

Reference Service in English and American Literature

英米文学のレファレンス・サーヴィス

Frances Neel Cheney

フランセス・ニール・チェニー

要 旨

これは英米文学に深い知識をもつレファレンス・ライブラリアンが配属され、この分野の参考資料が使えるようになっている、よく整備され充実された参考図書館における日常の問題について検討を加えたものである。この問題にかかわる要因として文学、参考質問、質問者および情報源の性格をあげることができる。その場合、分野を英米文学に限ったのは、とりあげる資料の例を限定するためである。しかし最近の文学を概観すると、定量化を考えたり、厳密な研究法を採用したりする注目すべき新しい動向がある。研究とその成果の出版は學術団体を通じて財団から多くの支援を受けつつある。學術出版を補助し、学者に研究時間の余裕を与えることは出版物の増大をもたらした。研究・養成について国家的な助成も行なわれている。しかし、とりわけ重要なことは人文科学自体が科学の影響を受けつつあるということである。また、アメリカ人文科学財団の設立も勧告されている。このような状況において文学の分野についてみると、その形式は変わろうとも、その本質は変るものではないし、また図書館とそのコレクションは変わろうとも文学に対する責任が変るわけではない。その責任は増大するのみである。



文学の性格をみるに、散文、韻文、とくに形式・表現がすぐれている作品、永遠普遍の事柄を表現している作品は創造力のある作家、評論家によって文学作品とよばれている。永遠普遍の事柄という考えが含まれていることは、文学が書かれた言葉であらわされる過去を摂取している証拠である。

Asheim は文学関係のコレクションを (1) 創作、(2) その批評、(3) 文学理論、および (4) 史的・解的的分野に分けているが、大学図書館、公共図書館はコレクションの充実のために、*Choice*, *Sewanee Review*, *Kenyon Review*, *Scholarly Books in America*, *The Times Literary Supplement*, *The New York Review of Books* などの資料を利用することができる。

次に参考質問は定義、識別、説明を求めるものの3つのカテゴリーに分けられる。しかし、質問を出した人との関係において、その質問をみると、3つのカテゴリーにきちんと分けられるわけではない。作家自身は何を尋ねるかわからないし、歴史小説家の質問が社会史に、科学小説家の質問が科学に、詩人の質問が美術、音楽に属するかも知れない。それらの質問を予測することはできない。

Frances Neel Cheney, Associate Director and Associate Professor, George Peabody College Library School. 1951-52 Visiting Professor, Japan Library School. フランセス・ニール・チェニー：ジョージ・ピーボディ大学図書館学校副校長、準教授。1951-52年度図書館学科訪問教授。

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評論家の質問は以前は予測しやすかったが、すでに述べたような趨勢のもとでは、次第に予測ができにくくなり、もっと学問相互間の関連の面からアプローチすることが必要となろう。大学院学生の質問は評論家のそれと類似している。しかし彼らは過去の文学に対する親しみがうすく、実際に何を求めているのか不確かである。もっと不確かなのが学部学生であり、さらに生徒も、彼なりにペーパーを書かねばならぬ。

最後に、いわゆる一般の読者がいる。この人たちも原稿を準備したり、最近の小説の書評を求めたりする。こうした様々の質問者が次々とやってくる。レファレンス・ライブラリアンは主題知識に身を固め、コレクションの知識をたずさえて、やってくる人を待ち構えている。筆者はその際に利用する資料として、主題文献案内、著者書誌その他の書誌・索引、コンコードランス、特殊集書の目録、一般参考図書などのタイトルを例示している。

最後に図書館機構について触れている。大公共図書館、大学図書館におけるレファレンス・サービスは主題部門化への傾向を辿りつつあり、新築、改築があると参考部に人文科学課がつけられる。この課にはその専門主題について広く深い知識を備えた図書館員を配属せしめている。これらの主題専門家は学者に対して、もっと書誌的援助を提供し、一般読者にもっと個人的サービスをなすべきであるというのが一般的な意見である。レファレンス・ライブラリアンは要求さえあれば、その要求に応えることができる。

(M. N.)

*The soul breeds fortitude in libraries
Enduring patience for another's pain.*

Randall Jarrell

This is no State of the Art review of what has been written, recorded, and measured in statistical terms, or even deep meditation on the nature of reference service in the field of literature. It is a very modest attempt to comment on the every day problems in a well-organized, well-stocked reference library, staffed by reference librarians who have more than a fleeting acquaintance with the body of English and American literature and who have the reference sources which give access to this literature.

Simply stated, the factors involved are: the nature of literature, the nature of the reference questions, the nature of the questioners, and the nature of the sources. The field is limited to English and American literature, not from a feeling that characteristics of the various national literatures are greatly different from one another when approached in terms of reference service, but in order to restrict specific examples of sources to that part of a library's collection classified by Dewey in 810 and

820, and by the Library of Congress in PS and PR.

A cursory review of the recent literature pertinent to the subject reveals some activity worthy of note, however. Frances Kirschenbaum cites the Princeton report which shows the new ideas and directions emerging in particular branches of the humanities during the past thirty years.¹⁾

Some of the new directions of scholarship are indicated in the report of the Commission on Trends in Education to the Modern Language Association, including the current faith in "quantification," and the use of more rigorous methodology.²⁾ These are "exemplified by the increasing application of the findings of descriptive linguistics to literary studies and by the largely descriptive nature of much of the new criticism. Humanistic scholars are showing interest in the use of machine techniques for the compilation of bibliographies and concordances. Concentration is on the contemporary, with interest centering around interdisciplinary curricula, area studies, and comparative literature. Traditional literary criticism is being supplanted by a kind of criticism which encourages the multiple inter-

pretation of works of art—anthropological, psychological, and sociological, as well as historical and linguistic.”⁸³)

The amount of research and its published results are being affected by the increased support of such foundations as the Rockefeller Foundation and the Ford Foundation, administered through such learned societies as the Modern Language Association and the American Council of Learned Societies. Assistance to scholarly publication and release of the scholar's time for research have resulted in an increase of publication.⁴⁾

Federal funds supplied through the National Defense Education Act of 1958, which provides for the establishment and support of centers for foreign language studies in colleges and universities, and for training institutes for teachers of foreign languages in the secondary schools, have further stimulated activities in the field.⁵⁾

Other evidence of activity may be found in the learned journals. But most significant is the fact that the humanities themselves are being affected by science. Also pertinent is the Report of the Commission on the Humanities of April 30, 1964, which recommends the establishment of a National Humanities Foundation.⁶⁾ This report contains valuable reports from twenty-four learned societies, a section on libraries for the humanities, and a discussion of the humanities and the schools.

Within this framework of ferment, one returns to the specific field of literature, with the realization that forms may change but that its essence does not. And while libraries and their collections may change, their responsibilities to literature do not change. They only increase.

Nature of Literature

Writings in prose or verse, especially writings having excellence of form and expression, and expressing ideas of permanent or universal interest are called literature by creative writers and critics, and are so defined in English dictionaries. The fact that ideas of permanent or universal interest are involved gives evi-

dence that literary pursuits feed upon the past, a past represented for the most part in the written word.

Asheim's four broad divisions of a literature collection serve as a reminder of the materials found in a well-stocked library: (1) the original literature itself (plays, novels, poems); (2) criticism of the original literature; (3) “philosophical” (that which treats of literature in general terms rather than in terms of specific literary works or writers); and (4) the historical-interpretative field.⁷⁾

In developing their collections, college and public libraries are fortunate in having the discriminating judgment of college professors and other informed reviewers published in *Choice*, a review journal begun last year under the auspices of the American Library Association. Poetry, plays and novels are well represented in this monthly publication, and reference librarians are assured of a better collection of current, original writing, especially since the brief reviews appear more promptly than the longer ones found in such literary quarterlies as the *Sewanee Review* and the *Kenyon Review*. Also valuable for new volumes of criticism is *Scholarly Books in America*, which briefly annotates but does not evaluate those published by university presses in America.

The Times Literary Supplement has long provided well-balanced and well-written reviews of English and American literature, far superior to those in American book reviewing weeklies. However, *The New York Review of Books*, which began publication in 1963, is an excellent source for long, analytical reviews of current fiction, poetry and criticism, even though some of its English and American reviewers have been criticized for being infatuated with the sound of their own words.

At any rate, libraries have fairly adequate sources for keeping up with what is being currently published in the field.

Nature of the Reference Questions

Simply stated, reference questions in English and American literature fall into three categories, those of definition, those of identification,

and those of explication. Definition questions may range from the current meaning of a word to whether a word was in use in the fifteenth century. Identification questions may range from location of a word in a poem, a character in a play, to the first edition of a novel. Explication questions may range from a simple description to a detailed, critical analysis of part of a work. Variations are endless, but fundamentally, the nature of the investigations may be described by one of these three terms: definition, identification, explication.

Nature of the Questioners

The reference questions do not fall into such neat categories when they are asked by living people, face-to-face with the reference librarian. What people? First, there are the writers themselves, the novelists, the poets, the dramatists, who may ask any kind of question under the sun. A historical novelist's questions may fall in the field of social history, a science-fiction writer's in the field of science. A poet's questions may be in the fields of art and music. Their questions are unpredictable.

Critics have been more predictable in the past. They have been seeking variations in a text, criticism of a text by other critics, biographies of authors, translations, or any of the results of literary scholarship. With the changing trends already noted, their questions will become less predictable and will require a more inter-disciplinary approach.

Graduate students resemble critics in their demands, being for the most part critics in their infancy. They are less familiar with the body of literary scholarship of the past, less certain of their masters, less sure of what they are really seeking. They want "primary" sources, but are not always certain of what is "primary."

Even less certain is the undergraduate, faced with writing a paper on a novelist, dramatist or poet, who finds it hard to use the card catalog, is impatient with the time it takes to assemble what has been written and to select the best.

Then there is the school boy, "With his

satchel/ And shining morning face, creeping like a snail unwilling to school." He must write a paper on Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*, or Robert Frost's *A Boy's Will*.

Finally, there is the so-called general reader, preparing a paper for one of his clubs, seeking reviews of a current novel, or the source of a fugitive quotation. The effect of contemporary scholarship on their current interest is not yet evident.

They come, they come, bright and dull, young and old, sure and bewildered, eager and listless. The reference librarian, clad in the armor of knowledge of the subject, bearing the sword of knowledge of the collection, stands ready. He muses with Hamlet, "If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all." And face to face with the reference encounter, he declares with Macbeth, "Let's briefly put on manly readiness,/ And meet i' the hall together."

Nature of the Sources

What has man devised, organized, synthesized from his recorded literary past that will allow him to recall it with assurance, with accuracy, with dispatch? What are his guides? Let us proceed along the well-worn path.

Familiar to all are the bibliographic guides to the field. At least they are familiar to reference librarians, who know that such works as Tom Peete Cross, *Bibliographical Guide to English Studies*, or the more recent *Concise Bibliography for Students of English*, by Kennedy and Sands, or Gohdes, *Bibliographical Guide to the Study of the Literature of the U.S.A.*, will bring to his mind the bibliographies, the dictionaries, cyclopedias and handbooks, histories and criticism, indexes and journals, which make up the ever-increasing body of useful reference materials. Their usefulness is attested by the fact that new guides and new editions of old guides continue to appear, in man's effort to keep a firm hold on his literary past.

Pierson points out the importance of the

current efforts of Professors Lewis Sawin and Charles Nilon of the University of Colorado to "launch an 'integrated' bibliography of English studies. The effect of such a bibliography would be to simplify searches by bringing together (and organizing for retrievability) citations of all the items now listed in the innumerable bibliographies, large and small, which a student of English must scan in order to compile an exhaustive bibliography. It is possible that such a work would some day render superfluous certain reference tools now considered indispensable."⁸⁾

Until such a day comes, the existing sources must be used, including bibliographies of individual authors which are appearing at such a great rate that it would be difficult to keep up with them if it were not for the *Bibliographic Index*, with its adequate coverage of English and American authors. So many there are, from Meriwether's bibliography of William Faulkner⁹⁾ to one on Edgar Rice Burroughs,¹⁰⁾ of Tarzan fame, that Miss Constance Winchell must omit them in her new edition of *Guide to Reference Books*, making the reference librarian even more dependent on the *Bibliographic Index*. It is easy to bring to mind bibliographies of Anderson,¹¹⁾ Cummings,¹²⁾ Farrell,¹³⁾ Huxley,¹⁴⁾ James,¹⁵⁾ Mencken,¹⁶⁾ Norris,¹⁷⁾ Thoreau,¹⁸⁾ and Wolfe,¹⁹⁾ among the many which have appeared since 1959.

Revival of interest in Victorian literature has been responsible for bibliographies such as *Guide to Doctoral Dissertations in Victorian Literature*.²⁰⁾ *Dissertations in American Literature*²¹⁾ gives evidence of this growing field of research.

Indexes are also on the increase, with *Index to Book Reviews in the Humanities*,²²⁾ begun in 1960, providing some access to reviews in a wide range of periodicals in the English language. Though still inadequate in coverage, it supplements the older *Book Review Digest*, which is useful only for those books in English and American literature which have been widely reviewed in more general sources.

The Index to Little Magazines,²³⁾ begun in 1948, continues to be an excellent source of experimental writing and new criticism, admi-

rably supplementing the *International Index to Periodicals* in which the more scholarly academic journals are better represented than little magazines.

Indexes to specific forms of writing are also more plentiful, including Thurston's *Short Fiction Criticism*.²⁴⁾ *Granger's Index to Poetry*,²⁵⁾ with a fifth edition in 1962, analyzes the contents of 574 anthologies published through 1960. Ottemiller continues to compile his *Index to Plays in Collections* at fairly regular intervals, the fourth edition appearing in 1964. The *Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature* since 1920, has been a useful source of comment in books, pamphlets and journal articles, though its appearance is not so prompt as might be desired. And Blanck's monumental *Bibliography of American Literature*²⁶⁾ is steadily nearing completion.

Interest in the spoken word is evident in the growing body of recorded poetry, represented in part in the *Archive of Recorded Poetry and Literature*, a checklist of recordings in the Library of Congress published by the library in 1961. This includes works read by the authors themselves and by others.

These are only random samplings which illustrate the proliferation of this very valuable type of reference source, to which must be added the concordances of the works of individual authors, which threaten to overwhelm us since the IBM machine can now be used to produce them so speedily. One of the first of the machine-made concordances was *A Concordance to the Poems of Matthew Arnold*, published by Cornell University Press in 1959, with many more to follow. Did Arnold envision such when he wrote of "This strange disease of modern life?"

Meanwhile, we issue catalogs of distinguished collections—the Cornell Joyce collection,²⁷⁾ the Texas Dickens collection,²⁸⁾ the Dalhousie Kipling collection.²⁹⁾ These grow more valuable in these days of microform copies available for the asking.

Aids to ready reference are plentiful, with a new Benét's *Reader's Encyclopedia*³⁰⁾ supplying thumb-nail sketches of authors, literary movements, and journals, as well as synopses of

novels, plays and poems. Somewhat longer treatment is given to a more limited field in Herzberg's *Reader's Encyclopedia of American Literature*.³¹⁾

Though seldom a substitute for the original work itself, the anthologies of British and American poetry, so popular in this age when it is easier to publish an anthology than a volume of original verse, are much in evidence, from Untermeyer's well-known collections of modern American and British poetry, to *The Atlantic Book of British and American Poetry*,³²⁾ that delightful selection of Dame Edith Sitwell, who, now, alas, is no longer with us.

Recent reference sources continue on the whole to follow trends pointed out by Helen Northup in her paper on new sources in the humanities, delivered in 1957.³³⁾ The proliferation still continues.

Organization of the Reference Service

The trend toward departmentalization of reference service in large public and university libraries continues, and as new libraries are built and old libraries are reorganized, there are more and more Humanities Divisions in reference departments. And these are increasingly staffed with librarians whose knowledge of the field is broader and deeper than that of general reference librarians who must cover all fields of knowledge. The prevailing opinion is that these subject specialists should provide more bibliographic assistance to scholars, more personal service to the general reader.³⁴⁾

Howard Winger relates the experience of a well-known author which may inspire reference librarians to be more helpful. He says, "Library books, in many cases, of course, have inspired the intellectual and provided him with information to develop his thought. Carl Van Doren, for instance, has recorded how he wandered aimlessly about the campus at the beginning of his college career, spending most of his free time in the gymnasium. 'Then,' he wrote in his reminiscences, 'random in the library, I discovered Marlowe, and the glory of the great verse changed my world as if mountains had sprung up out of the prairie.'"³⁵⁾

Reference librarians cannot turn bad novelists into good ones, cannot make a little poet into a great one, nor a shallow critic into a profound one. They can, however, upon request, deliver the work of the good novelists, the great poets, the profound critics, for others to read on, feed on. They can supply the names of winners of literary prizes, reports of the activities of learned societies, the first published poem of a young poet before he became famous. They need not be like the librarian described by William Faulkner in his inimitable prose: "Except there was a woman in Jefferson, the county librarian, a mouth-sized and colored woman who had never married, who had passed through the city schools in the same class with Candace Compson and then spent the rest of her life trying to keep *Forever Amber* in its orderly overlapping avatars and *Jurgen* and *Tom Jones* out of the hands of the high school juniors and seniors who could reach them down without even having to tiptoe from the backshelves where she herself would have to stand on a box to hide them."³⁶⁾ But one should remember, it was this little librarian who found the photograph of Candace Compson and clipped it from the slick magazine in which it appeared.

- 1) Kirschenbaum, Frances J. Periodicals in the Humanities. *Library Trends*, 10: 321, Jan. 1962. This is an excellent brief review of journals in language, literature and philosophy.
- 2) Modern Language Association. Report of the Commission on Trends in Education. PMLA, 75: 66-70, May 1960.
- 3) Kirschenbaum. *op. cit.* 321-22.
- 4) Ford Foundation. *The Ford Foundation Program in Humanities and the Arts*. New York, n.d.
- 5) Modern Language Association. *Executive Secretary's Report*. PMLA, 74: 15-19, May 1959.
- 6) Commission on the Humanities. *Report*. New York, American Council of Learned Societies, 1964. 222 p.
- 7) Asheim, Lester. *The Humanities and the Library*. Chicago, ALA, 1957. p. 201-202.
- 8) Pierson, Robert M. Some Problems in the

- Bibliographical Organization of Belles-Lettres and Related Secondary Works. *College and Research Libraries*, 24: 297, July 1963.
- 9) Meriwether, James B. *The Literary Career of William Faulkner: a Bibliographical Study*. Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Library, 1961. 192 p.
 - 10) Heins, Henry H., comp. *A Golden Anniversary Bibliography of Edgar Rice Burroughs*. Complete ed. rev. West Kingston, R.I., Donald M. Grant, 1964. 418 p.
 - 11) Sheehy, Eugene P. and Kenneth A. Lohf. *Sherwood Anderson; a Bibliography*. Los Gatos, California, Talisman Press, 1960. 125 p.
 - 12) Firmage, George James. *E. E. Cummings; a Bibliography*. Middletown, Connecticut, Wesleyan University Press, 1960. 129 p.
 - 13) Branch, Edgar Marquess. *A Bibliography of James T. Farrell's Writings, 1921-1957*. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1959. 142 p.
 - 14) Eschelbach, Claire John and Joyce Lee Shober. *Aldous Huxley: a Bibliography, 1916-1959*. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1961. 150 p. (University of California Bibliographic Guides)
 - 15) Edel, Leon and Dan H. Laurence. *A Bibliography of Henry James*. 2d ed. rev. London, Hart-Davis, 1961. 427 p. (Soho Bibliographies, no. 8)
 - 16) Adler, Betty and Wilhelm, Jane. *H. L. M.: The Mencken Bibliography*. Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press, 1961. 367 p.
 - 17) Lohf, Kenneth A. and Eugene P. Sheehy. *Frank Norris: a Bibliography*. Los Gatos, California, Talisman Press, 1959. 107 p.
 - 18) Harding, Walter Roy. *A Thoreau Handbook*. New York, New York University Press, 1959. 229 p.
 - 19) Johnson, Elmer D. *Of Time and Thomas Wolfe; a Bibliography with a Character Index of His Works*. New York, Scarecrow Press, 1959. 226 p.
 - 20) Altick, Richard Daniel and William R. Matthews. *Guide to Doctoral Dissertations in Victorian Literature, 1886-1958*. Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1960. 119 p.
 - 21) Woodress, James Leslie. *Dissertations in American Literature, 1891-1955, with supplement, 1956-1961*. Durham, North Carolina, Duke University Press, 1962. 138 p.
 - 22) *Index to Book Reviews in the Humanities*. Detroit, Phillip Thomson, 1960- .
 - 23) *Index to Little Magazines*. Denver, Alan Swallow, 1948- .
 - 24) Thurston, Jarvis A. and others. *Short Fiction Criticism: a Checklist of Interpretation since 1925 of Stories and Novelettes (American, British, Continental), 1800-1958*. Denver, Alan Swallow, 1960. 265 p.
 - 25) *Granger's Index to Poetry*. 5th ed., completely revised and enlarged. Edited by William F. Bernhardt. New York, Columbia University Press, 1962. 2123 p.
 - 26) Bibliographical Society of America. *Bibliography of American Literature*, by Jacob Blanck. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1959- .
 - 27) Scholes, Robert E. *The Cornell Joyce Collection; a Catalogue*. Ithaca, New York, Cornell University Press, 1961. 225 p.
 - 28) Sister Mary Callista, comp. *Catalogue of the Dickens Collection at the University of Texas*. Austin, Humanities Research Center, Texas University, 1961. 195 p. (Texas Bibliographical Series, no. 1)
 - 29) Stewart, James McG. *Rudyard Kipling; a Bibliographical Catalogue*. Edited by A. W. Yeats. Toronto, Dalhousie University and University of Toronto, 1959. 673 p.
 - 30) Benét, William Rose. *The Reader's Encyclopedia*. 2d ed. New York, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1965. 1118 p.
 - 31) Herzberg, Max J. *The Reader's Encyclopedia of American Literature*. New York, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1962. 1280 p.
 - 32) Sitwell, Edith. *The Atlantic Book of British and American Poetry*. Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1958. 1092 p.
 - 33) Northup, Helen F. *New Sources in the Humanities*. In Illinois. University. Library School. The Library as a Community Information Center. Champaign, Illinois, The Illini Union Bookstore, 1959. pp. 81-106. (Allerton Park Institute, no. 4).
 - 34) Schiller, Anita R. Reference Service: Instruction or Information. *Library Quarterly*, 35: 52-60, January, 1965.
 - 35) Winger, Howard W. The Exchange of Ideas in the Advancement of Knowledge. *Library Quarterly*, 28: 232, October, 1958.
 - 36) Kirk, Robert W. and Marvin Klotz. *Faulkner's People; a Complete Guide and Index to the Characters in the Fiction of William Faulkner*. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1963. p. 43.