From a very early stage in his career Frederick W. Mote was closely involved with books as loci of civilization, and he played major roles in East Asian libraries in general and the Gest Library in particular. Soon after he joined the Princeton faculty in the Department of Oriental Studies as an assistant professor in 1956, he, together with Howard C. Rice Jr. and James Shih-kang Tung, organized a book exhibition on Europe’s discovery of China called *East & West*, on display at the Princeton University Library from 15 February to 30 April 1957. For a checklist of this exhibition, see http://libweb5.princeton.edu/visual_materials/Misc/East-West.pdf.

On a national level, Professor Mote frequently stressed the importance of strengthening existing Chinese library resources in the United States, for example when he was chairman of the American Council of Learned Societies’ Committee on Studies of Chinese Civilization. He went on record with his opinion that there are aspects of library management and bibliographic skills special to the Chinese field and that efforts should be made to include such skills in training new librarians while human resources were still at hand to transmit such knowledge to the next generation of scholars. In 1977 he invited Qu Wanli, author of the 1974 catalogue of Chinese rare books in the Gest Library, to co-teach a semester-long course on Chinese rare books, which with much foresight anticipated many topics now common in the field of the history of the

For Professor Mote, the book itself, as well as its content, is part of history, as a social and material product of its time and also in the way books have come down to us. Thus, when asked to organize a panel for the memorial conference for Professor Mote in October 2005, as the last graduate student to defend a dissertation on Ming history under Mote’s direction and the current Chinese bibliographer of the East Asian Library at Princeton University, I found it highly fitting to make “Books in History, History in Books” the focus of the panel. I invited four scholars to speak on aspects of this broad topic. Mote’s first graduate student, Hok-lam Chan, reported on the contemporary historical role of a rather unknown Ming document, “Ming Taizu’s ‘Record of Exposed Wrongdoings’ (Jifeilu): A Registry of Crimes and Transgressions Committed by the Imperial Princes”; a fuller version of Hok-lam Chan’s paper has been published as “Ming Taizu’s Problem with His Sons: Prince Qin’s Criminality and Early-Ming Politics” in *Asia Major* 20:1 (2007). The remaining three papers are published here in the current number of the *East Asian Library Journal*. The presentation by Chu Hung-lam, also one of Mote’s graduate students, “Textual Filiation of Li Shimian’s Biography: The Part about the Palace Fire in 1421,” carefully compares the biographical records that Mote used for teaching research methods in Ming history. Mote’s generous help to non-Princeton scholars of Ming history is evident in Lynn Struve’s “Ancestor Édité in Republican China: The Scrambled Journal of Xue Cai (1595–1665).” And rounding out the panel, another non-Princeton scholar who has since become a Princeton University insider as the director of the East Asian Library at Princeton, Ma Tai-loi, reflects on topic “The Collecting, Writing, and Utilization of Local Histories during the Late Ming: The Unique Case of Xu Bo (1570–1642).”

Taken together, the papers from the “Books in History, History in Books” panel exemplify the importance of paying attention to all aspects of East Asian book history—from form to content and from creation to transmission—when studying the history of this region.