



# East Asian Library

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## IMAGES OF REVOLUTION



*As inseparable as fish and water.* During the Cultural Revolution political messages were disseminated through performance as well as print. Here, a propaganda team stages an opening scene from the "model opera" *Shajiabang Village*, celebrating the close ties between the people and the People's Liberation Army. *Yushui qingshen.*

In January of this year, the East Asian Library added the Ann Tompkins (Tang Fandi) and Lincoln Cushing Chinese Poster Collection to its holdings.

Ann Tompkins traveled to Helsinki in 1965 as a member of the United States delegation to the World Peace Conference. Her participation in the conference led to an invitation to visit the People's Republic of China later that year, a visit that ended only in 1970 and that spanned the most turbulent years of the Cultural Revolution. Unlike most foreign experts working in Beijing in those days, who typically lodged in hotels, Ann lived where she worked, at the Beijing Institute of Languages. This put her into closer contact with the events of the Revolution; it also allowed her a closer view of the ideals she believed were driving it.

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# Letter from the Director



The best research libraries possess collections of both depth and richness that continue to grow in significant ways. As the articles in this issue of the Library's newsletter demonstrate, the East Asian Library is one of them.

Berkeley's *banzuke* collection is one of the lesser-known aspects of the Mitsui acquisition, an acquisition whose breadth is perhaps not fully appreciated. A better-known part of the acquisition is the Asami library. The KBS program mentioned in "Beyond the Asami" aired last August when I happened to be in Seoul. Soon after the broadcast, I was approached by Korean scholars and government representatives wanting to send researchers to Berkeley to examine the Asami materials. I readily agreed. The result is the joint research project described in these pages.

Since last summer, the Library has acquired the Ann Tompkins (Tang Fandi) and Lincoln Cushing Chinese Poster Collection through the generosity of both former owners. The collection contains approximately five hundred posters, most of them dating to the years of the Cultural Revolution. The Cultural Revolution has been called the largest social

engineering effort in the history of mankind. Perhaps the only undisputed aspect of the Revolution is the scope of its impact, which affected over 600 million Chinese.

To some, the Cultural Revolution was a period of utopianism and experimentation, a time to clean the slate and start anew. "Serve the people" was an ideal everyone should aspire to; creating a "classless society" was the objective that should be shared by all. To many others, however, the Cultural Revolution was a period of violence, tragedy, and catastrophic social upheaval, which ultimately did not deliver the lasting institutional and social change promised.

As I recall, newspapers, position papers, pamphlets, and propaganda in every form and format, both official and unofficial, deluged the country during those years. Surprisingly few of these publications have survived. Perhaps their ephemeral nature is the reason for their scarcity today. Perhaps as a society we failed to preserve them in an unconscious effort to forget the trauma of those years. There is a danger, however, to such deliberate amnesia. We have much to learn from the Cultural Revolution—why events unfolded as they did, and how to prevent such wide-scale violence from occurring again.

The Ann Tompkins (Tang Fandi) and Lincoln Cushing Chinese Poster Collection preserves a genre of art that was known to and accepted by hundreds of millions of Chinese during the years of the Cultural Revolution. The posters' images and the directives they supported once influenced a quarter of world's population. Anyone attempting to understand this period will want to study these posters, not simply as illustrations of the era but as expressions of its ideals and vicissitudes. These posters were everywhere in China during the Cultural Revolution. Although seldom encountered today, they occupy an important place in history and are a valued addition to the East Asian Library's collections.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Zhou". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Peter" and last name "Zhou" clearly distinguishable.

Peter Zhou  
Director, East Asian Library

# BEYOND ASAMI



Five members of the Korean rare materials team at the Northern Regional Libraries Facility in Richmond: Kwon Jin Ok, Chung Woo Bong, Sim Kyung-Ho, Yu Chong-min, and Baek Jin-woo.

Thanks to Chaoying Fang's descriptive catalog, *The Asami Library*, the early Korean materials collected by Asami Rintarō while serving as a legal adviser and judge in Seoul, and now housed in the East Asian Library's rare book room, are well known to Western scholars of Korea. Thanks to *Ch'wijaepail*<sup>4321</sup> (the Korean Broadcasting System's answer to *60 Minutes*), which aired two segments on the collection last summer, it is even familiar to members of the Korean television-viewing public. Less familiar are the Korean rare materials at the East Asian Library that were not collected by Asami. Librarian for the Korean collection Jaeyong Chang is attempting to correct this.

For a year and a half, Jae Chang worked with Dr. Oh Yong Seob, of Incheon City College, to identify materials in the Library's general collection produced before 1910, the first year of Japanese colonial rule in Korea. In early February, a team of scholars from Korea University, Seoul National University, and Harvard joined Jae and Dr. Oh in Berkeley to review the items themselves. Now back at their respective institutions, members of the team are combing online catalogs of Korean libraries to determine which titles may be scarce in Korea or unique to Berkeley. Quite a few are, due to the large

number of manuscripts among the works examined.

One unusual find—one that postdates the 1910 cut-off date—is a series of gazetteers and land and census reports commissioned by the Central Advisory Council, the Chungch'uwŏn, during the colonial period. The reports were compiled by both Japanese and Korean scholars, sometimes working in tandem. Never published, the reports are handwritten on Chungch'uwŏn stationery and pressed with the seals of the officials who received them. The reports offer a first-hand view of conditions then prevailing in Korea and of the colonial government in operation. They may also offer a different slant on the situation of Korean intellectuals during that period: the author of one of the reports was the loyalist Kim Ton-hŭi, assumed by many never to have cooperated with the colonial government in any way.

Funded by a grant from the Academy of Korean Studies, Hangukhak Chungang Yong'uwŏn, the team should complete a brief catalog of the materials by the end of this year. Future plans include publication of the brief catalog and, eventually, compilation and publication of a descriptive catalog of titles selected from both the Asami and the general Korean collection. ㄸ



# WRESTLING FOR FIRST PLACE



Very occasionally *banzuke* yielded the lower half of the ranking sheet to illustration. This woodblock by ukiyo-e artist Nagahide portrays Mitsui Hachirōemon and fellow Osaka entrepreneurs as Kabuki actors. *Naniwa ōganemochi hihi hanjō no fūka shū*.

The custom of publishing rankings of sumo wrestlers in the days preceding tournaments took hold in the early eighteenth century and continues to this day. The standard format divides the contenders into two divisions, east and west, with the east recognized as the more prestigious. The first three positions in each are titled *ōzeki* (champion), *sekiwake* (junior champion), and *komusubi* (“little knot”). The less skillful wrestlers share the common designation *maegashira*, although graphic devices can be employed to suggest rankings within the class. After its first appearance the format was quickly adopted by the theater world for ranking favorite actors of the Kabuki stage. By the nineteenth century, it was being used to rank everything from foolish behavior to natural disasters.

Preparing rare holdings for the move into the new East Asian Library building later this year, Library staff Yuki Ishimatsu and Tomoko Haneda recently came across the East Asian Library’s collection of roughly two hundred of these rankings, most commonly referred to as *banzuke*. The collection came to Berkeley with the Mitsui acquisition in the 1950s. The majority of the items in it are devoted to topics other than sumo and date from the mid-nineteenth century into the twentieth. Many bear Mitsui *ex libris* seals and accession slips.

The Mitsui were one of the wealthiest families, if not the wealthiest, of the late Tokugawa and Meiji eras. It is understandable therefore that among the Mitsui *banzuke* are a good number of rankings of wealthy individuals, including the 1877 *Dai Nip-*

pon mochimaru chōja, *The Richest Men in All Japan*, which accords the eastern ōzeki ranking to Mitsui Hachirōemon. Contenders for the position that year included Godai Tomoatsu, one of the leading entrepreneurs of the Meiji era, and Iwasaki Yatarō, founder of Mitsubishi. This *banzuke* identifies each entrant by name and place of origin only, but similar *banzuke* in the collection issued by other publishers include such details as businesses engaged in, assets held, and net worth.

*Banzuke* devoted to different subjects provide detail of a different nature. A ranking of pawn shops dating to 1892 includes the shops' crests. An 1879 ranking of crimes includes their respective punishments. An 1888 ranking of dairies in the Tokyo area includes addresses that surprised Yuki Ishimatsu, who recognized many of them as choice properties in the city's center. An 1878 ranking of miracle drugs includes the ailments treated and the leading supplier of the drug. One of the "referees" of this ranking was Shiseidō, which had yet to branch out from western pharmaceuticals to cosmetics.

There are variations in format as well. One ranking of restaurants groups the contestants into uptown (Yamanote) and downtown (Shitamachi) rather than east and west. The uptown grand champion of this ranking is the well-known Yaozen, which has survived into the twenty-first century. One ranking of Kabuki stars' compensation uses actual amounts ("one thousand ryō") in place of ōzeki and similar titles. One ranking of the hours of the day abandons the grid pattern altogether, preferring circles divided pie-style. Another, ranking mountains and rivers, follows the outline of an open fan. Some rankings present simple pairs of opposing elements. *Shimpan tōsei ninjō ketsu sagashi, The Faults of Contemporary Customs and Ways Revealed*, for instance, contrasts the faults of natives of Tokyo and natives of Osaka, geisha and matchmakers, artisans and Confucian scholars.

The tone of the *banzuke* can be serious or teasing. The subjects represented in Berkeley's collection similarly run from one end of the spectrum to the other: scholars and physicians; singers, storytellers, samisen players, and Bunraku performers; samurai and kendo masters; coin collectors; tea merchants and sake brewers; chicken, eel, and noodle shops; streets, bridges, and pleasure quarters; temples and



This *banzuke* grading occupations and businesses demonstrates how ranking within the general class *maegashira* could be suggested graphically: as the eye moves down the page, the space is increasingly compressed and the calligraphy executed with increasing brevity. *Shoshoku hatarakibito kagyō mitate sumō*.

shrines; hot springs and celebrated trees; sights and experiences not to be missed by the traveler; world populations; orthographical errors and examples of verbal prolixity.

The dimensions of Berkeley's *banzuke* vary from the size of a sheet of typing paper to three or four times that. Publication information is generally clearly displayed, along with "revised" notations to ensure the reader that the ranking is current and reliable. The dates and details have in fact led Japanese historians to comb *banzuke* for raw data on topics such as the fluctuation in rice prices during times of famine, as well as insight on phenomena such as the influence of Western learning during the Kansei era. Like other types of ephemera, the *banzuke* provide an unintended link to the past, a link that is possibly all the more direct for its want of purpose. 本



Ann saw the artistic expression of those ideals in the posters then commonly sold in bookstores and department stores: posters promoting women, workers, science, and study. They struck a chord and they were cheap, so she began to buy them on impulse. After some time, noticing changes in the posters' emphases, Ann bought more deliberately. Between this and subsequent



**Chairman Mao's finest soldier—Lei Feng.** Bland depictions of the exemplar Lei Feng abound. Artist Wu Qiangnian's portrait stands out for its forcefulness of line and image. Wu's woodblocks have been exhibited in Japan, the United States, and the European Union. *Mao zhuxi de hao zhanshi—Lei Feng.*

visits, including another extended stay between 1980 and 1983, she collected over five hundred of them. Back in the United States, Ann occasionally displayed some of the posters. Most remained in the neat, tight rolls she had carried them home in, and are consequently in extremely good condition.

Three decades after her first trip to China, Ann happened to hear Lincoln Cushing interviewed on a Bay Area radio station. Cushing is a graphic artist with a special interest in political posters. (His book on Cuban political posters, *iRevolucion!*, published by Chronicle Books in 2003, was published in Japanese translation by Blues Interactions Press in 2005.) As it turned out, both Ann and Lincoln took the view that political posters are a rich resource for the researcher. Both were concerned

with issues of preservation and accessibility, Lincoln generally and Ann specifically—Lincoln eventually entered Berkeley's School of Information Management to study the use of digital tools in archiving, completing a Master's in 2001; and Ann had been looking for a way to put her own collection to others' use for years. Not long after their initial meeting, Ann turned her posters over to Lincoln, asking him to find an appropriate home for them.

A number of features distinguished the Chinese posters from the political posters Cushing was familiar with. From an artist's viewpoint, most were not really designed as graphic images, integrating typography and composition; they were paintings or woodcuts with simple text, printed in large full-color format. From an archivist's viewpoint, they included a surprising amount of information concerning their production—attribution, place, publisher, and date of publication, printer, distributor, the number of the edition or impression, often even the size of the press run, the dimensions of the printer's sheet, and the number of frames per sheet—information that could assist the researcher tracking shifts in style, imagery, and content. Features the Chinese posters shared with their Western



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\*This seal was designed and carved for the East Asian Library by Ma Ji, of Xi'an's Beilin Museum, in a form of small seal script known as *tiexian*: "From the Collection of the East Asian Library, University of California, Berkeley."



**Singing of the commune's beauty.** The neat terraces, well-fed stock, and flowering trees are intended as metaphors for the success of the new state; the importance of peasants to the new order is acknowledged in the stature of the commune member. *Gechang gongshe hao fengjing.*

counterparts included their broad appeal and the intention that they serve as instruments for change.

The posters in the Tompkins and Cushing Collection range in date from 1962 to 1988, with approximately 350 dating to the years of the Cultural Revolution, 1967 to 1977. They urge viewers to learn from Dazhai, Daqing, and Lei Feng; to smash imperialism, denounce Soviet revisionism, and expel America from Vietnam. Landscapes may embody the success of the socialist road, the advance of industrialization, or simply the beauties of China's mountains and streams. Vigilance against capitalism and anti-socialist influences, so prevalent in the earlier posters, fades in later years, with posters acclaiming the achievements of Newton, Edison, Franklin, and Einstein. Images of Mao Zedong are ubiquitous, although the variety of depiction and setting employed in the earlier posters is greatly diminished by the 1980s.

The decision to give the posters to the East Asian Library was a logical one, if not automatic. Ann had ties to Berkeley: her uncle, Dr. John Barr Tompkins, had been head of the Bancroft Library's public services, and her

aunt, Dorothy Campbell Tompkins, had been a highly respected bibliographer at the Institute for Governmental Studies for close to fifty years. Lincoln himself had been on the staff of the Institute of Industrial Relations Library and was later a cataloger at the Bancroft. Before deciding on Berkeley, however, they wanted assurance that the posters would be appreciated, accessible, and properly archived. Peter Zhou was able to give them that assurance.

The posters are currently in Conservation, being fitted for folders that will protect them until the move to the new building, where they will be stored in flat files. In the meantime, the collection remains accessible through a digital archive prepared by Lincoln Cushing and available at the Center for Chinese Studies Library. The digital archive saves wear and tear on the original posters while allowing researchers to sort them in various ways. About 150 of the posters will be published in reproduction this fall, when Chronicle Books releases Ann and Lincoln's *Chinese Posters: Art from the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution*. 利

# UPDATE ON THE C. V. STARR EAST ASIAN LIBRARY



The tower crane has finally been removed from the construction site. By late February, the roof tiles had been laid and the windows were being installed. By mid-March, the shroud covering the southern façade of the Starr Library will have been removed and preparations to mount the bronze screen begun. Installation of drywall and granite facing continues as the interior is divided into offices and reading areas. 利

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