Best Practices for 
Selecting and Acquiring 
Growing Chinese Print Resources

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Opinions expressed are those of the presenter and are not statements of the Library of Congress.
Growing Chinese Print Resources

• In the decade 2003-2012 Chinese publishing witnessed phenomenal growth.

• National output by no. of titles:
  2003 – 190,391
  2012 – 369,523

• National output by no. of new titles:
  2003 – 110,812
  2012 – 207,506
Collection Development vs Acquisition

• Collection development –
  Selection of materials for the library.

• Acquisition –
  Orders, receives, and pays for those materials.
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**Recommended Officer vs Acquisition Specialist**

- **Recommended Officers** –
  Responsible for collection development.
  Select materials for the library.

- **Acquisition Specialists** –
  Responsible for acquisition.
  Ordering, receiving shipment, paying invoices.
Institutional Goals

• Of all the relationships, the most important one for librarians is the relationship to the institution as a whole.

• Librarians give the institution’s mission the highest priority.
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Organizational Pattern & Staffing

• For Chinese publications the best organizational pattern is one based on language.
• Staffing must be adequate.
• Librarians must know the language and the civilization.
• Librarians must have training in Area Studies as well as in Librarianship.
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Publishing Trends (1)

• Sectors of publishing –
  Mass market publishing
  Trade publishing
  Educational publishing
  Scholarly publishing

• Complicated by numerous reprints.

• Further complicated by “cooperative publishing”
Publishing Trends (2)

- Librarians should frequently review publisher catalogs, read reports on publishing industry.
- Librarians should be encouraged and supported to conduct acquisition trips -- visit book fairs & bookstores in China.
Collecting Policies / Selection Guidelines

• In order to perform selection task professionally collecting policies and guidelines must be documented and followed.
• Collecting policies set forth the scope, collecting levels and emphases.
• Selection guidelines spell out the details of collecting emphases by subjects and topics.
Collecting Policies / Selection Guidelines (2)

• Some decisions require staff members to exercise their expert judgment.

• Regular revisions needed to update the documents, especially for types of materials the nature of which are particularly volatile.
Vendors & Publishers (1)

- Using the service of one or more vendors is the only option to buy books from China.
- Larger libraries might divide their purchase orders into “vendor-select” and “library-select” categories.
- Approval Plan Funds are used to purchase library materials that are selected by vendors.
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Vendors & Publishers (2)

• Some libraries refrain from using more than one vendor for each country/region – risk of acquiring duplicates.

• The risk can be prevented if vendors are assigned different publishers.
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Vendors & Publishers (3)

• For expensive items vendors can be invited to submit price quotes.
• Price quotes should include book cost, handling and delivery charges.
• Privilege to supply that item goes to the vendor giving the lowest bid.
Alternative Acquisition Methods (1)

• Gift and exchange are possible alternatives. Auction is rarely used.
• Intended gift and proposed exchange must go through vigorous screening.
• Staff time involved is forbidding.
Alternative Acquisition Methods (2)

• Gift and exchange can be considered when offered materials are not on the book market.
• Never use gift and exchange for the benefits of surplus book programs.
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Thank You

Please Keep in Touch