

THE UCI LIBRARIES FALL 2020 EXHIBIT



30

# From I-Ching to Manga:

UCI's East Asian Collection

Celebrating 30 Years



**Pauline Yu**  
Founding Chair,  
East Asian Languages  
and Literatures  
Professor of Chinese Literature

“In planning for the new Department of East Asian Languages and Literature at UCI in 1989, a top priority was securing support for the East Asian Library [Collection]. There were a lot of other tasks to be accomplished—establishing the department itself, its undergraduate major, and its graduate program; securing FTE and hiring new faculty; facilitating research opportunities for faculty; gaining access to development support, etc.—but it was clear that without on-campus access to library resources none of the programmatic goals could be achieved.

I was told that the campus had purchased a 12,000 volume Chinese collection from a private source in the People’s Republic of China (this may have been brokered by Visiting Professor Ping-ti Ho, but I’m not certain of that), but there were no staff capable of processing it or any funds for further acquisitions.

We were able to secure a commitment for an annual acquisition budget of \$100,000, which ‘was expected to increase.’ We also received \$50,000 for retrospective purchases. A line for a Chinese language bibliographer was released immediately, and we hired William Wang from the University of Illinois to fill that position, as the library’s first director. Japanese cataloguing support was also promised. The campus agreed to install a Chinese-Japanese-Korean terminal to enable more effective access to resources elsewhere that could be brought in through Inter-Library Loan, and 24-hour turnaround from UCLA’s East Asian Library was guaranteed. “I remember many hours spent poring over lists of books to be ordered. Steven Carter, our first professor of Japanese literature, was especially active in this effort as well.

Unfortunately, almost immediately after our arrival in the early 90s the University faced a budget crisis unprecedented in its history, and the “expected” increase in support for the program and library [collection] did not materialize.

But I believe the recruitment promises helped the fledgling East Asian library [collection] weather the fiscal storms, and I’m delighted it’s now celebrating its thirtieth birthday!”



**Ying Hu**  
Professor and Chair,  
East Asian Studies  
UCI School of Humanities

“I have benefitted greatly from the East Asian Library [collection] in teaching and research.

When I teach EA 192W, a upper division junior-senior seminar which guides students through individual East Asia-related research projects, I always ask our East Asian Librarian Ying Zhang to give a presentation to my class on our library holdings, and research methods and tools. Each time, she gives an up-to-date demonstration tailored to the specific projects students are engaged in. For some of my students, that class may have been the first time they stepped into the library. And yet, at the end of the quarter, they would have completed their projects, with 8-10 academic references to back up their research. And I, too, would have learned a new way of finding research material from Dr. Zhang’s presentation.

A few years back, I was working on a research project on a Chinese woman revolutionary Qiu Jin (1875-1907). One unusual piece of commemoration written by her sworn-sister draws from the ancient Confucian classic *The Book of Changes* to justify women’s participation in politics. My study of this esoteric divination manual was helped by the large *I-Ching (Book of Changes)* collection held by the EA library [Collection].”





**Qitao Guo**  
Director of UCI Center for  
Asian Studies  
Associate Professor, History  
UCI School of Humanities

“It’s a great pleasure to have this opportunity to write a few words to celebrate the EAC [East Asian Collection] 30 anniversary of the UC Irvine’s Langson Library.

The Langson Library provides excellent service in terms of both teaching and research. EAC is essential for UCI as a research university, as both faculty and graduate students in East Asian fields rely on it for their research. A substantial collection of publications in East Asian languages greatly facilitates the writing of their research at UC Irvine after they have completed original research in East Asian archives.

The EAC is also a major draw for attracting top-flight research scholars in the East Asian fields to UCI. For these reasons, it is absolutely essential that the University not only maintains the EAC current holdings but continues to invest in building the collection.

As a China historian, I will here focus on EAC’s [UCI Libraries East Asian Collection’s] role in terms of facilitating my research in the history of Ming China, and in this respect the research librarian, Dr. Ying Zhang, has played a particularly important role.

Since her arrival at UCI, Dr. Zhang has purchased virtually all of the important books related to my research interest in the region of Ming-dynasty (1368-1644) Huizhou, especially printed collections of source materials (Huizhou is remarkably rich in primary documents from the late imperial period). She even reached out to purchase an enormously rare and important Huizhou genealogy that was printed in 1480.

I am pleased to report that I have completed a new book manuscript on Huizhou and it owes a great deal to the service provided by the Langson Library and in particular, Dr. Ying Zhang.”



**Emily Baum**

Director of UCI Long U.S.-  
China Institute  
Associate Professor, History  
UCI School of Humanities

“When I was writing a book on medical history in modern China, Ying Zhang frequently brought new and relevant titles to my attention. Since UCI has a large student body interested in Asian studies, the importance of having our own East Asian library collection cannot be overstated.

In the future, it would be great if the library could invest in more primary source materials that could conceivably be used in a classroom setting, such as the Red Guard newspapers or Liangyou huabao.”



**Susan Klein**  
Professor and Director,  
Religious Studies Program  
UCI School of Humanities

“When I arrived at UC Irvine in 1992, although Steven Carter had been here several years, there was not much of a collection of Japanese scholarly books on medieval noh theater and religion (my specialization). I spent a lot of time at UCLA and UCB working in their collections as we very gradually built ours up.

Then over the course of four years we got three major collections of books and materials related to Japanese literature, performance, and art, collections that were subsequently strategically built upon by our amazing research librarians, William Sheh Wong and Ying Zhang.

To celebrate the addition of the Terashima and Nearman Collections to the library, Director of Development Michael Haggin and the Special Collections Librarian Jackie Dooley asked me to curate a library exhibition entitled "Dances Divine and Demonic: Japan's Performing Arts."

The exhibition, which ran from October 1997 to April 1998, drew on both collections. It was very fun working through the collection with Jackie, selecting books and materials and writing the captions. I gave an inaugural lecture, “Haunting History: Female Ghosts in Japanese Dance and Drama,” and I believe the exhibition beautifully showcased the new collections for both UC Irvine and the surrounding community.”





**Bert Winther-Tamaki**  
Chair, Art History and  
Professor, English Visual Studies  
UCI School of Humanities

“Japanese art history has been a slowly growing area of interest in UCI’s East Asian Collection for many years. Writings by Japanese art historians and art critics, as well as exhibition catalogues published by art museums and professional journals in this field are vital tools for research in Japanese art history.

Few libraries in North America have holdings of these kinds of materials, so UCI’s acquisitions in these areas have gradually produced a significant collection with strengths in the early modern, modern, and contemporary periods. Continued acquisitions in these areas will greatly benefit the research of current and future faculty and graduate students and provide critical teaching resources.”



**Yang Su**

Associate Professor, Sociology  
UCI School of Social Sciences

“Congratulations for the 30 years anniversary, EAC!

I write as an enormously grateful faculty member. I am a sociologist specializing in social movements and China’s political transitions. The collection of EAC is indispensable to my work, and the staff has gone extra miles to support. My first book was about the political violence during the Mao years *Collective Killings in Rural China during the Cultural Revolution* (Cambridge University Press, 2011).

While I had data collected from China, the book [*Collective Killings in Rural China during the Cultural Revolution*] would not have been written without the EAC materials on the elite politics. Important for my second book project, EAC here has one of the most comprehensive book collections on the 1989 Tiananmen Movement, including works such as 改革时期的政治斗争 (*The Political Struggles in the Reform Era*) by Yang Jisheng.

My research is not only assisted by what is available, but also by what is made available by the superb effort of the staff. One of such inquiries is a database on the Cultural Revolution in a searchable CD format. I owe a great debt of gratitude to the wonderfully knowledgeable and unfailingly obliging Ying Zhang and her colleagues.”





**Joseph Jeon**

Director of UCI Center for  
Critical Korean Studies  
Professor, English  
UCI School of Humanities

**“First rate research centers rely on first-rate libraries.**

The Center for Critical Korean Studies at UCI benefits from the crucial cooperation of the library and especially the East Asian Collection.

The library has been incredibly helpful in acquiring materials on Korea. A relatively new center, our inaugural year coincided with the opening of the Korea Corner at the [Langson] library. We have had Korea Foundation interns work with the library, participated in our events, and assist our graduate students.

The CCKS [UCI Center for Critical Korean Studies in the School of Humanities] looks forward to working with the library and the East Asian Collection in the future.”



**Dorothy J. Solinger**  
Professor Emerita,  
Political Science  
UCI School of Social Sciences

"The East Asian Collection has been totally invaluable to my research! I work on contemporary China and so much in the way of statistics and journal articles would be inaccessible to me without the Collection's resources, and, ESPECIALLY, the outstanding expertise and dedication of our East Asian Librarian, Ying Zhang. She can find anything!

I have also sent my students to her over the years and she was always unfailingly helpful. I don't think we could attract faculty - in any field - in East Asian studies without this unfailing and state-of-the-art Collection and its manager, Ying Zhang."



**Tara Rodman**  
Assistant Professor,  
Arts and Drama  
UCI Clair Trevor School  
of the Arts

“The presence of a robust East Asian Collection at UCI materially improves my ability to conduct my own research into early- and mid-20th century Japanese theatre and dance by providing access to historic newspapers, current periodicals, and Japanese scholarly databases.

Just as important, by having this collection on campus, I can direct graduate students to these resources, which jump-starts their own research prior to traveling to Japan.

The responsiveness of Ying and others at the library ensures that the collection evolves to meet faculty and student needs, which we all sincerely appreciate! Looking toward the future, I hope that the collection continues to grow its textual, visual, and media resources in performance.”





**Yidi Wu**

UCI Alumnus

Assistant Professor,  
Saint Mary's College

“As a history PhD from UCI, I cannot imagine having any research done without the help of the East Asia Collection and our amazing librarian Ying Zhang, who never fails to acquire materials I need. Happy 30th anniversary, and I look forward to seeing its growth and continuing support for research and education on East Asia!”



**Lorelei Tanji**  
University Librarian  
UCI Libraries

“The East Asian Collection is an invaluable resource for students, faculty, and community members studying a wide range of topics related to Korea, China, and Japan.

In addition, the EAC fosters a ‘*global perspective*’ that is vital to understanding the world today. It acts as a gateway to global perspectives that will become increasingly important in the future for discovering solutions to address society’s grand challenges.”



**Calvin Boyer**  
Former University Librarian  
UCI Libraries

“There have been many pivotal moments for the UCI Libraries since its opening in 1965. Surely one of the more consequential and exciting ones was the birth of the East Asian Collection [EAC], whose 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary we celebrate this year.

The decision to launch the EAC occurred within the confluence of several factors. UCI was recruiting East Asian faculty of stellar credentials and reputations. The East Asian curriculum was expanding in course offerings and degree programs. The student body demographics were changing. Such changes mirrored those of the University’s surrounding community and those of the State.

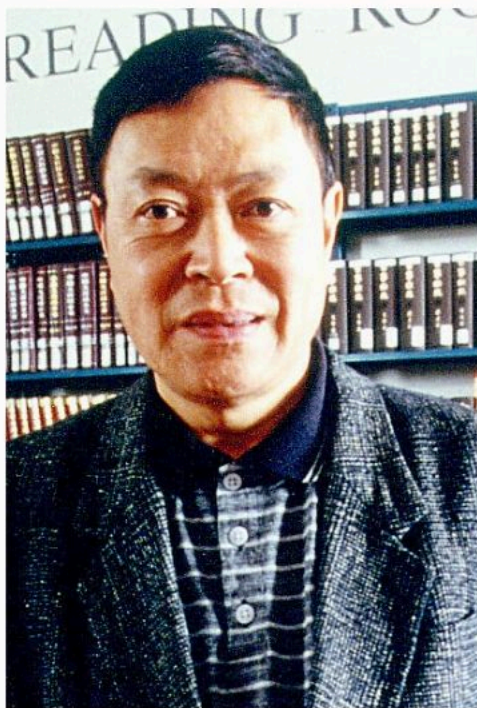
As I talked with library directors for campuses which had existing EACs, it was evident in contemplating the exciting future of the UCI Campus that it was prudent in 1990 to initiate an EAC. Changes within the Campus in East Asian instruction and research dictated a bold change in our collection development efforts and services offered.

The founding EAC [East Asian Collection] Director had to be someone familiar with best practices in EACs, a librarian of broad experience in distinguished EACs as well as a visionary. Not only did our EAC need to develop quickly in expanding its collections and services, the vision of what it should become had to be aligned with the rapidly evolving and ever increasing needs of students, faculty, and researchers served.

It would be difficult to overestimate the importance of the arrival of our first EAC Director, Dr. William Shey Wong. So much of what one sees today can be traced back to his vision and work in the early days of UCI’s East Asian Collection.

In reflection, it was for me a special professional joy to be a part of the founding of the East Asian Collection!”





**William S. Wong**  
Founding East Asian  
Studies Librarian  
UCI Libraries

“During the initial period, the Library showed strong support for the new East Asian studies program. Before UCI East Asian Collection developed a working core collection, the Library provided a shuttle bus to UCLA campus twice a week for our faculty to use the library there. The special arrangement ended in 1994.

Originally, the East Asian Studies programs among the three UC campuses in the Southland were designed to complement but not duplicate each other. Their focuses were respectively: UCSD in social sciences (including Pacific Studies); UCI in Humanities; and UCLA in general.

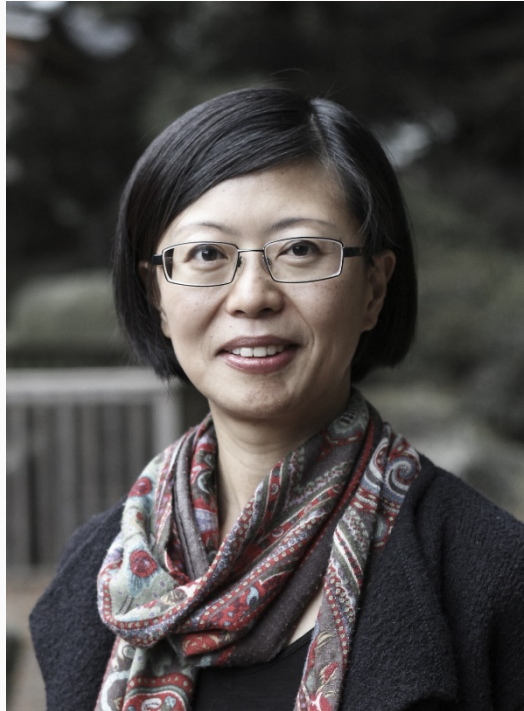
As the research trends and needs change, and the database subscriptions and other consortium projects become routine, the collection goals and strategies may be different. However, subject expertise and personal contacts remain to be important.

I focused on not just collection, but also the infrastructure behind it. I used to joke about the Library-Restaurant analogy. When I asked for more space, I would say people only see the dining area, but forget that a restaurant also needs a kitchen. If there were serious budget problems, I would comment that “巧妇难为无米之炊” (Even a clever person, cannot prepare a meal without rice).

A 100,000 volume collection was just a goal. In the process, I kept reminding myself [of] a Chinese proverb: “行百里者半九十” (Even though one has travelled 90 miles of a 100 mile journey, it is still a failure if one does not persist to the end). Source: 战国策 Zhan Guo Ce

A new restaurant receives attention from local residents and may become a local attraction. A new collection should be able to attract users especially local folks. Book exhibits, special materials programs, and staff participating in local activities are just a few ways to connect with the local community.

In the Cambridge, Massachusetts campus area, Joyce Chen Restaurant serving 北方菜 (Northern Style Cuisine) had an excellent reputation. Harvard’s faculty and students loved it. No wonder Professor Jun-jo Liu (刘君若) of the University of Minnesota once said that “Where a strong Chinese studies program is located, where has an excellent Chinese restaurant.”



**Hana Kim**

Director, Cheng Yu Tung East  
Asian Library, University of  
Toronto President, Council on  
East Asian Libraries (CEAL)

"This milestone offers a wonderful opportunity to reflect upon the history of the UCI's East Asian Collection and the important contributions it has made to the academic development of the UCI's community, past and present. What a shining success story of the East Asian Collection and a thoughtfully curated exhibit! Congratulations!"



In her letter to Bill dated March 29, 1991, Marion Buzzard, the departing UCI Libraries Assistant University Librarian for Collections, praised UCI Libraries Founding East Asian Studies Librarian highly.

“In a very short time you have accomplished a great deal, often under difficult circumstances....it was not easy to come into a situation... in which you were being asked to build a collection almost from the ground up with practically no language or processing support... You have more than met our expectations and have done so with good humor and grace.”