

REPORTS

East-Asian content in IFLA 1990, Stockholm

This year there was a large contingent of East Asian representatives at IFLA. There were five from China, two from Hong Kong, 36 from Japan, 25 from Korea, one from Macau, seven from Taiwan, and many others with an interest in East Asian affairs from USA, UK and Australia. Despite the large contingent, only two papers were presented by East Asians, both Japanese. There was plenty of opportunity, however, to exchange ideas with old friends such as Du Ke, Li Xuncha and Jiang Bingxin from China, Nakano Shogo, Tanaka Agusa, Kawamura Hiroshi, Kimura Kogo and Tamura Kiyoko from Japan. The new National Diet Librarian was also present but I did not meet him.

The two papers presented were in the Asia and Oceania Section and the Section on Services to Multicultural Populations. The first paper by Jingaki Katsuhiro dealt with the new Japanese University of the Air, available now in the Kanto region to all high school graduates without any need for a further entrance exam. The service will be available later in other regions. Fees are charged and degrees issued. Library services are provided by giving students access to local university and college libraries as well as local public libraries.

The second paper by Kawamura Hiroshi dealt with services to Korean minorities in the Japanese public library system. The paper gave a very sensitive approach to the longstanding problem of discrimination against Koreans living in Japan. Both papers were delivered in English and I have copies, should anybody be interested.

East Asia was well represented at the Standing Committee on Asia and Oceania by two delegates, each from Japan and Korea, but no representatives were there from other parts of Asia.

The routine business meeting called for papers for IFLA 1991 in Moscow and briefly discussed IFLA 1992, to be held in Delhi. The Standing Committee on Services to Multicultural Populations also had some East Asian content as it will have non-Roman script automation as its theme for the 1992 Delhi conference as a follow-on from the Tokyo conference. Any offers for papers for this conference would be welcomed. The offers should be made to me initially as the Australian corresponding member of the committee.

Pauline Haldane

33rd ICANAS Congress in Canada

The 33rd International Congress of Asian and North African Studies was held at the University of Toronto from Sunday August 19 to Saturday August 25, 1990. The tradition of the Congress dates back to 1873 when it met for the first time in Paris. Since then, apart from a hiatus during the two world wars, the Congress has convened approximately every three years. The programme of the 33rd Congress was a full and varied one focused on the theme 'Contacts between Cultures.' It included formal regional and cross-cultural sessions of individual but related papers as well as lunchtime round tables on current issues such as 'Perceptions of China since Tiananmen', the 'Future of Hong Kong', and 'Is Japanese Japanese Culture unique?' There were also late afternoon round tables and forums on such issues as Asian immigration to Canada and the US and funding for Asia research.

The International Association of Orientalist Librarians (IAOL), which was founded at the 27th Congress in Ann Arbor, Michigan, in August 1967, meets in association with ICANAS and arranges library seminars at the congresses. Members of the new committee are all Hong-Kong based, with Dr Kan Lai-bing as the new president. The committee is therefore well placed to organise the IAOL programme for the 34th Congress which is scheduled to take place in August 1993 or January 1994 in Hong Kong.

The IAOL programme, which was confined to three days, was equally varied and reflected the intercultural theme of the main Congress. Sessions were devoted to 'South Asian Libraries and Culture', 'Asiana - Issues and Themes', 'the Library of Congress in Asia and the Middle East', 'East Asian Libraries and Collections', and 'Publishing in Asia'. Presentations included papers on 'School libraries in Bhutan', 'Academic and Cultural Newsletters and News-disseminating Bulletins in the West concerned with East Asia', 'Issues in developing Systems and co-operative Programs to support Orientalists, Libraries and Scholarship', 'the Library of Congress and East-Asian Collections' and 'Russian publishing in Shanghai and Harbin'.

In addition to the academic programmes of both ICANAS and IAOL, there were also other events such as exhibitions, including 'Asia in Books - Books in Asia' and 'Chinese Painting in Canada' as well as performances of Asian dance, Korean drums and Arabic music for the qanun.

Finally, there was also an opportunity to tour the Robarts Library - the major research library of the University of Toronto and to observe an online search of the RLIN CJK database.

Asian content in the first ALIA Biennial Conference in Perth

The inaugural conference of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) was held in Perth from September 30 to October 5, 1990. The programme included a full afternoon session devoted to an Asia Pacific programme, convened by the committee of the Asia Pacific Special Interest Group (APSIG) of ALIA. Papers were presented on 'Australian government programs and library aid to Asia and the Pacific' by Maxine Rochester; 'International initiatives for library cooperation and coordination in Asia and the Pacific' by Anthony Ketley; 'Partnership in developing education overseas - ACPAD and IDP' by Sue Halbwirth; 'Library preservation in Indonesia' by Jan Lyall; 'Cooperative acquisition of publications from Asia and the Pacific' by George Miller; 'Asian language materials on ABN' by Susan MacDougall; and 'Library automation in Thailand' by Bill Linklater and Kannikar Lipisal.

The Asia Pacific Programme was followed by a general meeting of APSIG members at which it was decided that the current Canberra-based committee should continue in office for the present and consolidate progress already made for the group.

In addition to the programme convened by the APSIG committee, there were also other papers on Asia-Pacific librarianship scattered throughout the programme. Papers on library workers as Australian volunteers in Indonesia and Western Samoa by Ruth Quinn and Felicity Williams, and experiences of an exchange librarian in China by Susan Prentice, were presented along with two other papers devoted to exchange experiences in the session "Have qualifications: will travel". A session devoted to services to students with English as a second language dealt largely with the needs of Asian students in using libraries both here in Australian libraries and in the Hong Kong Polytechnic.

The papers are available in the two-volume published proceedings. In addition, the APSIG committee is considering publication of a volume to include all the papers present with Asian content.

This comparatively high profile for aspects of Asian librarianship in the papers presented, together with references to Asia and the Pacific in the President's address and most of the plenary sessions is perhaps a

recognition, albeit belatedly, that if Australian librarianship is to be relevant into the 21st century, it has to take Australia's geographic reality into account.

Susan Prentice
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Visit to Murdoch University Library

While in Perth I had the pleasure of meeting Mrs Sit-ling Tull, East Asian librarian at Murdoch University Library, who is currently on leave but who kindly showed me around.

Singapore Post-conference Seminar

The Post-conference Seminar in Singapore, organised jointly by the Library Association of Singapore (LAS) and ALIA, had as its theme strategic planning and library management. Australian delegates were impressed by the reports on the Singapore Work Improvement Teams (WITS), for their content and for the professionalism of the presentation. WITS is a management technique which Australian library managers could explore.

Outside the formal sessions there was ample time to chat with Singaporean colleagues, and we found that we had much in common. When discussing IFLA, it became clear that there was a common concern that IFLA concentrated on European and North American issues and did not adequately cater for the Asian region and interests of Asian librarians.

On the library tours arranged for participants, I was pleased to meet Mr Koh Thong Ngee, Librarian and Head of the Chinese Library, Mr Choo Yam Wai, Head, Japanese Resources, both of the National University of Singapore Library, and Mr Lai Yeen Pong, Assistant Director of SILAS.

EALRGA general meeting

EALRGA held a general meeting at the Asian Studies Association of Australia biennial conference at Griffith University, Brisbane, in July. The President reported that the number of East Asian collections in Australia was growing. Growth in EALRGA membership was also encouraging. Susan MacDougall was preparing a report on Chinese romanisation on ABN. Various libraries reported on the progress of their East Asian collections and on their activities. Copies of the minutes can be requested by members from the Secretary/Treasurer if required.

Susan MacDougall