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EDITORIAL

The theme for this issue is 'language and libraries', a deliberately broad theme which has resulted in a very wide-ranging issue. Inside these pages is a glimpse into a few of the current language collections at the University of Cambridge and their activities, and it also brings in some of the other languages that affect our libraries, from ancient scripts to computer coding. Kristen Williams gives us a fascinating glimpse into the the complexities of cataloguing Japanese-language material, from the ways in which this task is enhanced with collaborations in the UK and abroad to the technical processes involved. Picking up on the importance of these technical advancements to the role of libraries, Nicholas Cutler takes us on a tour through the history of

computing languages, from EDSAC to Python. Katie McElvanney and Marian Via Rivera of the Faculty of Modern and Medieval Languages Library share their experiences in creative approaches to collection and learning at their library, again highlighting the interdisciplinary and co-operative nature of language collections at Cambridge. We then take a step back in time and explore the archives of the ancient Aegean and Near East with Pippa Steele of the CREWS Project (Contexts of and Relations between Early Writing Systems). The question of how writing was stored and where provide avenues into reading these ancient texts, and can reflect on the practice of archives and libraries throughout civilisation.

Back in the present day, Katharine Dicks writes about one of the ways that libraries are promoting their language collections by giving us an insight into the 'European languages across borders' blog, run by the Collections and Academic Liaison department at the UL. Another collection of language material resides in Downing Place, easily overlooked but for those in the know: this is the University's dedicated Language Centre, designed for the language-learning needs of University staff and students in Cambridge. Jocelyn Wyburd gives us the low-down on how the centre has developed, and what it offers today.

These articles are diverse avenues into the many ways that languages and libraries interact, and I hope that you enjoy reading them as much as I did.

CATALOGUING JAPANESE COLLECTIONS AT CAMBRIDGE AND BEYOND

The Japanese works in the Cambridge Digital Library nearly tripled with a big update in February 2019. There are now 458 Japanese items available in the digital library. It is exciting to see these rare and special things become available to a worldwide audience. Today, readers can start in one of several places to find Japanese books at Cambridge: iDiscover, the UK Union Catalogue of Japanese Books, the Union Catalogue of Early Japanese Books in Europe, and the Cambridge Digital Library. It has not always been that

easy. Making the Japanese collections discoverable and accessible has been and continues to be a long journey.

Even after three years of working with Japanese books in the UL, I am still regularly surprised at the odd sorts of problems that come up when dealing with Japanese scripts in an English-speaking environment. Some challenges are related to the fact that few staff members within the Cambridge University Libraries can read or write in Japanese. Other issues come up because students and scholars in Japanese studies may need more guidance locating resources in Japanese, which may be their third or fourth language, than they might need for resources in Western languages. Once identified, the resources may still be difficult to obtain in the UK. Finally, technological issues are often a hurdle, with each advance bringing its own difficulties.

The trouble of inputting Japanese started with typewriters, which did not include Japanese characters. Once catalogue entries or cards were typewritten, the original script had to be omitted or written in by hand. The East Asian Reading Room in the Aoi Pavilion still has thousands upon thousands of handwritten catalogue cards. When the library first switched to an electronic catalogue, the catalogue could not accept East Asian scripts.

Because of the various difficulties in obtaining and cataloguing Japanese items, language specialists from several UK libraries joined together to form the 'Japan Library Group' in 1966. Librarians responsible for Japanese materials at Cambridge, Oxford, Sheffield, Stirling, and the British Library all participated from the beginning, and several other institutions joined later, including the School of

Oriental and African Studies.[1] Early on, the members specialised in different fields so that as many Japanese-language resources as possible would be available somewhere in the country. Today, the members trade duplicates, share tips about possible sources of support, and consult each other about vendors and electronic resources. Together with members of the European Association of Japanese Resource Specialists, itself inspired in part by the Japan Library Group UK, the institutions have negotiated consortium discounts on several main resources for Japanese studies.

The Japan Library Group's collaborative efforts at building Japanese collections across the UK in a complementary way that avoided too much overlap made it necessary for the institutions to share information about their Japanese holdings with each other and with their readers. Twenty years after its founding, the group started work on a union catalogue with the help of a £20,000 grant from the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation. The project took a major step forward in 1991 with a £100,000 grant from the Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation and the cooperation of Japan's National Center for Science Information Systems Cataloging Service (NACSIS-CAT).

Cambridge's Peter Dunn and Noboru Koyama took on major roles in making the Japanese union catalogue a reality. Mr Koyama and others have written in Japanese about the details of the project, which required years of effort, many floppy disks and CD-Roms, computers imported from Japan, and inventive solutions for inputting Japanese characters.[2]

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[1] "History of the Japan Library Group," Japan Library Group (2016), http://www.jlgweb.org.uk/history.html (accessed 14 February 2019).

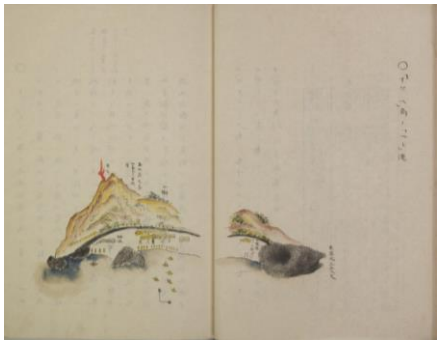
[2] Cf. Koyama Noboru, "CA1138: Eikoku Nihongo shuppanbutsu sōgō mokuroku (1): Nihon kankei jōhō no genjō (2) 英国日本語出版物総合目録(1): 日本関係情報の現状 (2)," *Current Awareness* 215 (20 July 1997), http://current.ndl.go.jp/ca1138 (accessed 14 February 2019); Miyazawa Akira, "Eikoku CAT Purojekuto o oete 英国CATプロジェクトを終えて: On UK NACSIS-CAT Project," Gakujutsu Jōhō Sentā Kiyō 学術情報センター紀要 https://ci.nii.ac.jp/els/contents110000466561.pdf?id=ART0000845811 (accessed 14 February 2019).

After the books were recorded in the Japanese system, Cambridge's Chris Sendall found a way to take the records—converted into Romanized form—and import them back into the local system in use at Cambridge at the time. Since the local system did not accept Japanese characters, the records included links to Japanese records stored on a separate server. This represented a huge step forward in discoverability for users.

Finally, after a 2004 update to Voyager, it was possible to include Japanese script in the main bibliographic records. Even then, some Japanese characters were excluded from MARC, not only at Cambridge but also at most of the libraries contributing to OCLC. This forced substitutions like the Chinese character 戶 for the Japanese character 戸, a common character that appears in Edo 江戸, the old name of Tokyo. The characters mean the same thing and look similar enough that humans can read one for the other. However, computers do not treat them as the same character, so readers searching iDiscover for one will not pick up physical titles that include the other. Since databases and electronic resources were not restricted to characters allowed by MARC, readers need different strategies to search them than they would use with books in the Cambridge collections.

Alma has made new cataloguing of Japanese books easier, but with tens of thousands of Japanese bibliographic records already in our own system and script problems widespread among the bibliographic records available to copy catalogue, many of the old problems are likely to remain for years to come. Mr Koyama continues to improve access for readers, even in retirement, by updating old bibliographic records as a volunteer.

Today, the UK Union Catalogue of Japanese Books is one part of a web-based system maintained by Japan's National Institute for Informatics, which replaced NACSIS. Cambridge University Library currently records its Japanese books both on this system and on Alma. More titles are available for copy-cataloguing on the system than on OCLC because many Japanese university libraries participate, and the process is quick since Cambridge simply adds its classmarks to existing records, rather than downloading records to store locally. Cataloguers can copy and paste from the Japanese



records into Alma templates and add Romanization when nothing is available to copy-catalogue on Alma. This helps to reduce the cataloguing backlog for Japanese books. Advantages for readers are that they can search for titles verbatim, rather than doing their own Romanization or adjusting for MARC's character set, that they can easily to search from any computer or smartphone connected to the Internet, and that they can search across UK Japanese collections.

Up until now, I have focused on the modern and contemporary works within the Japanese collections. Voyager or Alma cataloguing of the rare books and manuscripts within the Japanese collections was deferred for years, in part because a book-form catalogue was available for most of them. Nozomu Hayashi and Peter Kornicki published *Early Japanese Books in Cambridge University Library: A Catalogue of the Aston, Satow, and Von Siebold Collections* with Cambridge University Press in 1991. This title later formed the basis of the Union Catalogue of Early Japanese Books in Europe, and it is now informing the metadata for additions to the Japanese works in the Cambridge Digital Library.

Overall, the situation for readers looking for items in Japanese has greatly improved over the past several decades. Almost every smartphone and computer can now accept input in Japanese, if it is enabled to do so, so readers can search the electronic catalogues on their own devices even when public terminals are sometimes set up in a more limited way. The patchwork of solutions and catalogues can be difficult to navigate at first, but with outreach efforts from both the UL and the Faculty Library for Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, students and scholars soon learn how to approach the material that most interests them.

Kristin Williams
Head of Japanese Section
University Library
Background information on library computer systems and on the development of the UK Union Catalogue of Japanese Books was kindly provided by Iain Burke and Noboru Koyama, respectively.

PROGRAMMING LANGUAGES FROM EDSAC TO THE CODING CULTURE

On 6th May 1949 a radically different type of machine was operated for the first time. This was EDSAC, the Electronic Delay Storage Automatic Calculator,[2] the world's first, practical stored-program digital computer. The key feature which set this apart from other early computers was the ability to store both programs and data in the same memory, making it easier to set the machine up to solve a range of different problems. Writing instructions for such a machine required a new type of language, or code. In the case of EDSAC this consisted of a series of instructions, each identified by a single letter and a memory location. At this point programming was an activity confined to a few scientists who needed to speed up numerical computation.

Just twelve years later, programming was to become more accessible with the advent of Autocode[3] on EDSAC (superseded in 1958 by a larger and faster machine). The aim of this was to allow the user to "express his problem in a language similar to normal mathematical conventions", while it also used English words for functions (like PRINT), and control operators (like REPEAT). Many of the basic concepts familiar to anyone who has used a modern programming language were present in EDSAC Autocode. Of course, the machine couldn't understand Autocode directly, and another

[2] Wilkes, M.V. and Renwick, W. (1949) "The EDSAC". In: *Report of a conference on high speed automatic calculating machines*. Cambridge University Mathematical Laboratory.
[3] Hartley, D.F. (1961) *EDSAC Autocode programming manual*. Cambridge University Mathematical Laboratory.

program would translate it into the machine's native 'language'. In modern terms Autocode was a high-level language, and the EDSAC order code was low-level. The program to translate from one to the other was a compiler.

Autocode, however, was not the first high-level language. The American giant IBM had an early version of Fortran[4] in 1957, and in Europe Algol[5] had appeared by 1960. Both of these were influential at the time, and the Fortran language, now considerably extended and standardised, is still used for scientific computing. However, both of these had their limitations, and a joint project between the Computer Laboratory and the University of London aimed to produce a new language using the concepts of Algol, but with many extensions. The new language was to be called CPL (Combined Programming Language). Unfortunately, for various reasons, the project was a failure, producing a language which was difficult to implement at the time.[6] This, however, is not the end of the story, as Martin Richards produced a version without the problematic features which he called BCPL.[7]

BCPL was a powerful and useful language, and was designed as a systems programming language. In effect this means that the language was no longer restricted to numerical computation, and because it offered direct access to the hardware of the machine, it could be used to write programming language compilers, utilities like text editors, and even entire operating systems. Consequently it enjoyed a considerable success at the time, having been implemented on more than 25 different computer architectures. Although no longer in widespread use, it led to the development of the C

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[4] International Business Machines Corporation (1957) *Programmer's primer for Fortran automatic coding system*.

[5] Backus, J.W. et al. (1960) "Report on the algorithmic language Algol 60". In: *Numerische Mathematik* vol. 2, pp. 106-136.

[6] Barron, D.W. et al. (1963) "The main features of CPL". In: *Computer journal*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 134-143.

[7] Richards, M. (1973) *The BCPL programming manual*. Cambridge University Computer Laboratory.

programming language which is still popular. Additionally, Martin Richards still makes a BCPL system available on his website.[8]

If programming languages were becoming easier to use, the computers themselves were still rather inaccessible. When the computer occupied an entire room, users either submitted their programs to be run, and collected the results later, or worked at a terminal which simply passed commands to the remote machine, and displayed the results. This changed in the late 1970s when the microprocessor made it possible to put a computer on everyone's desk, or in the living room of every home. At a time when Britain was slow in embracing the possibilities of microcomputers, the BBC launched the Computer Literacy Project which introduced an entire generation to computers, and made the Cambridge based Acorn Computers famous.

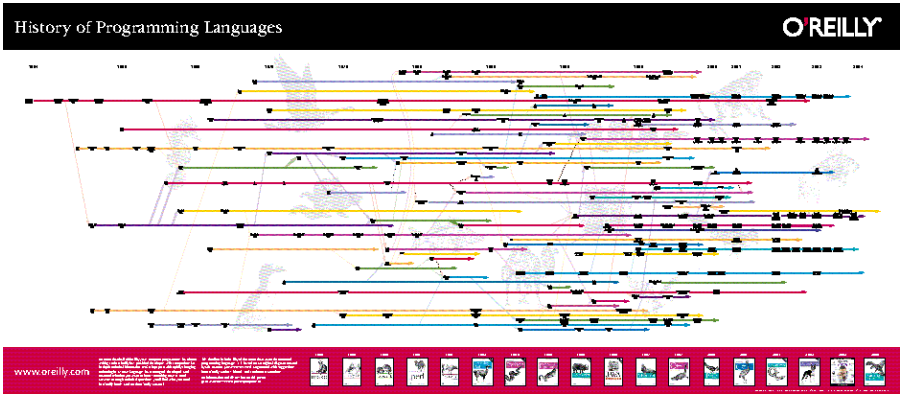
The BBC Micro wasn't the cheapest microcomputer in the 1980s, but it was one of the most versatile. Like many microcomputers it came with a dialect of BASIC,[9] a high-level language which introduced many children to programming, including the author of this article. Apart from the more natural syntax, one of the advantages of BASIC was the ability to type in single commands, or entire programs, and have the computer run them immediately without a compilation step. This convenience was achieved at the expense of speed because the language was interpreted; each line was translated to machine code as it was run. This also enabled the interpreter to catch potential errors and made it much more difficult for a faulty program to crash the computer. These were important features for beginners and hobbyists, as they could experiment without worrying about doing any harm. For more experienced users, other languages were available including BCPL and Pascal.

In many respects, the IBM PC compatible machines which came to dominate the market were a retrograde step. The machines came supplied with

[8] http://www.cl.cam.ac.uk/users/mr/BCPL/bcpl.tgz

[9] Coll, J. (1982) *The BBC Microcomputer user guide*. British Broadcasting Corporation.

standard office software, but no programming language, while operating systems such as Windows went to great lengths to hide the internal workings of the machine from the user. Of course, you could always purchase programming tools, Borland's Turbo C and Turbo Pascal were well known and popular for a time, but these were expensive and lacked the necessary convenience to encourage the beginner to experiment.



For full resolution go to http://cdn.oreillystatic.com/news/graphics/prog_lang_poster.pdf

Fortunately, there are signs that this is changing. Programming (now called coding) is, once more, being introduced to school children. This has been enabled by the development of the Raspberry-Pi, a miniature computer which aims to do for computing now what the BBC Model B did in 1982. Such is progress that this compact machine is vastly more powerful, and much cheaper too, even before allowing for inflation. Reassuringly, the Pi is designed to encourage programming and comes with the Python language installed. Like BASIC on a 1980s microcomputer, Python is interpreted and retains the advantages of convenience while adding all of the features of a modern object-oriented language. If you wanted to try programming this is a good starting point; there are also versions of Python freely available for PCs and Macs.[10] Learning to program is like learning a new way of thinking;

[10] https://www.python.org/downloads/windows/ or https://www.python.org/downloads/mac-osx/

whatever language you learn, the basic concepts are similar and can be transferred to any programming language.

Nicholas Cutler
Librarian
Computer Laboratory

BEYOND READING LISTS: CREATIVE APPROACHES TO LANGUAGE LIBRARIES AND LEARNING AT THE MODERN AND MEDIEVAL LANGUAGES LIBRARY

As many of you will know, working in a Faculty Library can be challenging in terms of managing perceptions of the library purely as a space for providing reading list material, but it can also provide countless opportunities for creative approaches to learning and librarianship. As a language library, we are especially seeking to build interdisciplinary links and to promote and support a holistic approach to language learning in higher education. This is reflected, for example, in the inclusion of film, linguistics, arts and history materials which sit side by side in our collection.

Last year we asked students as part of a UX survey how they thought MML Library staff could support them with their studies. The main responses included: purchasing books for papers, finding and recommending books, and scanning. However, at the same time, the survey results revealed that many students were aware of the activities and initiatives we offered beyond the collections (such as craft and teaching sessions, Russian Scrabble, and the popular weekly squash and biscuits), and viewed the Library as a welcoming and inclusive space. It was apparent, then, that there was a disconnect between the way they viewed the space and their understanding of what library staff could offer. So, how are we trying to bridge this gap?

One of the ways we are seeking to do this is to embed ourselves more not only with the Faculty but also with the student body. For example, introducing ourselves and speaking at language-specific inductions at the start of Michaelmas Term and running language specific e-resources training

has helped to make us more visible and allowed us to share subject knowledge. At the same time, our teaching sessions have also focused on more general creative and practical learning strategies, such as time management and critical thinking. This approach aims to equip students with the resources to seek information both in Cambridge and while on their Year Abroad. We continually review our teaching and learning strategy, but also our wellbeing practices, in response to student feedback and wider changes across the University.

As a Library team we each have language specialisms, which gives us the opportunity to share knowledge and skills across languages and cultures. A recent example of this collaboration is our current display for LGBT+ History Month. Not only have all staff members contributed ideas and items, but we are actively encouraging students and staff to suggest new items for our collections. Other displays and small exhibitions (including on Spanish Transition Comics and Decolonising the Curriculum) have also led to increased engagement and interaction with the wider MML Faculty, as well as staff and students from across the University. The challenges posed by a lack of physical space in the Library have in fact allowed us to create more interactive displays, where visitors can touch, read, borrow and comment on the materials. This ties in well with our ethos of promoting engagement and community building through both the collections and the Library space.

This inclusive and collaborative approach has led students to move from participation to creation. While we have run a weekly craft session for the past year, we were thrilled recently when a student set up a weaving loom in the Library social space for everyone to use. We have also been fortunate to work with graduate students to actively develop the collections in subject areas for which we have special funds, such as Ukrainian. We similarly encouraged student input when establishing our graphic novel collection (now covering nine languages!). Again, this demonstrates a shift from students as users to creators and curators.

The opportunities for culture sharing and community building in a language library are endless, and at MML we try to make the most of this by continuously responding creatively to the ongoing needs of our users.

Katie McElvanney and Marian Via Rivera
Senior Library Assistants
MML Library

ARCHIVES OF THE ANCIENT AEGEAN AND NEAR EAST

© Louvre Museum CC BY-SA 3.0

If one of the purposes of writing is to record information, then one of the side effects of literacy is that we have to think about how and where to store written documents. This was no less a problem in ancient times, and different societies developed different ways of dealing with their written output, beginning traditions of storage that have come down to us in modified forms today.

At the CREWS Project (Contexts of and Relations between Early Writing Systems, based in the Cambridge Classics Faculty) we are conducting research on ancient writing systems of the Mediterranean and Near East in the 2nd and 1st millennia BC, and specifically we're interested in the social and cultural background to writing. That means trying to answer questions such as: Why did a society adopt/develop writing when it did? What did people think should or shouldn't be written down? What did they write on? What did they write about? How many people could read and write? What effects did writing have on society? Inevitably the answers vary from one society to another, which means that in any given place in the ancient world there may have been very different attitudes to writing, and to storing the products of writing.

My own research focuses on writing in the Bronze Age Aegean, where Mycenaean Linear B (15th-13th C BC) – the syllabic script deciphered by Michael Ventris in the 1950s that turned out to be in an early form of Greek language – is perhaps the most famous script. But what is strange about Linear B, unlike its undeciphered ancestor Linear A, is that it looks like it was used for a very restricted range of purposes. Almost all surviving inscriptions are on clay documents used in administration, chiefly lists of goods and personnel, written on clay tablets. If this was the main purpose of writing, then it is not surprising that storage was organised thematically according to e.g. the type of item being listed or the location of materials being accounted for. At Pylos, one of the most prolific Mycenaean centres, archaeologists identified two rooms as an 'Archives Complex', where documents were stored in baskets with clay labels signalling their contents fixed to the outside. Surviving examples show the imprint of the basket on the reverse. We also know that information could be recorded first on individual small tablets before being transferred onto longer ones for storage. This was bureaucratic literacy, written by bureaucrats for themselves and for their colleagues.

If we turn towards the east, Mesopotamian literacy offers quite a different picture. The cuneiform writing system developed for Sumerian in the 4th millennium BC was adopted and adapted in neighbouring areas, and although its main vehicle was again the clay tablet, the people who used it thought it was useful for a lot more than state administration. While the state and its agents did use cuneiform writing to keep tabs on goods and personnel, the people under its control also had more dynamic interactions with writing, which could for instance be used in a whole range of private contracts between individuals. Meanwhile, elites could be interested in writing as a feature of high culture, and writing down poems and other 'belletristic' texts became an important aspect of literacy, as did religious writing and scientific scholarship. With so much to write about, inevitably storing all these written documents became a more complex challenge.

Image courtesy of Silvia Ferrara

Cuneiform culture was also rife at Ugarit, a Late Bronze Age Syrian site that is the main focus of CREWS researcher Philip Boyes' work, where a newly invented cuneiform alphabet (different from the Mesopotamian syllabic varieties) was used alongside Akkadian (a Mesopotamian language written in syllabic cuneiform). Here we see a wide range of different types of text, from administrative to literary, and strikingly we find that important officials kept archives in their own residences. Of course, the residences of these individuals may not have been 'private' in a modern sense, and are likely to have been centres of administrative activity in themselves – but the geographical decentralisation of archives that (at least in part) relate to state administration means a shift in the way information storage works. In fact, there is an interesting parallel at Late Bronze Age Mycenae, where Linear B records unusually were found not only in the central 'palace' complex but also in buildings outside it, perhaps not so different from Ugarit's literate official residences.

In areas where literacy was more widespread, powerful individuals often sought to use it as a source of cultural power. Perhaps most famously, the 7th C BC Assyrian king Ashurbanipal (whose exhibition at the British Museum has made a big splash this winter) made great claims to literacy and was often depicted in art with a stylus or two in his belt. He took pride in his great library at Nineveh, and most strikingly he declared himself to be interested not only in the skill of writing in itself, but also in historical writings, stating in one decree that he had "examined stone inscriptions from before the flood". The historical depth of his literary interests and of the collection in his library is quite different from the ancient concept of the state archive. Here we see significant value put on writing for writing's sake, which arguably brings us closer to the way we think about libraries today – not as

repositories of administrative information but as institutions that safeguard literary and cultural heritage.

A division is commonly made between archives as long-term stores of essentially 'dormant' information, and libraries as repositories used for more regular consultation, although the ways these terms are used do vary between Mediterranean and Near Eastern scholarship. Essentially, the issue is whether a document is intended to be read again, and if so, how the user locates it when the need arises. Sometimes, for instance, a clay tablet could have a separate inscription on its edge, indicating its contents if viewed from the side in a row with other tablets – a very different technique from the less direct labels used for whole groups of Linear B texts in baskets. This is of interest to us at CREWS because it shows an interaction between the social setting in which a document was used and its physical features, demonstrating just one of the ways in which context is crucial to understanding writing in the ancient world.

If you enjoyed reading this post, you may also be interested in our blog: https://crewsproject.wordpress.com/.

Pippa Steele
Principle Investigator of the CREWS Project

BLOGGING TO PROMOTE OUR WORK AND LANGUAGE COLLECTIONS

The Collections and Academic Liaison department is responsible for the University Library's European-language collections as well as the acquisition of English-language material outside Legal Deposit and the administration of the ebooks@cambridge programme. We have two blogs – the ebooks@cambridge blog and the European languages across borders blog, which is the focus of this article. The blog has been running since autumn 2013, with at least one post a week. The name of the blog aims to emphasise the fact that our work involves books from all around the world, from

countries where languages with a European origin are spoken, rather than from European countries alone.

All members of the department are encouraged to contribute blog posts; we have also featured guest posts and regularly reblog from other relevant blogs such as ejournals or Special Collections. Each post generally concentrates on collections in one language, usually one of the major European languages, but we have also featured more minor languages such as Scandinavian or Afrikaans and sometimes take a multilingual approach such as in a post to commemorate the start of the First World War or one last December on St. Nicholas. We try to ensure that posts feature engaging images too.

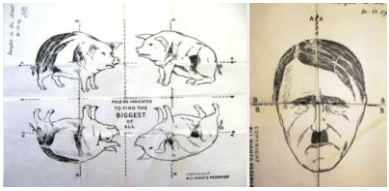
Whatever the starting point may be for a post, our purpose is always to promote our language collections, historical or new, and to publicise more widely the work that we do. Over the years, the range of subjects and materials covered has been wide and there have been many different sparks to stimulate ideas for posts:

- a new arrival in the Library that we want to share e.g. a recent beautiful book of wallpapers that inspired a broader look at similar titles or the Cartonera collection of Latin American items from cardboard publishers;
- an anniversary such as 25 years since German reunification or 100 years of De Stijl;
- the death of an author such as Umberto Eco or Dario Fo;
- a round-up of literary prizewinners;

- donations such as the recent Diane Française artists' books or the Robert Howes donation on the Portuguese revolution of 1974 and the Portuguese colonial wars;
- existing Special Collections such as the Acton Library as well as additions to our historical collections such as the Chadwyck-Healey Liberation Collection or a rare pamphlet from just after the 1755 Lisbon earthquake;
- the opportunity to publicise exhibitions such as one last year on Wifredo Lam and Aimé Cesaire or talks and lectures such as last autumn's annual Liberation Literature lecture;
- e-resources such as the scheme for Italian ebooks or online trials such as the recent Europresse one;
- explaining our work such as discussions of book covers, classification decisions, and authority work.

WordPress, who host our blog, provide all sorts of statistics which give us an insight into how our blog is currently used:

- it has had more than 85000 views in total with obvious spikes in the numbers of views on days when new posts are published;
- the most viewed post ever (over 2500) is one on feminism in Germany;
- on one day in November 2017 the blog had more views than any other day, due in part to a discussion thread on a Dutch site which resulted in almost 200 views of a post on World War 2 propaganda featuring these images:



- since the blog started we have seen the average views per day go up by about 50%;
- around one third of our readers come to us via search engines but nearly 10% of our traffic is generated through social media;
- the vast majority of views are by people based in the UK, United States or mainland Europe but the blog has been seen almost everywhere in the world;

- the blog is followed by almost 250 people.

If you were not aware of our blog before, do take a look at https://europeancollections.wordpress.com/ and please tell all your friends and readers about it. If you think that you might like to contribute a guest post, we are always on the lookout for new ideas so would welcome hearing from you.

Katharine Dicks (kd302@cam.ac.uk)
Collections and Academic Liaison
University Library

THE UNIVERSITY'S LANGUAGE CENTRE: MORE THAN JUST A LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE

Hidden on Downing Place, the narrow street leading from John Lewis or the Revolution bar down to the East side of the Downing Site is the University's Language Centre. Those in the University with long memories will remember that it started life as a 'language laboratory' in the bowels of the Sidgwick Site – an environment for self-study using audio-visual resources. And it is amazing how many people in the University think that is still what (and where) the Language Centre is!

Today the Language Centre has, in response to an ever increasing demand for language skills and changes in learners' needs, greatly extended the scope of its operation. It now offers a range of courses in 15 languages under the umbrella of **Cambridge University Language Programmes (CULP)** – accessible to staff and students from across the University, from every possible department or discipline, with some courses now also welcoming members of the public, including notably University staff family members. At the same time, the Centre has

established a range of programmes to support the Academic Literacy skills of international students, whose previous academic studies were in languages other than English. These programmes are delivered by the **Academic Development and Training for International Students (ADTIS)** team, who also assist the international graduate student admissions processes with advice and supplementary assessments.

At the heart of the Language Centre's endeavour is the self-access learning centre, dedicated to the memory of **John Trim** (1924-2013), a pioneer in the field of language education and the description of language learning proficiency, whose work to establish the Common European Framework of Reference, as a tool for levelling competences, aids language educators worldwide today. John was himself head of the department of Applied Linguistics and it is from those origins that the Language Centre began to take shape.

Today the **John Trim Centre** houses language learning resources in some 180 languages. Dictionaries, grammar books, course books at various levels, for general and specific purposes, many accompanied by audio visual material, as well as films, documentaries and readers – these all populate the shelves. All are freely accessible to any member of the Collegiate University community – staff or students – across all disciplines. Resources are shelved according to language and function and our catalogue is fully browsable online from the **Resources** tab on the Language Centre website. The Language Centre's holdings are also discoverable through iDiscover, alongside those of the other University libraries. The digitisation of its analogue holdings, some of it very rare, is a priority for the Centre, as is the shift from a DVD-based provision of video materials in an age where streaming services dominate.

The Language Centre's analogue and digital resources have largely developed in response to student and teacher demand. Typically learners inform us of their needs and we attempt to source new resources, if their need cannot be met from the existing collection. As an example, we recently sourced some materials to support the learning of Iñupiaq for a Social

Anthropology doctoral student wanting to prepare for fieldwork in northern Alaska. Finding materials in lesser taught languages, and particularly in languages which have more of an oral than written tradition can be a real challenge. Similarly, as demand for language skills to read primary and secondary sources for the purposes of research has increased, particularly across the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, we have also been focussing on resources which support the acquisition and advancement of reading skills. The development of our resource collection of course also reflects the developments in our taught programmes, including those for specific purposes. Thus we have recently sourced materials to support the learning of languages for medical purposes as a result of the expansion of our taught provision for the Clinical Schools.

Language learning is inherently a multi-modal process. Audio visual media have always been essential components and from the late 1980s onwards these have lent themselves to incorporation into interactive digital resources. Early on the Language Centre exploited the opportunities afforded by various audio-visual media to create resources incorporating textual and audio-visual input with interactive exercises and instant feedback. The Centre's learning development team has a long history in designing online learning resources and today it creates a range of learning objects in support of the Centre's own blended learning pedagogy across all its programmes as well as for independent learners. This growing collection is available from the Centre's Raven-protected online platform: **LC Online**. Thus a range of language learning opportunities is now available remotely as well as in the Centre itself. In a similar vein, resources developed to support the academic literacies of international students include support around issues like clarity in writing and self-editing, which are potentially equally applicable to native speaker undergraduate and graduate students! Some of these resources are cross-referenced in the new CamGuides for Master's students which we collaborated on with the University Library.

The Language Centre shares most of its online learning resources with the wider world as Open Courseware, under a Creative Commons Licence. Its Open Courseware is downloaded hundreds of thousands of times a year

worldwide. We are particularly struck by the large number of downloads of our Mandarin Chinese materials in China – presumably for the teaching of Mandarin as a foreign language. Having exploited some of our earlier online learning resources in an outreach programme to local schools, the Open Courseware collection is also actively promoted for use by secondary pupils alongside the Centre's outreach and widening participation projects run jointly with the Faculties of MML and AMES.

To provide an interface between the learning resource collections (both physical and online) and our learners, the Centre offers a language learning advisory function. John Trim Centre staff give first line support in accessing and using resources, and have a comprehensive knowledge of both the physical and online collections. They actively seek out supplementary resources which might be freely available on the internet. Learners may also book an appointment with one of the language teaching staff who are trained as **Language Advisers**. They function somewhat like a personal coach in a gym – assisting learners to set their own goals, identify resources, develop their learning strategies and monitor and reflect on their learning. Support tools and materials are provided via the Centre's website and there are plans to set up a dedicated Moodle site to assist independent language learners further with study skills and learning strategies.

The Centre is currently planning to bring the John Trim Centre and the online learning development team together into a new Learning Development and Support section. This will better reflect how our users learn in the digital age. We are hoping to learn more from the FutureLib project as the new section reviews our physical learning environment alongside our online learning presence, starting in 2019.

Full information on all the activities and holdings of the Language Centre can be found on our website at www.langcen.cam.ac.uk. We would be

delighted if other Cambridge libraries would link to us from their websites to encourage their users to access the Centre's wide range of learning and teaching opportunities and we welcome visits from librarians across the university who might be interested in finding out more.

Jocelyn Wyburd
Director
Language Centre

PEOPLE

The UL welcomed **Michael Williams** as the new Head of Collection Development and Management, from 'the other place'. He was previously the Head of Storage and Logistics at the Bodleian.

Gill Partington is the new Munby Fellow and is working on a new project about the 'moveable book'.

The University Library bid farewell to **Liz Goddard** (Learning and Development Manager). **Jennifer Broadway** has joined as the new Friends Coordinator. We now have a Communications Manager – **Stuart Jones.**

Lauren Cadwallader is now Research Data Facility Manager at the Office of Scholarly Communications. They welcomed **Elena Varela Fuentes** (Open Access Deposit Coordinator) and **Sacha Jones** (Research Data Coordinator).

Colin Clarkson (Head of Reference) has moved to take up the new post of Head of Modern Research Collections. **Rose Giles** is in the new post of Reader Services Manager. **Morag Law** (West Room Superintendent) retired after 35 in the UL. She joined the West Room as a fetcher and apart from a brief stint in the Accessions department she spent most of her time managing the UL's famously swift and efficient fetching service. During her reign nearly 3 million items were fetched but more significantly she trained 300 new fetchers – many of whom were inspired to pursue library careers in Cambridge and beyond, some no doubt will be reading these words. **Alex**

Fisher has taken her place as Reader Services Supervisor. **Meghanne Flynn** and **David Chapman** have joined the Reference department.

Digital Services bid farewell to its Acting Head **Oladeji Famakinwa**. He played an instrumental role in the implementation of Alma and iDiscover. **James Howe** (Senior Software Developer) has joined the Software Development team.

Conservation welcomed back **Cecilia Duminico**. **Sam Foley** is on secondment. They bid farewell to **Fay Humphreys**. **Rachel Sawicki** has joined as Exhibition Conservator. **Alan Shaw** has retired after many years in Collection Care.

The Genizah Unit welcomed **Mohamed Ahmed** (Genizah Research Associate).

English Cataloguing welcomed **Lewis Brittain**. **Jessica Colon** has joined Legal Deposit.

The South Asian, Tibetan and South-East Asian department bid farewell to **Rajashree Dhanaraj.**

Angela Few retired from English Cataloguing after 41 years of service in the UL. A large part of her time in the UL was spent in the Official Publications Department. An intrepid traveller, she plans to travel extensively in her retirement.

Dawn Kingham, from the Whipple Library, went on maternity leave in November; we congratulate her on the birth of baby Sam. Her maternity leave is being ably covered by **Francesco Mannu**, fresh from his recent secondment at the Engineering Library.

The Engineering Library has had a number of changes over the last few months. **Niamh Tumelty** has left to become Head of STEMM Libraries (overseeing the Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths and Medical

library services). **Lynne Meehan** is the new permanent Department of Engineering Librarian. **Charlotte Smith** has left to take up the post of Library Assistant in the Physics Library. **Lucy Welch** will leave her secondment at the Engineering Library, and her substantive post in Reader Services at the UL, for a new post as a Subject Librarian at the University of Cardiff at the end of February.

SPS (Sociology, Land Economy) have noted a few changes over the years. Following three resignations in 2017 of **Dean Ward**, **Catherine Ascough** and **Ian Preston** we recruited **John Hennessy** as Library Assistant and we persevered, working hard, through Michaelmas and Lent up to March 2018 when **Christina Brown** joined as Senior Library Assistant, coming from Cambridge Regional College. **Iliostalakti (Lily) Thoua** started with SPS in October 2016 in the position of Junior Library Assistant. She took maternity leave during 2017-18 (covered by committed temporary staff) and resigned in September 2018 due to health problems. **Kerry Duggan** joined us as a very efficient Junior Library Assistant for term times only, from October 2018.

In February 2019, **Veronica Sheils** is retiring after 7 years of dedicated service at SPS. Veronica previously worked in the Mill Lane library, preceded by many years in other libraries. Her sense of humour, hardworking nature and impressive institutional knowledge made her a popular member of staff. Her total service in Cambridge University libraries was about 25 years and we wish her a very happy and deserved retirement. She will be missed.

Congratulations are due to **Ana Ruenes Rubiales** (Churchill College Library Assistant) and **Manuel Del Campo** (cataloguer at the UL) who had a baby girl just before Christmas, whom they've named Marta.

At Wolfson, **Laura Jeffrey**'s job title has changed to 'Academic Skills Librarian' (previously Information Skills Librarian). The new title indicates expanded skills provision that the library offers to students at all levels of study at Wolfson.

Emily Grayton has retired as Library Assistant at Peterhouse after 12 years' service. The new Library Assistant is **Monica Boria**, who previously worked at the Language Centre.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

The next issue of ***CULIB*** will be entitled "Professional qualifications and activities". This could cover experiences of library school, professional teaching awards and membership and activities of CILIP. We are also looking for more articles on hobbies for the section 'What librarians do in their spare time'. If you would like to contribute an article, please contact the ***CULIB*** editors. The deadline for submission is 15th September 2019.

Cambridge University Libraries information bulletin *(**CULIB**)* is distributed free, twice a year, to libraries within the University and its Colleges, and to others on request. ***CULIB*** is edited by Kathryn McKee km10007@cam.ac.uk at St John's College Library, Mary Kattuman mpk1000@cam.ac.uk at the University Library, Lyn Bailey lkb24@cam.ac.uk at the Classics Faculty Library, Lindsay Jones lj311@cam.ac.uk at the University Library and Fiona Mossman fam50@cam.ac.uk at the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Library. Lindsay and Fiona produce the online version of ***CULIB*** which can be found at http://www.intranet.lib.cam.ac.uk/communication-and-news/culib. The editors may be contacted at ucam-culib@lists.cam.ac.uk.