

# **UCLA**

## **UCLA Historical Journal**

### **Title**

Special Features

### **Permalink**

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/8r58t86z>

### **Journal**

UCLA Historical Journal, 3(0)

### **Author**

Historical Journal, [No author]

### **Publication Date**

1982

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"Special Features" aims to provide a cumulative and updated directory of existing academic resources and professional services as well as general information of interest to graduate history students. Organizations and individuals wishing to submit material for publication in Volume 4 are encouraged to do so. The deadline for submissions is April 15 of each year. This installment of "Special Features" includes a note on computer resources useful to the historian and a letter from a Chinese historian describing his career as a scholar.

COMPUTER RESOURCES: Although many historians have utilized computers for data analysis, they have been slow to use databases as reference and primary research tools. Compared to the variety of databases available in many fields such as sociology, education, psychology, business, and management, little historical material has been converted for computer use.

A number of databases which contain secondary sources of interest to historians, however, are presently available at many large universities and public libraries. They are more versatile than card catalogues or printed indexes because they allow subject searches under subject headings beyond the range of standard catalogue and index headings.

*America: History and Life* corresponds to the printed index of the same name. It encompasses American history and culture, and includes abstracts and annotations of articles and book reviews from 2,000 journals in history, social science, and the humanities dating from 1964. It lists books and dissertations printed since 1974.

*Historical Abstracts* also corresponds to the printed index of the same name. It documents 2,000 journals published worldwide in history, the social sciences, and the humanities, and incorporates articles published since 1973 on world history (except Canada and the United States) from 1450 to the present. This index cites foreign language articles, conference proceedings, collections of essays, and dissertations.

The *Comprehensive Dissertation Index* consists of ninety-nine percent of the dissertations accepted at United States accredited institutions since 1861 and selected masters theses since 1962. The advantage of this database is that the user can retrieve dissertations on a particular topic written in different years in all disciplines.

Some databases not intended primarily for historical use are nonetheless useful to historians. *ERIC* is geared toward educators and refers to education research reports, bibliographies, course descriptions, theses, and curriculum guides. It also includes bibliographies, speeches, addresses, directories, and handbooks helpful to historians.

*The Philosopher's Index* draws upon over three hundred journals and books and includes material on the history of philosophy, historiography, the philosophy of history, and history as a field of inquiry. The database indexes, and often abstracts, articles published from 1940 to the present in primarily English-language and European journals. Philosophy books published in English since 1940 are also indexed.

*Social Scisearch* lists articles, book reviews, editorials, and communications from 1,500 social science journals, 2,400 science journals, and a few monographs. Some history journals are in this database, although many are now covered in the *Arts and Humanities Index* which is expected to be online soon.

In addition to reference materials on secondary sources, databases also cover a variety of individual and aggregate primary data. Examples are parish records and other sources of vital statistics on birth, deaths, and marriages; tax records and other business data including customs data and slaveholding records; records of participation in political, religious, and educational organizations; census data and census manuscript schedules; and voting records and statistics. The single largest collection of historical data files is held by the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR). They publish an annual *Guide to Resources and Services* available from ICPSR, Box 1248, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106.

An extensive bibliography of databases, primary source material, and computer books and journals which discuss historical research is provided in the summer 1982 issue of *RQ* (Vol. 21, No. 4). It includes a series of articles under the general title, "Computer-assisted Reference Services in History."

*The following autobiographical letter forwarded to the Journal has undergone minor editing to protect the author's anonymity, but otherwise appears verbatim.*

I was born in 1931 in Nanjing. My father was a metallurgist who had graduated at the Kyoto Imperial University in Japan and thereafter had ever been a manager of a Kuomintang iron and steel works in Shanghai. In 1937, when the Sino-Japanese War broke out, the plant and my family were moved to Chongqing. By the time I was fourteen, my father died of heart illness. In Chongqing I finished my primary and middle

school studying. At school I liked most History, English and ancient Chinese literature. I began to learn English at twelve. In 1948 I skipped one grade in my middle-school education won the entering examination into high school and then entered into the History Department of the National Beijing University.

Half a year after I entered the University, Beijing was liberated. In autumn 1949, in Grade Two of university, I began to learn Russian and had translated some articles into Chinese from Soviet historical journals. In 1950 I joined the New Democratic Youth league (namely, the China Communist Youth League today). In August 1951, after I finished the course of Grade Three in Beijing University, I was sent to U.S.S.R.

In September 1951 I entered the History Department of the Leningrad University and began to study the whole course there from Grade One. Within five years I won two marks "good" (4) (namely B in American school) and all the rest "fine" (5) (namely A in American school) in studying 33 subjects. I learned Latin one and half a year. Early in Grade Two my grade article was appraised as near to the graduation dissertation and my photo was shown on the honour roll of Department. In these years I continued translating articles from Soviet historical magazines into Chinese and took part in translating textbook of mediaeval history of Soviet universities into Chinese. Besides, I had taught Russian students Chinese conversation and reading in the Department of East in the Leningrad University. Since I was in Grade Three, I began to write my graduation dissertation. . . . I was admitted as a postgraduate staying at that university for three years. In June 1956 I received diploma with "fine" marks from the Leningrad University.

After having my summer holidays in China, in October 1956 I returned to the Leningrad University as a postgraduate of section of mediaeval history. . . . In one year I won all the examinations of graduate school with marks: Russian 5, philosophy 4, the seeds of capitalism in Europe 5, mediaeval History of Portugal 5. I had studied Portuguese for one and half a year and French for one year. At the end of 1958 I continued to write my dissertation leading to the degree of Vice-Doctor of Historical Sciences. . . . In May 1958, one part of my dissertation was published in the Chinese journal "Historical Researches". . . .

Unfortunately, in 1957 in China occurred so-called "the struggle against the rightists." After that, among the Chinese student in U.S.S.R. something so-called "purge" was carried out. I was qualified as "backward element unbelieving in the policy of CPC." For this, in spite of my vice-doctor's dissertation which was almost already to get through, I was repatriated by the Chinese Embassy in U.S.S.R. from the Leningrad University back to Beijing. In January 1959, before leaving Leningrad, I married a Soviet citizen. . . . in Leningrad and withdrew from the China Communist Youth League.

From March 1959 to April 1961 I worked in Historical Institute of the Academy of Sciences of China. I was enclosed by discrimination and misfortune especially I was against so-called "Three Red Banners." But I did my best in studying history, I continued translating from Russian, but only a few of these translated articles were published in China. Then I wrote a series of articles in Russian and sent them to Soviet

magazines. In 1961 I published my article in Russian . . . in Soviet magazine "Asia and Africa Today". . . .

Being unable more to stand the discrimination, I left Historical Institute in Beijing in spring 1961 and went to work for one year at Oil Field Daching. In August 1962 I came to county Suihua of . . . Heilunjiang and became a teacher of Russian in the First Middle school. Within these years I often heard from my teacher Dr. Luiblinskayn who always encouraged me to continue the studying of history in any conditions. I revised the second part of my dissertation . . . and sent it to the editor of Soviet magazine "The Problems of Soviet Orientology." I had written and translated many other articles and sent them to Soviet magazines and papers. . . . But I don't know whether any of other my articles were published or not because of Cino-Soviet relations became worse and worse and correspondence with Russians became unfit more and more. Besides, for this reason my Russian wife waited me for seven years and we could not get together. At last we were forced to divorce from one another.

In 1966 the so-called "Great Cultural Revolution" was started. At first I was treated as a "revisionist" and stood all kinds of insults. But things didn't stop only on this. My true views on affairs of that time was qualified as "vicious attacks on Mao Zedong Thoughts." In 1970 I was arrested and sentenced to twenty years imprisonment as a "counterrevolutionary." Most of my property, including my diploma and appraisal on my postgraduate school study of the Leningrad University, was missed in the disorder. Even a single sheet of paper of my books and manuscripts was not left since then.

From October 1970 to April 1979 I was imprisoned in the Third Prison of Province Heilunjiang and worked in a brickkila. In the first year of imprisonment I planned to write a book on the title of "China and the World Civilization." But this was taken for "act against idealogical remoulding" and the first part of manuscript was confiscated at once. Then in the following years all I could do was to spend my . . . spare time to read the rare papers and books which I could get in the prison. After the "Gang of four" was smashed, things became a bit better. In spring 1979 I began to write secretly in the prison a series of articles under the total title "On the Superstition to Individual." Manuscripts of these articles were safely taken out of the prison by myself.

I was released and acquitted of the crime in 1979. I returned to the First Middle School of County Suihua and worked as a teacher of English. In January 1981 I was transferred to the Department of English of the Teacher's College of Suihua Prefecture. . . .