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SOONER HORIZON

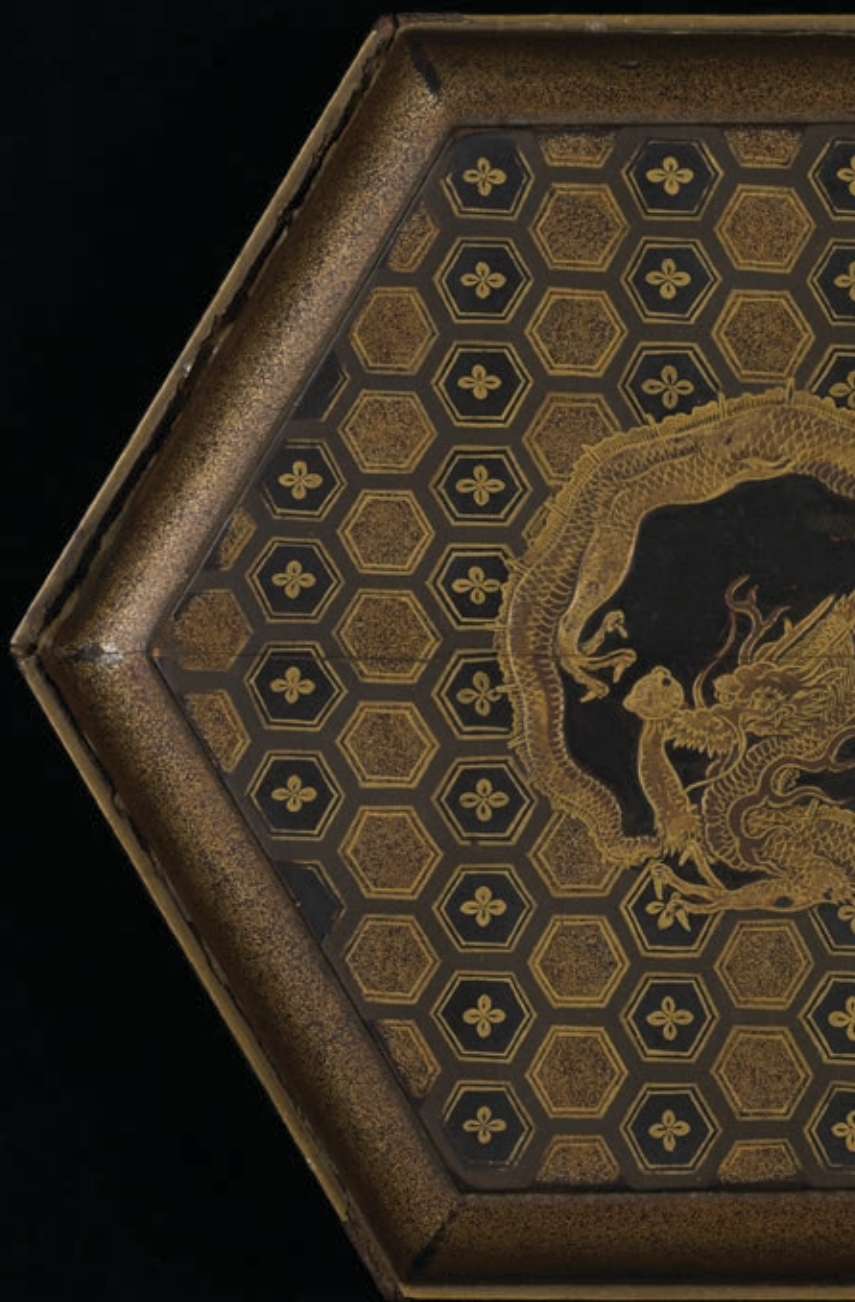
FALL 2014

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 2

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The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA LIBRARIES Special Collections

The Bizzell Bible Collection

The Harry W. Bass Business History Collection

The History of Science Collections

The John and Mary Nichols Rare Books and
Special Collections

The Western History Collections

The Daniel and Ruth Boorstin Collection

ON THE COVER: Chinese lion, George & Cecilia McGhee
Collection, date unknown.

LEFT PAGE: Top of a Chinese box, circa 1700 George &
Cecilia McGhee Collection.

LETTER *from the* DEAN

The Reach of a Gift



Professor Jonathan Stalling and Dean of University Libraries Rick Luce witness Professor Wolfgang Kubin as he signs the deed of gift for his collection to the University of Oklahoma.

This issue of *Sooner Horizon* highlights two remarkable and distinctive collections that have come to the OU Libraries as extraordinary gifts. Together they make OU special collections arguably the foremost destination for the study of contemporary Chinese literary works translated into English.

The Howard Goldblatt Collection - a significant collection of the papers, archives and personal library of the world-renowned Chinese translator Howard Goldblatt. Goldblatt all but single-handedly introduced contemporary Chinese-language literature to the English-speaking world. With over thirty volumes of Chinese fiction in translation as well as collections of short fiction, memoirs and a volume of poetry in translation, he is widely regarded as the foremost translator of modern and contemporary Chinese fiction in the West. His archive contains handwritten manuscripts in Chinese, his publications, drafts, a wide range of correspondence (in English and Chinese) with the luminaries of Chinese literature from across the world professional activities from throughout his career; and professional correspondence with the greatest publishers, editors, and scholars of our day.

Wolfgang Kubin Collection - the papers of Europe's most well-known translator of Chinese Literature, Wolfgang Kubin, Professor of Chinese Literature at Bonn University. Kubin has translated over 100 book-length volumes of poetry, and has authored over 20 books and edited 35. Both men have become household names in the Chinese literary establishment and holding their papers will provide OU with a unique foundation for growing its reputation in Chinese literary studies.

While Goldblatt is known for his translations of novels (he is the translator of Nobel Prize winner Mo Yan), Kubin is known for his translations of poetry. Kubin's papers include unpublished poems, correspondence, paintings, calligraphy, and other important historical documents that document the history of Chinese poets in Europe from the 1980's to the present. These two archives constitute a research collection in Modern Chinese Literature that will significantly further the study of contemporary Chinese literature and the study of translation itself.

These collections were acquired through the combination of initiative, scholarly reputation and personal connections of Professor Jonathan Stalling in partnership with the OU Libraries. Professor Stalling is Associate Professor of English at OU specializing in Modern-Contemporary American and East-West Poetics, Comparative Literature, and Translation Studies and co-founder and editor of *Chinese Literature Today* www.ou.edu/clt magazine. Prof. Stalling has recently been appointed as Curator of the Chinese Literature in Translation Archive.

Library collections serve as living laboratories of -- and for -- new ideas. Our special collections inspire us to develop a deeper understanding of the world around us, to develop critical thinking skills with primary sources, and to create new knowledge.

Of course, it would not be possible for these collections to 'become alive' without our talented staff members. They serve not as gatekeepers but as guides and I am constantly inspired by their dedication, knowledge and service ethic.

Much of what we accomplish is through the generosity of our friends. We are grateful for the support of OU alumni and donors, faculty, and administrators who believe in our mission. I hope you will continue to join us as we continue to feed the imagination of the OU community and beyond.

Sincerely,

Rick Luce
Dean, University Libraries
Professor and Peggy V. Helmerich Chair
Associate Vice President for Research, Norman Campus

The Chinese Literature Translation Archive



Professor Jonathan Stalling and Professor Wolfgang Kubin.

Jonathan Stalling Curator

Chinese Literature Translation Archives

Jonathan Stalling is an Associate Professor of English at OU specializing in Modern to Contemporary American Poetry, Comparative Chinese-English Poetics and Translation Studies. Originally from Eureka Springs, Arkansas, Dr. Stalling received his BA in Chinese Studies summa cum laude from UC Berkeley, an MSc in Cultural Theory from the University of Edinburgh with highest distinction, and an MA and PhD in Poetics from SUNY Buffalo where he was the McNulty Fellow in Ethnopoetics. Dr. Stalling is the co-founder and an editor of *Chinese Literature Today* magazine and book series and the Curator of the Chinese Literature Translation Archive at OU. He is the author of four books including *Poetics of Emptiness*, *Grotto Heaven*, *Yingelishi*, and the forthcoming book *Lost Wax*, and is an editor of *The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry: A Critical Edition*. Stalling is also the translator of *Winter Sun: The Poetry of Shi Zhi 1966-2007*, which was a finalist for the National Translation Award in 2013. Dr. Stalling lives in Norman with his wife Amy, and three children: Isaac, Eliana, and Rowen. To learn more about Dr. Stalling's work in interlanguage writing and translation see his TEDx Talk: <http://youtu.be/7de8ENdf1yU>

The great cultural critic Susan Sontag once wrote:

Translation is the circulatory system of the world's literatures. Literary translation, I think, is preeminently an ethical task, and one that mirrors and duplicates the role of literature itself, which is to extend our sympathies; to educate the heart and mind; to create inwardness; to secure and deepen the awareness (with all its consequences) that other people, people different from us, really do exist. (*The St. Jerome Lecture on Literary Translation*).

As we stand at the cusp of what many are calling "The Pacific Era," it has become clear that China has arrived as a global power but that it is also a place where "other people, different people from us really do exist." Thanks to the proximity granted to humanity through the apertures opened through literature, however, readers can gain an immediate and powerful proximity to one another through the discipline and art of literary translation. Unfortunately in the first decade of the new millennium only about 0.01% of Chinese literature was translated into other languages despite the fact that China is the world's most populous nation with arguably the most prolific continuous literary tradition spanning millennia. Yet despite these harrowing statistics, many Chinese novelists have become well-known around the world-- the 2012 Nobel Prize Winner, Mo Yan, the Mann Asia Literary Prize winner Su Tong, as well as other award winners like Jia Pingwa and best sellers like Wang Shuo and Jiang Rong among others. The one thing all of these authors have in common, however, is that they have all found their English audiences through a single translator: Howard Goldblatt. For nearly forty years, Goldblatt has single handedly translated several dozen novels, collections of short fiction, and essays. In Europe, the German translator Wolfgang Kubin has published nearly 100 volumes of translated poetry from China and has been responsible for organizing poetry readings around Europe from the 80's to the present. Taken together, their voluminous publications have enabled countless westerners direct access to modern Chinese literature, but perhaps equally importantly, their unpublished correspondence and notes reveal something deeper about the human scale upon which such literary history has been built.



From 2013 to the present, the University of Oklahoma Libraries have collected over 7,000 books and many more documents in the Howard Goldblatt Collection and thousands of documents in the Wolfgang Kubin Collection to form the core of the Chinese Literature Translation Archive.

Jonathan Stalling 

Jonathan Stalling, PhD
 Deputy Editor in Chief, Chinese Literature Today
 Deputy Director, Center for the Study of China's Literature Abroad
 Beijing Normal University
 Curator of Chinese Translation Collections
 Associate Professor of English, University of Oklahoma



July 9, 1988

Dear Howard:

Thanks for the review -- instead of handwringing, but my handwringing is so incredibly bad that I do suspect you wouldn't be able to read a word I wrote.

When a magazine and especially one as big as TIME don't sell you how thrilled I was to open that great big book of mine -- and find my name on a volume from Beijing means -- that is an honor! I had heard of magazine editors being wild as one time in France -- but had never seen the English edition logo and the great design. And the design is fantastic! I am getting it framed and will hang it in my office. It really was so kind and thoughtful of you.

I was also really touched by your kind note -- and really grateful to you for writing it. So much of my day is filled with foreign friends -- leaving my house that is so sometimes hard to forget why I want to talk every weekend. Of course, the reason is books like YOU and writers/translators like YOU and you. It has really been a delight working with you on this. I do think this is an extraordinary translation that deserves a huge audience. I have read it several times now, of course, and each time I find something else that is wonderful. And I must say, it is so great to read your review to me because in each sentence I learn something about YOU -- your views about China, about the language.

And I also want to say how grateful I am to you for your professionalism -- your attention to every query and your helping me to do my last minute time busy again.

I hope that maybe a Chinese writer will break through in a massive way. And it will be largely thanks to your goodness. Let's hope that in three years, he, and Su Tong, get to share in the honors!

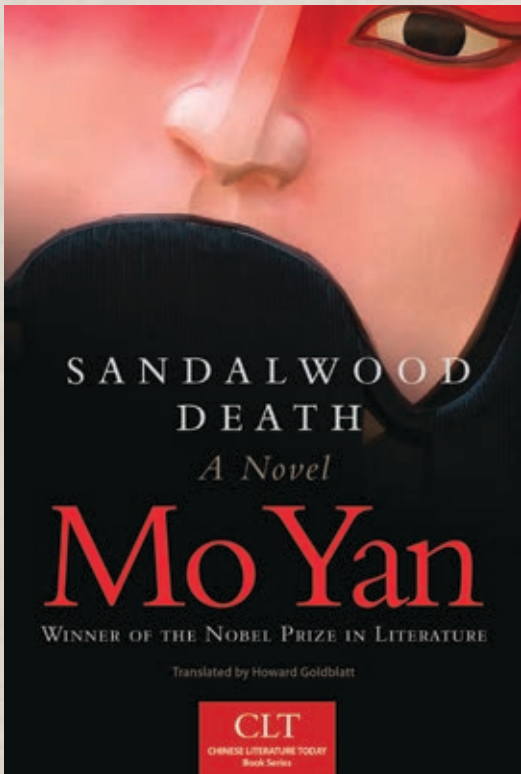
With many thanks again,
 An English

Will Goldblatt
 Editorial Director
 TIME



LEFT Document from the Howard Goldblatt Collection.
 RIGHT Chinese Figurine, c1940 George & Cecilia McGhee Collection.

HOWARD GOLDBLATT COLLECTION



Sandalwood Death by Mo Yan, courtesy University of Oklahoma Press.



As one of America's most prolific and influential translators of any language, Howard Goldblatt (born February 21, 1939 in Long Beach, California) has introduced generations of English readers to a wide spectrum of contemporary Chinese-language literature and brought translated Chinese literature from the confines of academia into the mainstream. With nearly 40 translations of novels, memoirs and a major anthology of poetry, Goldblatt's

translations have been reviewed by the most prestigious magazines, newspapers and online media outlets and by literary giants like John Updike among others. As the only translator of Mo Yan, the winner of the 2012 Nobel Prize for Literature, Goldblatt's contributions to World Literature have become well known but what may be less well known is that he has amassed an extensive collection of correspondence with authors from across Mainland China, Taiwan, and elsewhere as well as with the most influential and important editors and publishing houses of our time. Taken as a whole these notes, drafts, and correspondence reveal a deeper picture of the life of Chinese Literature abroad, and speaks to the importance and glamor of literary translators as the cultural mediators of our time.



Professor Howard Goldblatt and his wife Sylvia with Mo Yan at the 2012 Nobel Prize award ceremony.

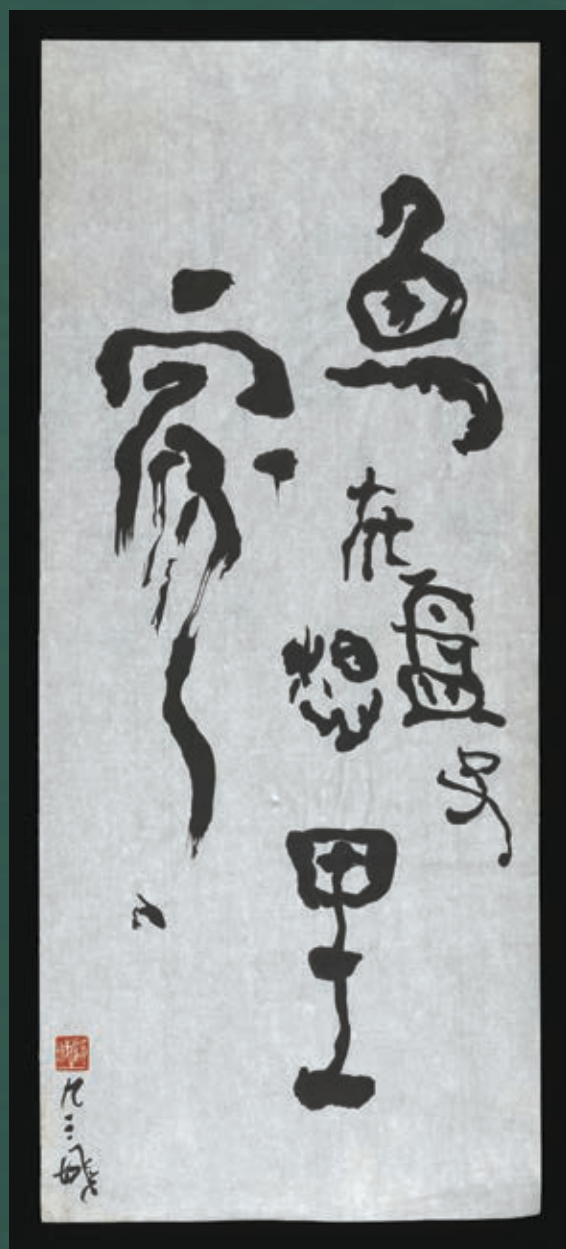


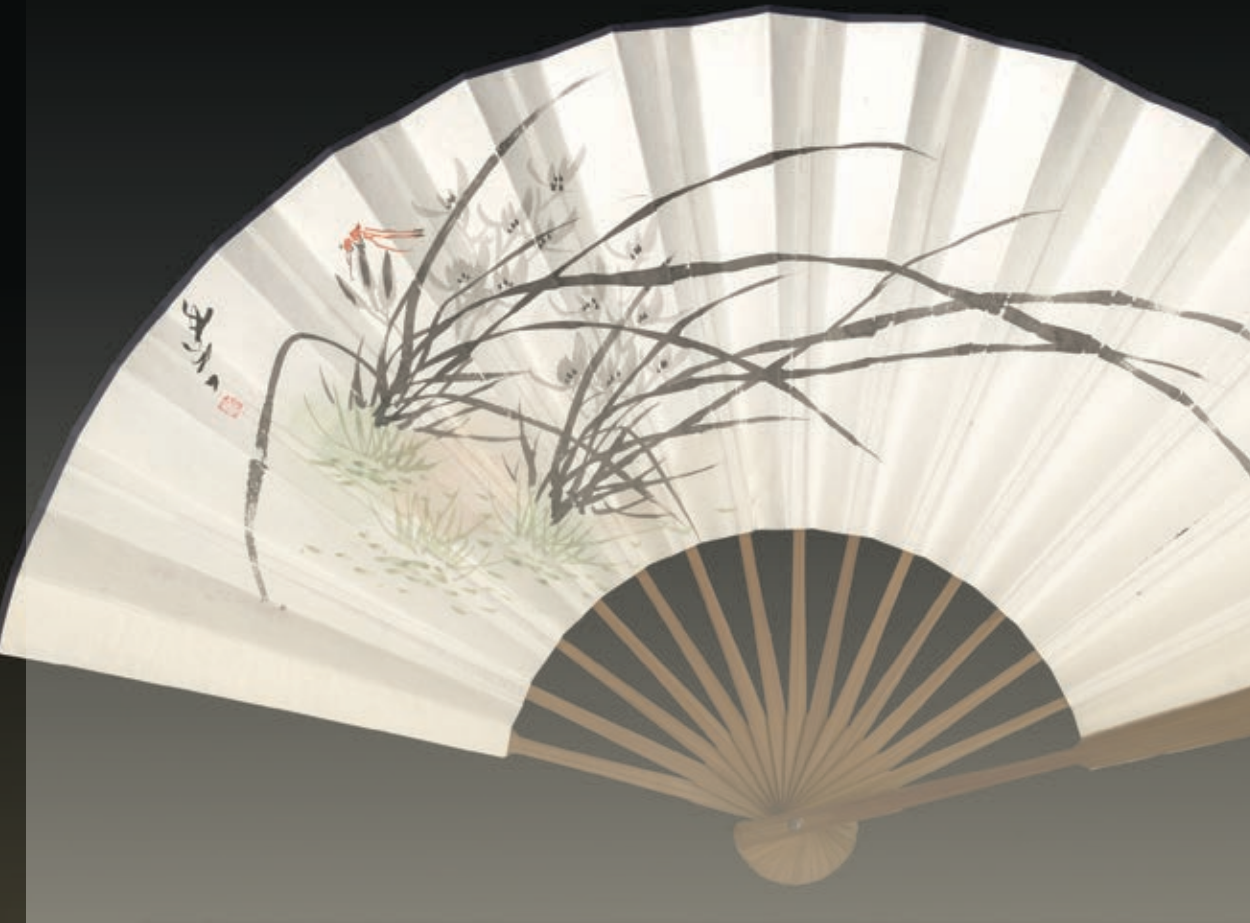
WOLFGANG KUBIN COLLECTION

Wolfgang Kubin – (顾彬, born December 17, 1945 in Celle, Germany) is one of the most well-known sinologists in Europe and its most prolific translator who has published over 100 books of translation as well scholarship, criticism and poetry. Over the span of his impressive career Wolfgang Kubin has become the most widely known and discussed Western literary critic in China. Never afraid to voice his opinions, his views have sparked debates throughout Chinese literary circles for well over a decade. Beyond the dust-ups garnered by his considerable media profile, he has steadily built up the most extensive collection of materials chronicling the lives of Chinese poets as they have traveled and in some cases immigrated to Europe from the 1980's to the present. As the most prolific translator of Chinese poetry into German (of any period), Dr. Kubin's personal network of friendships has spanned a wide range of Chinese writers from the Nobel Prize winning writer Gao Xingjian, to the most well-known poets of our era (Bei Dao, Gu Cheng, Wang Jiaxin, Yang Lian, etc.) and he has attentively collected materials detailing their lives abroad. Dr. Kubin's papers include a singular collection of personal correspondence, original, unpublished poems and calligraphy and a comprehensive collection of materials that paint a picture of the life-world of Chinese poetry in Europe. The materials now housed at OU includes some of the last poems and calligraphy penned by the Chinese poet Gu Cheng before his untimely death in 1993, as well as original calligraphy by Ouyang Jianghe among many other texts and artifacts that are priceless in the eyes of scholars and lovers of Chinese poetry the world over.



ABOVE Professor Wolfgang Kubin. BELOW Chinese Scroll, Howard Goldblatt Collection.





Howard Goldblatt Collection

CURRENT EXHIBITION

Fall 2014–Spring 2015

The George & Cecilia McGhee Artifact Collection: A Voyage through China,
Mesoamerica and the Middle East, Monnet Hall room 300

For additional information, please contact:
University of Oklahoma Libraries
401 W. Brooks St.
Norman, OK 73019-6030
405-325-2611
<http://libraries.ou.edu>



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