit of social welfare to the public.

Private libraries were generally founded by scholars and officials, or by wealthy merchants, partly as a way to exhibit their interest, wealth, and privilege. Consequently, private libraries stressed book collecting and preservation, rather than sharing among the people as social welfare. For famous libraries as Tianyi Pavilion (founded in 1561 by Fan Qin), the book collections were even restricted within the family, where only a few people had access to the rich collection, to reduce the potential damage to the books. As famous scholar Huang Zongxi (1610–95) recalled, “the book collections were strictly closed after Fan Qin passed away. The Fan family made an exception to open up the collection upstairs for me.”<sup>3</sup> And yet, after years of visits to private libraries, Huang commented that “Book collector families at that time were not poor, and they did not show their books to others easily.”<sup>4</sup> Though private libraries like Tianyi Pavilion managed to protect and preserve a lot of precious books (while a lot of them were lost during times of war) to these days, the books were hardly used at that time. Similarly, though the traditional cataloging reached its prime as private libraries thrived during Qing Dynasty (Ma & Qi, 2016, p.10), such practices were largely restrained due to the nature of private libraries.

Monastery libraries played important role in Chinese library history. In order to store rare sacred texts, and further promote beliefs to the general public, monastery libraries were

---

<sup>3</sup> Huang, Zongxi, *Book Collections in Tianyi Pavilion*.

<sup>4</sup> Huang, Zongxi, *On Xu Yuanfu*, in *Memoir of the Past*.

founded to preserve books. The earliest form of the monastery library can be traced back to the storage of religious texts (mainly the oracle bones) in the Shang Dynasty. During the Han Dynasty, when Buddhists from India began promoting Buddhism (since 67 CE), Emperor Ming of Han (reigned 58-75 CE) assigned White Horse Temple for the Buddhists to translate and store the scriptures (recorded in *Memoirs of Eminent Monks*, compiled by Hui Jiao, circa 530), which could be considered the beginning of Buddhist monastery libraries in China. In the following years, Chinese and Indian monks continued to communicate culturally, by translating the scriptures. The communication reached its peak when Monk Xuanzang traveled to India and returned with a large amount of Buddhist scriptures, and organized translation of the texts, during the Tang Dynasty. While Buddhism gradually declined in India, the communication between the two countries ceased, and yet Buddhism and the monastery libraries had set roots in China. The Buddhist monastery libraries stood as examples of how devoted communication could penetrate the cultural barriers between the civilizations. (Schneider, 2009, p. 8) However, “comparatively speaking, monastery libraries were relatively detached from Chinese political and social systems.” (Diao, 2017, p.201) Due to the self-isolated nature of the monastery libraries, books and scriptures were largely limited to the monks, and hence the monastery libraries were restrained from developing into public libraries.

### **3. Why Public libraries failed to develop in Imperial China?**

Since there were different types of libraries in Imperial China, and each type served the purpose well, why did the public library system fail to develop during the imperial times?

As Chan mentioned in the foreword of *Libraries and Librarianship in China*, ‘In most of the world, political, social and economic forces have often influenced library sciences; in turn, libraries have reflected the political tenor and sociological fabric of societies in which they exist.’ (Chan, 1998, p. xv ) And this quote rings true in the case of the absence of public libraries in Imperial China.

In conclusion, public libraries didn’t thrive in Imperial China, basically due to the following reasons:

1. Politically, Imperial China had evolved into a highly centralized society, where the political and cultural environment would be rather closed to itself. As *The Book of Lord Shang* (composed in the 3rd century BCE and credited to the reformer Shang Yang in Qin State) claimed, “When the people are weak the state will be strong, and when the people are strong the state will be weak. Therefore, a country which keeps the right way should weaken its people.” Culturally, the government would control the people by restricting the access to knowledge, and such practices were widely undertaken through dynasties.

In the case of the library, the government, academic, and private libraries system, as Prof. Diao commented, were combined in a hierarchy system, to “help create an educated elite and to establish support for the emperors’ ideological control” (Diao, 2007, p.203). To control the minds of people, the traditional library system forbade distributing the knowledge among people, and hence public libraries lacked the ground to grow in the imperial society.

2. Economically, the Chinese had a tendency in keeping restricted to themselves and lack the spirit to open minds under the self-sustainable natural economic system. According to Marxist theory, the economic base determines the superstructure. As a major cultural institution, the library during imperial times also tended to be self-restricted, especially in governmental(royal) and private ones.

From research on book prices during the imperial times by Zhang Sheng (Zhang, 2016), books were affordable to the literati but not to ordinary people (except in the late Qing Dynasty when modern printing was introduced), due to the limitation in production of traditional printing, which made books valuable collections for the privileged.

3. Culturally, knowledge itself had a class nature. Though Confucius advocated that “education has no class restriction” (Confucius), learning in the imperial times was basically the privilege for certain classes, as an outreach of the imperial reign.

Therefore, books were considered sacred and were symbols of economy and social status. Intellectuals in imperial times tended to keep books to themselves rather than open to the public to indicate and secure their status. Also, influenced by the traditional Confucianism ideology, the Chinese had a strong sense of respect for their ancestor. For book collectors, they were keen to preserve what their ancestors passed down in their family, rather than sharing the rich resources with the public.

Since the cultural environment in Imperial China wasn't ideal for public libraries to develop, communication with foreign culture might have been what was needed in the development of public libraries. The Christian missionaries from Catholic Church arrived

in China in late Ming and Qing (16<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> century) , and they were the first who introduced the early form of the public libraries to the Chinese.

## **Part II. The Origin of Foreign Missionaries and Introduction to Western Libraries**

### **1. The Early Christian Churches in China**

From historical records and archaeological discovery of the Nestorian Monument in Xi'an<sup>5</sup>, Christianity was first introduced in China during Tang Dynasty (c.7-10<sup>th</sup> century). The first recorded mission was from the Church of the East (the Nestorian Church) in 635. It was named *Jingjiao* (literally 'Luminous Religion') in Chinese, and the Church of the East thrived for over 200 years in China.

Later in Yuan Dynasty, Latin Catholic missionary John of Montecorvino arrived in Peking (nowadays Beijing) and became the archbishop of China. However, the early Church only had limited influence on Chinese culture for they only thrived in limited groups. And consequently, these early Christian groups had little contribution to the library development in Chinese history.

### **2. Western Library and Jesuit Missionaries in Late Ming and Early Qing (c. the first half of 17th century)**

---

<sup>5</sup> Also known as the Xi'an Stele, Nestorian Stele. It is a stele erected in 781 ( during Tang Dynasty) that documents the history of early Christianity in China in Chinese and Syriac language.

In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, as Portuguese explorers made great exploits around the world and led to the Age of Discovery, Christianity also faced the duty and opportunity for a world mission. In order to “extend the Kingdom of God,” missionaries were sent around the world to spread Christianity, under the support of the Catholic Church and religious Spanish and Portuguese rulers.

China had always lingered in the mind of Europeans for its charm and wealth. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, China, ruled by the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644), enjoyed a high culture but was a self-contained world for China had superiority to other “barbarian” cultures. The Chinese were proud of the glorious past and were satisfied to remain in stagnation. As Dunne commented, “the atavistic and provincial character of Chinese culture” that dominated in political and cultural life forbade learning from the “barbarians”, let alone accepting Christianity. (Dunne, 1962, p.11) In consequence, Europeanism, which considered European culture superior to other cultures, would prove inept in China.

As a result, a few missionaries questioned the Eurocentric approach. Among them, Jesuits, the member of the Society of Jesus, played a major role in reviving the method of “cultural adaption” (Dunne, 1962, p.18): the way the early Church adapted itself to the cultural context of the Roman society, and gradually expanded the Christian world. After the inquiries and observations during his stay in Macao from 1577-1578, the Jesuit superior Alessandro Valignano had high esteem for the Chinese, whom he praised as “great and worthy people” and brought up new approaches for missions. In his letter to the general of the Society, he wrote that “The only possible way to penetration will be utterly different from that which has been adopted up to now in all the other missions in



these countries.”<sup>6</sup> Valignano questioned about the “Eurocentric” approaches and in his practice, he encouraged “cultural adaption”. The missionaries were ordered to learn to read, write, and speak Chinese; and further, they should try to understand and respect Chinese customs and tradition. As they were accepted by the Chinese society, they could communicate with the Chinese people equally and introduce Western culture and Christian ideology. The ultimate goal of the Jesuit missionaries was to be accepted by the Chinese intellectuals as scholars of both Western and Chinese Confucian, and eventually set the root of Christianity in China.

One of the ways to introduce western culture was to present books to the Chinese intellectuals, for Chinese intellectuals had a tradition of respecting knowledge. And the way they preserved and exhibited the books in the church library can be considered as the early practice of introducing the Western monastic library to the Chinese.

### **3. Matteo Ricci’s early practice of organizing small a library for the public.**

Matteo Ricci was one of the missionaries that paid respect for the people and culture of China and adapted himself to the environment. During his stay in Zhaoqing (approximately 1583 - 1589), he discovered the possibility to establish friendship with the open-minded scholar-official class in China by presenting advanced Western science and culture. In order to introduce Western science and culture to the numerous visitors, Ricci and fellow missionary Michele Ruggieri “kept on exhibition their collection of

---

<sup>6</sup> From Dunne (1962, p. 17), Quoted by Henri Bernard , S.J., *Aux portes de la Chine( Tientsin: Hautes Etudes, 1933)*, p. 141

books” in a small reading room in the church, and the well-decorated books attracted many curious and respectful locals. And throughout his life in China, Ricci kept asking for more books in his letters to Europe. As G. H. Denne commented in *Generation of Giants*, “modest though this was, it was the foundation of the first library of European books in China.” (Dunne, 1962, p.28)

As Ricci recorded in his journals (published posthumously as *De Christiana expeditione apud Sinas*, edited by his colleague Nicolas Trigault in 1615), “among the many books in the missionary library, there were two large volumes of Canon Law, which were greatly admired by the learned Chinese for their exquisite printing and also for the excellent workmanship of the covers, which were ornamented in gold...” (Ricci, 1953, p.157 ) Though the Chinese could neither read these books nor did they have any idea of the contents, they believed the books must be important for the expense. Moreover, “they could conclude that letters and science must be held in high esteem in Europe, and that in this respect the Europeans, with such books, must surpass not only the other nations but even China itself.” (Ricci, 1953, p.157 ) Also, the Fathers worked hard to learn Chinese language, characters and classics, and “their library were well stocked with Chinese books.” (Ricci, 1953, p.157) By presenting the books in the small library, Ricci stated that it gave the Chinese an impression that “these Europeans had a reputation for doctrine and learning” (Ricci, 1953, p.157 ), and he believed that the value of Christianity could be spread more effectively for Chinese revered books and words.

Though the early library Ricci and Ruggieri organized was modest and the books were not understandable to the Chinese, it was open to the locals who were curious, which

gave the local community an introduction to western books, and spread the ideology of western library and the value of a library.

Matteo Ricci's practice of establishing a tiny monastic library later evolved into the Nantang church library in Beijing. The missionaries were finally permitted to the court to meet Wanli Emperor (reign 1572-1620) in 1601. After Ricci and his mission settled down in Beijing, they raised funds to build the Nantang Church, the first Catholic church in Beijing, in 1605. A church library was also established to keep the books. Ricci and other missionaries wrote to their fellows in Europe for books to enrich the collection, leading to Nicolas Trigault's quest to acquire more books when he returned to Europe in 1613.

However, after Ricci's death, the vice minister and Minister of Rites along with other officials in Ming instigated a trial against the Jesuit missionaries due to suspicion against them in 1616. As a result, the remaining missionaries were put on trial in Beijing and Nanjing, and they were banished from the Chinese mainland. As Jesuit Álvaro de Semedo, who was among the banished missionaries in Nanjing, later recorded that "our house, furniture, especially all the books were ransacked."<sup>7</sup> This record suggests the tragedy of Ricci's books during turbulent times.

---

<sup>7</sup> Semedo, Alvaro (1655). The history of that great and renowned monarchy of China.

#### 4. Nicolas Trigault and the “7000 volumes of books”

Nicolò Longobardo became the successor of Matteo Ricci as the Superior General of Jesuit in China in 1610. In 1613, Longobardo sent Nicolas Trigault back to Rome to report the circumstances in China to Pope Paul V. In addition, Trigault had a minor mission: to send more missionaries to China and acquire more books for the library in Beijing.

The Pope showed support and granted book collections from Vatican libraries as well as providing funds to acquire books around Europe. During Trigault’s stay in Europe, he purchased a large number of books and received donations from authors, publishers, and noblemen. Also, the papacy approved the Holy Bible could be translated into Chinese, which led to the official spread of scriptures and other religious writings in Chinese.

Trigault and fellow missionaries set out from Lisbon in 1618 and arrived in Macau next year. After the long and difficult trip across the sea, some tragically passed away. The remaining missionaries continued to contribute to the spread of Western science and culture to the Chinese. However, according to Ming official Yang Tingyun’s records, the missionaries were greatly restricted due to the aftermath of the Nanjing incident in 1616<sup>8</sup>, and the books had to be kept in Macau in 1621, while the Chinese Catholics like Yang expected Imperial Court to admit the missionaries again. It was after 1623 when the books were finally admitted to the Nantang Church library in Beijing. The books

---

<sup>8</sup> The incident was instigated by Minister of Rites Shen Que, with support from other officials. Shen accused Catholic missionaries’ threat to China and Chinese culture. As a result, the missionaries were banished from Beijing and ceased perform missionary work until 1622.

contained books on Medicine, Jurisprudence, Astronomy, Geography, Mathematics among other scientific and cultural subjects (Dong, 2018, p 68).

Trigault didn't leave any records on the exact number of books he carried, and the number could only be deduced from the records of his contemporaries. Li Zhizao, a Chinese Catholic scholar, wrote in the introduction for Aleni's *Zhifang Waiji* that "Trigault gifted us more than 7000 books from his country..." and praised this great gift for cultural communication as "a great feat in history." (Dong, 2018, p67).

After the Jesuits settled down, they also organized translations of books to introduce the Western classics and discoveries in the Renaissance. As the Sinologist N. Standaert commented, these books spread the knowledge of the Renaissance among the Chinese. Also, the ideology of cataloging the Western books supplemented the traditional catalog of Chinese. (Standaert, 2003)

Unfortunately, Trigault passed away in 1628 and the translation of the books was laid aside. Though some of the books were translated by eager intellectuals, the books and the mission library were forgotten and lost due to the turbulence in the transition from Ming to Qing (c. second half of 17th century). When the church library was sorted out in 1938, only hundreds of books remained (Qi & Ma, 2016, p.55). Though there are no records on the management, preservation, and usage of the books in detail, the library still worked as a showcase of Western culture and science to the Chinese intellectuals.

#### **4. Descriptions of libraries through Giulio Aleni's *Zhifang Waiji***

The missionaries during Ming and Qing also translated a large number of western books into Chinese. Several books by the missionaries introduced the western libraries in their books on Western countries and civilization.

The first book to introduce western libraries was *Zhifang Waiji* (literally as "*Record of Foreign Lands*"). The book was written by Matteo Ricci's colleagues Diego de Pantoja and Sabatino de Ursis, later edited and compiled by Giulio Aleni, and was finally polished and published by Yang Tingyu in 1623. In the book, Aleni introduced that in European countries, "the capitals all set up official libraries to preserve the books" and "such libraries are open twice per day for people to read and copy the books, though the books can't be circulated outside the library." From his paragraph, he introduced the concept that governments in Europe stressed the importance of keeping books and let people have access to public resources. As official libraries and private libraries in China only had limited access to the privileged or private sponsors, such ideas were novel to the Chinese intellectuals. (Qi & Ma, 2016, p.44.)

Though Aleni's introduction on libraries didn't have any influence on actual library development back then, and the libraries he introduced were not public libraries in the modern sense, such paragraphs can be considered as early introduction of premodern European library ideology to Chinese.

In conclusion, Jesuit missionaries in China, as Dunne commented, "wrote a splendid page in the history of the cultural relationship of East and West" (Dunne, 1962, p.14). They played an essential role in facilitating the transmission of knowledge, science, and culture

between China and the West. As the missionaries were spreading Western science and culture, the ideology of the Western library gradually spread among the Chinese intellectuals and bureaucracy as well.

On the other hand, the Jesuits still followed Roman Catholic tradition, and the library system they introduced represented the traditional monastic library, based on the traditional Catholic ideology.

Though missionaries encouraged that books were to be open to the public, books were still restricted to intellectuals due to the difficulty in reading and translating the books, which meant that the general public still couldn't have access to the contents. Also, the Chinese intellectuals and officials focused more on the knowledge the books carried, rather than the ideology of setting up public libraries to open people's minds. And, tragically, of all the Western ideas and technology, "none of it saved the Ming, and none of it changed China at all." (Dardess, 2012, p.23).

When Ming Dynasty collapsed, and Qing Dynasty gradually conquered China, the Jesuit missionaries continued to communicate with and serve the Qing government in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The mission library was in the charge of German Jesuit Johann Adam Schall von Bell (1591-1666), and the book collections were further expanded by missionaries, mainly by French Jesuits.

However, there were conflicts between Roman Papacy and Qing government officials on religious rituals in the 18th century. As a result of long debates, the papacy banned the traditional Chinese Rites adopted by the Jesuits, while the Qing Emperor banned the

Jesuit missions in China. Accordingly, the Jesuit mission along with the mission libraries came to a halt in China. And the ideology of the Western monastic library system was also ceased due to the pressure on missionaries. From 1785 to 1826, the churches in Chinese were almost destroyed and the book collections were greatly lost. Some of the book collections were handed to the Russian Orthodox church library.

### **Part III. The Russian Orthodox Missionary and the Library in China in Qing Dynasty**

As Karl Marx commented in an editorial in 1857, “the Russians enjoy the advantage of maintaining an Embassy at Peking” (Marx, 1857), while many other countries were forbidden from communicating with the Chinese Empire (Qing China). The Embassy mentioned was mainly maintained through the Russian Orthodox missionary in Peking (Beijing).

As the Orthodox Church was an important role in the administrative structure of the Russian Empire, the missionary in Beijing served more than a religious group, but also a diplomatic and cultural envoy. From 1715-1917, the Russian Orthodox Church had sent 18 missions to China for diplomatic and cultural communication purposes. In the case of libraries, the Russians also contributed to library development in China as they collected books for Russians and established the church library in Beijing.

The origin of the Russian Orthodox Church mission to China can be traced to the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. From the account of Father Avraamy, during Emperor Kangxi’s reign (1661-1722), Qing China and the Russian Empire had continuous conflicts at the border,



and after China conquered Albazin (Yakesa in Chinese records)<sup>9</sup> in 1686, several Russians were taken as prisoner and sent back to Beijing. The Emperor was friendly to the prisoners and granted them settlement and an Orthodox Church in Beijing. In 1715, Tsar Peter I (reign 1682-1725) officially sent the first mission to Beijing. Since then, religious, diplomatic, and cultural communication had been sustained through Orthodox missions.

As part of religious and cultural communication, the Church ordered the missionaries to establish a library in Beijing, use the funding provided by the Church to collect books, as well as to exchange books between Russia and China.

While the missionaries had kept personal book collections from the first mission, the Church library was officially founded in Beijing in 1795 during Qianlong's reign<sup>10</sup>. The book collection in the Orthodox library kept expanding as the Russian government and Church provided funding to acquire books, and it also took over books from other mission libraries, since the Catholic missions were greatly restricted by the Qing court.

The book collection in the Beijing Orthodox library mainly focused on theology education, Chinese studies, among other studies. From the catalog recorded by fathers in the library, topics included Theology, Philosophy, Geography, History, Engineering, Nature Science (including Physics, Chemistry, Medicine), etc. The library also held various texts in Chinese, Mongol, Tibetan, and Manchu for Sinology.

---

<sup>9</sup> The first Russian settlement on the Amur River. The Russians were defeated by Qing China in 1686, and the area was assigned to China, by the Treaty of Nerchinsk.

<sup>10</sup> 1735 - 1796

The books the Russian missions collected also supplied the Sinology collection in Russian universities, public libraries, museums, and other institutes, as acquiring books in China was an important method to study Chinese culture. From 1844-1845, with the intermediary of the 12<sup>th</sup> mission, the Qing government (ruled by Emperor Daoguang) and Russian government (ruled by Tsar Nicholas I) officially exchanged books between the countries. The Qing government sent more than eight hundred volumes of Tibetan Buddhist scriptures in response to the Russian request, and Russia repaid the courtesy by sending seven hundred Russian books on sciences and humanities in return. (Xiao, 2006, p.79)

Though the Russian Orthodox mission in China was rather cautious and didn't expand the Orthodox community in China greatly, it still played a unique role as a diplomatic and cultural delegation in the Sino-Russia relationship. The library established by the Russians in Beijing played an essential role in the cultural communication between Russia and China. The Russian missionaries were eager to collect and acquire various books, which later contributed to the foundation of the Russian school of Sinology, as the books contained various subjects in Chinese, Mongol, Tibetan, and other languages. The mission library and books also contributed to the Western study in China, as the church organized translation of books, as well as promoting Russian language education in Beijing, when the Catholic mission was hugely restricted.

However, the mission library had limited contribution to the library system in China, for it was more of a political and diplomatic institute. Comparing to the eagerness of the Russians to collect their Chinese books and establish school of Sinology in Russia, the Chinese government and intellectuals were not so keen about learning about Russia and

the Russian culture. Therefore, though the library held a wide collection of books and other resources, they were merely accessible to the missionaries, due to the language barrier and lack of translation of works.

Though the Russian Orthodox mission library was a subordinate institute of the mission, with precious book collections on Western studies, it still had a limited impact on the library system in China, comparing to how the Protestant missionaries introduced modern library system into China during Late Qing.

#### **Part IV. Introducing the Western Modern Library from Late Qing (c. 1840-1912) to Republic of China (1912–1949)**

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as the Western capitalist countries exploited their global market, missionaries followed the expansion and spread the gospel among the colonized regions. While in China, before the First Opium War (1839-1842), Qing government took a conservative approach and restricted official missionaries from Christian Churches (except Russian Orthodox). In response to the restriction, the missionaries had to take an indirect method to spread the gospel, by introducing Western science and culture.

After the Qing government was defeated by Britain in the First Opium War, the Treaty of Nanking was signed in 1842. Following the Treaty, the Qing government was forced to open up five Treaty ports for foreign trades. In the following years, the Qing government suffered more defeats to the West countries, and more cities were opened to the Westerners. These trade ports also served as the base for foreign missionaries (mainly from Catholic and Protestant churches). As many missionaries gathered in Shanghai, it

became a center for religious and cultural communication. The ideology of librarianship also set root in Shanghai as the practice of establishing modern libraries was carried out alongside cultural communication. With the development of missions from Christian churches, the missionaries and Western educators, alongside open-minded Chinese, spread the ideology of library and librarianship in China.

In contrast to the mission libraries in Late Ming and Early Qing, these libraries, in general, adopted a more modern method in management and cataloging system, as well as introduced the education of library science. Such libraries worked as a facilitator to the development of modern librarianship in China.

### **1. Bibliotheca Zi-Ka-Wei, the First Modern Library in Shanghai**

Xujiahui (Zi-ka-wei in Shanghai dialects), literally means “Xu family’s property where three rivers converge”. The Xu Family was the family of Xu Guangqi, the Chinese Catholic scholar-official who was a close friend of Matteo Ricci in the Ming Dynasty. Xujiahui became the initial window to resume the communication with the Jesuits in the Qing Dynasty.

In 1842, after the First Opium War, the Jesuits eventually returned to China after the long suspension, and the mission established their base in Shanghai. In 1847, a Catholic Church was established near Xu Guangqi’s burial ground. Near the cathedral, a three-room house was built to preserve the books the missionaries held, which is the origin of the Bibliotheca Zi-Ka-Wei (or Xujiahui Library), the first modern library in Shanghai. The first book collection consisted of Chinese books the missionaries purchased in China

and books they carried from Europe. In 1860, as the residence of the missionaries expanded, the book collections were moved to a separate building. As the collection in the library grew, plan for a new building was designed in 1897. In 1906, when the building was finished, the collection was moved to the new building. After years of turbulence, the building still remains and has integrated into the modern Shanghai Library as a historical site and ancient book deposit nowadays.

The Bibliotheca was a two-storied building, which was designed in a combination of Chinese and Western style in structure. The first floor held the Chinese collections while the second floor held the European books. At the prime of the library, it kept over 100,000 titles in 200,000 volumes, 120,000 volumes in Chinese, and 80,000 in European languages (King, 1997, p.462). The Chinese collection was classified into five categories: the four traditional Chinese classic categories (classics, history, philosophy, and belles lettres), with a fifth category, collectanea (collected writings). The European collection consists of ten different European languages and the books were categorized in subjects like philosophy, theology, literature, geography, history, natural science, etc. The library had several unique collections: the local Gazetteers on provinces, counties of China, early newspapers and journals published in China, translation of Chinese classics in Latin, manuscript copies of early writings by the Jesuit missionaries in Chinese, and other Catholic printings (King, 1997, p.462).

The Bibliotheca continued the mission of Jesuits in China and inherited their valuable legacy in Sinology. The building and collection of the library are important primary sources about the early Church in China, Chinese Christians, and Sino-Western relations. (King, 1997, p.462). The library has been a deposit for the precious primary sources and

other collections, which have been a rich resource for Christianity education and Chinese studies.

Despite its rich collection, the Bibliotheca was much restricted geographically, for Xujiahui was rather remote in Shanghai during Late Qing dynasty. Additionally, the library was only accessible to Jesuits and other approved patrons, and it was not open to the general public, so the presence of the library was rather neglected by the intellectuals and the general public at that time, therefore the Bibliotheca's impact on modern librarianship in China is limited.

As time passing, though some of the collection have been lost in turbulent times, the Bibliotheca still stands as the earliest modern library in Shanghai, as a monument for the cross-cultural communication between China and the West.

## **2. Robert Morrison's Practice in Introduction the Western Libraries**

Rev. Robert Morrison was the first Protestant missionary to China and a pioneer in Sinology in Britain. In 1807, Morrison arrived in Guangzhou and started his mission. During his stay in China, he organized translation of the Bible into Chinese in full text, compiled a major Chinese–English dictionary, established the first mission college in China, among other deeds. Morrison was undoubtedly a significant pioneer in modern Chinese – Britain cultural communication.

Morrison's practice in introducing the Western libraries can be examined in two ways: he wrote about libraries in his book and established the school library of Ying Wa College.

*A Brief History of Foreign Countries* was written by Morrison in Chinese, and it introduced the situation of “foreign countries” to the Chinese. Though the book was written under a Eurocentric view and was offensive to some Asian and African countries under modern perspective, it still served as an important resource to provide a rich and vivid description of the Western history and culture for Chinese, and consequently inspired the Chinese intellectuals to learn more about the modern Western culture. In terms of libraries, Morrison wrote that the Netherland and France, among others, all held a large collection of books. In particular, he praised education in Britain and the university libraries, as he recorded the rich collection and wide subjects of books and how it was “supported with rich resources.” (Qi & Ma, 2016, p.69) Such records, though brief, in some ways inspired the Chinese intellectuals to follow suit in establishing similar libraries in China.

Morrison was a pioneer in establishing mission colleges in China, as he founded Ying Wa College (or Anglo-Chinese College) in Malacca, Malaysia in 1818, and later the college moved to Hong Kong in 1843. The college was supported by Church of England, East India Company (and later by the British government when the trade monopoly with China was abolished in 1833). Aside from religion-related courses, the College also had various courses on Western nature science and social science, and the administrators emphasized on the translation of Chinese classics.

In 1811, Morrison and his fellow missionary William Milne drafted a proposal to build Chinese and Western European Libraries to collect books on the language, history, and tradition. Morrison donated funds and his private books when Ying Wa College was founded in 1818. In the following years, the collection of the library expanded greatly

through donations and support from social and religious groups, as well as purchases from Morrison and fellow missionaries. According to *the 2nd Annual Report for the Anglo-Chinese College* in 1823, the Anglo-Chinese College library contained 3,420 volumes, 2,850 of which were in Chinese, 570 volumes in various languages, including several European and Southeastern Asian languages (Daily,2013). Aside from collecting and preserving books in the library, the missionaries in the College also translated Chinese classics into English.

Ying Wa College held an abundance collection of Chinese and Southeast Asian books and documents, and the missionaries had translated and published books and journals on Chinese and Southeast Asian culture, making it an important institute for Sinology and East Asian studies.

In addition to his contribution to the Chinese library, Morrison was also a keen collector of books during his stay in China between 1807 and 1823. His private library consists of approximately 15,000 volumes, comprising more than 1,000 titles on a wide range of subjects, including Chinese history, philosophy, law, medicine, literature, etc. These collections are now preserved by School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London.

Rev. Morrison's interest in books and passion for education set the basic ground for modern library and library science to grow in China, and was carried on by other missionaries and educators.



### **3. Alexander Wylie's Contribution on the Development of the Modern Library in China**

Alexander Wylie (1815-1887) was a British Protestant Christian missionary in China and an important figure in Sinology. Wylie was interested in the Chinese language and culture and he devoted his effort to writing articles on Chinese culture, compiling Chinese-English dictionaries, and translating classic texts in Chinese, as well as other historical texts in Mongol and Manchu into English. Aside from literary works to introduce Chinese culture to the West, Wylie also made his contribution to the development of modern libraries in China.

During his stay in China, Wylie was a keen collector of books, as he was eager to acquire books on different subjects about China, and he was proud of his private collection. He was also generous in sharing his resources, as he “ceded his valuable library” to the North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (NCBRAS, founded in Shanghai in 1857), before he returned to Britain in 1860. The library of the Society continued to thrive with Wylie's support and developed into a comprehensive library in the study of the Far East. The library mainly collected books on history and language, and it featured gazettes or journals on Sinology, among other primary materials like original files, documents, and pictures.

Aside from setting the bases of the library in NCBRAS, Wylie also influenced the modern librarianship, as fellow Sinologist Henri Cordier commented that “Bibliographical labours are those by which Wylie is best known in Europe” (Cordier, 1887, p. 363), as he compiled *Notes on Chinese Literature*, “the only guide to the general literature of China”, which was eventually published in 1860. As a good

bibliographer, the book wasn't compiled merely "in alphabetical or systematical order". Wylie, with his profound knowledge of Chinese culture, followed the traditional Chinese classification under four categories (Classics, History, Philosophy, Belles-lettres). Over 2000 works were recorded with notes by Wylie, and the whole work was headed with a preface and introduction, including the content of translation of Chinese works into European languages. At the end of the book, Wylie attached an appendix and index of the book titles, names of people. (Cordier, 1887, p. 363) Cordier also recorded how Wylie and his private library helped him to compile his *Bibliotheca Sinica* (first edition in 1878-1885, second edition and supplement in 1904-1924). From Cordier's memory of Wylie, Wylie's knowledge in the bibliography also supported the course of cultural exchange between the East and West.

Further, the NCBRAS library continued to serve in the Republic of China. In 1917, the library decided to expand the service for the benefit of the public and was accessible to the public. Comparing to the *Bibliotheca Zi-Ka-Wei*, which was only accessible to the Jesuits, and other subscription libraries, NCBRAS stood out in its openness and publicity, as non-members were still permitted to read the books, while members were able to check out books. The library was also the first library in China in adopting the modern card catalog system, with an index in the Dewey Decimal System, which can be dated back to 1908. Such practices were innovative for the Chinese during that time, and further influenced the development of modern libraries in China.

#### **4. John Fryer and the Shanghai Polytechnic Institution and Reading Room**

After the disastrous defeats in the First<sup>11</sup> and Second Opium Wars<sup>12</sup>, the Qing government was determined to reform by adopting Western science and technology, and the period is known as the Self-Strengthening Movement (c. 1861-1895). The Qing government employed foreigners as instructors and translators to the Chinese. Among them, missionary John Fryer (1839-1928) was a remarkable figure, as he translated more than 75 Western Scientific works while working as editor and chief translator in the Department of Translation, Kiangnan Arsenal.

Aside from his abundant works on Science, Fryer had some influence on the course of library and librarianship in China. From his experience in the Department of Translation, Fryer was confident about the prospects, and he commented that though China and the Western countries had conflicts and misunderstanding, “she (China) recognized the fact that knowledge is confined to no nation or country”, and “she is, therefore, willing to be taught even by the ‘foreign barbarians’ such useful things as she feels she is ignorant of.”<sup>13</sup>

In his effort to pursue a wide influence, Fryer tried various other means of bringing Western science before the Chinese. Sinologist Jonathan Spence considers “the most ambitious of these” was the founding of Shanghai Polytechnic Institution and Reading Room in 1876, intending to bringing “the Sciences, Arts and Manufactures of Western Nations in the most practicable manner possible before the notice of the Chinese” (Spence, 1969, p.153). The Polytechnic had regular exhibitions of scientific and mechanical apparatus, held lectures and classes, and gradually establish the technical

---

<sup>11</sup> 1840-1842

<sup>12</sup> 1856-1860

<sup>13</sup> Fryer, *Science in China*, p. 56, quoted by Spence, 1969, p.153

library. The library was heavily influenced by the NCBRAS library, and the user community was mainly the Chinese people.

However, though Fryer and his fellow Chinese colleagues tried hard to promote the Western knowledge to the Chinese, the library was not so satisfactory as Fryer expected, for it was always short of funds and felt humble in appearance, as one newspaper commented that those who admired its fame would “find empty halls and ...incipient decay” (Biggerstaff, 1956, p.137). Also, another newspaper commented harshly that the access to the knowledge in Western books “is a privilege which but few Chinaman can understand or appreciated.” (Biggerstaff, 1956, 143-145)

Though there is no sound evidence of the exact people who made use of the Polytechnic’s Reading Room (Biggerstaff, 1956, p.149), the Reading Room has had a profound influence in that it was the first library to be open to the Chinese people. The publicity of the library promotes the ideology of modern libraries and further influenced Chinese intellectuals to reflect on the importance of the public library in promoting Western knowledge and ideology.

## **5. Mary Elizabeth Wood: the Queen of the Modern Library Movement in China**

During the Wuxu Reform Movement in 1898, many Chinese intellectuals were enlightened by the Western ideology, and they were aware of the importance of libraries in educating and enlightening people’s minds. Though the reform failed, the government supported the idea of modernization. “Public Library Movement” was launched in the

late years of Qing Dynasty, and many public libraries were established in China from 1901 to 1911.

Library Science was introduced to the Chinese during the first two decades of the 20th century, as a result of advancements in modern education. Foreign missionaries had a profound influence on modern library science education in China, and the American mode of public libraries was widely adopted by the Chinese.

The early practice of Library Science education in China dated back to 1913, when Harry Clemons (1879-1968) was working as a librarian in Jinling University (a private university sponsored by American Churches). He instructed courses in Library Science and encouraged his students to study in the U.S. colleges. Clemons' effort in setting up the Department of Library Science, which has integrated into School of Information Management in Nanjing University. The department continues to foster talents in library science in China.

Mary Elizabeth Wood (1861-1931) was another early important pioneer in library science education in China. She was an American missionary of Episcopal Church in the U.S., and a leading figure to introduce modern Library Science to China. Wood, with a large number of Chinese librarians who studied in the U.S., launched the "New Library Movement", bring modern public libraries into modern Chinese life. And for her contribution, she was praised as "The queen of the modern library movement in China" by President Li Yuanhong, of the Republic of China.

Wood was born on August 22, 1861, in Elba, New York. She attended Simmons College, Boston, and majored in Library Science. Then she worked in Richmond Memorial Library, Batavia, NY for 10 years.

In 1899, the Boxer Rebellion broke out in China, and the rebels were highly aggressive toward foreigners and Christians. Worried about her younger brother, Missionary Robert E. Wood who was in Wuchang, China, Mary Elizabeth Wood set out to visit him.

When her arrival, as the Boone School (founded by the mission) needed teachers, Robert persuaded Mary Wood to stay and work as an English teacher. As the Rebellion surged, the Church decided to transfer the missions to take shelter in Japan in 1900. Before returning to Wuchang, she worked temporarily at St. John University, Shanghai, and help to arrange the book collection in the school library. Wood resumed her work as an English teacher, and she realized the limited access of students to books and library resources (as the case for the general people in China). As an experienced librarian, Wood suggested that the school should set up a library. As Wood herself put it, “this was begun in a very humble way by gifts of books from the libraries of friends in America”, and from these various sources, “an English library of over 3,000 books has been built up.” (Wood, 1907, p. 86) Though the collection was rather small and humble, they became precious resources for students, and further supported the education of the School.

Wood considered that these efforts were not sufficient for the benefit of her students. In 1906, she returned to the U.S., engaged herself to raising funds for the library, and trained herself as a professional librarian at Pratt Institute in New York. In the annual meeting of the ALA in 1907, she shared her experience in Wuchang and requested assistance from

fellow librarians. From her observation, she realized that Chinese welcomed anything educational and informational, as the lectures and an experimental reading room proved to be successful. She then suggested that “we are now hoping to spread our influence beyond the college of Boone college, and aid in this great educational movement” in China, by “establishing a large public library, which shall contain not only English books, but Chinese literature as well.” (Wood, 1907, p. 86)

As Dr. W.A.P. Martin observed, “the circulating library, if it exists in this country (China) at all, is an exotic. The very characters for library mean a place for *hiding* books,” (Wood, 1907, p. 86) Wood hoped that the tradition of “hiding” book, would be replaced by the public library service to meet the intellectual needs of the Chinese people.

After her diligent work in the U.S., Wood was able to raise over 3,000 books and \$10,000 to finance the library construction. In 1908, she returned to Wuchang and organized the Boone Library. The library was eventually open in 1910, with 3,000 volumes in Chinese and English, and the collection developed into 12,000 volumes of books (5,000 in English and 7,000 in Chinese.)

Wood strived to publicize the library among the general people. She launched a series of academic lectures among schools in Wuchang, to raise the awareness of modern library service to the public. Also, in following trends with the U.S, Wood organized regular social events like lectures, reading clubs, and concerts in the library. In further expanding the service of the library, started a “traveling library” program to deliver the books to schools, government organizations, and factories around the district. (Zheng et al., 2010, p. 343). The library also had reading rooms open to the public.

Through her effort, Wood introduced the mode of American public libraries to the Chinese. Under the influence of the public library movement in the West, Wood was eager to promote the idea of “a book for every person”. The book collection was available not only for the students but also for the general public. Also, the library was open stacked, which was a rare practice even in Western countries at that time.

Furthermore, Boone Library organized social events, enhancing the public service of the library. In consequence, the library challenged the traditional ideology of “hiding books” and shifted to the idea of public library service. Through her efforts, Wood implemented the essence of the public library.

However, Wood faced other challenges while running the library. For one thing, her method of management contradicted with the School President James Jackson’s view, for Jackson preferred closed library management, for he believed that the books would be damaged or lost in the open stack. And yet Wood stood up to her idea, believing that the library should serve the public, not to be restricted due to possible misbehaved people.

For another, as Wood’s student library scientist Shen Zurong recalled in his memoir, in the beginning, much to their disappointment, there were only a few people who visited and made use of the library resource, for people at that time didn’t have an idea of the public library (Qu & Liu, 2014, 151).

Also, with the development of the library, training modern professional librarians and introducing library science in China became important. Wood supported two assistants, Shen Zurong and Hu Qingsheng, to study in the New York State Library School, and they both returned to China to join the Boone University library. With the Chinese librarians, Wood designed a curriculum of library science, and the course started in 1920.



From then on, the Boone Library Department fostered 45 students in Library Science, and most of them devoted themselves to national and academic libraries in China. In 1924, Wood traveled to the U.S. and spoke with Congress in a petition to allocate funds from the Boxer Indemnity Fund, to support the public library course in China. The funds were eventually allocated to the development of public libraries and the education of library science in China.

In 1929, the library course became a separate school, known as the Boone Library School, the first modern library science education institute in China. The Boone Library followed the outline of the American Library Science mode and combined it with the needs of the Chinese library. The school undertook Chinese and English in teaching the courses and emphasized studying the combination of library science.

Wood also contributed to the founding of the Library Association of China in 1927 and encouraged Chinese libraries' communication and cooperation with the Western ones.

Mary Elizabeth Wood devoted her life to the course of China's library development. She introduced the modern American public library into China and supported modern library science. Wood infused the spirit of devotion and faithfulness into the Chinese librarians through her practice, and her spirit will be enduring for generations of librarians in China.

Through the effort of Wood, graduates from Boone Library, and other students from American library schools, American mode had played an important role in developing the concept of modern Chinese libraries and librarianship. (Lin, 1998, p.7) These passionate Chinese, under the guidance of Wood, eventually set the groundwork of librarianship in China, and continued to develop the modern libraries for the people.

In 1953, Boone Library School merged into Wuhan University. It became the Department of Library Science in Wuhan University, and later became the School of Library and Information Science in 1984. The department continues to be the most influential department of library and information science, as it has trained generations of professional librarians, and has contributed to the theoretic researches on information and library science. Now the Department of ILS in Wuhan is the leading one among Chinese universities.

Though the effort of Ms. Wood and other Western missionaries, modern library system and library science set the roots in China, and it seemed library science education would be promising in China. However, in the years before the Second World War, Japan invaded China, and the whole country and the people suffered. Libraries in China were destroyed or plundered during the war. It is estimated that 2,000 libraries were lost in the southeast China when the war against Japanese invasion broke out in 1937, and numerous books were lost (Lin, 1998, p.10). Despite the hardship and adversity during the war, some libraries managed to move their rare books and manuscripts to safe places. Also, Chinese librarians collaborated to move the service in the unoccupied areas, and new libraries were set up, and services tried to sustain. (Lin, 1998, p.10).

Shortly after the end of Pacific War and surrender of Japanese troops in China, civil war broke out, the land would have to suffer more warfare. And libraries and librarianship were still hard to develop under the hardship. Libraries and librarianship waited for a peaceful time to further develop in China.

## **Part V. The Development of Libraries in the People's Republic of China (1949- now)**

After 15 years of wars —the war against Japan invasion (1937-1945), then the Civil War (1945-1949) — the People's Republic of China was established in 1949. The leading party, the Communist party decided to build a new nation economically, socially, and culturally.

The libraries in China, though greatly damaged during the war, managed to survive. And during this period (1949- the 1960s), libraries and library service played a critical role in cultural rebuilding.

During the 1950s, the Soviet Union supported China in many ways, including sending experts to assist the Chinese in many fields, and library science was no exception. The Chinese Ministry of Education decided that libraries should shift to the Soviet Union's mode, as the Chinese education system was heavily influenced by the Soviet mode. and As scholars recalled, China took the approach of “renounce the American mode and follow the Soviet mode.” (Lin, 2015, p.91), which showed that the Chinese determined to abandon the “Capitalism mode” and follow the “Communist” mode, by “adopting the experiences, theories, and principles of reconstruction of socialist library service as a model” (Yu, 2001, p. 255). Additionally, with the stressed atmosphere of Cold War, the hostility between China and the U.S. surged, and consequently, the American mode in librarianship was abandoned at that time.

All libraries in China followed the Soviet mode in “establishing a socialist culture”, and the libraries were replenished with socialist books, especially the classic works of the “revolution tutors”, namely Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, and Chairman Mao. Books with “reactionary” ideology, like capitalism (particularly those on American culture), feudalism, imperialism, etc., were banned in the library. There was a rise of Russian language collections and Soviet-related materials in the library, as a result of the diplomat and political policy of China.

Libraries in China developed rapidly and expanded the scale by establishing rural and factory libraries and reading rooms, “to elevate their ideological awareness and the standard of their scientific knowledge and production technique.” (Yu, 2001, p.256) However, the further development of the libraries proved to be overextended, as the libraries and reading rooms couldn’t provide adequate or proper service, while materials in other foreign languages were greatly decreased at that time.

Chinese library education was heavily influenced by the Soviet Union system. A number of Soviet textbooks and other works on library science were translated into Chinese, and by Russian librarians were invited as consultants to give lectures for the Chinese librarians. And, “inevitably, it could not avoid the ‘pan-politicized’ and ‘ideologized’ features practiced by Soviet Union library education” (Zhang, 2014, p.302). Restricted by the Soviet and Communist mode and ideology, publications and researches were limited to political issues, and failed to advance. Some scholars were ashamed in that Chinese librarianship only followed the Soviet mode but failed to develop the Chinese mode of librarianship. (Lin, 2015, 94)

Though China and the Soviet split up in the 1960s, the “communist” or “socialist” mode of the library continued until 1978. During the disastrous time of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), libraries and schools were distorted or shut down, due to the nationwide hostility against intellectuals and the “Western culture.”

In all, though the scale and number of libraries expanded, and Soviet Union mode was introduced as a new approach for library science, the movement was much misguided, as the ideology of politics, rather than humanity, was dominated in the historical context.

After the tragedy of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), China adapted to a reform and opening policy. As the economy, politics, and social life recovered, the government supported the rebuild of libraries and education on library science. The Chinese librarians reflected on the “politic-oriented” mode of Soviet and shifted to the “service-oriented” mode of the U.S. Nowadays, the public libraries emphasized fulfilling the needs of the community in an equal and inclusive way.

As the number of public libraries increased, China also introduced an important reform in the 1990s: the establishment of digital libraries. With the impact of world trends in advanced technology and the transformation of libraries in technical models and services, Chinese libraries adapted to automation, networking, and digitalization. Leading up to the 2000s, many public libraries have developed a digital section and have started to provide virtual services to the public (Zhang, 2014, p. 303). In 2003, Professor Yongxiang Lu, the Chinese signatory, attended the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge, expanded corporation with international organizations. With the rapid development of the Internet, digital libraries and digital resources will have a bright future in China.

After the Cultural Revolution, the library schools were reopened, and once again, Western thoughts were introduced into China. One significant point was the practice to explore the relationship between library science and information science, with the popularization of the concept of “information society” (Zhang, 2014, p. 303). Since many researchers believe that the introduction of information management will be a great opportunity to promote library science, in some schools, the Department of Library Science has been replaced by the “Department of Information and Library Science.”

Furthermore, academic communication between China and Western countries has resumed, as the China Society for Library Science (CSLS, founded in 1979) encourages academic exchange and cooperation with library organizations around the world. Also, China resumed the membership in UNESCO, and CSLS resumed its seat in IFLA. With active participation in international events, China is willing to communicate with other parts of the world in the field of library science.

## **Part.VI. The Goal of Librarianship Through Time**

China has enjoyed a high culture since ancient times, and Chinese people throughout history have produced numerous precious pieces of literature. However, such prosperity was limited to the ruling class, which, in Chinese tradition, meant the scholar-official class. Accordingly, libraries, where the books that carried knowledge were stored, were accessible primarily for the privileged class. Consequently, under the rule of the Imperial system, knowledge itself was a privileged and valuable resource that was controlled by the ruling class and was forbidden to the general public. And thus, the rate of illiterates in

Imperial China was high, and the general public didn't have access to books. So, the libraries, which were supposed to be the cultural center that distribute the knowledge, mainly functioned as "depositories" in Imperial China. Thus, traditional "librarianship" in Imperial China, if any, was restricted to bookkeeping, preservation, and bibliography, and yet such practices can hardly be considered as "library science".

During the Age of Discovery, with the European explorers traveled around the world, Christianity also spread to a different land. As the Catholic missionaries spread the religious thoughts and Western science, they also brought the ideology of Western monastic libraries. The missionaries shared their knowledge with the Chinese intellectuals and displayed their books with pride. However, the Catholic monastic libraries were also restricted to the intellectuals. And the Chinese intellectuals during Ming and Qing focused more on science and technology, while the ideology of librarianship behind the book collections was neglected. Librarianship during this time was mainly to manage the books of missionaries, which were a presentation of the Western knowledge, while the monastic librarianship was only applied within the churches.

Similarly, the Russian Orthodox mission in Qing Dynasty was self-secluded. Though the Russian mission was an important delegation for diplomat and culture, the Mission benefited Russia more than China with the book resources they collected. Russian librarianship back then didn't contribute to the librarianship of China.

The Protestant missionaries, on the other hand, began expanding the education among the general public, introducing advanced science and ideology to the Chinese. With the assistance from open-minded Chinese intellectuals, Western education could be

permeated to the general public, rather than only accessible to the ruling class. From this trend, the Protestant missionaries brought the ideology of modern libraries, as Ms. Wood introduced the modern library mode and librarianship in the American style., by stressing the ideology of “open”, “equity” and “inclusiveness” among the people, setting the bases of modern libraries in China.

After the foundation of the People’s Republic of China and the Cultural Revolution, though education was spread to the general people, and libraries established to the rural areas and factories, the resources were not sufficient to keep the libraries. Also, during that time, the ideology of the whole country stressed on politics, and it largely damaged the ideology of humanity, which stresses “open” and “inclusive”.

After the Chinese economic reform, China resumed contact with Western countries, and once again followed the American mode of library and librarianship. Nowadays, Chinese libraries and librarianship are growing for the benefit of the people and are modestly learning from Western ideology and practices.

As the Chinese government adopted the policy of “reform and opening up”, libraries and librarianship in China eventually resumed communication with the world. Nowadays, librarianship in China is greatly influenced by the American mode, while adapting to local needs. Nowadays, different types of libraries thrive to meet the needs of their user community and for the benefit of society. Librarianship will continue to develop to follow the global trends and meet the needs of the diverse user community in China.

From the practices in history, it can be suggested that the development of libraries and librarianship reflects the history of disseminating knowledge by breaking down the



barrier of social and political hierarchy. Building up libraries and introducing professional and modern librarianship is for the benefit of the people, as a library can enlighten the general people with the knowledge it carries.

Under the Imperial rule, the politics and culture turned narrow and eventually stagnant, as the Confucianism school dominated the ideology and culture. Generations of Christian missionaries brought new ideas to the mythic and secluded countries, gradually influenced the mindset of the Chinese, and eventually led to the enlightenment of the people. Libraries important for intercultural communication, as the exchange of ideas can open up the mind, and gradually change society. The introduction of libraries and librarianship reflects the history of Sino-Western communication, of how the Western ideology of democracy and social welfare set root in this ancient land.

## **Part VII. Suggestions for Chinese Libraries**

With the development in economic growth, political equality, social welfare, and communication globally, it is expected that libraries and librarianship in China will continue to thrive in the future. Also, since communications with China and Western academics are growing, there are more opportunities for Chinese librarians and researchers to study and communicate different ideologies abroad.

So, what should the Chinese Libraries Learn from the Western Libraries nowadays? In the view of this author, the advocacies from American Library Association (ALA) can be

a reference for the Chinese libraries. As listed from “Key Action Areas” of ALA<sup>14</sup>, several areas can be taken into consideration:

1). Advocacy for Libraries and the Profession:

From the description from the ALA, the association “actively works to increase public awareness of the crucial value of libraries and librarians”, by promoting legislation beneficial to libraries and library users, and supplying the resources for libraries of all types.

This advocacy is significant in China, since people still have some misunderstanding of library, librarians, and library science. The education of library science still faces challenges, as Yao mentioned in her papers that universities are having difficulty in defining “library and information science”, and “lack of agreement on the understanding of LIS education.” (Yao, 2014, p. 304); another issue is that students are having trouble in finding jobs (Yao, 2014, p. 304). Such issues show that library education needs support and understanding. Another issue is that the libraries around China, especially the ones in distant areas, need support in funds and other resources. The disparity of economic development in China is huge, as there’s a large disparity in the geographical distribution of libraries in China, and the rural libraries are in urgent need of more resources and improvement of service. For the cultural development in such areas, libraries should be properly funded, and professional librarians should be employed.

---

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/missionpriorities/keyactionareas>

## 2). “Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion”:

Equity, diversity, and inclusion are fundamental values for the American libraries, and such values shall be introduced to the Chinese libraries to provide better service for the society.

In China, the major issues would be providing service for the minor ethnic groups, people with disabilities physically or mentally, sexual minorities, deprived people, among other minority people.

Also, the library should promote the idea of DEI among the user community, as there’s still prejudice against the minority people in the society. The libraries, especially those in major cities, should set the example by showing their respect for the minority people.

They can expand the collections on minorities and welcome the minor groups to visit the libraries.

## 3). Equitable Access to Information and Library Services:

As ALA states in the guideline, “Equity extends beyond equality—fairness and universal access—to deliberate and intentional efforts to create service delivery models that will make sure that community members have the resources they need”. From news reports in recent years, there’s still a lot to be done, like lack of materials for people from minor ethnic groups, accessibility issue for people with disability,

Another important point is to develop digital libraries and open the digital resources for the public, in response for the growth and expansion of information science and

technology. And it arouses another issue, the digital divide, which, defined by ALA, “is a term that refers to the economic and social inequality between demographics and regions that have access to modern information and communications technology and those that don't.” The library should provide certain education courses for those who have difficulty with digital devices and technology.

## **Part VIII. Conclusion**

This essay has reviewed the history of libraries in China, how traditional libraries developed through time, and how Westerners from different cultural backgrounds contributed to the course of librarianship in China. It is a history of intercultural communication, where different ideologies conflicted and merged. The history of the library and librarianship development can reflect politics, economy, and society, as well as how the Chinese people were enlightened by the ideology of democracy and social welfare. Nowadays, the Chinese libraries are eager to follow the trend of promoting “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion” and provide better service for the user community. While the current relationship between China and Western (especially the U.S.A.) countries are tense, it is expected that libraries will stand as a pivot for intercultural communication.

## Bibliography

Avraamy, A. (2016). *A Brief History of the Orthodox Mission in Beijing* (R. Liu (trans.)). Daxiang Press.

Battles, M. (2003). *Library: An Unquiet History*. W. W. Norton & Company.

Biggerstaff, K. (1956). Shanghai Polytechnic Institution and Reading Room: An Attempt to Introduce Western Science and Technology to the Chinese. *Pacific Historical Review*, 25(2), 127–149.

Brokaw, C. J., & Chow, K. (Eds.). (2005). *Printing and Book Culture in Late Imperial China*. UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS.

Brook, T. (1996). Edifying Knowledge: The Building of School Libraries in Ming China. *Late Imperial China*, 17(1), 93–119.

Chen, K.-C. (2012). Mary Elizabeth Wood, the Queen of the Modern Library Movement in China, and Her Contribution to Chinese Library Establishment. *Journal of Library and Information Science*, 38(2), 87–93.

Cordier, M. H. (1887). The Life and Labours of Alexander Wylie, Agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society in China. A Memoir. *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 19(3), 351–368.

- Daily, C. (2013). The Ultra Ganges Mission Station, a Printing Centre, and the Final Educational Step of the Template. In *Robert Morrison and the Protestant Plan for China* (pp. 462–163). Hong Kong Univ. Press.
- Dardess, J. W. (2012). Governance. In *Ming China, 1368-1644: a concise history of a resilient empire* (p. 68).
- Diao, Junli. (2017). *The Absence of Public Libraries in Imperial China: An Alternative Interpretation of Chinese Writing*. *Library & Information History*, 33(3), 195–214.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17583489.2017.1334910>
- Dong, L. (2018). *Influence and Diffusion of Illustrated Books Imported by Western Missionaries in the 16th and 17th Century China*. *International Journal of Sino-Western Studies*, 15(12), 63–72.
- Dunne, G. H. (1962). *Generation of giants; the story of the Jesuits in China in the last decades of the Ming dynasty*. University of Notre Dame Press.
- Fan, X. (2008). *A Study on Sino-Soviet's Exchanging in Librarianship and Its Influence in the Year of 1950*. *Library and Information Service*, 53(3), 132–136.
- Hao, L. (2019). Libraries and cultural poverty alleviation in rural areas. *Library of Yunnan*, 1, 18–20.
- He, Z. (2007). *On the History of Sino-Western Cultural Communication*. Hubei People's Press.
- Marx, K. (4.7.1857). *Russia and China*. New York Daily Tribune.

- King, G. (1997). *The Xujiashui (Zikawei) Library of Shanghai*. *Libraries & Culture*, 32(4), 456–469.
- Lin, M. (2015). The Influence of Soviet Library Science Ideology on on China. *Library Theory and Practice*, 5, 91–95.
- Lin, S. C. (1985). *Historical Development of Library Education in China*. *The Journal of Library History (1974-1987)*, 20(4), 368–386. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25541653>
- Lin, S. C. (1998). *Libraries and librarianship in China*. Greenwood Press.
- Gamsa, M. (2006). *Traces of Russian Libraries in China*. *Library History*, 22(3), 201–212. <https://doi.org/10.1179/174581606x158909>
- Standaert, N. (2003). *The transmission of Renaissance culture in seventeenth-century China*. *Renaissance Studies*, 17(3), 367–391.
- Qi, C., & Ma, N. (2017). *Foreign Missionaries and the Development of Modern Libraries in China*. Guangming Daily Publishing House.
- Qu, D., & Liu, C. (2014). The Library Science Education of Mary Elizabeth Wood. *Lantai World*, 11, 151–152.
- Ricci, M. (1953). *China in the sixteenth century: the journals of Matthew Ricci, 1583-1610*; (L. J. Gallagher (trans.)). Random House.
- Spence, Jonathan D. (1980). *To Change China: Western Advisers in China*. Penguin Books.
- Winkelman, John H. (1982). Mary Elizabeth Wood (1861-1931): American Missionary-Librarian to Modern China. *Journal of Library & Information Science*, 8(1), 62–76.

- Wood, M. E. (1907). *Library work in a Chinese city*. Bulletin of the American Library Association, 1(4), 84–87.
- Wood, M. E. (1924). *Recent Library Development in China*. Bulletin of the American Library Association, 18(4), 178–182.
- Wood, M. E. (1931). *The Boxer indemnity and the library movement in China*. Central China post ltd.
- Wu, X. (2015). *A Brief History of Modern Library in China*. Social Sciences Literature Press, China.
- Xiao, Y. (2006). *Russian Orthodox Mission in Beijing and Sino-Russian Books Exchange in the Qing Dynasty*. Studies in Qing History, 79–89.
- Xie, Z. (Ed.). (1987). *The History of Libraries and Books in China*. Wuhan University Press.
- You, S., & Zhou, J. (2016). Discussion on Criterion of Banned Books and its Actual Situation. Lantai World, 09, 103–105.
- Yu, P. C. (2001). Leaning to One Side: The Impact of the Cold War on Chinese Library Collections. Libraries & Culture, 36(1), 253–266.
- Zhang, S. (2016). A Brief Introduction of the Book Price in Ancient China. Research on the History of Publishing in China, 3, 84–96.
- Zhang, Y. (2014). The development of library and information science in China (1840–2009). International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, 40(4), 296–306.



Zheng, J., et al. (2010). *The queen of the modern library movement in China: Mary Elizabeth Wood*. *Library Review*, 59(5), 341–349.

<https://doi.org/10.1108/00242531011047037>