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and the Gest Collection

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"End Matter", The Gest Library Journal 3, no. 3 (Winter 1989-1990)82-89, accessed January 14, 2017, https://library.princeton.edu/eastasian/EALJ/end.EALJ.v03.n03.p082.pdf

News and Notes: For the Friends of the Gest Library

Personnel

The appointment of Antony Marr to the position of Curator of the Gest Oriental Library and East Asian Collections was announced on January 4, 1990. Mr. Marr joined the Gest Library staff on March 1. A welcome party in his honor was held by the Department of East Asian Studies on March 15.

Martin Heijdra was appointed Chinese Bibliographer on February 1, 1990. Mr. Heijdra, a Dutch citizen, holds two bachelor's degrees and two master's degrees from Leiden University, in Sinology and in Japanology. He is now a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of East Asian Studies, Princeton University, concentrating on Ming-Ch'ing social-economic history. He has also studied at Beijing University (1977-1978) and at Kyoto University (1979–1981).

Diane E. Perushek, Curator of the Gest Oriental Library and East Asian Collections, left the library on October 15, 1989. She now works at the University of Tennessee as the Associate University Librarian for Collection Development. Noting the departure of Ms. Perushek and assessing her contributions to the Gest Library, D. W. Koepp, the University Librarian, supplied the following comment in the *Princeton University Libraries Bulletin*, vol. 37, no. 4: "Her tenure here was notable for a considerable increase in the number of Chinese books acquired, following on the opening of the People's Republic of China. This increase in receipts was accompanied — to everyone's satisfaction — by a substantial *reduction* in the uncataloged arrearage of East Asian material. These unlikely events were a spin-off of

Diane's emphasis on a rigorous application of RLIN CJK and of a reorganization, under her initiative, of the Gest Library staff which centralized the technical services activities. . . . She has served Princeton well in a complex and rapidly changing field." During her curatorship at the library, Ms. Perushek also helped the publication of and occasionally contributed to the *Gest Library Journal*. We feel grateful for her help and wish her well on the new job.

Announcements

Zhen-ping Wang joined the editorial board of the *Gest Library Journal* in February 1990. He completed his doctorate in June 1989 at Princeton by defending a dissertation on Sino-Japanese relations before the eleventh century. He was a 1987–1988 Japan Foundation Fellow, and spent one year at Kyoto University doing research for his dissertation. Besides working for the *Gest Library Journal*, Mr. Wang is a research associate of the Department of East Asian Studies, Princeton University.

Our former editor, Hung-lam Chu, has accepted a research post in the Institute of History and Philology at Academia Sinica. Our former managing editor, Howard L. Goodman, now holds a teaching post at Harvard University. With the help and guidance of the faculty in East Asian Studies and the Advisory Council of the Department, and the support and encouragement of the Friends, they launched the *Gest Library Journal* in 1986, and since then have made valuable contributions to the journal. Even after their departure, Dr. Chu and Dr. Goodman have continued to show their concern for the *Journal* and render help to us. We want to extend thanks to them and wish them success in their new positions.

The Gest Library in the Nineties: An Interview with Antony Marr

"I was born in Nanking, but my family was originally from An-yang, Honan Province." Antony Marr, the new curator of the Gest Oriental Library and the East Asian Collections started the conversation by telling his own story. "In 1949, I boarded the last train to leave China for Hong Kong, where I attended high school until 1951. I then went to Taiwan to enter National Taiwan University. I studied English literature and earned a bach-

elor's degree. In the late fifties, I came to the United States with a scholarship granted by Rutgers University, and was going to enroll in a master's program in English literature. However, I switched to library science at the persuasion of my wife, who at that time was already attending Rutgers Library School." Since that time, Mr. Marr's life has been closely related to libraries. Besides a degree of Master's in Library Science from Rutgers University, he also received a diploma from the Institute for Advanced Far Eastern Librarianship at the University of Chicago. Before coming to Princeton, Mr. Marr worked for six years in the Catalogue Department at Rutgers University and helped establish its Asian Library. He then went to Yale in 1970 and worked there for twenty years as associate curator of the East Asian Collection of Yale University Library. In that position, Mr. Marr was responsible for the development and maintenance of the Chinese collection. He also provided bibliographic assistance to faculty, gave bibliographic instruction to students, and served as the representative of the library in dealing with institutions and scholars from abroad.

"Although quite comfortable in New Haven," said Mr. Marr, "I was willing to move to New Jersey to pursue a new career, leaving behind me my only son, who graduated from Yale in 1985 and is now working in the Yale Computing Center. The reason is simple: jobs like Princeton's just do not come up every day. Besides, New Jersey is not at all a new place for me. Coming to Princeton and working for the university is a special pleasure, because the town and the campus are very beautiful."

When asked to compare the two East Asian libraries in Yale and Princeton, Mr. Marr pointed out that the East Asian library in Yale is under the administration of the Sterling Library, which takes care of such things as circulation and binding, whereas in Princeton, the Gest Library is an independent unit. The two libraries, however, do share some characteristics: the size of their holdings and the close relations between the library and the faculty as well as students in the Department of East Asian Studies.

Mr. Marr then went on to discuss the challenges that face the Gest Library: "With the departure of Diane Perushek and the arrival of myself as the new curator, the Gest Library entered into a transitional period. During this period, providing leadership for the library and its staff is crucial. Efforts should be made to improve the morale of the staff, to maintain good service to readers, and to acquire more space for the library."

Elaborating on these efforts, Mr. Marr pointed out: "Good librarianship

is to provide excellent service to readers. A library with poor service will be regarded as a poor library no matter how excellent a collection it may possess. I am confident that our library staff, who are very hard-working and dedicated to their job, will continue their good service to readers and further improve it."

Space has been a major problem for the Gest Library. The increasing library holdings have resulted in new stacks taking up the space for carrels and narrowing the corridors. The library, which used to be one of the most pleasant places for research and study, is becoming more and more crowded. This situation has caused concern among faculty and students. As a temporary means to gain badly needed breathing space for the library, Mr. Marr has decided to move some books into storage. "We now have the authorization to use some of the space in the Forrestal annex to store up to one hundred thousand books from the Gest Library. Although not a long-term solution to our space problem, this nevertheless is a very much appreciated help. It gives the library immediate relief as well as the room for storing the books that the library will acquire in the coming five years." In response to the concern expressed by some East Asian Studies faculty and students that the removal of books from the Gest Library to the annex will limit their access to the library collection and cause inconvenience to them, Mr. Marr said: "A compromise and perhaps a reasonable solution to the problem have been worked out by myself. I am currently going through the stacks, selecting books that have never been circulated. Since they have been staying there untouched, the chance of their being used by readers is relatively slim. Therefore, it should not matter too much where they are stored." According to Mr. Marr, as of April 17, 1990, he had selected 3,444 such books, which were to be moved to the annex. He stressed that readers will have access to these books. If any of them are paged by readers, they will be sent to the Gest Library within twenty-four hours. "Although burdened by limited space," Mr. Marr further pointed out, "the Gest Library will not narrow the scope of its purchasing. Our library is dedicated to collecting all the necessary publications so as to support scholarly research related to China and Japan."

The Gest Library has been famous for its collection of Chinese rare books and of secondary scholarship on the history and literature of premodern China. In recent years, to broaden the scope of its Chinese collection, publications, journals, and books concerning modern Chinese history and

literature have also been systematically acquired. The same efforts have been made to strengthen the Japanese collection. "We are prepared for the increasing interest in Japan, especially in its economic development, among scholars and students." Mr. Marr also wished that the Japanese collection in the Gest Library could expand even more by new acquisitions.

Admittedly, no library would have the resources to cover all the major publications in China and Japan. Only a cooperative purchasing project can make such publications available to readers in America. Currently, one such project involves Harvard, Yale, Cornell, Columbia, New York Public Library, and Princeton. Princeton is responsible for purchasing the major publications in five provinces in China: Inner Mongolia, Liao-ning, Ning-hsia, Shan-hsi, and Peking. Similarly, Princeton is also collecting publications concerning the local histories of Kyūshū, Ryūkyū, Okinawa, and Shikoku in Japan.

Another area of cooperation is the book exchange program with major libraries in China and Japan. The exchange is on a one-for-one basis (that is one English book for one Chinese or Japanese one). However, since in America books are usually priced much higher than in China, any such exchange on a large scale would cause the Gest Library financial difficulty, and therefore exchanges of books have been limited in scope.

The Gest Library has been more active in another area of national and international cooperation, the compilation of a union catalogue of Chinese rare books. A great undertaking initiated by the Research Library Group (RLG), this catalogue will eventually include Chinese rare books held by libraries in the United States, Taiwan, and China. Librarians in Peking University and in the Academy of Sciences had already expressed their interest in joining the project. An office to coordinate the project will be set up in the Gest Library.

Talking about this project with enthusiasm, Mr. Marr said: "Automation, that is the application of computers in cataloguing Chinese books, will have a great impact on the participating libraries. The union catalogue of Chinese rare books in automated form, when completed, will greatly improve our reader service in searching and locating Chinese rare books. To perfect the catalogue, we need some experts to work with us, helping solve the problems specifically related to cataloguing Chinese rare books, such as the identification and authentication of such books. RLIN is another national cooperation project, which now involves almost every East Asian

library in the United States. A catalogue in automated form, RLIN enables one library to use the catalogue entries created by others, thus substantially cutting down the cost and the labor of original cataloguing." Mr. Marr believes that the development of automation in library science will eventually make card catalogues obsolete. "There is still much room for national as well as international cooperation," said Mr. Marr. "Funding certainly is crucial for any cooperative project. But leadership is perhaps more important. I hope that the Library of Congress, as the recognized leader among American libraries, will make a still greater contribution to the coordination of national and international cooperation."

The conversation then switched to the *Gest Library Journal*. Having kindly agreed to serve the *Journal* as its advisor, Mr. Marr offered his opinion as to how the *Journal* can be improved. "I would like to see the *Journal* appeal to both scholars and educated general readers. Scholarly articles are essential for keeping up the high academic standards of the *Journal*. Articles of popular interest, however, are equally important. Many of the general readers may not have mastered Chinese and Japanese to appreciate the contents of our East Asian collection. However, with the help of articles with vivid illustrations showing the beauty of the printing, the binding, and the layout of traditional Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and other East Asian books, they certainly can appreciate them as cultural and art objects. Such appreciation will help deepen their understanding of the history and culture of East Asia. In a sense, the *Gest Library Journal* and the library share the same goal: offering excellent service to anyone interested in East Asian cultures. Let's cooperate with each other, and try our best to achieve this goal."

The Gest Journal Staff

FRIENDS OF THE GEST LIBRARY

The Friends of the Gest Library is a group of private individuals dedicated to the idea that an East Asian library resource like the Gest Oriental Library (the East Asian Research Library at Princeton University) must be known, supported, and encouraged in order to enrich both the aesthetic knowledge of East Asia and the growth of scholarship and contemporary information concerning that part of the world. Many individuals have already been active for years in guiding the Gest Library, and contributing their time and resources ad hoc. In 1986 they formed the Friends of the Gest Library in order to broaden the Library's support and foster communication among other interested parties.

As a group, the Friends sponsor colloquia and exhibitions on East Asian books, calligraphy, art, and their historical relationships. They secure gifts and bequests for the Library in order to add to its holdings items and collections of great worth. They disseminate information about the Library (and about other East Asian libraries) so that members and nonmembers alike can benefit from its resources.

Joining the Friends

Membership is open to those subscribing annually twenty-five dollars or more. With that membership fee is included a yearly subscription to the *Gest Library Journal*. Members will be invited to attend special exhibitions, lectures, and discussions that occur under the aegis of the Friends. Checks are payable to the Trustees of Princeton University and should be mailed to:

Friends of the Gest Library
c/o East Asian Studies Department, Jones Hall 211
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THE GEST LIBRARY JOURNAL

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PRINTED ON MOHAWK ACID-FREE PAPER
BY PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS

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