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From the President

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From the President

I have always liked autumn. There is a nice crispness to the air that signals winter is around the corner, yet temperatures do not fall into the freezing range. The fiery colors of autumn are inspiring.

Then, there is Autumn 2020. A second wave of the coronavirus in many countries, social distancing, lockdowns, and the “new normal”. Nevertheless, the Council on East Asian Libraries (CEAL) is moving forward. The work of CEAL does not stop because of a pandemic.

Since immediately after the 2020 CEAL Annual Conference in March, the CEAL Executive Board has been busy handling a number of business items for the CEAL community. Here is a list of some major highlights of what the CEAL Executive Board has been doing:

In Spring, the following committees were formed with new members under chairs newly elected in March 2020: [Committee on Chinese Materials \(CCM\)](#), [Committee on Japanese Materials \(CJM\)](#), [Committee on Korean Materials \(CKM\)](#), [Committee on Public Services \(CPS\)](#) and [Committee on Technical Processing \(CTP\)](#). Subsequently, the term of the [CJM Subcommittee on Japanese Rare Books](#) has been renewed. In addition, the following two CEAL affiliates’ terms have been renewed: Small East Asian Collections Roundtable (2020-2023) and Working Group on Research Materials in East Asian Science, Technology and Medicine (2020-2023). All of the committees have developed exciting and thoughtful work plans for the next three-year term for the CEAL community.

To identify strategies that support CEAL members’ interests and needs, several task forces have been established.

The COVID-19 pandemic has unleashed a new operational and budgetary ecosystem for area studies libraries and their neighboring institutions that collect, archive, and preserve scholarly and cultural heritage. Many CEAL members expressed the desire that collection integrity and access must be maintained throughout this time. In solidarity with the concerns raised by our colleagues in the Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials (SALALM) in their June 10, 2020, Task Force Resolution, and the Middle East Librarians Association’s (MELA) June 22, 2020 Statement on Collection Development, Access, and Equity in the Time of COVID-19, I suggested to the Executive Board to issue a joint statement in partnership with, but not limited to, the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES) Committee on Libraries and Information Resources (CLIR) Executive Council, the Committee on Research Materials on Southeast Asia (CORMOSEA), and Committee on South Asian Libraries and Documentation (CONSALD) that highlights the organizations’ commitment to diversity and accessibility. Furthermore, I suggested the creation of a Task Force in order to issue a CEAL-specific pandemic statement. These mandates were supported by the Executive Board.

Thus, two major outcomes were generated. First, the CEAL participated in crafting [the Joint Statement: Equity and Access in Higher Education and Academic Libraries Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) released on July 31, 2020. It was written by colleagues from 16 organizations and represents our shared areas on concerns and recommendations on how to alleviate challenges faced by marginalized communities of color, people with disabilities, and students from rural and low-income areas. The Joint Statement Task Force has been engaging in conversations with administrators and board members of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), the Center for Research Libraries (CRL), and HathiTrust to share the concerns described in the statement.

Secondly, the Task Force for the Creation of CEAL's Statement on Collection Development and Acquisition Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic, in collaboration with the North American Coordinating Council on Japanese Library Resources (NCC) and the Society of Chinese Studies Librarians (SCSL), was established to work on issues specific to East Asian area studies and to create a statement outlining a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. With the wonderful work by the Task Force, the [CEAL statement](#) was created and released on August 13 and was officially endorsed by the Association for Asian Studies on August 31.

Several months ago, I was notified by the Eastlib manager that there was an issue with the CEAL mailing list archive. The CEAL mailing list, Eastlib, was established on the listserv server at the University of North Carolina (UNC) of Chapel Hill in 1999 and has been used by subscribers for various communication needs: announcements, job postings, discussions, inquiries, etc. On the CEAL website, Eastlib had messages posted for searching and browsing of archival postings. In early March of 2020, the Eastlib manager discovered that this message was no longer valid, as the archiving setting was found to have been inadvertently reset to the system default of 90 days record retention. An investigative report on the matter from the UNC Listserv office could not determine when and why the archiving setting had been changed to the default setting. The likelihood was that it had happened during various system migrations over the years. In order to rebuild the lost archive, in June, the Task Force for Reconstruction of the CEAL Mailing List Archive was established. The Task Force will ensure to make it accessible to CEAL subscribers and to facilitate the long-term preservation of the archive.

The CEAL Task Force on Metadata Standards and Best Practices for East Asian Electronic Resources (ERMB) was initiated in March 2013 as a special task force under the supervision of the CEAL Executive Board. The ERMB Task Force is currently charged with investigating best practices for the creation, manipulation, and management of electronic content and metadata for resources in East Asian languages, and with addressing issues as how e-resources move through their life cycle from selection through to user access, along with associated metadata, across various systems and functions. Under this general charge, the ERMB Task Force also promotes compliance with well-established e-resource metadata standards and best practices and communicates the required standards for compliance to vendors/information providers of East Asian digital resources. Over the past 6 years, the ERMB Task Force has fulfilled these goals by organizing training workshops at CEAL annual conferences, initiating various international collaborations, and coordinating Cooperative E-Journal Cataloging Projects to provide either original cataloging of the journals, or

enrichment/enhancement of metadata to facilitate improved access and discovery. As the ERMB Task Force is in its third renewed term, it was necessary to have its charge reviewed and to be re-examined to see if the Task Force should be expanded or to consider if a new standing committee was needed. Thus, the Task Force for Review of the ERMB Task Force was established in June 2020. Also, the membership of both the ERMB Task Force and the Task Force on CEAL Leadership Institute 2021 have been updated.

Lastly, the CEAL Executive Board is hard at work, preparing for the 2021 Annual Conference. Please stay tuned for next year's program.

In closing, I would like to recognize the dedication and commitment of members of the Executive Board, committee and task force members, and their service to the CEAL community. Also, I would like to express my appreciation to CEAL members for your ongoing valuable feedback and input, as well as your resilience during this pandemic.

Wherever you are, I sincerely wish you are continuing to stay safe and well in these extraordinary and difficult times.

Hana Kim
Your CEAL President