



10-1-2009

The State of the Field of Chinese Studies Librarianship

Zhijia Shen

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/jeal>

BYU ScholarsArchive Citation

Shen, Zhijia (2009) "The State of the Field of Chinese Studies Librarianship," *Journal of East Asian Libraries*: Vol. 2009 : No. 149 , Article 4.

Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/jeal/vol2009/iss149/4>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Journal of East Asian Libraries* by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.

THE STATE OF THE FIELD OF CHINESE STUDIES LIBRARIANSHIP

Zhijia Shen

University of Washington

Introduction

Chinese studies librarianship in North America refers to the specialized field within the profession of library and information science whose province is to collect, organize, and provide access to information regarding the study of China, the Chinese culture, and language. Different from Chinese studies librarianship in China, our field focuses on serving teaching, research, and other information needs relating to China in North America. It requires the librarians to have both the Chinese and English languages and preferably a subject background in Chinese studies. Chinese studies librarians usually work in academic or research libraries and are not necessarily ethnic Chinese. Chinese studies librarianship, like librarianship in general, had been relatively static for centuries until the 1970s when computer technology began to automate library catalogs. Ever since, change has been the buzz word of the profession.

The timeframe for this article conveniently stretches back twenty years to 1989 when Eugene Wu, then Librarian of the Harvard-Yenching Library, gave a presentation at the plenary session of the annual meeting of the Committee on East Asian Libraries, which is now the Council on East Asian Libraries (CEAL), entitled the "Current State and Future Prospects of Chinese Collections in North America."¹ At that time, Research Libraries Information Network (RLIN) and Online Computer Library Center' (OCLC) Chinese, Japanese, and Korean (CJK) modules had already brought Chinese language cataloging records online. The field of Chinese studies had gone through rapid growth of the 1960s and 70s in response to the Cold War and was excited by the opportunities presented in the 1980s by the recently opened China. Chinese studies collections had also enjoyed a golden time of funding and accelerated. For the years 1971-75, the collection growth rate was 25%; for 1976-80, it was 18%, and from 1980-1989, it slowed down but still increased at a 12% rate.² The steady decline pointed, however, to the beginning of a trend toward a decrease in collection growth due to the increase in book price and reduction of library funding.

Resource-sharing became a natural solution to the decline of funding. Preservation also began to draw attention. Library automation called for basic organizational changes and reallocation of human and material resources within libraries. In 1989, conducting business with Mainland China was quite a challenge as China's book industry was going through drastic privatization and other changes. It was important to develop healthy business relations with vendors and libraries in Mainland China in addition to those in Taiwan and Hong Kong. "Chinese studies librarians will by necessity also have to become diplomats and facilitators in all imaginable kinds of situations,"³ predicted Eugene Wu. Twenty years later when we look at the field today, while more significant changes have happened, many of the concerns and issues in 1989 are still relevant.

The State of Chinese Studies Librarianship today has been impacted by two major developments of the past twenty years: 1) the rise of China as an active economic player, which has generated unprecedented interest in China and Chinese studies; 2) the advancement of information technology. These developments have brought about revolutionary changes to the field of Chinese studies librarianship, causing it to evolve from a traditional practice of collecting and managing print collections to a dynamic service addressing all aspects of information management to meet the needs of library users.

The sources of information used for this article mainly include the following: CEAL statistics, report of the CEAL Committee on Chinese Materials, web pages of major Chinese studies collections, and publication on projects and initiatives relating to Chinese studies collections published by Chinese studies librarians.

¹ This speech was later published in *Journal of East Asian Libraries (JEAL)* 88 (October 1989):1-4.

² *JEAL* 87 (June 1989):44-48.

³ Eugene Wu, "Current State and Future Prospects of Chinese Collections in North America," *JEAL* 88 (October 1989):1-4.

Expanding Needs for Chinese Collections and Changing User Population

As China grows in economic strength and the United States becomes an active member of the Asian Pacific World, the needs for better understanding between the two cultures have grown. Chinese studies programs in North America also developed from traditional Sinology studies focusing on classics, language and literature, to an interdisciplinary field of scholarly inquiry touching upon all aspects of humanities, social sciences, and cultural studies.

The Chinese collections in North America support a leading aspect of the scholarship about China in the Western World. Although the field of Chinese studies in the United State is small compared to other academic disciplines, its impact is immeasurable because the U.S. scholarship on China directly informs the China policy of the United States, which significantly impacts the Western response to China. In many respects, U.S. scholarship about China also leads the trend of the entire Western scholarship on China.⁴

In 2003, the College Board passed the resolution to add Chinese to its Advanced Placement program. Many high school students are able to take college-level Chinese language courses. The AP program has boosted the learning of Chinese language by young Americans, and many liberal arts colleges have started to offer Chinese courses or majors.

The fast development of Chinese studies has placed an urgent demand on libraries for more quality Chinese collections. In response, many college and university libraries started to acquire Chinese materials and develop new collections. One immediate problem libraries then face is to find qualified librarians.

Another consideration for libraries is the increase on U.S. campuses in Chinese student population. In addition to the large number of graduate students, the undergraduate population also grows. Many of the Chinese students are now from Mainland China in addition to those from Taiwan and Hong Kong. These students are not necessarily Chinese studies majors. They are often Chinese native speakers with limited English. They have different library needs than the Chinese studies majors who are not necessarily Chinese native speakers.

Our students today largely belong to the so called Net Gen (Internet Generation) or digital native or format agnostic users. They are accustomed to multimedia environments: figuring things out for themselves without consulting manuals; working in groups; and multitasking. These qualities differ from those found in traditional library environments, which are usually text-based. Net Gen users expect to access information 24/7 wherever there is Internet access.

With the rising population of Chinese immigrants, Chinese collections also must meet the demand for services from their growing local Chinese communities. Service to Chinese immigrants whose primary reading language is Chinese becomes an important service area for libraries.⁵ This is within the mission of most public academic libraries; however, for private academic libraries, this is an area to be defined. Though it requires resources on the part of the libraries, it nonetheless has proven to be rewarding for libraries. Through services to the community, we not only broaden our user group but also strengthen our community ties and develop potential donor relationships.

Technology and Impact on Libraries

Advancements in information technology have revolutionized the way information is stored, disseminated, and serviced. Digitization has greatly shrunk the space needed for information storage; distance is no longer an issue in information delivery. The revolutionary changes brought about by the development of information technology took place at an exponential rate both in China, where most of our Chinese collections come from, and in North America, occupying the spotlight of our profession.

⁴ Professor Kam Wan Chan made this comments in his presentation at the pre-conference of the Summer Institute on Chinese Studies Librarianship in the Electronic Environment held on the campus of University of Washington in the summer of 2008.

⁵ For details see Zhou Yuan, "An unstated mission: Chinese collections in Academic libraries in the U.S. and their services to overseas Chinese," *JEAL* 139 (June 2006): 10-17.

Technology has narrowed the gap between the practice of Chinese studies librarianship and that of the mainstream libraries, and connected Chinese collections in this country closely to libraries in China. With the implementation of Unicode, different bibliographical utilities are connected. The America-based OCLC has expanded from a national bibliographic utility to become an electronic information giant with membership across the world. In the Asia Pacific, there are over four thousand OCLC member institutions, facilitating various libraries services seamlessly across the Pacific and throughout the world. The OCLC Connexion module integrated CJK cataloging into the mainstream practice. We no longer need a CJK terminal in order to catalog a Chinese book. Microsoft Asian Language Pack has enabled Asian language processing on PCs, allowing vernacular language materials and websites to be accessed anywhere on and off campus. OCLC Open WorldCat brings libraries to people via the World Wide Web anywhere at any time, increasing awareness of libraries as a primary source of reliable information.

Chinese Collections

The Chinese collections in North America collectively compose the largest Chinese resources outside China. The Chinese collections are part of the more than ninety East Asian libraries in the United States and Canada. In addition, there are also collections of Chinese materials in libraries without an East Asian branch. According to the 2008 CEAL Statistics, of the fifty-three libraries reported, the total holdings of Chinese materials are over 9.3 million books not including media and electronic materials, a total almost double that of 1989, and more than 53,100 current periodical subscriptions. These figures, however, represent a much smaller collection growth rate of 2.7%, compared to the 12% growth of 1989 or the 25% of the early 1970s. The low growth rate resulted from several causes such as budget constraints and the rising prices for Chinese publications. As the Chinese collections in North America mature, however, their growth rate naturally slows down. In the past ten years, the average collection growth rate was 3.21% with the highest being 3.97% of 2007 and the lowest being 2.59% of 2008.⁶ Since 1989 the collection growth rate has steadily declined.

Of the fifty-three reporting libraries in 2008, thirteen libraries hold more than 500,000 volumes, twenty-four hold between 100,000 to 499,000 volumes, and sixteen hold fewer than 100,000 volumes.⁷ These numbers give us a simple and arbitrary breakdown for large, medium, and small collections. They are geographically distributed throughout the United States with the major collections concentrated on the two coasts, in Chicago and Michigan of the Mid-west; and in Canada, with the three major Chinese collections each at University of British Columbia, University of Toronto, and McGill University.

In the past decades, China has experienced an unprecedented publication explosion. According to official statistics in 2007, there were 579 publishers in China and a total of 248,283 titles were published, compared to 502 publishers and 65,962 titles in 1988.⁸ The 2007 total number of publications in China was 3.76 times of that in 1988. The price of Chinese publications also has sky-rocketed. In 1989, an average book cost about ¥5 to ¥8; now it costs ¥35 to ¥45. For reference books the price increase can go up 200 times higher.⁹ The publication explosion and sky-rocketing prices have asserted serious stress on the budget of Chinese collections. Most American libraries have not been and will not be able to increase their budgets or collection space to match the change. Collection as a core library function has encountered many challenges. Resource-sharing and collaborative collection development become areas where librarians are looking for solutions.

Many national and regional consortia have been formed to facilitate resource-sharing. The Chinese collections usually join their home institutions in regional consortia. In the United States, the Pacific Rim Digital Library Alliance (PRDLA) and the University of California Libraries are the main consortia on the

⁶ CEAL Statistics Database, 2008. CEAL Annual Stats from All Institutions

http://www.lib.ku.edu/ceal/quickview.asp?view=all_yearly&step=1&tblview=1&from=2004&to=2008

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ *Zhongguo Chuban Nianjian 2008*. Zhongguo Nianjian Chubanshe. *Zhongguo Chuban Nianjian 1989*. Zhongguo Shuji Chubanshe, 1991.

⁹ Example: *Chongqing Difang Wenxian Mulu Tiyao*, published by National Library of China Press in 2008 (hard cover, 439 pages) is priced ¥180. *Zhongguo Difangzhi Lianhe Mulu*, published by Zhonghua Shuju in 1985 (hard cover, 965 pages) is priced ¥9.8.

West Coast, North East Research Libraries (NERL) on the East Coast, the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) of the Big Ten universities plus the University of Chicago in the Mid-West, and the Greater Western Library Alliance (GWLA) of research libraries covering seventeen Midwestern and Western states. The consortia promote common interests in programs related to scholarly communication, interlibrary loan, shared electronic resources, cooperative collection development, digital libraries, staff development, and other scholarly activities.

Facing budgetary and space constraints, libraries are proactively exploring new and creative collection models. In addition to a core collection that must remain on site, some libraries working through collaborative or consortium efforts to develop collection plans for non-core materials, dividing up certain non-core areas between collaborating institutions for shared collection development. Examples are collaborative collection development arranged between University of North Carolina and Duke University for Chinese and Japanese materials and the arrangements among the University of California libraries, among many others.

Also in search for an effective model to solve their problem of space and budget shortage, University of Arizona pioneered an attempt to trade collection for interlibrary loan service. The University of Arizona Library conducted an experiment on the validity of collaboration in managing collections in remote storage spaces to avoid duplicating efforts and resources, while building an active ILL service among the collaborative libraries, thus switching resources from collection to access and document delivery.¹⁰ The Arizona experiment has touched upon a major issue of today's libraries – ownership VS access.

In the short term, this can serve as an expedient solution to burning space and funding problems; however, in the long run, libraries must determine where and how they can ensure the resources will be available just in case they are needed for ILL loans. If we all switch to the ILL model, eventually who would be responsible for collecting and maintaining the materials? One idealistic speculation is that technology may provide a solution. All is open to our imagination and creativity. At present, however, libraries still must balance between collection building and access provision.

Also in the area of collection development, East Asian libraries have initiated projects on Chinese special collections, such as Chinese genealogy and oral history and Chinese film collections. Examples are the Asian Library of British Columbia's Chinese-Canadian Genealogy-Heritage Projects to build a collection of historical Chinese-language materials, and UC San Diego International Relations & Pacific Studies Library's initiative in building a Chinese underground and independent film collection.¹¹

Electronic Resources

Due to the vast scale of digitization efforts in Mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, as well as in the United States, Chinese electronic resources have increased dramatically. Large-scale projects have digitized classical texts, special collections, and cartographic materials. Many Chinese electronic content providers emerged, specializing in electronic books, journals, and databases of published articles.

Some of these electronic providers are Superstar e-library (<http://www.ssreader.com>), and Beijing Founder Apabi Technology Limited, (<http://www.apabi.cn/>) both specializing in Chinese e-books; China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) (<http://www.global.cnki.net/>), Wanfang Data (<http://www1.wanfangdata.com/>), and Weipu (<http://www.cqvip.com/>), specializing in academic journal and newspaper articles, thesis and dissertations, and conference proceedings; Ai-Ru-Sheng (<http://www.er07.com/index.jsp>) database series providing digital access to the largest collections of Chinese classics; Dragon Source (<http://www.dragonsource.com/>), offering full-text access to popular magazines. In Taiwan, some major e-providers and projects are Airiti Inc (<http://portal.airiti.com/modules/tinyd0/>) providing full-text academic periodicals, thesis and dissertations, conference proceedings, and e-books; Transmission Books & Microinfo Co. (http://www.tbmc.com.tw/index_english.html) offering classic Chinese series, Taiwan Studies series,

¹⁰ See Situ Ping, "New Concept of Collection Management: A survey of Library Space-Related Issues," *JEAL* 144 (February 2008):1-15.

¹¹ Jim Cheng, "Films 'R' Us: Jim Cheng University of California—San Diego," *Library Journal*, March 15, 2008.

Newspaper series, etc. ; Academia Sinica Digital Resources (<http://digiarch.sinica.edu.tw/index.jsp>) offering digital access to the collection of Chinese classics held by the Academia Sinica in Taiwan; Spatio-temporal Reference System (http://gis.ascc.net/STIS/index_b.html) providing the GIS database of "Chinese Civilization in Time and Space" (<http://ccts.ascc.net/>) and "Taiwan Historic and Culture Atlas" (<http://www.aborigines.sinica.edu.tw/>). In North America, through Google Print, the entire library collections of Harvard, Stanford, University of Michigan, and Oxford University are digitized for Google Print, which also include thousands of Chinese books. These are but a sample of the large and fast-developing pool of Chinese electronic resources now found in increasing numbers in the Chinese collections of North American libraries. According to CEAL statistics, in 2008 most of the reporting libraries had spent some of their budget on electronic resources with the highest amount being over \$220,000 and the lowest being \$4,000.¹²

User Services

One of the goals of user services today is to connect our users to quality information and to develop a generation of information-smart citizens. While Chinese studies librarians continue the practice of team-teaching research method classes with faculty and providing individual and group instructions to students and other library users, they also identify new service areas for library instruction. They design new programs targeting the students of English as Second Language (ESL) and newly-arrived Chinese students who are not native speakers of English¹³ and develop online tutorials to teach students to use the Chinese collections. The Chinese studies librarian at Emory University designed a Language Learning Oriented Library Instruction (LLOLI) program, targeting Chinese studies and other area studies students. The program intends to develop a library instruction program anchoring in the common area—the Chinese language—that overlaps Chinese research, language teaching and learning, and Chinese studies collections. To build library instruction programs in the language bringing together all three aspects.¹⁴ These efforts have strengthened the Chinese studies librarianship and enriched the learning experience of our users.

A service that since the late 1990s has significantly improved the access to hard-to-locate Chinese materials for researchers in the United States is the Gateway Service for Chinese Academic Journal Publications at the East Asian Library of the University of Pittsburgh. This service, the product of creative leadership of librarians at the University of Pittsburgh and successful international cooperation between the University Library System of the University of Pittsburgh and libraries in China, provides document delivery free of charge for Chinese academic journal articles that are not available in the United States. Before the advent of the Gateway Service, such access had only been possible through actual trips to China by the users. The Gateway service, however, using Internet document delivery software, delivers the requested materials to users within days. It sets up a successful example of global document delivery and resource sharing.

Fundraising

With budgetary constraints and sky-rocketing prices for Chinese materials, nowadays, fundraising has become part of the regular job activities for librarians. Unlike the Japanese and Korean studies collections, which have received significant support from the Japan Foundation and Korean Foundation, there is not any government sponsored funding from Mainland China for Chinese studies collections and services in North America or anywhere in the world. In 2006, the Chinese government started the Window to China book donation project. This is the only large-scale book donation program for Chinese collections outside China. Fourteen research libraries in the United States were the first to receive Window-to-China donations.

Libraries need to secure funding for initiatives in new collections and services, which in turn will put libraries in a stronger position to raise more funding. Innovative ideas, initiatives, and leadership are essential to attract funding that will ultimately benefit both the University community and public users.

¹² CEAL Statistics Database. 2008, table of Electronic Resource II, http://www.lib.ku.edu/ceal/new_query/viewelectronic2.asp

¹³ Annie Lin, "How helping Chinese ESL students write research papers can teach information literacy," *JEAL* 141 (February 2007): 6-10.

¹⁴ Guo-hua Wang. "LLOLI: Language Learning Oriented Library Instruction," *JEAL* 144 (February 2008): 16-20.

According to the CEAL statistics, in 2008, of the fifty-three reporting libraries fourteen have endowments for their Chinese collections, with the largest support amount being about \$154,000 and the smallest being more than \$1,600.¹⁵ Usually, fundraising activities are more effectively carried out at the East Asian Library level. There are numerous successful examples, with the most outstanding being the UC Berkeley campaign to raise over \$45 million for its brand new library building to house the the C.V. Starr East Asian Library and Tian Chang-lin Center for East Asian Studies.

Preservation Digitization

The first Chinese collection in North America dates back to 1869 when Tongzhi Emperor of China gave ten works in 905 volumes of Chinese classics to the Library of Congress. In the wars and unrest of nineteenth-century China, many Chinese rare books and other treasures were dispersed to other countries. Now over 1,670,000 pieces of Chinese cultural relics, including a large number of rare books, are held in forty-seven different countries. Many older East Asian libraries in the United States own valuable Chinese rare books. Rare books do not circulate because of their fragile condition; indeed, even supervised use may cause physical damage. Beside rare books there are other publications needing special preservation attention, such as publications of the Republican Era, mostly printed on acidic paper and in very poor condition. Digitization of the rare books and other special and deteriorating materials provides preservation and better access to these materials.

In 2004, the Library of Congress Asian Division and Academia Sinica implemented a collaborative project to create digital images of 21,000 maps and 840 aerial photographs to be included in the Chinese Civilization in Time and Space Database. Library of Congress also entered an agreement with the National Central Library of Taiwan in 2005 to digitize LC's most valuable Chinese rare book collections, including the 905 books from Emperor Tongzhi, 237 titles of the personal collection of Caleb Cushing, the first minister to China who negotiated the first U.S. treaty with China, and many other rare materials.¹⁶

In 2007, Harvard-Yenching Library, Gest East Asian Library of Princeton University, and the Library of Congress, in collaboration with the Fu Ssu-nien Library of the Institute of History and Philology of Academia Sinica in Taiwan, received a grant of \$580,000 from the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation for a joint Chinese rare book digitization project among the four libraries. Upon completion of the grant-funded phase of digitization, other libraries with rare books will be invited to join. The University of California at Berkeley and Harvard-Yenching Library also digitized their large collections of Chinese rubbings. These are just a few examples of digitization projects. In addition to such large projects, small scale digital projects have also been carried out at individual libraries.¹⁷

Chinese studies librarians and East Asian librarians have engaged in research and publication of annotated bibliographies of the rare-book collections in their libraries. Some of the libraries that have published such bibliographies are Harvard-Yenching Library, C.V. Starr East Asian Library at University of California at Berkeley, Chinese collection of Ohio State University, and Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library at University of Toronto in Canada. Such bibliographies significantly contribute to improving access to the valuable rare-book collections in North America.

Technical Services

On October 1, 2000, Library of Congress started the project to convert Wade-Giles Romanization in Chinese records to Pinyin, and since then all East Asian Libraries have undertaken a Pinyin Conversion Project for their own collections. The implementation was expected to have a transition period of one year, through October 1, 2001. Ideally, by that date, catalog users would no longer have to be familiar with two different Romanization schemes to access Chinese authors, titles, or subject headings. Almost ten years after the conversion, however, some libraries still have much clean-up to do. Due to constraints on

¹⁵ CEAL Statistics Database. 2008, Fiscal Support Table http://www.lib.ku.edu/ceal/new_query/viewfiscalsupport.asp

¹⁶ See Mi Chu, "World Digital Library and e-Resources in the Asian Division, Library of Congress," *JEAL* 138 (February 2006): 1-3.

¹⁷ *JEAL* 143 (October 2007): 49-50.

resources, the left-over clean-up work is likely to remain unaddressed for some time to come. This created access barriers for users to search for items in the older collections in their libraries. For this reason, some libraries still retain their card catalogs for access purposes.

In recent years, several major Chinese book vendors including Beijing Rare Books, Chinese International Book Trading Company (CIBTC), China National Publishing Industry Trading Corporation (CNPITC), APABI, SuperStar e-Library have started to offer services including vendor-supplied MARC records for acquisitions, cataloging, marking, binding, and shelf-ready services. All is offered at very affordable prices, usually several times less than the cost of the same services in the United States. More than a dozen Chinese collections in North America use vendor supplied MARC records for acquisitions. A few libraries have started to purchase full cataloging, binding, and marking services. This is a trend in the Chinese book trade. With Internet technology, such services can be set up easily in China for U.S. clients.

Vendor services enable libraries to streamline cataloging and acquisitions operations and substantially reduce processing costs, calling on the libraries to re-organize operations and reallocate existing resources. There are, however, pros and cons to introducing such vendor services to our libraries on a large scale. Vendor services challenge our traditional model of technical service operations.

Training for Chinese Studies Librarians

While our profession and working environment have changed significantly, training for Chinese studies librarians has not matched up. People who become Chinese studies librarians usually are either Chinese native speakers with or without subject background or non-native speakers trained in Chinese and China studies. They must have a master's degree in library science.

Library schools in North America still do not provide relevant curriculum in Chinese librarianship or any other area studies librarianship. Special training of Chinese studies librarians largely remains the same as twenty years ago, i.e. practicing librarians provide training for new librarians. Organized training to renew skills of practicing librarians was not institutionalized or regularly provided.

In the past twenty years, there were only three in-depth training programs for Chinese studies librarians: the Summer Institute on East Asian Librarianship which had a large component of Chinese librarianship, at the University of Washington in 1988; the Luce Summer Institute on East Asian Librarianship: China Focus at the University of Pittsburgh in 2004; and the Summer Institute on Chinese Studies Librarianship in the Electronic Environment at the University of Washington in 2008. There were also some smaller-scale trainings offered before or during CEAL conferences that addressed aspects of Chinese studies librarianship. Given the changes in the profession, the training available for Chinese studies librarians is far from adequate.

Training to renew knowledge and skills of Chinese studies librarians should be a long-term routine built into the regular agenda of the library profession and systematically implemented. In addition to library skills, Chinese studies librarians also need training in the subject areas in which they provide services. As Eugene Wu reiterated in his article to celebrate the 20th anniversary of OCLC CJK, "We need scholar-librarians in addition to business managers and computer specialists. We know from experience that knowledge of the language alone is insufficient to get the job done in East Asian libraries."¹⁸

Fortunately, many of our practicing Chinese studies librarians already have an advanced degree in a subject area of Chinese studies, such as political science, history, literature, and so on. These scholar-librarians are actively engaged in scholarly research and publication. In recent years, many of these librarians have achieved tenure and become more settled on their jobs. They now have more time to publish in their own subject areas. For example, in 2009, Guangxi Normal University Press published the first volume of a series entitled *Tian Lu Lun Cong: Anthology of Chinese Studies by Chinese East Asian Librarians in North America*, edited by Li Guoqing and Shao Dongfang, which provided a platform for

¹⁸ Eugene Wu, "Beyond Technology," *JEAL* 139 (June 2006): 9.

Chinese studies librarians in America to share their research in the subject areas of Chinese studies. Meanwhile, many Chinese studies librarians have also published monographs and research papers individually. Their research has contributed significantly to scholarship.

Conclusion

In the last twenty years, the world has witnessed dramatic changes. The rise of American interest in China and the wonders brought to Chinese collections and services by information technology has created an unprecedented golden time for Chinese studies librarianship in North America. The field is at its best in history. Opportunities for creative librarians to develop new services are exciting; however, the challenges are also many. As discussed above, many of the issues that concern the field of Chinese studies librarianship twenty years ago are still relevant today. Cooperation in all aspects of librarianship is the only strategy that will allow us to survive and thrive. Our time calls for Chinese studies librarians to cooperate within our institutions with colleagues of other library departments, to cooperate with colleagues and faculty from the university community, to cooperate regionally with other libraries and EAL collections, and to cooperate nationally and internationally to initiate new services and implement new visions. The field of Chinese studies librarianship promises ever more wonders and new developments in the next twenty years of the 21st century.