

## The Document Resources of Purple Mountain Observatory Library

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**Abstract.** This article includes a general overview of the Purple Mountain Observatory (PMO) followed by a description of the document resources held in the Observatory Library. The paper finishes with a discussion of the major role the Library has played in assisting Chinese astronomical research since 1935, and the methods used to achieve this level of assistance.

The Purple Mountain Observatory, Academia Sinica, is situated on the third peak of picturesque Purple Mountain which is on the eastern outskirts of Nanjing. It stands 267 meters above sea level at longitude 118 degrees 49'E and latitude 32 degrees 04'N.

The PMO has a long history. The predecessor of the Observatory was the National Research Institute of Astronomy in the former Academia Sinica and its observing site, the PMO. The Research Institute of Astronomy was established in February, 1928 and the PMO was completed on September 1, 1934. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, on May 20, 1950 the Research Institute of Astronomy was renamed as the PMO, Academia Sinica.

The PMO was the first modern Chinese observatory and its founding marked the commencement of new methods of astronomical research in our country. The Observatory is still considered "the cradle of the modern astronomy in China", as PMO had administered all the observatories and stations in China until July 1962.

The Observatory now specialises in research on astrophysics, celestial mechanics, astrometry, radio astronomy and space astronomy. At present it has over 200 scientific and technical personnel. During the organizational reform of the Observatory in 1997, six Departments were established. They are: the Radio Astronomy Laboratory, Space Astronomy Laboratory, the Department of Astrophysics, the Department of Celestial Mechanics, Astronomical Technology Centre and Astronomical Information Centre. The Observatory is also responsible for the editing of several different publications including: *Acta Astronomica Sinica*, *Publications of Purple Mountain Observatory*, the *Chinese Astronomical Ephemeris* and others.

The Observatory Library was established in 1935. At that time it had over 6000 books and periodicals. Since that time, due to the efforts of the astronomers and librarians, the present collection has over 25000 books and more than 30000 bound volumes of periodicals, most of them being astronomical books and astronomical periodicals.

More than 200 different astronomical periodicals which are now published abroad can be found in the Observatory Library. The Library has complete sets of some titles such as *Astrophysical Journal* and *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society*. In addition to the books and publications there are a lot of the Atlases of stars on film and in electronic format in the Library. For example, Palomar Observatory - European Southern Observatory Photographic Atlas of the Northern Sky, SERC - EJ (Equatorial J) Atlas on film, the Digitized Sky Survey on 101 CD-ROMs, to name but a few. The Library also has some books of ancient Chinese astronomy. As far as we know, the astronomical materials of the Library are the most comprehensive collection within China and so the Library has become a major center of astronomical materials. For several years we have been deeply aware that the relationship between researchers and libraries is the same as the one between fish and water. They depend on each other. Our researchers need different kinds of astronomical books while performing their work. If we want to attain important astronomical books we also need the assistance of astronomers. In the 1980s the astronomers who studied abroad obtained a lot of astronomical publications which had been lost in the mail. With the assistance of astronomers the Library exchanges publications with about 200 astronomical organizations in nearly 40 countries. For several years we have also received many astronomical books and publications which are given free by astronomical organizations and astronomers at home and abroad, especially the IAU, Astronomical Society of Pacific (USA) and The Royal Astronomical Society (UK) and so on. We express here our heartfelt thanks for their help on behalf of all astronomers and librarians in China.

In the Library, we suggest that the astronomers sign their names in the books which are donated by them so that more people will know the astronomers' fine qualities. Their books are kept in our Library and used by other researchers for a long time. The constantly rising prices of all publications published both at home and abroad in recent years causes us concern and our Library suffers from financial difficulties. In order to ensure the main astronomical books and periodicals continue in the Library, we have taken the following initiatives. For one thing we propose our government departments increase investment for the Library. For another we encourage the exchange of astronomical publications with astronomical organizations worldwide. We also encourage interaction and communication among astronomy librarians, and contact between astronomers and our librarians.

We need a lot of duplicates or remains of books in the libraries for astronomers to play an important role in astronomical research in China. We will continue to build our Library into the real astronomical materials center of China to serve all astronomers everywhere.

**Acknowledgments.** We thank Jeanette Regan for her help.