



# *APSIG Newsletter*

## *ALIA Asia Pacific Special Interest Group*

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### **Forthcoming APSIG event: Archives and Libraries in the Pacific: an update**



Kylie Moloney in Kiribati, July 2016

What is happening with libraries and archives in the Pacific? Kylie Moloney of the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau and Libby Cass from the National Library of Australia are two of Canberra's most experienced library practitioners with in-depth knowledge of the conditions and challenges in the Pacific island region. On behalf of

APSIG Kylie and Libby have put together a highly anticipated update on Pacific Archives and libraries. The session will include Pacific Island speakers and information about exciting projects and possibilities for Pacific Island archives and libraries.

APSIG members, colleagues, friends and members of the public are welcome to attend. No bookings necessary.

**When: Wednesday 7 September,  
12:30pm-1.30pm**

**Where: Lecture Theatre 1, Hedley Bull Building, ANU**

### **Postcard from Germany: 30 years of resource sharing**

On 10 June Friederike Schimmelpfennig, East Asian Librarian, ANU gave a well-attended APSIG lunchtime talk on resource-sharing and national licensing networks in Germany.

Frieda recently joined the ANU Library as East Asian Librarian, having had an extensive career in Germany, with her last post as Systems Librarian, University Library Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany. She is now a valued member of the Canberra APSIG Committee.

In response to interest from her Canberra colleagues, Frieda provided an overview of national networking and licensing in

Germany. Our German Asian-studies colleagues are to be envied!



Frieda Schimmelpfennig (right) with Libby Cass who chaired the session

From the 1950s onward the West German government established a Research Foundation (DFG) to provide funding to university and research institutions to build collections and have access to at least one copy of a published title for any research subject area. Each institution was allocated a special collection area (Sondersammelgebiete). The special collection areas were allocated to those libraries that had either already a major collection in this area, or major research in this area was done at their university.

The programme led to the development of special collection areas in all university libraries throughout the country. Inter library loan guaranteed the availability of these items. This programme was kept up until 2015. From the time online cataloguing developed, union cataloguing was also supported by the DFG.

### **The national union catalogue**

Today there are six union catalogue cooperatives with more than 1500 libraries taking part, and one nation-wide serials union catalogue (Zeitschriftendatenbank) or ZDB. Libraries catalogue right into the ZDB or a specific union catalogue via special

interfaces. All systems have a review team monitoring the quality of the incoming records. All records are also uploaded into OCLC's WorldCat.

With more and more electronic resources becoming available, the German States and their libraries formed purchasing cooperatives, or regional consortia. Today 15 organisations negotiate on the individual libraries' behalf, making purchases available for all the academic and research libraries within a State. The licenses offer better usage terms than those that would exist for each individual library.

### **'Consumer-defined offers'**

The DFG saw the need for coordination very early and saw that a shift from vendor-defined offers to consumer-defined offers was a first priority. The DFG, in its first programme started in 2004, developed a licensing model that would lead to the purchase of 140 major electronic databases usable nation-wide in every academic or research library for free and at no cost for the library itself. This programme, the national licensing scheme, ran until 2010.

Since 2010, the number of electronic resources has increased so much that the DFG's resources were strained. Another method had to be developed: the alliance licensing scheme. This is an opt-in model. The consortia on behalf of the libraries can take one of two approaches which suit them. They can seek to join in the negotiations for new resources. Or, if the license already exists, opt-in to use it for a percentage of the price.

### **The moving wall**

The alliance licensing model has a moving wall, after which the archival part of whatever database moves over to the national licensing scheme. This means that all the data before that embargo time are then available nation-wide. Both licensing schemes are monitored and developed by a

Special Working Group for National Licensing, consisting of members of the DFG, the National Alliance of Science, and other scientific organisations.

### An Asian digital research platform for Germany

How do Asian-related e-resources fare in this framework? CrossAsia was an early and exemplary result of these undertakings.

The State Library Berlin was always responsible for the Special collection area for East Asia, offering its materials for interlibrary loan. The DFG in the late 1990 funded several projects for cataloguing and information access for East Asia Studies, the major one being CrossAsia. Under the major direction of Matthias Kaun, now head of the East Asia Department of the State Library Berlin, CrossAsia became an exemplary digital research platform. It uses both national and alliance licenses and can now offer more than 130 East-Asia related databases for public use.

CrossAsia has now applied for funding to develop a digital research environment for East Asia studies and has won the grant until 2018.



Questions after the session

Interested in knowing more? Follow these links:

1. German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft DFG), Scientific Libraries Services and Information Systems: [http://www.dfg.de/en/research\\_funding/programmes/infrastructure/lis/in\\_brief/index.html](http://www.dfg.de/en/research_funding/programmes/infrastructure/lis/in_brief/index.html)

2. Alliance of German Science Organisations - The Digital Information Initiative: <http://www.allianzinitiative.de/en/>
3. National Licensing Working Group (in German only): <https://www.nationallizenzen.de/>
4. Information about National licenses ( in German): <https://www.nationallizenzen.de/ueber-nationallizenzen>
5. CrossAsia: <http://crossasia.org/>

### RSCAO program at IFLA Conference, Columbus, Ohio, 2016

Jayshree Mamtora, Chair of the IFLA Regional Standing Committee for Asia and the Pacific (RSCAO), provided this information on several interesting Asia and Pacific related meetings and sessions at the IFLA Congress to be held in Columbus, Ohio, 13-19 August.

Saturday 13 August 17.30-18.30 Caucus Meeting – Africa, Asia & Oceania and Latin America and the Caribbean

Sunday 14 August 13.45-15.45 RSCAO Standing Committee Meeting 1

Monday 15 August 9.30-11.30 RSCAO Open Session: Access to Information for Sustainable Communities

Monday 16 August 13:45 – 15:45 Genealogy and Local History with Asia and Oceania, Social web: its Relevance for Family, Oral and Local History

Tuesday 16 August 8.00-9.30 RSCAO Standing Committee Meeting 2

Tuesday 16 August 11:45-13.45 Social Science Libraries with Asia and Oceania, User Experience (UX) and Social Science Libraries in the Digital Age

Jayshree has informed us that unfortunately, the planned satellite meeting, Access to Information in Small Island Developing States, has had to be cancelled due to the low number of proposals submitted. Perhaps reflecting the high cost of travel for Pacific delegates to attend the Conference, the

Committee nevertheless hopes that it can be re-scheduled to a later date.

The full program for the Conference may be viewed here: <http://2016.ifla.org/conference-programme>.

### **The situation of Asian studies in Australia: reflections from the ASAA Conference, Canberra, July 2016**

Meeting in cold Canberra in mid-winter, three reports below by experienced APSIG members George Miller, Andrew Gosling and Alex Philp throw a sharp light on the present condition of Asian studies in Australia.

#### *George Miller: Waiting for the next wave*



There were nearly 300 participants at the conference and the most positive feature was that the majority of attendees

were young and enthusiastic. Many were from Asian countries, or Australians of Asian ethnicity. From this perspective, it would appear that Asian Studies has a healthy future.

Among many older Asianists however, there was a feeling of concern, given the recent cutbacks in staff and resources for Asian Studies at ANU, regarded by many as the stronghold of Asian Studies in Australia and a wellspring from which lecturers and researchers from other universities could look to for inspiration and support. Many from outside of Canberra felt there would be a "ripple effect" from the cuts. There have been cuts at other universities as well. The fact that the Abbott/Turnbull government had dropped the ball on Ken Henry's "Australia in the Asian Century" White Paper (Canberra, 2012) was also mentioned as another sign of a decline in interest in

Asian Studies, and Asia per se, within the Australian community.

In a plenary session, it was pointed out that there were some positive signs, such as the New Colombo Plan, and the fact that Asian governments were putting funding into the teaching of Asian Studies in Australia. Given improving transport, Asian countries were closer than ever before. There were increasing numbers of Australian students studying in Asia; Study Abroad was the new black, as Kent Anderson of UWA put it. There was improved access to information through electronic resources, and knowledge about Asia is no longer limited to people in universities. Nevertheless, it was generally felt that things had declined since the "blessed run" of 1990-2014. Arising from this analysis, Howard Dick's concept of the "next wave" became a theme. Asian Studies had gone through periods of popularity and unpopularity before, and it was argued it was important to keep presenting the case for the importance of Asian Studies and the wheel would turn once more.

The two library sessions were well attended and created a lot of discussion. Issues focussed on were the changing nature of Asian Studies - from the classical disciplines to more ideological, sociological and theoretical subjects - funding, less printed material being acquired (not always a good thing), the positives and drawbacks of electronic information, the role of specialist Asian Studies librarians, resource sharing in difficult times, cooperation in accessing digitized material, and acquiring the formed, unique collections of aging Asian Studies scholars. It is hoped a number of these issues can be passed on to the Council of the ASAA for consideration.

There was a wide range of topics covered in the individual subject sessions. I attended ones which included analysis of the traditional Javanese text, "Babad Tanah Jawi" through to papers on trendy, Westernized youth in a Myanmar in transition.

The organization of the program went well, and ANU can be congratulated on hosting a rich and stimulating conference during a time of trauma for its own Asian Studies fraternity.

**Andrew Gosling : Asian Studies in Australia: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly**



Andrew Gosling

I have attended ASAA conferences since 1986 but this one was held under exceptional circumstances, as ANU is currently shedding staff in the School of Culture, History and Language (CHL) at the College of Asia and the Pacific (CAP).



Professor Louise Edwards

At least two panels addressed difficulties faced by Asian Studies in Australia. During the plenary session, “The state and future of Asian

Studies,” Professor Louise Edwards, President of the ASAA and Professor Tessa Morris-Suzuki of the ANU were pessimistic, given the cuts at ANU and elsewhere. By contrast Professor Kent Anderson, Deputy Vice Chancellor at the University of Western Australia, acknowledged that much was bad and ugly, but urged scholars to be more positive and look for solutions.

The angst currently being experienced in faculties and offices across the campus was reflected in the title of another panel, “Crisis at ANU: what happened to South East Asian history and culture?”

Professor Tony Reid, a leading historian, traced the rise and fall of ANU as Australia’s pre-eminent centre for research on this region. Professor James Fox, former Director of the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies (RSPAS) was of the view that the merger of RSPAS with the Faculty of Asian Studies to form the College of Asia and the Pacific in 2010 led to the loss of expertise in Asian geography, anthropology and an even greater decline in Pacific Studies.

Professor Robert Cribb noted that the current cuts at ANU are falling most heavily (though not exclusively) on South East Asian history and culture.

A two part panel on Asian Studies and its research material was chaired by Dr Amy Chan of ANU. It was very well attended by scholars and librarians. Dr Aline Scott-Maxwell of Monash University Library outlined how with the loss of Chinese and Japanese expert librarians Bick-har Yeung and Michelle Hall at the University of Melbourne Library, the two Victorian universities are sharing Chinese and Japanese library positions on a trial basis. Dr Amrita Malhi of the University of Adelaide said that Australian libraries are unwilling to collect Asian ephemera such as Malaysian election materials. Dr Robin Jeffrey, a respected India specialist, mentioned that he knows of a number of important scholars’ manuscript collections which should be preserved. It was suggested that a preliminary list of such resources be made as a first step in deciding on priorities, given the costs and labour involved in digitisation.

Despite the difficult circumstances under which it was held the conference was well organised and revealed some positive signs. A number of bright young academics and

postgraduates attended, showing that Asian Studies scholarship is by no means dying. Despite the severe reductions ANU has recently appointed Dr Yuri Takahashi to teach Burmese.

During the plenary session Professor Kent Anderson informed delegates that he has just accepted an invitation to join the Council of the National Library of Australia.



Professor Kent Anderson

Kent told me he is keen to promote a national approach to Asian studies library development, especially given the negative impact of the so-called efficiency dividend cuts on the National Library and other national cultural institutions as well as continuing cutbacks by university libraries.

**Alex Philp, Director of Asian Collections, NLA: Build on past successes**



The concerns described by George and Andrew about the situation of Asian studies as a consequence of cuts at ANU and elsewhere are very real. I found pessimism

across the Asian studies sector compared to the last ASAA conference in 2014 with some courses being discontinued, academic staff in some universities losing their jobs and Asian studies departments being restructured. Many of the delegates to the conference were wearing yellow material patches pinned to their clothes in solidarity

with Asian studies academic staff being made redundant.

I also attended the plenary session and heard an excellent panel discussion between Louise Edwards (ASAA president and UNSW), Tessa Morris-Suzuki (ANU), Ariel Heryanto (ANU) and Kent Anderson (UWA). The session discussed the complex issues at play across Australian universities and raised many examples of positive indicators including a number of Asian studies courses where student numbers are increasing. The panel also discussed issues adversely affecting the sector including reduced funding, increased competition for student enrolments and inflexibility in undergraduate course structures which are a barrier for students to enrol in Asian studies from, for example a Bachelor of Science course. This suggests there is a structural problem as well as a funding one.

Ultimately the panel appealed for delegates to be optimistic for the future of Asian studies in Australia and that all people in the sector should work together to build on past successes.

**Postgraduate Forum presentations**

National Library of Australia staff presented to 100 students at the Postgraduate Forum held before the conference and provided information about the Library's collections and services. Di Ouyang, Manager of Asian Collections, also participated in a roundtable discussion with the theme Asian Studies and its research material. This session was very popular with delegates and included presentations from staff from the University of Adelaide and the ANU. All in all it was a very successful conference which posed many thought provoking issues for the future.

## ALRA Library Workshop 5 July: Asian Studies and its research material

Dr Amy Chan, President, Asian Library Resources of Australia (ALRA) organised a library workshop at ASAA, which will be reported upon in our sister publication the ALRA Newsletter, available at this link. <http://alra.org.au/newsletter.html>



Workshop speaker included :  
Professor Robert Cribb (ANU), *New directions in Asian Studies and the implications for research methods*

Dr Vanessa Hearman (University of Sydney), *Library resources support for academics' research*

Dr Aline Scott-Maxwell (Monash/UniMelb libraries), pictured, *Language resources*



Diane Costello (CAUL), Libby Cass (NLA) Discussants and Dr Amrita Malhi (ASAA Council), *National cooperative collection development /collecting ephemera*

Dr Amy Chan (ANU Library), *Digitising research resources and the need for a national approach*

Dipin Ouyang (NLA), *Challenges in current web archiving*

Friederike Schimmelpfennig (ANU Library) *Cross Asia, a national, subject-oriented virtual platform for Asian Studies resources: access for all to a greater variety of materials*

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