



Improving the exploitation of ancient documents in some libraries in Hanoi

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ABSTRACT

The libraries in Hanoi are treasures of voluminous document heritages of Hanoi and Vietnam. These libraries have collected a large number of valuable ancient documents and developed many services to meet the users' needs for ancient documents. It is extremely important to keep these ancient documents in good condition and exploit them in an effectively way, which helps preserving and developing Vietnamese and world heritages.

In fact, various studies have been made to define ancient documents and offer recommendations to preserve them. However, none of these studies have been conducted to find solutions to improve the quality of exploitation of ancient documents in libraries in Hanoi, Vietnam.

To carry out this research, the author studied through archives of libraries and used hands on approaches. The data featuring characteristics of ancient documents from almost ten typical public and academic libraries in Hanoi were collected and analyzed.

The research starts with a brief overview of libraries in Hanoi and then goes into the details of their collections of ancient documents as well as the real situation of the exploitation of ancient documents in some libraries in Hanoi. Lastly, on the basis of the findings, the author proposes solutions to improve the quality of exploitation of ancient documents in the current period.

Keywords: ancient documents, exploitation, library, Hanoi, Vietnam

OVERVIEW OF ANCIENT DOCUMENT COLLECTIONS IN SOME LIBRARIES IN HANOI

Hanoi, the capital of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, is the center of politics, economy, culture and science and technology of the country. Located on two sides of the Red River, in the middle of the fertile Northern Delta, Hanoi owns an advantageous position to become the domestic and international commercial exchange location.

More than just an economic center of the country, Hanoi is also a place gathering elite and virtuous talented men who are the life-sustaining element of the country, and a place for international exchange and cultural enhancement. It is the culture of the capital owning a

unique nuance and being increasingly developed and improved in the general progress of Vietnamese culture. Hanoi is also a cultural and educational center with various national leading theatres, museums, libraries, traditional craft villages, media agencies at national level and major universities.

According to the statistics in 2013 of the General Statistics Office, at present, Hanoi has 170 libraries under the local management with 845 thousand documents in total (including libraries of the old Hanoi and libraries of the merged Ha Tay). Besides public libraries managed by Hanoi city, specialized and multi-sectorial agencies, schools and their libraries and information centers have added to the number and types of diverse libraries for Hanoi capital. After studying the data in 2006 reported by the Library Department of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Touris, total number of local libraries and bookshelves of Hanoi is approximately 2000, 5 of which are among 6 largest libraries of the country, which are considered as "*a significantly critical part*" gaining the nation's "*concentrated investment*", such as the National Library of Vietnam, Central Library for Science and Technology, the library of Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, Military Library and Hanoi Library.

Libraries in Hanoi have owned a treasure of documents with massive quantity, diversity of categories and value of content. It reflects sharply the developments of all aspects including economy, culture, sociality, science and technology of the country. In particular, traditional culture and vestiges of thousand years of civilization in Hanoi and Vietnam are archived in the collection of valuable ancient documents in various libraries in Hanoi such as the National Library of Vietnam, Hanoi Library, the library of the Institute of Social Sciences Information, the library of the Institute of Han-Nom Studies, the library of the Institute of Literature, the library of the Institute of History (belonging to Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences), Library and Information Centre of Vietnam National University Hanoi, the library of Hanoi National University of Education, etc.

Over decades of construction and development, nowadays, libraries in Hanoi are still archiving hundreds of thousands of ancient documents dated centuries ago such as books, village conventions, stories of village gods, imperial edicts, sacred genealogy, royal recognition decrees, etc., written in Chinese and Nom, or printed on Poonah paper, inscribed documents dated one or two centuries ago and even ancient documents dated almost 600 years ago. Besides Han-Nom documents, the libraries in Hanoi also includes hundreds of thousands of books, newspapers, magazines, sheet films, maps, pictures, documentations, etc., researching on historic structures and places, festivals, culture, anthropology, archeology, etc., on different parts of the old Indochina, which are born in the feudal period under France colonization. Among these documents, there are extremely valuable and rare documents such as manuscripts of more than 400 years old, maps dated the eighteenth and nineteenth century; royal recognition decrees of the Le and the Nguyen dynasties in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century; Latin ancient documents dated the sixteenth and seventeenth century, etc.

The collection of ancient documents in Hanoi Library was started by receiving the resource of Han-Nom documents of French Far-East Academy of Archaeology, Indochina Central Library, University of Indochina (formerly Vietnam National University, Hanoi), the deposited source after Ordinance No. 18/SL dated 31 January 1946 of President Ho Chi Minh on depositing cultural documents in Vietnam, from the Department of Museum Conservation, libraries of some academic families in the previous centuries. This is a great cultural heritage considered as a clear proof of the long-standing civilization of the nation and the pride of Hanoi in particular and Vietnam in general.

Characteristics of the form of ancient documents of libraries in Hanoi

Books and documents of Vietnam have been created for a long time and made from different types of materials such as stone, copper, wood, bamboo, ceramic, silk, paper, etc. Due to objective and subjective conditions, this collection is not much left. Ancient documents preserved in libraries in Hanoi were mainly made from such materials as paper, Poonah paper and wood.

Table 1 *Statistics of materials of ancient documents in Hanoi's libraries*

Library	Number of ancient documents made from		
	Poonah paper	Wood	Modern paper
National Library of Vietnam	5,280	0	92,740
Hanoi Library	2,450	0	155
The library of the Institute of Social Sciences Information	57,553	0	194,439
The library of the Institute of Han-Nom Studies	71,299	20,000	0
The library of the Institute of History	1,463	0	5,228
The library of the Institute of Literature	953	0	4,750
Library and Information Centre, Vietnam National University, Hanoi	0	0	7,000
The library of Hanoi National University of Education	1,000	0	0
Total (Percentage)	139,998(30%)	20,000(4%)	304,312(66%)

Characteristics of the printing technique

Manuscript: In Han-Nom documents of Hanoi's libraries, inscribed documents account for only a small amount, the majority is copies.

Woodblock print: The major printing technique for printed Han-Nom documents is woodblock print.

Inscribed documents (copying inscribed documents): Copies of Han-Nom inscribed documents are made by copying letters patterns, drawings in stones, bells, board, pillars, distiches, horizontal lacquered boards, pottery and woodwork, etc.

Other printing techniques: For Latin documents and documents written in the national language in the collection of ancient documents in Hanoi's libraries, the majority were published in foreign countries, only a few were published in the Indochina area by typography or offset printing. In addition, some documents were created by typing.

Characteristics of languages

The collection of ancient documents in Hanoi's libraries is quite diverse in languages. In general, they can be divided into the following major languages: Han-Nom (Chinese, Vietnamese Nom of Kinh people, Nom of Tay people with Tay-Nung transcriptions, etc.) (45%), Latin (the national language, French, English, German, Italian, Spanish, etc.) (43%), ancient Chinese (9%), ancient Japanese (3%).

Characteristics of categories of documents

Books

- *Han-Nom books*: Han-Nom books own diverse and abundant categories reflecting various aspects such as cultural life, sociality, economy, politics, etc., of the ancient Vietnam, most of which were manuscripts written by individuals to serve their own study, and others were printed by inscribing.

- *Chinese, Japanese books*: the collection of ancient Chinese and Japanese books is only available in the library of the Institute of Social Sciences Information and some copies of Chinese kept in the library of the Institute of Han-Nom Studies. These are mainly documents mentioning about Vietnam and its people and Southeast Asia countries written in Chinese and Japanese.

- *Latin books*: The collection of Latin books is one of the important documents in some major libraries in Hanoi, including the document of Vietnam under the French colonization until 1945.

Newspapers, magazines

Ancient newspapers and magazines own various genres such as daily newspapers, weekly newspapers, gazettes, journals, professional journals, etc. Most of them were published in French. Some newspapers and magazines were published abroad; however, the most special one is the collection of magazines about Indochina published in Vietnam before the August Revolution, which is still archived in several libraries of Hanoi. However, the fullest collection is Indochinese magazines and newspaper at the National Library of Vietnam.

Some special types of documents

- *Village conventions*: Village Convention is a type of documents which records conventions and general compulsory codes of conduct for all members of each village and community in Vietnam and discussed and written by bureaucrats of the village and commune. The content of the conventions varies by the conditions and practices of each village. Ancient village conventions are considered a valuable resource for studying the Vietnamese traditional villages.

- *Stories of village gods and imperial edicts*: Stories of village gods are myths of saints worshiped in villages and communes, which are recorded and passed to next generations. Imperial edicts are regulations about god worshiping in local areas granted by feudal governments of dynasties which was led by a king. Stories of village gods and imperial edicts record the marks of tutelary gods, including heroes in fights against enemies; heroes protecting people and teaching people to farm, do handicraft, read and write, and heal people, etc.

- *Land registers, ancient paper works, commune's documents*: land register is a collection of declarations of land of villages and communes, which was carried out partly in the Le dynasty and mostly in the Nguyen dynasty as a base for agricultural taxes. It provides such information as the total number of lands, the total number of public lands, the total number of private lands, holy land of Buddhist gods, lands for housing, graveyards, land of bureaucrats, etc. "Ancient paper works" is the common name of such materials as imperial edicts, requests to Kings, proposals to King, records of land, records of taxation, genealogy, books and secret practice of Buddhist, etc., of some villages and communes in Vietnam.

- *Maps*: Currently, Hanoi's libraries are archiving a relatively large collection of maps. The collection of maps in Hanoi Library includes maps, atlas of Vietnam-China border, maps of economy, administrative, stratigraphic plants of Vietnam's river and areas, with various size and proportions. The most valuable maps are the original maps of Hanoi, which are preserved in the collection of the National Library of Vietnam, and the library of the Institute of Social Sciences Information.

- *Pictures*: The largest collection of ancient pictures in Hanoi belongs to the library of the Institute of Social Sciences Information with more than 100,000 pictures taken mostly from the early twentieth century. They are entirely black and white photos taken by French

and Vietnamese. This collection is divided into several parts with different themes such as historical monuments, handicrafts, cultural activities, Hanoi, provinces, etc.

Table 2 Statistics of types of ancient documents in Hanoi's libraries

Type		Library								Total (percentage)	
		National Library of Vietnam	Hanoi Library	Institute of Social Sciences Information	Institute of Han-Nom Studies	Institute of History	Institute of Literature	Vietnam National University, Hanoi	Hanoi National University of Education		
Books	Han-Nom	5,280	850	30,000	13,179	1,463	953	0	1,000	52,725	214,430 (46%)
	Latin	67,000	127	37,751	0	5,000	3,250	5,000	0	118,128	
	Chinese, Japanese	0	0	41,823	1,641	113	0	0	0	43,577	
Magazines, newspaper		25,740	54	18,436	0	110	1,500	0	0	45,840	45,840 (10%)
Other special documents	Village conventions	24	650	10,621	1,173	39	0	0	0	12,507	206,488 (45%)
	Stories of village gods and imperial edicts	16	162	16,863	1,918	26	0	0	0	18,985	
	Local literatures	0	1,500	0	55,269	0	0	2,000	0	58,769	
	Maps	1,291	20	13,755	0	5	0	0	0	15,071	
	Pictures, photos	0	153	101,003	0	0	0	0	0	101,156	

Besides the above-mentioned types, in the collection of ancient documents of Hanoi's libraries, there are Latin documents including typed or handwritten scripts and separate documents, and over 100 ancient and rare pictures (preserved in the library of the Institute of Social Sciences Information).

Characteristics of the content of ancient documents in Hanoi's libraries

* *Not intact*: ancient historic scripts of Vietnam have long been lost, mistaken and incorrect from generation to generation due to disasters, wars, carelessness and insufficient awareness of human.

* *Emphasis on literature, not focus on science and engineering*: the ancient Han-Nom documents include the majority of literary documents and the minority of science and engineering, which reflects clearly the productivity and scientific development of the country in the feudal period. Ancient Latin documents primarily focus on researching projects and studies to serve for the exploitation and human exploitation of the French colonists. It did not focus on science and engineering.

* *Reflect the political situation of each period*: contents of ancient documents created in Vietnam during the feudal period have bold feudal ideas to praise the regime and consolidate the political power of the ruling class. Ancient Latin documents reflect a period when the French invaded Vietnam to exploit the land and people, and the movement against the French invasion of our people.

* *Reflect ethnicity*: Han-Nom historical books have a clear ethnicity, it not only reflects the will of freedom, national pride, love for the motherland and country, but also refers the morality and reminds duty of people to their country. Many ancient Latin books and newspapers also reflects the spirit of independence, freedom, national pride and points out the injustice in the society and the will for winning the basic rights of human and nation.

Historical and cultural value of the collection of ancient documents in Hanoi's libraries

Ancient documents in Hanoi's libraries are a valuable source for historical study on various fields of Vietnam before the August Revolution. It is the foundation to have a more

comprehensive look of a modern Vietnam and enhance pride on historical traditions in order to promote beautiful cultural traditions nice to construct a modern Vietnam.

Ancient Han-Nom documents in Hanoi's libraries are considered to be a part of the cultural heritage passed by ancestors. It is a rich and diverse source of information of cultures in the past of Vietnam. Although their history is far shorter than the Nom historical books, ancient Latin documents, especially documents written in the national language contributed to the improvement of Vietnamese cultural studies since the period of French domination.

With the important historical and cultural values, this collection of document heritage is preserved in Hanoi's libraries to serve readers, including mainly domestic and foreign researchers, scholars and students who are interested in the history of Vietnamese culture and civilization.

ACTUAL STATE OF EXPLOITING ANCIENT DOCUMENTS IN SOME LIBRARIES IN HANOI

Library and information products

In order to serve the needs of exploiting ancient documents, Hanoi's libraries organized library-information products diversely such as card catalog, information publications, etc. In particular, many bibliographic and full-text databases have been established.

Recently, 100% of libraries and information agencies owning a collection of ancient documents in Hanoi have created a database. At present, Hanoi's libraries mostly have built bibliographic databases for their collection, and some libraries have owned a full-text database.

Table 3 *Statistics of types of database reflecting the collections of ancient documents in Hanoi's libraries*

Library	Type of database	
	Bibliographic	Full-text
National Library of Vietnam	x	x
Hanoi Library	x	
Library of the Institute of Social Sciences Information	x	x
Library of the Institute of Han-Nom Studies	x	x
Library of the Institute of History	x	
Library of the Institute of Literature	x	
Library and Information Center, Vietnam National University, Hanoi	x	x

Hanoi's libraries have had a bibliographic database system which is diverse and rich in contents and forms. Bibliographic databases in general have been covered the majority of ancient documents in libraries and played a positive role in helping users look up ancient documents in Hanoi's libraries. However, while being used, many databases still have some limitations: the database has not yet covered all ancient documents in the library which reduces the ability of users to find and access these documents; many libraries have not put their database on the Internet for wide search service; language for searching on databases has not been controlled; the link between libraries has not been concerned in building the integrated database.

Hanoi's libraries have built several full-text databases reflecting ancient documents such as the database of epitaphs of Library and Information Centre of Vietnam National Uni-

versity, the database of Indochinese Book, the database of Han Nom books of National Library of Vietnam, the database of ancient Han-Nom documents of the library of the Institute of Han-Nom Studies, etc., which are now in use and continue to be improved. Lots of libraries in Hanoi have been planning to continue digitizing its collection of ancient documents and building more full-text databases.

Table 4 Statistics of databases reflecting the collections of ancient documents in Hanoi's libraries

Library	Database		
	Name	Coverage	Online search
National Library of Vietnam http://www.nlv.gov.vn	SACH	Vietnamese and Latin books of the library, and a part of the collection of Indochinese books (over 300,000 records)	x
	NCUU	Indochinese magazines and newspaper and some magazines and newspaper of the Southern of Vietnam before April 1975 (1,792 records)	x
Hanoi Library http://thuvienhanoi.org.vn	DCHI	Geographic books in Vietnamese about Hanoi in historical periods (4574 records)	
	TC	Cited documents for research and finding historical events, cultures, landmarks, historical characters, etc., of Hanoi (4527 records)	
	THMUC	Documents of over 20 topics built Hanoi library since 1998 (17,429 records)	
	TTTM	Over ten thousand documents about Hanoi (books, cited newspapers, magazines) which are only available in Hanoi library, Institute of Han-Nom Studies, Institute of Social Sciences Information, National Library of Vietnam, taken from the general directory compiled by the library in 1998 (9,278 records)	
	HANNOM	The library's Han-Nom documents on Hanoi (1806 records)	
Institute of Social Sciences Information http://opac.issi.vass.gov.vn/	TTS	Stories of village gods and imperial edicts managed in the library at present (13,211 records)	
	Hgu	Village conventions managed in the library (5,637 records)	x
	ShL	Collection of QTE and Latin documents – general audio books transferred from the library of French Far-East academy of Archaeology (39,588 records)	
	OCT	Collection of OCTO documents –	

		transferred from the library of French Far-East academy of Archaeology (39.517 records)	
	Sử họcT	Books of Institute of Social Sciences Information – book of the library added after 1958, excluding Slavic books and names of Vietnamese books before 1958 (45.805 records)	
	TKS	Collect the imperial edicts of the library (4221 records)	
	Sử họcNI	Research books about Hanoi (1645 records)	
Institute of Han-Nom Studies http://hannom.org.vn	KSử họcN	Multiple types of Han-Nom documents (10.672 records)	
	NVDD	Introduce academics of Vietnam in feudal period (3.126 records)	
	TCMN	Cited magazines published in Vietnam before 1975 about Social Science (3.577 records)	
	HPCD	Documentation on fieldwork investigation of local areas in the Northern Vietnam (2.314 records)	
	TDTH	Documentations of alias of Han-Nom authors (1.277 records)	
	SQT	Documentations in Chinese (2.351 records)	
	HN54	Documentations on Hanoi, related to several pictures of the old Hanoi (797 records)	
	NOM	Nom documentations (900 records)	
	TDVãnhọc	Documentation of the typical cultural heritage in Vietnam (945 records)	
	Han-Nom heritage	Han-Nom heritage and inscriptions (1.500 records)	x
Institute of History http://viensuhoc.vass.gov.vn	Shv	Various types of books in the library (10.933 records)	
	Shc	Documents written in Kanji in the library (862 records)	
	Lus	Documents introducing villages of Vietnam in periods (1.131 records)	
Institute of Literature http://vienvanhoc.vass.gov.vn	Vietnamese books	Vietnamese books of the library from 1909 to 2007 (22.000 records)	
	English, French books	English and French books from 1836 to 1996 (3.777 records)	
	Art magazines and Literary magazines (Saigon)	Art magazines from 1949 to 1963 (2.267 records)	

Library and Information Center, Vietnam National University, Hanoi http://www.lic.vnu.edu.vn	BOOKS	Books of Information Centre - Library of Vietnam National University (127.400 records)	x
	MAGAZINES	Existing magazines of Information Centre - Library of Vietnam National University (2145 records)	x

Table 5 Statistics of full-text databases reflecting collection of ancient documents in some Hanoi's libraries

Library	Full-text Database		
	Name	Coverage	Online search
National Library of Vietnam	Indochinese books	French books imported to the library before 1945 (almost 227 documents – approximately 52,700 pages)	X
	Han-Nom books	The collection of Han-Nom historical documents of the library (over 1,907 documents – approximately 133,495 pages)	X
	The collection of Thang Long-Hanoi – 1000 years of civilization	Ancient maps, doctoral theses, Han-Nom books, newspapers published before and after 1954 in Hanoi and surrounding areas (175 maps, 159 theses, 341 books, 71 Nom books)	
	Newspapers & Journals	Vietnamese periodicals published before 1954 in Vietnam (4117 issues, 37518 pages)	X
Institute of Social Sciences Information	Pictures	The collection of pictures preserved in the library (almost 13,000 records and tens of thousands of pictures)	
	Van Uyen encyclopedia	Full-text database consisting of 182 CDs, covers the collection of ancient Chinese book with over 700 million Kanji written in 36,000 book preserved in China	
	HN	2056 Han-Nom books (234 books digitized in full, 326 copies – no images, 1496 books with 3 page images)	X
Institute of Han-Nom Studies	Han-Nom	Nom ancient documents which are especially valuable and high demanded (over 2,500 documents)	
Vietnam National University	Epitaph	Epitaph with pictures (almost 2,600 documentations)	
	Han-Nom & Chinese books	Han-Nom books (216 works) & ancient Chinese books (72 works)	X

The libraries are taking advantage of this information product to promote their image, information resources and products, other information service of the library and to bring benefits to users. One typical website is the website of National Library of Vietnam and the Institute of Han-Nom Studies, which introduces and provides relative comprehensive bibliographic and full-text databases of ancient documents helping readers quickly search.

The survey results shows that 43% of readers use databases of libraries to find information about ancient documents, which proves the libraries in Hanoi have built databases timely to meet the needs of readers. Database is also evaluated to be faster and easier to use than other products (72%). However, existing database should be updated and added. Besides databases, readers also use bibliography (23%), which means that built bibliographies have been doing their duties relatively well. Traditional content listing system in many libraries does not maintain their integrity which affects the efficiency of information search and information value. At present, approximately 18% of users use lists of content to access ancient documents, and 12% use website of library and 4% use other approaches.

Library- information services

Provide original documents

Libraries mainly offer services to provide original ancient documents by allowing users to read in the library by borrowing the librarian (closing storage). Ancient documents provided for readers to read in library are mainly original.

The results of the survey on usage of in-place reading service in libraries owning the collection of ancient documents in Hanoi shows that 96% of readers use the service to read documents in library. Basically, in-place reading service in Hanoi's libraries has met the needs of equipment, facilities, hours, quantity and forms of documents, etc. However, some users are not satisfied with many aspects, including the limitation of the quantity of ancient documents.

Exploiting microform documents

Exploiting microform documents for ancient documents has been currently deployed in the National Library of Vietnam and Library of the Institute of Han-Nom Studies. The collection of ancient documents transferred to microfilm and microfiche in National Library of Vietnam and Library of the Institute of Han-Nom Studies is quite large. However, the usage frequency of microfilm documents is not much (usually use accounting for 5%, unusually use accounting for 13%, and never use accounting for 82%) due to reader's reading habits, limitations of equipment and low quality of microfilm and microfiche.

Provide copies

For ancient, rare and unique documents, copying is a service used by lots of readers (67% of readers).

In general, for ancient and rare documents, copying service is implemented under a strict regulation, in which, such processes as receiving requests, sending documents for copying, returning the documents and sending the copy to readers are managed systematically and strictly. Over 70% of readers find the copying service of libraries satisfying their need.

Translate document upon requests

At present, most of ancient documents in libraries are without accompanied translation. Most of libraries do not have the department for this service, they only provide the service upon request. The quality and price of this service is highly appreciated.

Search information

The search service in libraries owning ancient documents in Hanoi is conducted under two forms: traditional search and automated search. The survey result shows that 76% of readers use search service in Hanoi's libraries.

Provide information upon requests

According to the survey results, the percentage of readers using the service of providing information upon request is not high, only 15%.

Exchange information

Information exchange service launched by Hanoi's libraries has brought certain benefits for readers; however, it is not really diverse and frequent. In specific, there are such services as conferences, seminars, exhibitions for ancient documents, electronic forums, etc.

In general, among provided library-information services, readers mainly use in-place reading services (96%), search service (76%) and copying service (67%). Other services such as translating documents, exploiting multimedia documents, providing information upon request and Q&A, etc., have not been trusted well. In terms of prices of chargeable services, the charge rate of libraries is considered to be acceptable. In terms of serving attitudes of staff in libraries, 86% of readers rate the attitude of staff to be relatively well and very well, 77% of readers consider that the attitude meets their requirements.

ASSESSMENT OF ANCIENT DOCUMENT EXPLOITATION IN HANOI'S LIBRARIES

Advantages

- (1) Partly satisfy readers' need of exploiting ancient documents
- (2) Contribute to the success of many scientific works

Limitations

- (1) Not fully optimize the values of ancient documents
- (2) Not attract many readers

Reasons

- Different libraries do not have the coordination and share of products and information services
- The quality of some products and services is not high
- Service staffs still have some limitations
- Readers have not had skills for using library-information services and products
- Facilities remain limited

SOLUTIONS FOR IMPROVING EFFICIENCY OF EXPLOITATION OF ANCIENT DOCUMENTS IN HANOI'S LIBRARIES

Complete the information retrieval systems

The traditional retrieval system

At present, most of libraries have not completed establishment of a modern retrieval system for their collection of ancient documents, libraries should have plan to revise and perfect the traditional cataloging system in order to cover the entire collection of ancient documents and bring the convenience to readers.

Libraries can also build supporting systems for readers to search information. Additionally, libraries should continue to compile the directories, especially specialized directories.

The modern retrieval system

Libraries should continue to focus on investment in order to complete their databases, and cover the entire collection of ancient documents.

Developing database for support readers in searching ancient documents in Hanoi's libraries can be divided into such groups as general bibliographic database, specialized bibliographic database; and fact and figure database.

Enhance the document digitization and digital library construction of ancient documents

Enhance the document digitization

Currently, when Internet and Web are popular in every aspects of social life, document digitization, especially documents with long-term value, has become an indispensable trend in library information activities.

In order to enhance and ensure the quality of document digitization, libraries should pay attention to establish a specific policy of prioritizing digitization; establish authorities and rights for using documents; establish and form a network of document digitizing organizations; establish standards and general regulations in digitization; focusing on recruitment of staff for document digitization; focus on preparing digitization; invest and carefully prepare equipment; focusing on backing up and protecting data.

Build digital libraries of ancient documents

The digitized collection of ancient documents should be systemized and built into a database and digital library to serve readers.

When establishing digital libraries, libraries should pay attention to build a standard library for ancient documents in order to ensure the consistency in controlling bibliography, and to facilitate conditions for sharing, exchanging and controlling ancient documents in libraries.

Diversify and improve the quality of information services

Libraries should focus on diversifying their information resources, creating new types of information services, sharing information resources to other libraries and applying information technology to library's activities, especially enhancing modern information services.

In order to launch search service and provide documents via the Internet, libraries and information agencies in Hanoi should solve such problems as building a digital collection; having a portal of the library; posting the digital collection of ancient documents online in order to make them searchable via the portal of the library.

Along with diversifying and improving the quality of information services, libraries should pay adequate attention to widely propagate and promote ancient documents and information services and products to meet readers' demand for ancient documents.

Enhance the cooperation between libraries in exploiting ancient documents

In the future, in order to complete the collection of ancient documents in libraries and improve the efficiency of exploiting ancient documents, libraries should make inventory for the collection of ancient documents, while planning to cooperate and share documents to other libraries by:

- Establishing partnership with domestic and foreign libraries, information centers, archives and places owning ancient documents;
- Continuing to collect ancient documents from people across the country;
- Unifying standards for ancient documents in catalog, build databases, E-libraries and digital libraries.
- Cooperating to build bibliographic control tools covering ancient documents in all libraries in Hanoi in particular and the country in general.

Supporting solutions

- Enhance research activities, determine the values of ancient documents in libraries
- Complete the form processing and content processing
- Train readers
- Improve skills of library's staffs

CONCLUSION

Hundreds of thousands of ancient documents preserved in Hanoi's libraries are unique heritages left from the national collection of ancient documents, which are the pride of Hanoi and Vietnam. For many years, libraries and information agencies in Hanoi have extremely focused on collecting, preserving and exploiting ancient documents with both traditional and modern products and information services to meet the needs of readers.

In order to improve the efficiency of ancient document preservation and exploitation of Hanoi's libraries and promote the values of the ancient document collections during the nation's industrialization and modernization, in the next period, the libraries should enhance their application of modern information technology, develop digital library and create modern information channel in order to optimize ancient document preservation and exploitation.

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