EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF SINOLOGICAL LIBRARIANS

The seventh annual conference of EASL was held in the British Library, London, from 27th to 29th August 1987. The first day of the conference consisted of a visit to Oxford, including the Bodleian Library, the Ashmolean Museum, and the Oriental Institute Library.

Present were: Odile Pierquin-Tian (Centre de Recherche et de Documentation sur la Chine Contemporaine, Paris)
Jane Hwang (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, München)
Renate Stefan (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, München)
Johann-Michael Streffer (Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin)
Claudia Lux (Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin)
Helga Dressler (Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin)
Kira Rohde-Liebenau (Ruhr-Universität Bochum)
Andreas Mixius (Universitätsbibliothek und TIB, Hannover)
Lars Fredriksson (Ostasiatiska Biblioteket, Stockholm)
Roger Greatrex (Forskningspolitiska Institutet, Lund)
Kirsten Rønbøl Lauridsen (Det Kongelige Bibliotek, København)
Elisabeth Eide (Universitetsbiblioteket i Oslo)
Joyce Yung-tzu Wu (Sinologisch Instituut, Leiden)
Basilia Fang (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Wien)
Michael Egloff (Universität Zürich)
Alfredo Cadonna (Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli)
Johanna Scheerlinck (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven)
Frances Wood (British Library, London)
Beth McKillop (British Library, London)
John Caley (British Library, London)
Charles d'Orban (School of Oriental and African Studies, London)
Charles Aylmer (Cambridge University Library)
David Arrandale (Brotherton Library, Leeds)
William Liu (Edinburgh University Library)
Ray Chin Foo-Kune (British Library Document Supply Centre, Boston Spa)
Anthony Hyder (Oriental Institute Library, Oxford)
David Helliwell (Bodleian Library, Oxford)

Observer: Nancy Ching-hung Wang (National Palace Museum, Taipei)

ACTA

1. Notices

The following notices were given:

1.1 The address list of European institutions with holdings of Chinese books had become out of date since it was published in the first issue of the bulletin; the chairman would produce a revised version

for publication in the next issue.

1.2 The British Library annouced its intention to hold a colloquium on resources for Japanese studies from 14th to 16th September 1988, at SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies).

1.3 The Staatsbibliothek in Berlin was to have the trial use of OCLC CJK for a period of 6 months commencing in January 1988.

1.4 A professional vacancy in the Chinese field would shortly be announced at the Ostasienabteilung of the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin.

2. Election

David Helliwell was re-elected to the office of Chairman.

3. Eighth EASL Conference

It was decided that the eighth EASL conference would be held in Krakow, immediately before the EACS conference in Weimar. Should it prove impossible to make the necessary arrangements, the chairman and J-M Streffer would try to arrange for the conference to be held in East Berlin.

4. Bulletin

There had been a delay in the production of the third issue of the bulletin, largely owing to a shortage of material. Members were firmly of the opinion that the bulletin should be kept alive, and promised to supply the chairman with large quantities of copy by the end of October. The third issue would be edited in November, and printed and circulated by J-M Streffer in Berlin during December. The chairman and editor of the bulletin reminded members of a previous understanding that contributions may be made in any European language that is written in the Roman alphabet.

5. EASL Serials Project

The principal item of business at the seventh conference was a discussion of J-M Streffer's plans for the implementation of EASL's longstanding proposal to compile a union list of Chinese serials in European libraries:

5.1 This endeavour would henceforth be known as the "EASL Serials Project".

5.2 On behalf of EASL, the chairman would formally request the director of the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin and Dr Hartmut Walravens, the director of ZDB, to act as hosts and editors of the project, add non-German locations to ZDB, and provide all participating

libraries with output.

5.3 Subject to the reservations outlined in 5.4 below, members agreed unanimously to participate, and pledged their enthusiastic support for a project that held promise of very great advantages in the near future.

5.4 Reservations were expressed on the following points:

5.4.1 The decision had not yet been taken by RAK to change the official German standard for the romanisation of Chinese from Wade-Giles to Pinyin. Whilst it was confidently expected that the decision would be favourable, an adverse decision would make it impossible for EASL to participate, as members were overwhelmingly of the opinion that the use of Wade-Giles was now out of the question for a project of this kind.

5.4.2 On examination of some samples of printed output, it was noted that syllables were separated by hyphens, which were ignored for filing purposes, the filing being by letter rather than by syllable. John Cayley stressed the importance of keeping each syllable distinctly defined in the computer file, even if the output was filed by letter. Some members felt that the system of filing by letter was a serious disadvantage, and sought assurance that output filed by syllable would be available. J-M Streffer agreed to seek clarification of these matters.

5.5 The timetable for the development of the project was outlined as follows:

1987 October-November: RAK decision on Pinyin.

1988 January: input of Staatsbibliothek holdings to begin; conversion of existing Wade-Giles records to Pinyin to take place concurrently.

1988 August: sample output to be examined by EASL; EASL members to be briefed on input method.

1988 December: input of Staatsbibliothek holdings of current titles (approximately 4,000-5,000) to be complete; first output on microfiche.

1989 January: input of (British) China Library Group union list to begin; input of other non-German locations to begin; input of dead titles (including entire 1972 union list) to begin.

5.6 In the first instance, input of material in non-German locations would be made from lists supplied from each participating library. Members were therefore urged to keep any lists currently in progress fully up to date. The project would depend entirely on the submission of material by each participating library: there could be no question of hiring a travelling librarian to gather material. Members without serials lists were therefore urged to compile them. Following the initial incorporation of such lists into the database, notification of additions and changes would

probably be made by means of simple printed forms. The exchange of information by machine was considered rather too advanced a proposition for members to contemplate at this stage.

5.7 J-M Streffer would publish a more detailed description of the EASL Serials Project in the next issue of the bulletin.

6. LIBER

It was decided that the chairman should seek to affiliate EASL with LIBER (Ligue des Bibliothèques Européennes de Recherche).

7. Interlibrary Loans

It was noted that the German "Blauer Leiverkehr" system for arranging interlibrary loans operated more efficiently in the case of Chinese materials than other systems currently in use elsewhere. J-M Streffer would write a description of this system for publication in the next issue of the bulletin. The Sinologisch Instituut in Leiden was invited to consider participating in the system as a lending member.

8. Automation

There was some discussion of matters relating to automation, and particularly of the RLIN and OCLC CJK systems which members had seen demonstrated earlier in the week at the British Library Chinese Studies Colloquium. Aside from the experimental use of RLIN at the British Library and of OCLC at the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin, no European library had plans to install any CJK automation. Both RLIN and CJK were considered to be insufficiently developed at present for any practical application in Europe. It was decided that the bulletin would be a useful medium for announcing further developments in this field. John Cayley agreed to submit a short report on the experimental use of RLIN CJK at the British Library, and Nancy Wang offered to provide an account of automation progress in Taiwan.

David Helliwell,
Chairman

Oxford, 4:ix:87