

ANU LIBRARY'S ASIAN COLLECTION



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The Australian National University Library's Oriental collection was established in the early 1950s, largely in Chinese and Japanese, two languages regarded as an essential foundation for the university's Far Eastern historical research. As a result of its amalgamation with Canberra University College, added to the ANU collection was CUC's Indonesian language collection as well as its Asia-related material in Western languages (English, Dutch, and French). Since then, the ANU Library has developed this collection, extending to the wider Asian region and languages currently include Chinese, Japanese, Indonesian, Korean, Javanese, Balinese, Vietnamese, Hindi, Sanskrit, Tibetan, Burmese, Tagalog, Mongolian, Arabic, Urdu, Parsi, and Manchu.

To date, the major strength of the collection is its China, Japan, and Indonesia material in both indigenous and Western languages, with the China collection being the most expansive.

As was designed, the collection closely mirrors the research interests of the university.

As one of the more established Asian collections nationally, the ANU Library has managed to acquire quite a good selection of unique and rare items: in the China collection is the Qing Dynasty Manchu Xinjiang document collection; rare books from the National Library of Peiping acquired in 1961; the Xu Dishan collection, the library's first significant acquisition in 1950; Japan collection: Toyo Keizai Bunko, an ongoing gift collection from one of Japan's oldest and most influential publishing companies; and web-based and CD-ROM resources such as Nikkei Telecom 21, Yomiuri Shinbun, Asahi Shinbun, and Fujin Gaho; and in the Indonesia collection: Javanese and Balinese manuscript collection, and South Celebes manuscript collection. Of note also is the collection of sacred texts of Buddhism in Pali, Burmese, Chinese,

Tibetan, Japanese, and Sinhalese.

The ANU Library has been gradually building its digital collection over the years and unique in this collection are the Giles-Pickford photographic collection (images of 1860–1940 China), Cultural Revolution in China, and the recently added drawings of Bun Heang Ung on the Khmer Rouge period in Cambodia.

The combined collections of NLA and ANU Library's Asian Collection have supported world-leading research on Asia since the 1950s, and continue to draw international visitors to Canberra annually. Together, the Canberra collection on Asia represents one of the world's best sources on China and Indonesia.

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