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From The Editor

In the summer of 2001, Dr. Ma Tai-loi, director of The East Asian Library and the Gest Collection at Princeton, knowing my interest in the physical aspects of Chinese books and paper, brought to my attention a conference on the management and preservation of Chinese books being planned by the National Library of China in Beijing. I later received an invitation to attend this International Symposium on Chinese Ancient Book Management and Preservation held from 16 to 19 October 2001 at the National Library. There I met many of the over one hundred librarians, conservators, library administrators, researchers, and persons in the book trade in attendance representing institution in China, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan and in England, France, Russia, and the United States. More than thirty presentations over the course of the formal sessions introduced histories of old and rare Chinese book collections, specific conservation projects and practices, aspects of planning and implementing book conservation programs, plans for training the next generations of conservators, and changing technologies in book and document preservation. In record time, the symposium papers were published in Chinese with English abstracts as *Zhongwen shanben guji baocun baohu guoji yantaohui lunwen ji* (Proceedings of the International Symposium on the Management and Preservation of Chinese Ancient Books) (Beijing: Beijing tushuguan chubanshe, 2002). Director of the National Library Ren Jiyu, conference organizers Sun Liping, Su Pinhong, Wang Du, Zheng Xianlan, and many others on the staff of the National Library are to be thanked for their hospitality, efficient and thoughtful planning of the meetings, and arrangements for related visits to repositories of old and rare books in Beijing.

At the conference, Professor Wu Ge, member of the editorial advisory board of the *East Asian Library Journal* and rare book librarian at

Fudan University, made a special point of introducing me to his colleagues in the world of Chinese rare book librarianship. I am particularly grateful for those introductions and for Professor Wu's fulfilling his promise to bring to my attention particularly fine new scholarship on topics related to the history of the book in China. Two of his recommendations are published in English translation here in Volume II, no. 1 of our journal.

The conference presentation by Liu Qiang, librarian at Tsinghua University in Beijing in charge of rare book cataloguing and collection management, was filled with heart-sinking drama that resolved into considerable hope for the future of book conservation in China. Liu Qiang's article amplifies that report on the project that she directed to restore the remnants of the cache of old and rare books from the Tsinghua Library collection, ninety percent of which was destroyed while in supposedly safe storage in the suburbs of Chongqing when the Japanese firebombed that city and the surrounding area in 1940. What she writes will be of interest to Western book conservators for its insights into how the simplicity of traditional Chinese-style book binding structures lends itself to repair and restoration even when these books are severely damaged. Historians of modern China can add this narrative to the specific evidence on how war and neglect its aftermath play havoc with important elements of culture. And then historians of the book and printing in China will delight in the new evidence that Liu Qiang and her colleagues uncovered in the process of restoring the books which reveals exactly how the 1894 imperially commissioned photolithographic-reprint edition of the great Yongzheng-era Chinese encyclopedia *Gujin tushu jicheng* (The Chinese Encyclopaedia) was produced.

Wang Qingyuan, special collections librarian at the Liaoning Provincial Library in Shenyang, writes about the discovery of a previously uncatalogued and unnoticed Song edition of Zha Qia's *Chunqiu jizhu* (Collected Annotations for Spring and Autumn Annals). One reviewer wrote of her work, "[I]ts demonstration of the correctness of the identification of the newly discovered exemplar and the erroneous identification of related items . . . is a model study of this kind." Preparation of Professor Wang's manuscript for publication itself evolved into a model of cooperation among scholars. Alfreda Murck, member of

this journal's editorial advisory board, art historian, and independent scholar living in Beijing, graciously accepted my invitation to translate this manuscript. Her work brought Professor Wang's research to life in English but also revealed many complexities in the language used to detail this process of the verification of editions. Deciphering the linguistic nuances of Wang Qingyuan's prose required additional consultation among the author, the translator, and this editor. And then, Professor Frederick Mote, chairman of the editorial advisory board, read the modified translation and came to the rescue of the translator and the editor with questions, suggestions, and amplifications of many thorny points. This process took on the qualities of the finest of seminars where the further we all went toward making the translation reflect accurately the meaning of the Chinese original, the more stimulating the research became. I trust that it will not be lost on the readers of this article that the inclusion of a complete translation of the 1275 preface by Wei Zongwu, by which Wang Qingyuan is able to date the Liaoning exemplar of *Collected Annotations for Spring and Autumn Annals*, was no mean feat. Even if we had omitted this preface from the translation as I on first reading was tempted to do, Professor Wang's work would have stood as a fine example of the process of verification of editions. However, Professor Mote's daring unraveling of Wei's spare and subtle language, which mirrors these same qualities found in the language of the text of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* and of Zhang Qia's explications of the Classic, clearly shows Wang Qingyuan's article of significant interest also to scholars of the history of the Song dynasty and of the Spring-and-Autumn era. I thank Wang Qingyuan, Freda, and Professor Mote immensely for their generous patience and persistence as we engaged in long-distance scholarly discussions from Shenyang to Beijing and Granby to Princeton. And I offer special thanks to the National Library of China for making photographs of the two different exemplars of *Annotations for Spring and Autumn Annals* in its collection available for publication and to Wang Han, editor of two of the National Library's scholarly publications, for delivering these photographs to me in person.

The third article, a submission unrelated to the 2001 symposium in Beijing, is by Hok-lam Chan, Professor Mote's first graduate student at Princeton and recently retired professor of Chinese history at the

Chinese University of Hong Kong. His study of Li Tan's rebellion of 1262 is somewhat outside the scope of the topics on the history of books and printing usually published by this journal. Nonetheless, it provides a look at the political and social turmoil that occurred at the end of the Southern-Song dynasty, an era in which remarkable scholarship and book publishing continued to be undertaken (the editions, dated 1255 and 1275, of Zhang Qia's *Annotations for Spring and Autumn Annals* being examples). Hok-lam Chan's study is based on a corrupt text preserved by Zhu Yunming, a seventeenth-century scholar somewhat marginalized for his unorthodox behavior and thinking. Professor Chan takes a new look at this text, recently published in a collated and corrected version, and asserts that the correct reading of the history of this rebellion requires balancing and augmenting fact with fiction, orthodox interpretations with the unorthodox, and the official record with the unofficial record. The tendency in the writing and reading of Chinese history has been to give credibility to the facts, so-called, found in orthodox official records. Here, Chan's analysis of additional, perhaps marginally factual and even fabulous, information available in the previously overlooked text on Li Tan's activities may reveal the true significance of the actions of this hitherto shadowy figure moving in the complex political world as the Southern Song gave way to the Mongol Yuan.

Taken together these three articles shed light on the way that uncovering, giving notice to, and reevaluating collections of books, a single work, or an individual essay in effect extend the life of those records of culture and idea. The presentations certainly advance the understanding of the history of written records in China with new insights into the writing, production, accumulation, transmission, preservation, reading, and interpretation of those records, all essential topics in the history of the book in East Asia.

It cannot have escaped the notice of the readers of the *East Asian Library Journal* that the previous several numbers of our journal have been made up, to a very large part, of articles related to the history of the book and printing in China. This lack of balance in coverage of the history of the book and its production in East Asia is not by design, but rather represents the predominance of the material submitted to this journal for review. I am actively seeking manuscripts from scholars who write about

the history of the book and printing in Japan, Korea, and other parts of East Asia and, in fact, hope to be able to present in an upcoming number a group of papers of special interest to Japanese bibliophiles. Then, just this past week, I received from the directors of the Cheongju Early Printing Museum, who visited Princeton in the autumn of 2002, a very large volume containing articles in English translation on a wide range of topics in the history of printing and the book in Korea. I will be investigating how some of the best of these pieces might be incorporated into future issues of the *East Asian Library Journal*.

As always, I enjoy hearing from you with your responses to and criticisms and corrections of the material we publish. Should you want a sample copy of the *East Asian Library Journal* to share with a friend or an institutional librarian, I will be happy to send one to you along with subscription information.

