2-29-2024

From the President

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Cheng, Hong (2024) "From the President," Journal of East Asian Libraries: Vol. 2024: No. 178, Article 1. Available at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/jeal/vol2024/iss178/1

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From the President

Happy New Year of the Dragon! The Dragon holds a significant place as an auspicious and extraordinary creature, unparalleled in talent and excellence. It symbolizes power, nobility, honor, luck, and success. 2024 is forecast to bring about opportunities, changes, and challenges. The theme of the forthcoming CEAL Annual Meeting perfectly fits the forecast of opportunities, changes, and challenges.

As approved by the CEAL Executive Board, the plenary theme of the CEAL 2024 annual conference is *Artificial Intelligence (AI): Impacts on the East Asian Library*. The presidential plenary session of the Annual Meeting includes two parts, the keynote speeches and the town hall meeting.

The keynote speeches are from experts from three different fields, AI industry, information education, and East Asian studies. In the speech titled "How AI is Changing the Way We Learn and Think," Alice Zhao, Senior Product Manager at Microsoft, will discuss the growth and trends of generative AI adoption and spending across different industries and regions after introducing major achievements and challenges. She will demonstrate how Microsoft is leading the way in developing and deploying AI solutions across various domains and scenarios, and focus on generative AI in productivity and creativity.

Dr. Bill Howe is an Associate Professor in the Information School and Adjunct Associate Professor in the Allen School of Computer Science & Engineering and the Department of Electrical Engineering of the University of Washington. In his presentation, “AI Reduces to Knowledge Curation,” Dr. Howe explores the impact of generative AI on knowledge curation and indicates such a regime shifts all responsibility to the end user to identify errors, biases, and compliance issues. His speech will give some examples of public interest technology that would benefit from a curation-first approach, including identifying illegal medical debt collection from court documents, extracting addresses from eviction records, fact-checking claims, avoiding hallucination in science Q&A, and extracting pedestrian paths from satellite images.

Dr. Kwok Leong Tang, Lecturer of East Asian Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University, will delve into how AI redefines scholarly training, data collection, and analysis, and the very nature of academic output in his speech “Navigating the Uncharted Waters: AI and East Asian Studies.” Rather than attempting to predict the future, he will focus on tangible use cases from his recent experiences in teaching, workshops, consultations, and project development, which vividly illustrate how AI is reshaping the landscape of academic scholarship, particularly in East Asian studies.

While the keynote speeches give us a general prospect of generative AI from different perspectives, the town hall meeting will have a more casual discussion of the impact of AI on our education, library service, and social life. There will be five panelists in the town hall meeting: Dr. David Schaberg, Professor and Dean of UCLA; Dr. Mahlon Meyer, a reporter for the *Northwest Asian Weekly*; Alice Zhao, Senior Product Manager at Microsoft; Dongyun Ni, Chinese Studies Librarian at the University of Hawai’i at Mānoa; and Haruko Nakamura, Librarian for Japanese Studies at Yale University.
The town hall meeting will start with initial questions such as: How much do you think artificial generative intelligence (AGI) could affect teaching and research in a university? Do you expect and accept generative one day AGI take over the teaching of some undergraduate classes? Will you collect resources completely produced by generative AGI? Do you honor the copyright of the works produced by AGI? Do you think AGI will sooner or later replace library resources and reference services? Do you accept AGI replacing acquisitions, cataloging, and access services? Do you accept AGI takes over reference service and resource selection? Given the increasing use of AGI in areas such as journalism, how can human beings increase their unique contributions to news reports on East Asia? What do you see as the pros and cons of the AGI impact on Asian-American communities in North America? These questions cannot be simply answered and will be followed by more questions from the floor for further discussion. We do not expect the town hall meeting to definitively answer these questions; rather, we hope it opens a way for future exploration.

In addition to the plenary sessions, the CEAL committees are presenting programs related to various areas, as listed in the meeting schedule. I hope all CEAL members and colleagues will actively and interactively attend the programs. Artificial Intelligence could affect the East Asian library field for generations, and this annual meeting will certainly serve as a first response in the professional field.

Besides the 2024 annual meeting programs, the CEAL Executive Board (EB) will have new members through election and appointment. I sincerely thank the outgoing EB members for their outstanding service and remarkable contribution to the CEAL community over these years. They are Secretary Xiuying Zou, Treasurer Keiko Hill, Chair of the Statistics Committee Dongyun Ni, Chair of the Publication Committee Charles Fosselman, Members-at-Large Brian Vivier, and Sanghun Cho. Their efforts made the organization better and stronger during the pandemic and post-COVID period. They are truly appreciated!

With the publication of this issue of the *Journal of East Asian Libraries* (JEAL), Charles Fosselman will conclude his tenure as the Editor of the journal. I hope all of you will join me to thank him for his dedication and service over these years. The new editor of the journal will be announced at the Plenary Business Session of the Annual Meeting. We look forward to the journal’s continued excellence and distinction in the years to come.

Hong Cheng, PhD
President, Council on East Asian Libraries