

42nd yearly EASL Meeting in Gent - Minutes

Wednesday 7. 9. 2022

After a welcome from Marc Gilbert, Paul Buschmann, head librarian at the Faculty library of arts and philosophy welcomes EASL. He mentions that University of Gent, the largest student city in Flanders, just celebrated a big jubilee. And for this the library was reorganized, which involved the humanities libraries and a renovation of the Book Tower. Library re-opened doors in 2018 after over ten years of readjustment.

Apologies: Hanno, Katharina Feriančíková, Charlotte Jakob, Claudia de Morsier, Yan He (Cambridge).

The Agenda for the meeting is approved without any additional items.

8 members present showed interest in the EAL meeting. 3 meetings will be open to colleagues online: Internal meeting Wednesday, the vendors' presentations Thursday and the Members presentations Friday.

Line informs about visits and the reception at the faculty library.

Internal Meeting - Reports from the Members

The Minutes of the 2021 online meeting: are approved without additions.

Cathleen delivers the financial report: Nothing happened on the financial side: The account balance is € 1928,70.- no debits, no credits.

Kommentiert [GM(1): It should be higher than that

Marc mentions with respect to Wednesday elections: if anybody is interested in joining EASL-board, please report to Marc.

Shenxiao (Edinburgh): All CoVid restrictions have been lifted, things are back to before the pandemic. But some services like Scan and Deliver continues to be offered. The East Asian collection of the university library is running out of space, Shenxiao and colleagues are looking for solutions. E-resources continue to be a hot topic and Shenxiao is looking for ways to make them more attractive for users.

Benedicte (Leuven): No changes since last meeting, except for management pushing for more involvement and commitment. But no change to the collection. New researchers have come to Leuven on European scholarships on (Hilde de Weerd, Angela Schottenhammer). Library work is similar to Edinburgh: Scan and Delivery also as a takeover from pandemic times. Library will be open regularly with the beginning of the academic year in September.

Soline (BULAC): Colleague in charge of the Chinese collection is due to arrive, Soline works on the Asian collection, BULAC is working like before the pandemic, suffers major cuts in budget, though. Budget for print materials had to be cut by 50%! So librarians are working on how to reduce budget, weeding out e-resources that are little used. Researchers in Paris are increasingly asking for English language materials. In E-resources they ask for Chinese materials, but in print resources, English resources are much sought after. No Taiwan Resource Center yet. Asking colleagues for solutions. (Thomas: Catalogue entry for all TRCCS-donations in a field 500). Digitization project in scientific Chinese knowledge.

Loïc (BULAC): 2 Chinese newspapers published in Paris during the 1950s and 1960s are being presented in an exhibition. 25th anniversary of the Hongkong hand-over an exhibition commemorates the occasion. A Sino-French book partnership is planned for the end of the year.

Dat-Wei (EFEO): 2 collections housed in the library had to be moved so there was much reorganizing to be done. Attendance has shrunk: about half the people from before the pandemic. This summer the school got a new director who has not set up a meeting with the library and nobody has talked to him yet. But everyday work back to normal, only fewer attendance.

Maja (Vienna): Library back to normal, only seat booking still required. Scan and Deliver kept up. Retro-cataloging completed (except for 40 VHS cassettes). Maja retired during the year. Position will be refilled; interviews start in the week after EASL meeting.

Mathias/Cordula (StaBi Berlin): Things are also back to normal. StaBi celebrates 3 Jubilees this year. 100 years of department, 400 years of Christian Menze, 70 years of funding by DfG. Exhibition in the StaBi Kulturwerk museum. More on this during the members' presentations Friday.

Sun Hui (CATS Heidelberg): Normalization after CoVid. Masks still recommended, but not mandatory. Number of visitors increased (250 per day). Digital Archives for Chinese studies and Chinese music and Chinese comics. Digitization of Yao-Manuscripts. Several donations. Taiwan Recourse center (TRCCS) established. Signing ceremony in November 2022. Much discussion with German customs office about the gifted books (for scientific purposes). CATS is looking for ways to not pay customs. Solutions from colleagues are welcome.

Emma/Hsieh Han-Lin (British Library):

General Updates: 1. The exhibition spaces and reading rooms at both sites have now been providing full, pre-pandemic services for over a year (since Monday 23 August 2021).

2. Some disruption has been experienced recently due to staff shortages (e.g. COVID sickness), rail strikes, extreme temperatures and a couple of major technical faults that affected storage areas/reading rooms (June-July, now resolved) and conference facilities (August, ongoing).

3. Hybrid working is still available for staff who are able to work effectively from home. All staff are now onsite a minimum of two days per week. 4. Curatorial enquiries are now handled via the LibAnswers communication platform.

Staff Changes: 1. Tan Wang-Ward (Project Manager, Lotus Sutra Digitisation Project) returned from maternity leave on 13 June 2022.

2. Sara Chiesura returns as Lead Curator, East Asian Collections (Chinese) on 12 September 2022.

Main Activities: 1. International Dunhuang Project (IDP) – Following an EU Open Tender, which closed in June 2022, the British Library appointed a supplier to carry forward the redevelopment of the IDP website from September 2022 onwards. The new platform will make the collections more easily accessible and searchable and will hopefully increase the visibility of IDP.

2. Lotus Sutra manuscripts digitisation project (2017-2022) – Since September 2021, we have returned to normal operational capacity. The pandemic caused a delay of over 11 months. With support from our external funders, the project was extended until 31 December 2022 and we are currently on track to meet the new deadline. An end of Project conference, which will be hosted onsite and streamed online, is scheduled for 24-25 November 2022.

3. NLC virtual knowledge exchange – The British Library has partnered with the National Library of China for a virtual knowledge exchange on the topic of collections and conservation. The last of the 12 short training videos (6 per institution, in Chinese and English) has just been completed and all of the NLC's videos are available via their [online platform](#).

4. Retro-conversion and cataloguing projects – The post of Cataloguer, Chinese Retro-conversion Projects (full time, fixed term for 24 months) is being advertised now with a deadline of 11 September. This role will focus primarily on the completion of records for pre-1912 printed materials, as well as supporting similar projects within the Chinese section.

5. Digitisation – More on this next year as several batches of Chinese content are currently in the pipeline for release via the BL's new IIF Universal Viewer, e.g. manuscripts digitised for Shandong University, maps digitised for the Macau University of Science and Technology, etc.

Exhibitions: 1. Han-Lin Hsieh is one of five curators (3 x internal, 2 x external) for the exhibition *Chinese & British: Exploring British Chinese communities and culture*, which will open on 18 November 2022 and run until 23 April 2023 [more info via member presentation].

2. One Chinese item will also feature in the concurrent British Library exhibition *Alexander the Great: The Making of a Myth* (21 Oct 2022 – 19 Feb 2023).

Events: 1. The three 2021 Panizzi lectures delivered by Professor Cynthia Brokaw on the topic "*Spreading Culture Throughout the Land*": *Woodblock Publishing and Chinese Book Culture in the Early Modern Era* are now free to watch via the [British Library Player](#).

2. Han-Lin Hsieh and Yasuyo Ohtsuka (Curator, Japanese collections) participated in the online event *Meet the Curators: a News-themed session* and gave a joint presentation entitled 'Were they real? Fake news is nothing new! : Misleading Sino-Japanese War propaganda prints', which is now available on the [British Library YouTube channel](#).

International agreements: On 13 January, a new Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the British Library and the National Central Library, Taiwan.

Social media: [@BLAsia Africa](#) Twitter account (approx. 1 East Asian collections tweet per week); [@IDP_UK](#) Twitter account (approx. 2-3 tweets per week); [@大英图书馆](#) Weibo account (managed by Learning team, see also www.britishlibrary.cn)

Mamtimyn (Oxford): Bodleian notable acquisitions: *Zhongguo jiben guji ku* 中國基本古籍庫 (one user's license). Statistical yearbook full-text database. Print resources. Reprint of the palace bureau of drama bought. *Guoben Xiju* 國本戲劇 series acquired. Opera's collection is now pretty complete. Scroll manuscripts found.

Exhibitions: Funding obtained, but due to pandemic not taken place. More on this on Friday. Space issue: book storage facilities is now collection storage facility, because museums also contribute. 2024 will be the ten-year's jubilee of the Chinese center. Library system is planned to be switched to ALMA, but not yet done. Original deadline (August) was postponed for a year because the setup is complicated.

Thomas (StaBi München): With the pandemic over, no more restrictions in library service apply. The library got extra budget for acquisitions: Japanese illustrated books and woodblock prints could be acquired. Also non-Chinese extra-European material. Exhibitions on Japanese wood-block-prints planned in the library.

Provenance research: library collections' origins are being researched. Over 20'000 manuscripts and printed books are being origin-researched. Provenance now for colonial context (Nazi-provenance has been researched). Tibetan, Persian manuscripts, Yao-manuscripts, Reichsmüller-expeditions (over 18'000 volumes). The goal of the provenance-research is to be able to answer the increasing questions about the provenance of the library's collections.

Joshua (Princeton): Joshua brings greeting from SEAL and invitations to join their events. Work-Shop-Conference in Harvard on digital humanities in East Asian Studies prior to AAS in 2023 ("Tools of the Trade"). Princeton: switched to ALMA last year. Digitization of Mikro-films started of Princeton's materials (digitization of the Mikrofilms, not of the original materials). Shanben-collection of 1796 and later will ill be prepared and published in the future. Large backlog, that will be worked on now. Human-rights collections being worked on Colleague working on 2025-exhibitions: book forms beyond the European Style: Block-books, palm-leave books etc. If interest on cooperations exist: please get in touch.

Delphine (College de France): The collection and offices are now back in the original building they moved out 10 years ago for reconstruction. But the building construction quality is sub-par with many reasons for complaints. Therefore the building is not open to the public yet. More construction will be required. Hopefully opening in January 2023. During the last year, the Oracle Bones collection has been digitized, the library switched to ALMA, but everybody is still adjusting.

Inga-Lill (NIAS): Little news from NIAS: The funding has been active since the 1960s, but during the last 10 years all institutions were moved to different funding, Nordic research agency is now funding NIAS, but they don't really fund institutions. Thus the budgets for the coming years is uncertain. The budget for the following year will only published in December. Five-year-funding is only available for research, not for library. NIAS has a new director who is looking for new models of funding. New director is into South-East-Asian Studies. NIAS moved to a smaller location.

Zhang Ruili (Manchester): Return to Campus: Most of faculties in Manchester University has confirmed that **remote** study will not be made available to students in 2022/23. We expect all undergraduate and taught postgraduate students to be on campus unless there is a major change in UK government advice.

An exhibition 'Qing: China's Multilingual Empire' at the John Rylands: This exhibition opened to the public on 21 October 2021 and ran for just over 4 months until March 2022. The focus of the Qing exhibition was the languages and culture of China's last dynasty, Qing, and featured new research funded by the **University** of Manchester with support from the Confucius Institute. Over 35,000 visitors from all over the world came to the Qing exhibition. That is impressive, especially considering the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions that impacted the exhibition's run.

To coincide with this physical exhibition we also launched a new Chinese digital collection on Manchester Digital Collections. The highlighted items represent many aspects of Chinese culture presented in a variety of forms including small cheap print, printed scrolls, paintings on pith and bodhi leaves, and European influenced engravings.

Moreover, the Rylands has contributed to a series of films on 'Chinese Collections in the City' which, through the voices of researchers and community groups, told a city-wide story of civic Chinese collections across Manchester.

Line (Gent): Detailed report during the special report Thursday. The library is being moved: 49 different classification systems previously used in humanities have been replaced by LoC classification system.

Cathleen (Max Planck Berlin): Open all the time during the pandemic (except for 2 months), while all researchers were stuck in Berlin, so this was a busy time for the library staff. Director Dagmar Schäfer is asking for printed books. There is a new project on *leishu* that was launched. Cathleen prepares a business trip to China in November.

Olivier (Stockholm): The insecurity that plagued the Asia Library for years has been solved: there is no more Asia library at Stockholm university! When the department moves back to campus, no special branch library will be needed. All holdings are to be integrated into the main library. In December 2021 it was confirmed that the books will be moved, so in the summer of 2022 the library was eliminated. Fear was what happens with the collections: Space was found in a closed stack, so no books were eliminated. 700 titles were eliminated (doubles) after extensive research. 27'000 books were moved. All packed and moved in 2 weeks (month of June). Policy: books that were borrowed during the last ten years will be in open stacks. Students now have better availability. No difference for researchers, they did have the access. Olivier will continue to be the Liaison Librarian for the Chinese collection.

Marc (Zürich): The reorganisation of institute libraries to be in a common university library (organization-wise, no relocation required yet) which took 2 years has been completed. The separate collections of the institute's library have all been part of the University library, beginning on January 1st 2022. This involves many adjustment processes and all separate library websites had to be reconfigured and the contents relaunched in a common format.

Claudia de Morsier retired this summer, we managed to get Gian Carlo Danuser, the librarian in the institute's Western language collection on China as her replacement.

Thirdly the three-year project to retro-catalogue Korean language holdings bought under the guidance of Korean Studies Prof. Martina Deuchler back when the University of Zurich had contemplated the introduction of Korean studies, has now been completed and Zurich has roughly 5000 volumes of Korean language materials available for users. Still no Korean studies, though.

Marc (Leiden): Since last year, the library has been receiving meters of material from the Van Gulik family. Leiden has been home to the private book collection of Robert van Gulik's since the 1970 (The Van Gulik Archives). It is very divers and of high academic value. The last and final batch of material we received consist in archives relating with the Judge Dee stories, including original drawings by Van Gulik, some being apparently unpublished. An inventory is in the making and the collection is being organized. An EAD will follow and we hope that the collection will be fully proceeded next year.

In May 2022: 100 new issues from our collection of unofficial poetry journals from China were made available online, about 10.000 openings. The ingestion went much more smoothly that last year, thanks to the experience built since the beginning of the project. A specificity of the selection that became available online this year, is a significant number of issues by migrant workers. We received full support from the editors of each journal digitized, but also many positive feedback from around the world. We will soon be working at the selection for a third batch, to which we hope to add issues digitised by our partner in Shanghai. A fourth batch is also expected to come online in 2024.

A few years ago, Leiden has acquired facsimiles of the three maps ordered by the Kangxi, Yongzheng and Qianlong emperors. The scans were delivered to the Manchu foundations and stitched together. All places have been referenced and the final product, three gigantic digital maps made available and searchable on the Qingmaps.org website.

Before the summer, Leiden made these maps available via its digital collections, for users around the world not only to consult but also to download. Cf. <http://hdl.handle.net/1887.1/item:3285048> ; <http://hdl.handle.net/1887.1/item:3279273> ; <http://hdl.handle.net/1887.1/item:3279272>

We were also happy to acquire two Miao albums from the Yunnan province, thanks to a generous donation. Together with teachers at the department of Chinese studies, we are working at a project, offering PhD students the opportunity to explore and research these albums. More about this project during the members' presentations on Friday morning.

Thursday 8. 9. 2022

Vendor's Presentations I: Online Presentations

09:00 Claire Guo (Keledge): *ebooks from China's National Knowledge Service*

09:15 Michelle Chen (Orient Indie Films): *Engage Students and spark conversations with documentaries.* michelle@orientindiefilms.com

09:30 David & Lancy (Wang Lanxin / Airiti): *New database presentation: Taiwan Government Research Archives*

09:45 Hu Yu (CIBTC): *CIBTC Recommendations: Modern China Database*

10:00 Gioia Li & Jane Xiao (CNKI): *CNKI Latest Progress Sharing*

10:15 Julie Li & Emily (Wediscovery): *WENXINGE Database, the enhanced Diaolong Database*

10:30–11:00 Coffee break

Vendor's Presentations II: Presentations in presence

11:00 Ariane Rückebeil (East View): *Four Centuries of East Asian History: Authoritative Resources available from East View*

11:15 Jason Dai (Wangfang Data): *Updates on E-Resources from Wanfang Data*

11:30 Laura Blomvall (Adam Matthew): *Discovering the Past through AM Explorer*
laurab@amdigital.co.uk

11:45 Ekrem Dursun, Shu Chunyan (Brill): *A Student's Dictionary of Classical and Medieval Chinese, a revised and expanded edition* (Third Edition). Paul Kroll's dictionary in the latest edition (13. April 2022): 735 pages, ISBN 9789004499393 (Revised, 2nd edition was 713 pages)

[Lunch Break]

13:45 Line Pattyn, Lien Vanmarsnille, Willem Derde (UGent): *Implementation of "new tasks" in library services at Ghent:* New tasks all have to do with digitization. So new tasks are Open Access, Licensing, etc.

The history of the faculty library: Centralized library started in 2005. Before that 222 locations for 50 different libraries, 49 classification systems, only 53% of the titles were in the ALEPH-catalog. 2018 the final part of the faculty library opened. Development was that the scholarly output doubled, while the collections remained stable, and the loans actually declined over the years.

Therefore a new mission statement: Library as a location but also as a service. Library is an open platform, where knowledge is created, shared and made accessible.

Challenges are that the old tasks are not resolved, that 49 classification systems are still in operation and are to be superseded by LoC classification.

Research data is being collected by the library. From 2016 research management is initiated, since 2020 PhD students are required to write research data plan. For this they have RDM support, training sessions and similar tasks.

Information literacy training: Faculty library research and educational support team teaches information management (finding, organizing, analyzing, storing and publishing information).

Informational literacy teaching starts with secondary school pupils, but also individual support for students.

Specific example: Willem Derde: Cune-iif-orm: how to work on cuneiform writing documents. Willem gives an outline of the uncovering and development of cuneiform writings. Triple-I-F: International Image Interoperability framework: cooperation between several institutions to 3D-scan the cunei tablet and try machine reading of the texts.

Friday, 9th September:

09:30–12:40 Members' presentations

09:30 Hsieh Han-Lin (British Library): An exhibition "*gong xu Ying Hua 共敘英華* = Chinese and British : exploring British Chinese communities and culture". An Exhibition on Chinese Communities in the UK over the last 300 years. The exhibition claims it has a "unique lasting impact" on the UK's culture. Today, the British Chinese population is larger than ever before. The exhibition uses Manuscripts, Oral Histories, Photographs and 3D Items. It draws on personal stories, but also on moments of national significance. The exhibition will open at the end of November.

The exhibition has 3 sections, starting with starting with Shen Fuzong 沈福宗 / Michael Alphonsius Shen Fu-Tsung (1657–1692), the first Chinese person in the UK, arrived in Britain 1686 and was working for six weeks in the Bodleian library helping to identify Chinese materials. Han-Lin mentions

12:25 Mamtimyn Sunuodula (Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford): *Making sense of the Chinese Special Collections : a community perspective*. Originally, before the pandemic, an exhibition was designed that was subsequently published as an online exhibition. The launch is planned for March of 2023- In the end there should be objects and printed materials brought together. This is a first time that the special collections are presented for an exhibition in this way.

Mamtimyn then refers to the history of the Chinese collection and the history of the Bodleian library, which was founded by Thomas Bodley, using the money of his wife (of whom we hardly have any information).

For the exhibition, the library selected themes like "Geography, navigation and global connection; Health and medicines, Humans and human conditions, Literature, entertainment and arts.

The actual exhibition in the Western Library on China was accompanied by a workshop where children could draw Sun Wukong and where Chinese songs were sung and people could have their name written in Chinese characters.

12:55–14:45 Lunch break

14:45–16:00 Internal meeting (members only)

1. CNKI monopoly and cyber security (See for example: http://www.cac.gov.cn/2022-06/24/c_1657686783575480.htm or <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/V0k1gWcCsq8HPw1C8ZgPCw>)

Mathias mentioned that the issue of cyber security is the graver concern than the monopoly issue. The Chinese cyber wall creates security issues, but CNKI lost the right to distribute certain articles overseas. This means that the access to over 400 journals is lost (These are predominantly STM journals: Science, Technology and Medicine; humanities journals are not so much affected): Certain critical contents are not delivered for "security reasons", referring to political reasons (StaBi Berlin has received content-PDFs and not just the hook-up to the CNKI-server). Of course this is more pressing concerning contemporary political reasons. For political reasons not being allowed to deliver certain contents creates a problem with research on the Western parts. (Apparently the full contents are still delivered to the EASTVIEW Server).

Marc questions if this is an issue to be raised with CNKI on the part of EASL. Joshua wants to take up the issue with a Eastview-representative in the U.S.

Shenxiao points out that apart from political reasons, there are also copyright-issue that stops the accessibility of certain contents. He continues that CNKI has a domestic server and an overseas server. We could therefore ask for access to the domestic server-

Thus the basis for a reliable relations with the provider is not guaranteed. Mathias proposes that we compare what EASL-libraries still have subscriptions to printed journals.

2. OCLC-Interface: Hanno sent a message via the list on the new OCLC interface with some consequences for non-Roman scripts in that the Pinyin is no longer available. (At First Search the romanization is still available). The OCLC-CJK Users group is also raising the issue. Keep an eye on this issue as well. No action necessary at this point.

3. Hybrid or not: Shall we continue to offer hybrid sessions for vendors to introduce their products? Pre-recorded messages by the vendors don't make sense to watch in a common space and during a meeting. Olivier points out that meetings where there is an online-option may in the future disallow business trips if there is an online-option. Marc points out that the management of online-vendors was very time-consuming and for the people administering it is not possible to follow the presentation. The positive aspect for EASL-members (in Hongkong or who cannot come) there should be the possibility to follow the meetings online. Because of the mid-term implications for EASL-meetings Marc wants a decision not by the board, but by all members. So he proposes that the vendor's presentations and the members presentations can be followed by members who register

two weeks in advance (no last-minute registrations). So no changes for members except that there will be a deadline for registrations. Members participating in the two presentations sessions will be like this year, but all other sessions will not be available so there is an incentive to be present. Also if there are technical issues the meetings will proceed as normal, so we officially do not encourage online-participation. Online-participants will not be able to interact and won't be able to give presentations. No opposition to this plan.

4. Mathias raises a "small issue": The EASL-Website is in an abysmal state. Looks very outdated. What content should we offer in a newly designed website. Marc W., Soline and Delphine will look into this and come up with suggestions. Also: Marc reminds members that messages should be sent directly and not via the president: all mail addresses are on the website, and if members don't get messages, they should be encouraged to update their email-information.

5. Venues of next meetings: Marc summarizes the problems in communication with Lisbon and so the question comes up whether or not to continue pursuing the plan with Lisbon. Cathy cites the case of Turin, where nobody was taking care of the needs of participants. Marc also quotes the problem with EAJRS 2022, where there are only last minute arrangements are made. Delphine offers that the College de France would host 2023's meeting. The vote is unanimous and so Lisbon is not a candidate but Paris will host in 2023. (September 6th to 8th 2023).

27th to 30th of August 2024 a EASC-meeting will take place in Tallin. So EASL 2024 could take place in Tallinn, but we should ask the organizers in Tallin to postpone for a week. Talks with the organizers will take place after the EASL Meeting.

6. Election of secretary, treasurer, chairman. Reelection unanimous.

7. Goodbyes: With the current meeting, two long-time members will do into retirement: Maja and Shenxiao.

Hanno Lecher makes a surprise call from Heidelberg to honour Maja, EASL Chairwoman for the decade 2010-2019, who retired in August (Hanno and Maja studied together in Vienna and they had their final exams at the same day, also Hanno had worked in the Vienna library before leaving for Heidelberg and before Maja became the first official subject librarian in Vienna).

David makes a few remarks on behalf of Shenxiao. David only learnt an hour or two ago that Shenxiao will retire by the end of 2022 and that this will be his last meeting as a working colleague. Shen Shenxiao was appointed in 1999. Then he first contacted David. 2005-2009 Shenxiao was secretary of EASL for five years. Shenxiao was also responsible for the Chinese collection in Glasgow. Currently he is engaged in an enterprise to locate and catalogue all pre-modern books in Scotland. Personally. David calls Shenxiao an "English Gentleman", a quality hard to find. Shenxiao answers that he appreciated the support and exchange with all the colleagues. He never missed a meeting since 2000 because he appreciated the support and friendship of the colleagues throughout Europe.

Marc on behalf of all thanks Line for the organization of this year's meeting: Official meeting concludes 16:12.

Marc Winter (Secretary)

Kommentiert [GM(2): Maybe good to mention that Maja was chairwoman for a good ten years