

**Bear in mind: this handout gives the barest information about old and rare Chinese books. Go to a good East Asian library and go online and explore for yourself.**

### Online resources

#### 1. Library and archive websites

--*Zhongwen guji shumu ziliaoku* 中文古籍書目資料庫  
<http://nclcc.ncl.edu.tw/ttsweb/rbookhtml/nclrbook.htm>

This online union catalog includes not only rare books and string-bound books (through 1911) in 25 institutions in Taiwan, the PRC, and the United States. Holding information of libraries in China is incomplete with the exception of the National Library of China (formerly the National Beijing Library) which provides more than 300,000 records. At present the catalog as a whole contains more than 440,000 records. One can use the “General” search mode from any computer; results give only brief bibliographical details, and do not include the holdings of the National Library of China. The “Advance” search mode is available only from public computers in the East Asian Library. Search results provide full bibliographical details, and holdings from the National Library of China are included.

--Chinese Rare Books Project/RLIN

One of the best online catalogues around is Chinese Rare Books Project (CRBP), which is part of the RLG Union Catalogue—in fact, the CRBP provides a good model of a thorough catalogue entry: title, author, publication data, physical description (including the physical dimensions of the volumes), whether that particular copy is complete or not, also reference to an easily accessible bibliography, and some information, such as the names of the blockcarvers; and will be adding a scanned image of a page to its database

The RLG Union Catalogue is usually accessed through the Eureka interface, which actually does not provide every bit of information that the cataloguers actually put into the system. Furthermore, the records in this database will be incorporated into another international catalogue database OCLC, usually accessed through “WorldCat”. This “migration” is about to occur, as soon as April 2007.

--National Library of China 中国国家图书馆  
[http://210.82.118.4:8080/F/34HC5PIH127R5BK82GP1VMHBDLVI5LJ4XTGTRDPXHT611PCDG-18275?func=file&file\\_name=find-m](http://210.82.118.4:8080/F/34HC5PIH127R5BK82GP1VMHBDLVI5LJ4XTGTRDPXHT611PCDG-18275?func=file&file_name=find-m)

--National Science Library, Chinese Academy of Sciences 中国科学院国家科学图书馆  
<http://159.226.100.34:8080/guji/web-patron/index.jsp>

Shanghai Municipal Library: home page url: <http://www.libnet.sh.cn/>

--has many features, but *not* a catalogue for their rare or old books, nor for their genealogies collection

--Fudan University 复旦大学图书馆古典文献数据库  
<http://www.library.fudan.edu.cn:8080/guji/default.htm>

has some useful “databases”, such as for finding rare and old editions of Ming and Qing literary collections in the important libraries in China

#### 2. another useful website

--Barend ter Haar’s bibliography on literacy, writing and education  
<http://website.leidenuniv.nl/~haarbjter/literacy.htm>

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### Printed catalogues

Printed catalogues have several advantages over online versions. First, it remains easier to flip through them for browsing or compiling your own bibliographies. Second, the compilation of online versions may have generated new errors, as well as transferring old errors from the library’s original catalogues or in-

house computer files. Third, the printed catalogues may contain more bibliographic information than available online (e.g., page layout, completeness of a copy, publishing data). Thus it is worth checking the printed catalogues, even old ones.

By now, the majority of the large libraries in China, Taiwan, Japan, and the West that have important collections of rare or old Chinese books have published their catalogues of such works. In an East Asian library, they will be clustered in the reference area, with Library of Congress call numbers starting with “Z”. For instance, the very useful, if not complete rare books catalogue for most of the large and middle-sized public libraries in China, the *Zhongguo guji shanben shumu* 中國古籍善本書目 has the call number Z1029.Z566 1989 (or something like that). (A newer version, the *Zhongguo guji shanben zongmu* 中國古籍善本總目 (2005) has more information, but has also renumbered the entries from the *shumu* and an annoying large number of misprints.)

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### Books with useful bibliographies

- Brokaw, Cynthia J. and Kai-wing Chow, eds., *Printing and Book Culture in Late Imperial China*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.
- McDermott, Joseph P. *A Social History of the Chinese Book: Books and Literati Culture in Late Imperial China*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2006.
- Tsien Tsuen-hsuei. *Paper and Printing*. Vol. 5, Part I of *Science and Civilisation in China*, ed. Joseph Needham. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

### Books with reproductions of pages from Chinese rare books and other materials

- Beijing tushuguan, ed. *Zhongguo banke tulu* 中國版刻圖錄. 8 vols. 2d ed. Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1961.
- Hu, Philip K., comp. and ed. *Visible Traces: Rare Books and Special Collections from the National Library of China*. New York: Queens Borough Public Library; Beijing National Library of China, 2000.
- Seikadô bunko 靜嘉堂文庫, ed. *Seikadô bunko Sô-Gen pan zuroku* 靜嘉堂文庫宋元版圖錄. 2 vols. Tokyo: Kyûko shoin, 1992.
- Zheng Zhenduo 鄭振鐸, ed. *Zhongguo banhua shi tulu* 中國版畫史圖錄 (Illustrations to the history of Chinese woodcuts). 24 vols. Shanghai, 1940-47.
- (Guoli) Zhongyang tushuguan (國立) 中央圖書館, ed. *Manmu linlang Guoli Zhongyang tushuguan shanben tecang* 滿目琳琅國立中央圖書館善本特藏. Taipei: Guoli zhongyang tushuguan, 1993.
- Zhou Xinhui 周心慧, ed. *Mingdai banke tushi* 明代版刻圖釋. 4 vols. Beijing: Xueyuan chubanshe, 1998.

### Other useful books

- Nagasawa Kikuya. *Zhongguo banben muluxue shuji jieti* 中國版本目錄學書藉解題. Trans. Mei Xianhua 梅憲華 and Guo Baolin 郭寶林. Beijing: Shumu wenxian chubanshe, 1990. *succinct introduction to old catalogues and bibliographies*
- Wang Zhongmin 王重民 (1903-75). *Zhongguo shanbenshu tiyao* 中國善本書提要 (Notes on Chinese rare books). Shanghai: Guji chubanshe, 1983.
- , *Zhongguo shanbenshu tiyao bubian* 中國善本書提要補編. Beijing: Shumu wenxian chubanshe, 1991.
- These two works exemplify the kind of *tiyao* that are well-written and chock full of information useful not just to bibliographers but other researchers working with old editions.
- Wei Yinru 魏隱儒 and Wang Jinyu 王金雨. *Guji banben jian ding cong tan* 古籍版本鑑定叢談. Beijing: Yinshua gongye chubanshe, 1984. *Useful basic introduction to working with old Chinese string-bound books*
- Zhang Xiumin 張秀民. *Zhongguo yinshua shi* 中國印刷史. Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin, 1989.