

Annual Report of IFLA-PAC China Center (2015)

The IFLA-PAC China Center was established in the National Library of China in 2004. Over the past decade, it has achieved fruitful results in its various undertakings. Following is the work report of the China Center for 2015.

I. Institutional Improvement

According to the need for business development of the IFLA-PAC China Center, the National Library of China improved its institutional arrangement. The International Cooperation Division, Coordination & Operation Management Division, Stack Management & Reading Services Department, Digital Resources Department, Microforms Department, Ancient Books Library and Office of China National Center for Preservation & Conservation of Ancient Books altogether formed the leadership group of the China Center, taking charge of works in their own field of expertise. The purpose is to further clarify the responsibilities of different departments, enhance their communication with the China Center, and promote its development.

II. Major Responsibilities

Since its establishment, the China Center has been closely following the regulations of the IFLA-PAC to act as the bridge between China and IFLA and carry out its due responsibilities, including: strengthening the awareness of the Chinese public to the preservation and conservation of documents; disseminating information on preservation and conservation; translating professional documents into Chinese and sharing them to domestic libraries for free; organizing training courses, seminars and academic meetings on preservation and conservation and security of national cultural heritage under the support of other centers or the headquarters of IFLA-PAC; encouraging and promoting the use of standards (including permanent use of paper, digitization, microforms, etc.); writing for the IFLA-PAC newsletter (IPN) and disseminating it in China; and actively participating the IFLA and other international conferences.

III. Vigorously carrying out talent training for documents preservation and conservation

Since the “Chinese Ancient Books Preservation Initiative” was launched, the China Center has been vigorously cultivating talents on preservation, and a new “three-in-one” model covering training bases, colleges and professional institutions gradually took shape.

In 2015, the China Center provided 17 training courses on different subjects of ancient books preservation, benefiting 694 people. It also published text books series *Principle and Method of Ancient Books Preservation*.

In 2015, nine National Ancient Books Restoration Technique Institutions were set up. Currently, there are 21 such institutions under the National Ancient Books Restoration Technique Center, having 17 professional tutors and 127 students.

In the meantime, the China Center worked together with colleges to provide education of ancient books preservation and to promote the construction of the disciplinary system. From 2014, the Center signed agreements with Sun Yat-sen University and Fudan University consecutively to educate postgraduate students of ancient books preservation. In 2015, four partner institutions recruited 33 postgraduate students in total.

IV. Progress of Major Documents Preservation and Conservation Projects

Since the Chinese government launched the “Chinese Ancient Books Preservation Initiative” in 2007, the China Center has carried out effective work in the survey and registration of ancient books, digitization, complication and publishing, restoration, overseas cooperative protection and education on the

preservation of ancient books. Following is the progress on major projects.

i. Survey and Registration of Ancient Books

As the current condition of ancient books in China is unclear, the China Center organized nationwide survey and registration of ancient books on the platform of the survey system. As of December 2015, data for 1.7million items had been surveyed and registered. Meanwhile, the China Center coordinated and dominated the compilation and publishing of the *National Ancient Books Survey and Registration Catalogue* and *National Ancient Books Catalogue*. By the end of December, *National Ancient Books Survey and Registration Catalogue* from 95 organizations having ancient books in their collection had been published, including 21 volumes and 47 copies.

ii. Review of *Directory of National Precious Ancient Books* and “National Key Organizations for Ancient Books Preservation” Applicants

Under the leadership of the Ministry of Culture, the China Center began to review the applicants of *Directory of National Precious Ancient Books* and “National Key Organizations for Ancient Books Preservation”. In 2015, based on the suggestions from experts, the Center confirmed the final recommendation list for the fifth *Directory of National Precious Ancient Books* and “National Key Organizations for Ancient Books Preservation”. In

March 2016, the State Council announced the result of 899 new items enrolled in the *Directory of National Precious Ancient Books* and 14 newly elected organizations for “National Key Organizations for Ancient Books Preservation”.

iii. Ancient Books Restoration and Tools Supply

The China Center made great efforts in the management of national centers for ancient books restoration and National Key Organizations for Ancient Books Preservation, so that the restoration work is more standardized and in order.

In 2015, the China Center continued to support the ancient books restoration project, and helped finishing the repairing of *Compendium of Materia Medica*, a precious Ming Jinling edition. Besides, the restoration of *Tianlu Linlang* is in steady progress.

In 2015, the China Center focused on improving the preserving conditions of precious ancient books, and prepared special equipment for those enlisted in the *Directory of National Precious Ancient Books* and documents of multiple subjects. Currently, the National Library of China and the Gansu Provincial Library have been equipped.

iv. Digitization of Ancient Books

As an important means to protect and pass on Chinese precious ancient documents, digitization can clearly maintain their original form. As a result, Chinese classic culture is

promoted, the needs of professionals, scholars and the public satisfied, level of public culture increased and conflicts between the protection and utilization of ancient books properly solved. The project started the “Chinese Precious Ancient Books Database” project in 2012 to that end, and in 2015, nearly 100,000 pieces of film data were collected. About 290,000 pieces of precious videos about ancient books were uploaded by 19 organization. The Center examined and processed them according to strict standards, made launch plans and posted tens of thousands of types of ancient book resources online.

v. Compilation and Publishing

Besides maintaining the original condition of ancient books, the China Center also reproduced them as another form of protection. Through various compilation and publishing projects, it encouraged reasonable use of precious documents.

The first phase of the “Reproduction of Chinese Rare Books” project and its continuation, altogether 1,341 volumes of precious ancient books were published in 2015. Besides, the China Center published the *Catalogue of Reproduction of Chinese Rare Books* and organized the writing and review of sequels. Three types of the *Series of Chinese Precious Ancient Books* and 6 types of *Series of Chinese Precious History Books* were published, making it 10 types published in total.

vi. Overseas Chinese Ancient Books Investigation and

Cooperative Preservation

The China Center officially launched the “Overseas Chinese Ancient Books Investigation and Digitization Project” in 2014, aiming to work with other countries in the investigation, cataloguing, digitization and publishing of overseas Chinese ancient books.

In March 2015, deputy director Zhang Zhiqing of the National Library of China led a delegation to North America to push forward multiple cooperation projects including the “Catalogue of Chinese Rare Books in North America”.

In 2015, the National Library of France donated the digital version of “40 Sceneries of the Old Summer Palace” to the National Library of China, and the Bodleian Library of the Oxford University also gave high-definition digital versions of 19 volumes of *Yongle Dadian* in their collection to the NLC. Those were important results of the “Overseas Chinese Ancient Books Investigation and Digitization Project”.

vii. Education and Promotion of Ancient Books Preservation

In order to increase the awareness of the public to the idea and techniques of ancient books preservation, the China Center has been working vigorously these years to publicize the project and has held a series of events including seminar and exhibition.

These efforts have received good feedback.

In 2015, the China Center held themed exhibitions which were very popular in the industry and among the public, including “Commemorative Exhibition for Mr. Qian Cunxun”, “Special Exhibition of Precious Wood-Blocks” and “Precious Ancient Books Collection in the Folk”.

In 2015, the China Center jointly organized photo contest “Chinese Ancient Books and I” with the Library Society of China, and worked with 458 libraries in China to hold tour exhibitions of award-winning photos, presenting the achievement of ancient books preservation to the public. That event was very appealing to the society.

The year 2015 marked the 70 anniversary of the victory of Anti-Japanese War and WWII. The China Center solicited stories of people rescuing and protecting ancient books during the war and held large seminars. It also compiled and published the *Collections of Essays on the Rescue and Protection of Ancient Books during WWII*.

In 2015, the Center updated the version of “Chinese Ancient Books Preservation Website” and posted it online. The latest news and industry information are put online on time, which is well commented in the library circle.