

## IFLA, Paris 1989

I attended the Paris IFLA conference, thinking that there would not be very much there to interest librarians dealing with East Asian collections, but was agreeably surprised to find that IFLA is beginning to show some interest in librarianship outside of Europe, and in East Asia in particular. There were 65 librarians at IFLA from Japan and strong contingents from China, Taiwan, Korean and even one librarian from Macau. There were papers of interest to East Asianists in the specialist section of Asian and Oceania and also in the general sections, ranging from the use of Compact Cartridge Medline in Taiwan through Chinese MARC Databases to Services to Children in Japan.

There were also some superb displays of East Asian manuscripts, art and artefacts in the Bibliotheque Nationale and the Guimet Museum. The Bibliotheque Nationale has a huge collection of East Asian manuscripts including a considerable number of Tun Huang scrolls and some beautiful Japanese illustrated seventeenth century tales.

One of these has been published by the library, reproducing in facsimile the original Japanese grass writing, and alongside this, a translation into modern printed Japanese followed by a translation into French. All the illustrations there have faithfully reproduced in colour, and this is quite a collector's item from the library shop at the modest price of Fr 130 or so. The title translates as the "Lonely chrysanthemum" and is a romantic tale said to have been popular with the ladies.

Monique Cohen, curator of Asian Manuscripts, has the huge collection under excellent control and readers are well cared for on the first floor of the Library adjacent to the stacks. The Oriental Section will not move from Rue de Richelieu when the new 'Library of France', announced at IFLA, is constructed. Monique has a dedicated staff who do translations like the Japanese tale mentioned above in their own time for their own pleasure.

There was also a special exhibition of Asian artefacts which competed with their exhibition on the French Revolution and held its own remarkably well.

A visit to the Guimet Museum to see their excellent collection of Asian Art was very rewarding as well.

Pauline Haldane

### A visit to Oxford

After IFLA I visited the UK and spent some time in Oxford, where I had a chance to see the East Asian Collections at the Bodleian. David Helliwell has the Chinese material superbly housed and organised, but is suffering from the usual lack of staff to do adequate cataloguing and a restricted budget for new purchases. Details about the collection are arriving by seammil and can be provided in the new year.

Pauline Haldane

