



# IDP NEWS

IDP — TO PROMOTE THE STUDY AND PRESERVATION OF THE DUNHUANG LEGACY THROUGH INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

國際敦煌學項目 (IDP) - 通過國際合作以促進敦煌文化遺產的研究和保護

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## The Conservation of Manuscripts from Dunhuang and Central Asia Second International Meeting

*Bibliothèque Nationale de France  
Paris and Chantilly (Les Fontaines), 7-9 February 1996*



*Delegates at the Second Meeting in Paris*

The Second Meeting, held in Paris in February 5-7, 1996, was a great success thanks to the efforts of Monique Cohen and Dr Astrid Brandt of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF). A report on the proceedings by Monique Cohen is given on page 4 along with a complete list of speakers. A shortened version of Du Weisheng's paper is reproduced below with a summary in English overleaf. The full version will be in the Conference Proceedings, to be published in Paris in spring 1997. Full details of this will be given in future issues of the newsletter.



*Du Weisheng with Dr Frances Wood of the British Library at the meeting in Paris*

### 敦煌遗书修复中的两个问题

杜伟生

中国国家图书馆藏敦煌遗书的来源，可分为两部分：一部分是在本世纪初由甘肃解送到原京师图书馆的，这是现在中国国家图书馆敦煌特藏的主体部分；另一部分是中国国家图书馆历年来采购，接受捐赠及文化部调拨进馆人藏的。这一部分数量不多，约为1,800件。

甘肃解京部分，先后进行了三次整理。

第一次整理时间为本世纪初，从解送到京的敦煌遗书中挑选出完整的和比较完整的计8679件。

第二次整理时间为1929年以前，从第一次整理后剩余的遗书中，又挑出1192件。

62nd IFLA General Conference

96年北京國際圖聯第62屆大會

The International Dunhuang Project database will be demonstrated at the British Library's exhibition stand (stands 35 & 37) at IFLA 1996, 25-31 August, in Beijing. All are welcome to come and have a look.

## Two Conservation Problems for the Dunhuang Manuscripts at the National Library of China

Du Weisheng

The Dunhuang manuscripts in the National Library of China come from two main sources. The most significant group of manuscripts was sent from Dunhuang to the old Peking Library at the beginning of this century. The second, smaller group consists of manuscripts that have been gradually acquired over a more recent period by the National Library through purchase or excavation. The latter group numbers about 1,800 items.

The former group has undergone three periods of conservation activity. When the manuscripts first arrived in Beijing the most complete and significant items were identified (8679 items). Prior to 1925 in the second period, a further 1192 items were identified and catalogued. In 1990 the remaining 3614 fragments were conserved. The collection of Dunhuang manuscripts in the National Library therefore totals over 15,300 items. Conservation work has not yet been completed and it is not possible to provide an exact figure for the following two reasons.

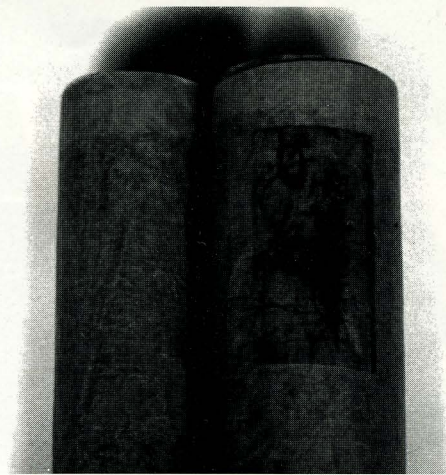
First, some of the Dunhuang manuscripts have been restored in the past. Patches found on the verso are often discovered to comprise several layers of inscribed paper during course of restoration. When these are removed, one manuscript turns into several.

Secondly, for historical reasons, some scrolls comprise several sections — as many as several dozen. For example, nos. 2136-2152 in fact comprise a single scroll which includes 16 items. These problems are not limited to the National Library but will arise wherever Dunhuang manuscripts are held.

Because of this, when the manuscripts are restored, I believe that we should adhere to the precept 'zheng jiu ru jin' — make the item as good as it was originally, i.e. when it was first seen by us (and not 'as good as new'). In this way we can preserve the original appearance of the manuscript. The following precepts offer some guidelines to achieving this aim.

1. Where the manuscript is in several fragments it is better, as a general rule, not to re-join them. Because fragments of one scroll may be held physically in different places there is not much chance of completing this work. Re-joining them would also mean that we are altering the manuscript in its originally acquired form.

2. The original backing should not be removed. In most scrolls where there is an original backing it is made from fragments of Buddhist sutras which have limited intrinsic value as texts. Removal increases the work of conservators and curators. Where there is an inscribed backing or patch, the best solution is to peel back a small section during conservation and, if identified as a Buddhist sutra, then after washing to leave the patch in situ. In this way the original appearance of most of the Dunhuang manuscripts can be preserved. Careful attention to the nature of the backing may take a little more of the conservator's time at this early stage but will greatly reduce the burden of future conservation.



*Inscribed patch on the verso of British Library, Or.8210/S.692*

第三次整理时间为1990年，此次蒋前两次整理后剩余的残片全部清点完毕，共整理出3614件。

经三次整理，甘肃解京部分全部清点完毕，共13485件。加上以采购等形式入藏的1800件，中国国家图书馆收藏的敦煌遗书总数超过15,300件。由于修复工作尚未完毕，中国国家图书馆入藏的敦煌遗书的确切数子，现在尚不能写上统计出来，这主要有两个原因。

1. 敦煌遗书历史悠久，过去有的就已经修过。有的经卷背面就有几处、十几处甚至几十处补了纸，在现在修复过程中，补纸不断被揭下，件数就不断增多，一件遗书修复后就变成了几件、十几件。

2. 同一经卷，由于历史原因，被分成几段，甚至十几段，如馆藏2136-2153号，同为一经，分为16件，2117-2122号同为一经，分为6件，2097-2101同为一经，分为5段，等等。

我相信，这种情况绝不仅仅在中国国家图书馆中存在，在其他图书馆等地，凡存有敦煌遗书的地方，都存在着这个问题。

对此，我认为在修复敦煌遗书过程中，严格遵照“整旧如旧”原则，尽可能保持敦煌遗书原始面貌，非常重要。具体作法应是：

1. 同一经卷被分成几段的，一般不缀合。大家知道，由于历史原因，同一件敦煌遗书不但可能被分成几段，而且可能分藏在不同国家里，因此，敦煌遗书缀合工作很难开展，而且毫无意义，另一方面，我们应当尊重前人整理工作，保持历史原貌。

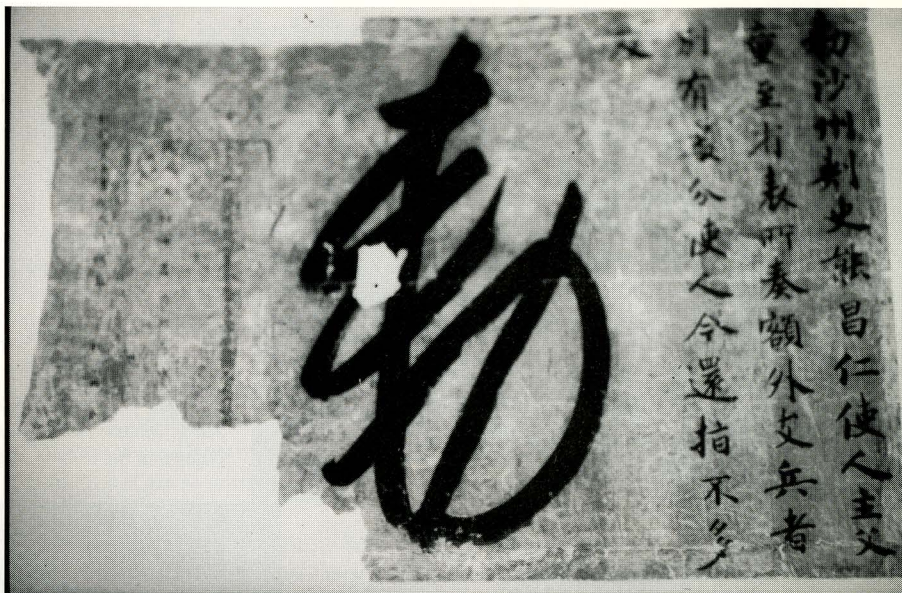
2. 经卷背后的补纸，尽可能不揭。经卷背面补纸大部是佛经残片，全部揭下意义不大。揭下即增加了修复难度，又增加分类编目的工作量，经卷背面的补纸无字的或纸上文字可读的，坚决不揭，补纸文字被遮住的，在修复时可揭开看一下，若是佛经以外文字，可揭下。若仅是佛经文字，应在清洗浆糊后登记一下再移回原处。这样做最大优点就是尽量保持敦煌遗书原始的、历史的面貌。当然，这样做修复工作可能增加一些难度，但为了保持修复质量，我以为这样做是值得的。

## Object or Text?

The dilemma posed by manuscripts patched with other pieces of manuscript which was discussed by Du Weisheng in his talk is also illustrated by scroll wrappers, mounted prayer sheets and shoe soles. These are all often made from several sheets of paper and all of which are found among the Dunhuang manuscripts and Stein collections. The dilemma is whether the text or the object should be considered most important. If the former — and many scholars follow this view — then all inscribed paper, whether used for patching, mounting, making shoe soles or scroll wrappers, would be separated into individual sheets in order that the text could be read, but thereby destroying the object. If the latter, then even small patches would never be removed.

A striking example of a scroll wrapper which has been separated into its component parts with very interesting results is the manuscript on which the IDP logo appears (British Library, Or.8210/S.11287, top right). When all the layers of the original wrapper were separated, it was found to comprise fifteen large pieces of paper and many smaller fragments. In this case the British Library decided to take apart the wrapper, but it has retained several other wrappers in their original condition. Du Weisheng also discussed this issue in his talk in Paris.

Also illustrated here are a fragment of a manuscript which has a shoe-shaped piece missing (British Library, Or.8210/S.6174) and a mounted printed prayer sheet (British Library, Or.8210/P.9, middle right). The characters on the paper which has been used to mount the prayer sheet can be clearly seen on the photograph.



## Conference Report



Monique Cohen (BNF) and Dr Jacques Giès (Musée Guimet) (left), and Dr Astrid Brandt (BNF) and Jean-Michel Blengino (Electricité de France) (below) on the podium at the Second Meeting.



At the wish of all the participants of the founding conference, organised by the British Library in October 1993 and bringing together for the first time conservators and restorers working on the manuscripts and documents from the sites of Serindia, the Chinese Silk Road, a second conference was held in February under the aegis of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF).

After a visit to the BNF workshops — where Dunhuang manuscripts in the process of conservation were shown, such as the process of de-mounting and temporary 'packaging' of the fragments from Central Asia (Kucha) under Rhoidoïd — and the introduction of several documents from the Pelliot Collection, the conference adjourned to Chantilly. Sixteen papers were presented under three themes, 'Historical Data and Project Management', 'Conservation', and 'Recent Contributions of Chemical Analysis' which showed the progress of studies in these areas and the conservation work carried out at the different institutions over the past two years.

Several databases are in development, including those in London, Berlin and Paris. Their specific objectives are dictated by the particular needs of each institution, but they all aim to compile a complete listing of the documents and their state so as to ensure good conservation by well-managed and systematic intervention.

Restoration, which is the ultimate objective, was the subject of the greatest number of papers. These presented cases illustrating the problems posed by different types of documents and different methods of intervention. All the papers are worthy of mention and those who were able to visit the exhibition 'Sérinde' (see report on p. 8) were able to appreciate for themselves the results of particularly delicate conservation work carried

out on the paintings and banners displayed in the exhibition. This had been the subject of papers at the Meeting.

Such was the quality of the papers and the discussion which followed by the attentive audience, that this Second Meeting reinforced the evidence of the First Meeting: that close collaboration between chemists, restorers and conservators on an international level is a pressing necessity. The wish for a Third Meeting was voiced and is to be held in May or June, 1998 in Berlin, organised by Dr Feistel, Deputy Director of the Oriental Department at the Staatsbibliothek, Berlin. As with the previous two Meetings, this will allow the participants the opportunity to see the collections of the local institution.

Apart from these several days passed together, there was also the opportunity to build on personal contacts now already well established. Among others, Nadia Brovenko passed several days at the BNF and Du Weisheng, as a recipient of a K. C. Wong Fellowship, stayed for three months at the BNF to work closely with his French counterparts. They welcomed this opportunity to benefit from his immense knowledge.

The publication of the *Proceedings* will follow next spring.

Monique Cohen

## Papers Presented

### *Session I:*

**Professor Lev Menshikov**, Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg: 'The History of the Conservation of the St. Petersburg and Kharakhoto Collections.'

**Nadezhda Brovenko**, Senior Conservator, Institute of Oriental Studies, St. Petersburg, 'A New Stage in the Restoration of Dunhuang Material at the St. Petersburg Institute of Oriental Studies.'

**Dr Susan Whitfield**, Head, The International Dunhuang Project, The British Library, 'The International Dunhuang Project—Two Years On.'

**Dr Harmut Ortwin Feistel, Frau Dr Simone Christiane Raschmann and Dr Thomas Schmieder-Jappe**, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, 'Demonstration of the Database of Manuscripts from Turfan Developed at the Staatsbibliothek, Berlin.'

### *Session II: Conservation*

**Kumiko Matsuoka**, Conservator, Oriental Conservation Studio, The British Library, 'The Conservation Survey of the British Library's Dunhuang Stein Collection.'

**Mark Barnard**, Senior Conservator, Oriental Conservation Studio, The British Library, 'Assessment of Early Extant Repairs on Dunhuang Manuscripts and Their Future Conservation.'

**Nathalie Silvie**, Restorer, Bergen Billedgalleri Rasmus Meyers Samlinger, Bergen, Norway, 'Problems Posed by the Reconditioning of Pelliot Fragments.'

**Françoise Cuisance**, Art Technician and Restorer, Direction des Services de Conservation de la BNF, 'One Approach to "De-Res-toration".'

**Anna Gretha Rischel**, Head of Paper and Textile Section, Dept. of Conservation, Nationalmuseet of Denmark, 'Storing, Mounting and Non-Destructive Analysis of Central Asian Paper Fragments from the Sven Hedin Collection, Folkens Museum Etnografiska in Stockholm.'

**Du Weisheng**, Conservator, The National Library of China, 'Two Problems in Dunhuang Conservation.'

**Patricia Dal-Pra and Claire Beugnot**, Textile Conservators, Service de restauration de la Direction des Musées de France, 'Conservation and Preservation of Dunhuang Textiles from the Pelliot Collection in the Musée national des Arts asiatiques Guimet.'

**Michel Cailleteau**, Conservator of Works on Paper, Service de restauration de la Direction des Musées de France, 'Different Aspects of the Problems Inherent in the Preservation and Conservation of Paintings on Silk and Paper from Dunhuang.'

### Session III: Recent Work on Chemical Analysis

**Dr. Peter Gibbs**, School of Chemistry and Molecular Sciences, The Queen's University of Belfast, 'An Update on the Conservation of the Diamond Sutra and Recent Advances in Dye Analysis.'\*

**Alan Kennedy**, School of Chemistry and Molecular Sciences, The Queen's University of Belfast, 'The Concept of pH Measurements in Paper.'

**Jean-Michel Blengino**, Engineer, Laboratoire Valectra, Electricité de France, 'Identification of the Products of the Chemical Alteration in the Manuscripts from Central Asia.'

\*The first part of this paper was originally to be presented by Professor Kenneth Seddon, Chair in Inorganic Chemistry at the Queen's University of Belfast, but he was unable to attend and so Peter Gibbs took over the presentation and combined it with his own.

Details of the Conference Proceedings and of the Third Meeting will be given in future issues of the newsletter. A special workshop will be held in June 1997 which will focus on the issue of forged Dunhuang manuscripts.

## Publications of Interest

This is a new section of the newsletter which will carry details of publications of interest, both journals and monographs. If you would like your publication included or know of any recent books that would be of interest in any language please send details to IDP (address on back page). This list will not be comprehensive nor critical.

**Turkic Languages** is a new journal published by the Publishing House Harrassowitz (Wiesbaden), edited by Lars Johanson (University of Mainz) in co-operation with Arpad Berta, Hendrik Boeschoten, Bernt Brendemoen, Eva A. Csato, Emine Gursoy-Naskali, Irina Muravyova, Dmitri M. Nasilov and Sumru A. Ozsoy with the editorial assistance of Vanessa Locke.

The journal will be published twice yearly starting in 1997 and carry refereed articles on any aspect of Turkic language studies.

#### For information contact:

Harrassowitz Verlag, Postfach 2929,  
D-65019 Wiesbaden, Germany  
fax: 49 611 530570

**Inner Asia** is a series of occasional papers published by the Mongolia and Inner Asia Studies Unit, University of Cambridge and is devoted to original research on the history, cultures, politics, economics and religions of Inner Asia. Subscriptions are UK £15 or US \$25 per issue.

#### For information contact:

Ms Annik Williams, Secretary,  
Mongolia and Inner Asia Studies Unit,  
c/o Faculty of Oriental Studies,  
University of Cambridge,  
Sidgwick Avenue,  
Cambridge CB3 9DA, UK.

**The Archaeology and Art of Central Asia: Studies from the Former Soviet Union** (Bulletin of the Asia Institute: 8), May 1996. Articles include:

A. I. Isakov, 'Sarazm: An Agricultural Center of Ancient Sogdiana'

A. Askarov and T. Shirinov, 'The "Palace", Temple and Necropolis of Jarkutan'

V. I. Sarianidi, 'Aegean-Anatolian Motifs in the Glyptic Art of Bactria and Margiana'

I. V. P'iankov, 'The Ethnic History of the Sakas'

B. A. Litvinskii and I. R. Pichikian, 'The Hellenistic Architecture and Art of the Temple of the Oxus'

ca. 350 pp. with many illustrations, cloth binding, US\$73 including shipping.

#### For information contact:

Bulletin of the Asia Institute,  
3287 Broadway Blvd.  
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48301, USA.  
fax: 1 810 647 9223

**Berliner Turfantexte** is a series concentrating on the edition of the Turkish and Iranian parts of the Berlin Turfan collection. The latest publication in the series is a collation of all existing manuscripts of the Old Turkish translation of the Suvarnaprabhāsottamasūtra with a German translation and a commentary on textual and Buddhological problems. The texts are reproduced in facsimile on 120 plates. Details of the publication are:

Peter Zieme, *Altun Yaruq Sudur. Vorworte und das erste buch* (Berliner Turfantexte 18), Brepols Publishers, Turnhout 1996.

#### For further details of this and other texts in the series contact:

Brepols Publishers  
Steenweg op Tielen 68  
2300 Turnhout  
Belgium  
fax: +32 14 42 89 19

#### Monographs

Ruth W. Dunnell, *The Great State of White and High: Buddhism and State Formation in Eleventh-Century Xia*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu 1996, 278 pp., ISBN 0824817192.

Richard N. Frye, *The Heritage of Central Asia: From Antiquity to the Turkish Expansion*, (Princeton Series on the Middle East), Markus Wiener Publishers, Princeton NY 1996, 264pp., ISBN 1558761101.

Valerie Hansen, *Negotiating Daily Life in Traditional China: How Ordinary People Used Contracts, 600-1400*, Yale University Press 1995, ISBN 0300060637.

Latika Lahiri (translator), *Chinese Monks in India: Biography of Eminent Monks who went to the Western World in Search of the Law During the Great T'ang Dynasty* by I-Ching (Buddhist Tradition Series), Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi 1995 (rpt., orig. pub. 1986), ISBN 8120800621.

Jenny F. So and Emma C. Bunker, *Traders and Raiders on China's Northern Frontier*, University of Washington Press, Seattle and London 1995, 224 pp., ISBN 0295974737 (pb).

# News

## Stein Day

In 1994 a number of curators of the Stein collections in the UK decided to meet informally once a year to discuss their work. The third Stein Day was held on June 10th at the British Library, providing an opportunity to learn about the active projects on the Dunhuang and other material at the Library and the work of librarians responsible for non-Chinese texts.

In the morning Professor Kenneth Seddon and his graduate student Alan Kennedy of the Queen's University of Belfast introduced their work on the Diamond Sutra, the world's oldest, dated printed text (868 AD). Using detailed slides, Professor Seddon showed how the condition of this important document has deteriorated over time largely as a result of early, inappropriate conservation, which lacks detailed documentation, and he stressed the urgent need for the document to be restored to a stable condition. But how? Professor Seddon's talk outlined the methods he has developed for analyzing the yellow dye used on many of the Dunhuang documents and he explained the nitrate treatment which can be used to change the chemical composition of the dye so that it will be insoluble in water (without altering its colour). This will enable the backing paper to be removed. He also showed the results of experiments using these methods performed on paper fragments from Dunhuang from the Institute of Oriental Studies in St. Petersburg. Alan Kennedy followed on with a lecture on the pH probe under development, funded by the British Library, and which will allow accurate measurements of the pH of paper.

The meeting was particularly pleased to welcome Professor Jiang Qixiang from the Xinjiang Institute of Archaeology. Professor Jiang is a renowned scholar of numismatics and was in London on a three-month study visit from April to June to the British Museum. Having spent twenty years in the Xinjiang Museum and another twenty at the Institute, Professor Jiang is familiar with all the recent archaeological work of both organizations. There was great interest in his slides of the sites but too little time to show them all, so a second session was arranged at SOAS, London University, on June 19th.

After lunch, British Library curators gave brief reports. Frances Wood spoke of the present work on the Stein third expedition material which is being carried out with the help of Professor Sha Zhi, formerly of Renda University, Beijing, who is at the British Library on his fourth visit. When the material has been surveyed, two Chinese conservators will spend time at the British Library assisting in its conservation.

Ursula Sims-Williams introduced the Sogdian (50+ fragments), Khotanese (1600+ fragments, not dated by c. 5th-6th centuries), and the Kuchean (500+ fragments), and mentioned the

work of James Hamilton in Paris on Runic Turkish. Michael O'Keefe spoke about the 800+ Kharosthi documents from Stein's three expeditions, and the British Library's acquisition in 1995 of birch bark manuscripts in north-west Prakrit Kharosthi. Up to twenty texts are represented in these new documents, and a joint project with the University of Washington should publish them in the next year. A joint British Library and UNESCO publication is also due out next year.

Susan Whitfield then gave a demonstration of the International Dunhuang Project database, showing the organisation of the material, cross-referencing, and images (whole and close-up). This is an impressive project and there is genuine appreciation among scholars of the thoughtful arrangement of the information and the ease in which material can be accessed. There are plans to make at least part of the database accessible on the Internet in 1997.

The tea-break was combined with a visit to the British Library Oriental Conservation Studio, where Mark Bernard and his colleagues showed their current projects, the re-boxing of some of the material in preparation for the move to the new British Library building, and the conservation survey element of the database, as well as answering questions.

Professor Roderick Whitfield spoke about his recent work on the banner paintings found recently by Frances Wood in the British Library. Professor Whitfield showed slides of the banners, described the composition of the paintings and compared them to those in the Musée Guimet in Paris. He read and then discussed the interpretation of the latter by Dr Jacques Giès.

To round off the day, short updates were given by Helen Wang (British Museum Coins and Medals), Anne Farrer and Shelia Canby (both British Museum Oriental Antiquities), and Anne Amos (Victoria and Albert Museum).

As last year, the meeting was very well-attended and there was interesting discussion.

*Helen Wang, The British Museum*

## Symposium Report

**La Sérinde terre d'échanges: art, religion, commerce du premier au dixième siècle** accompanying the exhibition at the Grand Palais, Paris, February 13-15 1996, was a truly international event, bringing together scholars working on vastly differing aspects of the ancient world of Serindia. The presentation of extremely recent research, as well as work in progress, was clearly appreciated, the audience at the final lecture literally gasping with delight at the splendour of Roderick Whitfield's slides of the Sui caves at Dunhuang.

The speakers are so well-known they need no introduction: Boris Marshak (Iranian, Sogdian and Serindian art); Chhaya Bhattacharya-Haesner (Indian influences in Buddhist iconography in Central Asian art); Kuo Liying (Un mandala de confession à Dunhuang); Paul Magnin (L'Empereur et le Bouddha: fondement d'une nouvelle harmonie); Marianne Yaldiz (The cosmological Buddha at the northern Silkroad); Yoshiro Imaeda (Rituel de serment des traités sino-tibétains [VIIIe-IXe siècles]); Evgueny Lubo-Lesnichenko (Tissus de Dunhuang et route de soie); Simone-Christiane Raschmann (Exchange of textile goods along the Silk Roads according to the Uigur texts); Eric Trombert (Textiles et tissus sur la route de la soie. Eléments pour une géographie de la production et des échanges entre le Ve et le Xe siècle); François Thierry (Entre Iran et Chine, la circulation monétaire en Sérinde); Georges-Jean Pinault (Narration dramatisé et narration en peinture dans la région de Koutcha); Victor Mair (La littérature bouddhique et ses représentations de l'Inde à la Chine); Zhang Guangda (Quelques pistes de réflexion sur les religions venues d'Asie centrale); Antonino Forte (Iraniens en Chine. Bouddhisme, mazdéisme, bureaux de commerce); Frantz Grenet (Avatars de Vaisravana); Monique Maillard (L'architecture de terre en Sérinde); Roderick Whitfield (Imperial splendour: the Sui dynasty (589-618) at Dunhuang).

All involved in the organisation of this stimulating colloquium deserve our congratulations, including the simultaneous translators (French-English; English-French) who made the presentations accessible to many grateful members of the audience.

As the speakers so ably demonstrated, great energy and intelligence is being applied to so many varied aspects of Serindia. Let us hope that a similar colloquium may be held in a few years time, to update us all.

*Helen Wang, The British Museum*

## Lecture Series

**The Circle of Inner Asia Art and Archaeology (CIAA)** finished off a very successful inaugural year with the May lecture by **Professor Nicholas Sims-Williams** (SOAS, London University) and **Joe Cribb** (The British Museum) entitled 'A New Bactrian Inscription of Kanishka the Great' and by the production of its third newsletter.

1996 had started with a fascinating lecture on **Zoroastrianism in Central Asia. Shahin Bekhradnia** from Oxford gave a fascinating insight into the traces of Zoroastrianism in the rituals and architecture of the non Islamic societies in this region, and the role this ancient

religion is playing in nationalistic rhetoric today. She illustrated her talk with some excellent slides and other materials.

In February and April the lectures focused on particular Central Asian towns: **Dr Elizabeth Errington** from the British Museum spoke on 'The Columns and Capitals of Gandhara with Special Reference to Jamalgarhi' and **Merv** was the subject of the paper by **Dr Georgina Herrmann** (Institute of Archaeology, University College London). In March **Dr Susan Whitfield** spoke about the **International Dunhuang Project**.

Enthusiasts were rewarded with two lectures in April. **Helen Wang** from the Department of Coins and Medals at the British Museum, gave the second and offered a tantalising picture, albeit too brief, into the life of Sir Marc Aurel Stein's 'Recording Angel', **Miss Florence Lorimer**. It was fitting that Miss Lorimer's great niece and great great niece were able to attend.

Congratulations must be extended to the organisers of CIAA for their excellent work. Details of the 1996-7 lectures will be given in the next newsletter. If you are interested in giving a lecture or know of anyone passing through London over next year please contact CIAA at the address below.

*The provisional schedule of next year's lectures is given below. Full details will be given in future issues of IDP News.*

September: **Professor Roderick Whitfield**, *Newly-Discovered Dunhuang Paintings*.

October: **Dr Elisabeth Errington**, *The Charles Mason Collection*.

November: **Professor Bivar**, *What is Mithraism?*

**Robin Coningham**, (to be announced).

December: **Dr Andrew Palmer**, *Imagery in Religious Poetry*.

January: **Dr Mary Stewart**, *Chinese Monks and Monasteries*.

February: **Dr Vesta Curtis**, *On Parthian Furniture*.

March: **Dr Youngsook Pak**, *The Otani Collection in Seoul*.

April: **Dr David Scott**, (to be announced)

May: **Robert Knox**, *New Excavations at Akra in Pakistan*.

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## Project News



*Delegates at the EBTI conference in the Foguangshan Monastery in Taipei with Venerable Master Hsing Yun.*

### Conference Reports

#### *Meeting of the Electronic Buddhist Text Initiative*

*Taipei, April 6-8, 1996*

The Electronic Buddhist Text Initiative (EBTI) was founded to provide a forum for discussion of the problems and potential offered by computerisation of Buddhist texts and a potential route for standardisation. Since its inception, many of the Projects have been finished or are nearing completion. The computerisation of the Koryo Canon from the woodblocks at the Hae-in Monastery in Korea, hosts of the Second Meeting in 1994, has been published on a CD-ROM demonstrated at the meeting. The font has been designed specially based on the woodblocks. Other full text projects represented at the meeting included two separate Pali text projects (a representative from a third, from Sri Lanka, was unable to get a visa), Sanskrit, Tibetan, and Vietnamese.

EBTI was founded to consider the problems of full text computerisation and Dr Urs App of the International Zen Research Center in Japan and Christian Wittern of Goettingen University in Germany kept all the presenters on their toes with their questions about character coding and mark-up of text. The former problem has no immediate solution. For example, most complete Chinese character sets still contain fewer than 30,000 characters whereas it has been estimated that about 70,000 are found in Zen Buddhist texts (including some unique to these texts). On the latter point it was agreed that mark-up will be the next stage for most of the projects and only then will digitisation capacities be exploited fully. Urs App and Christian Wittern joined with Professor Hsieh of Academia Sinica in the final session to emphasise this point and everyone came away determined to explore the potential of mark-up.

Databases, of course, provide mark-up by structuring of the text into separate fields and several database projects were demonstrated, including the International Dunhuang Project. One of the most impressive was a database designed by Professor Thomas Price of California State University for teaching schoolchildren about Japan, complete with music and moving images. The computerisation of the Huntingdon Archive of Buddhist Art presented

by Jan Glowski of Ohio State University showed the enormous potential digitisation of images could offer. Combined with ground plans of monasteries and shrines, maps, text and other scholarly aids, the images can be used by students, scholars and the public to gain a much wider understanding than most people could ever hope to gain from travel.

One of the most impressive presentations was given by Professor Heng Ching Shih of the Buddhist Centre at Taiwan National University. The Internet service developed by the Centre offers dictionaries of Buddhism, lessons in Sanskrit and many other resources for the Buddhist scholar. However, the problems of the slowness of the Internet will probably mean it is used less than it deserves. Computerised dictionaries were also the subject of several presentations, including that by the hosts, Foguangshan Monastery.

The conference was held at their new monastery in Taipei. Apart from the excellent food and the warm welcome, the nuns and monks ensured that the conference was a success by providing excellent technology and, even more importantly, knowing how to make it all work. For a meeting at which everyone had at least one computer which they needed to use in their presentations, it was refreshing to prove that technology need not be problematic — it can work! The Meeting was very pleased to be addressed by the Venerable Master Hsing Yun the final day and some of the participants extended their stay by travelling down in the main monastery in Kao-Hsiung.

The next Meeting was arranged for October 1997 in Japan.

After the EBTI Meeting, Susan Whitfield went on to the workshop entitled **Global Information Infrastructure for Asian Studies** and the **Annual Conference of the Association of Asian Studies**, both held in Honolulu, where she spoke about the work and progress of the Project at various fora and demonstrated the database. Thanks are owing to the East Asian Libraries Co-operative who generously allowed space on their stand for demonstration of the International Dunhuang Project database. On her return to the UK she also spoke at the **Research Libraries Information Network (RLIN®) Forum** in Cambridge. Details of this are given in *RLIN Focus*, 20 (June 1996).

# Project News

## Special symposium and call for papers

A special project symposium entitled 'The Dunhuang-Turfan Symposium' will be held as part of 35th ICANAS (International Congress of Asian and North African Studies) in Budapest, Hungary, 7-12 July 1997. It will be divided into the following sessions:

### A. Silk Road Archaeology in the Twentieth Century

1. 1900-1930: Sir Aurel Stein and the great discoveries at the start of the century  
*papers on Sir Aurel Stein and any of the other archaeologists of the Silk Road at this time and on their finds*

2. 1930-1997: Chinese archaeology on the Silk Road  
*papers on any aspect of archaeology on the Silk Road starting from the joint expeditions in the 1930s up to the present*

### B. International Scholarship on the Discoveries

1. Conservation and Co-operation  
*papers on conservation of the discoveries after their removal from the sites and on collaborative projects such as the UNESCO Silk Road Project, IDP etc.*

2. The Textual Tradition  
*papers on the manuscript finds from Dunhuang/Turfan, particularly on problems of terminology and translation.*

The symposium is being organised by Drs. Raschmann and Whitfield (details below). If you would like to offer a suggestion for a paper please send an abstract to one of the organisers.

There is no funding available for fares, conference fees, accommodation or other expenses and so participants will have to be totally self-financing. The symposium is part of 35th ICANAS and participants will be expected to register for this and will receive all general details from the ICANAS organising committee. A registration form and details of ICANAS will be sent if the paper is accepted.

Dr Simone-Christiane Raschmann,  
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## Call for articles

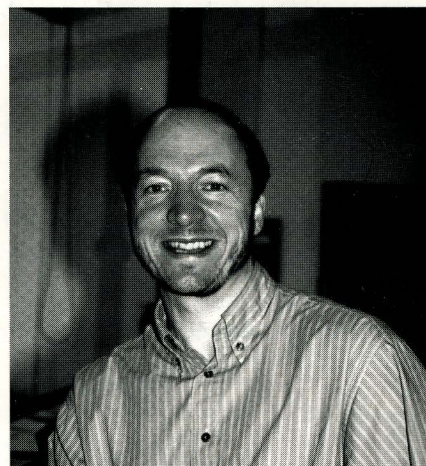
The next issue of *IDP News* will carry articles on **Dunhuang studies in China**. Suggestions for short articles or reports (In Chinese or English) on any aspect of this are welcome. Please either send your suggestion or a copy of your article (500-1000 words) or report (up to 500 words) to IDP at the address below. Details of recent or forthcoming publications are also welcome. The deadline for copy is October 31 1996.

## Dunhuang Monograph Series

This will be launched in 1997 and full details will be given in the next newsletter. Anyone who has a manuscript which they would like to be considered for the series should contact the Project at the address below.

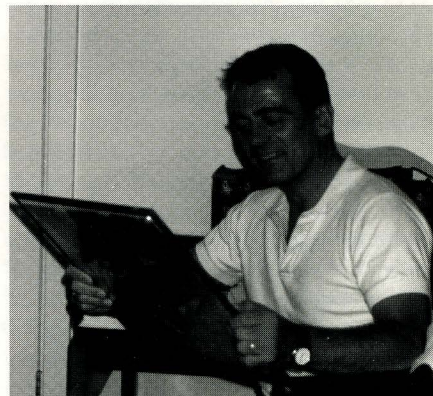
## People

The Chinese Section of the British Library was extremely pleased to welcome back **Professor Sha Zhi** in April this year for a six month visit to work on Stein's Third Expedition material. Professor Sha will be followed by two conservators from the National Library of China, **Zhang Ping** and **Gu Jun**, who will assist in the conservation of this material in the British Library Oriental Conservation Studio. Sincere thanks are extended to the Sino-British Fellowship Trust which has funded these three visits.



Congratulations to **Mark Barnard** (above) from the British Library on his promotion to Chief Conservator in Collections and Preservation and welcome to Robert Davies who started work in the Oriental Conservation Studio earlier this year.

**Professor Skjærvø** (pictured above right) returned to the British Library in July to continue his cataloguing work on the Khotanese manuscripts and fragments from the Stein Collection. Professor Skjærvø, now Aga Khan Professor of Iranian at Harvard University, began this work in the early 1980s and it is now nearing completion. When finished it will make



available to the public a large number of economics and legal texts from Khotan between the sixth to tenth centuries, as well as contemporaneous Buddhist texts. Of special interest are first-time translations of several Vajrayāna (tantric) texts from late tenth-century Dunhuang. Details will be given in future issues of the newsletter.

## Stein photographs

As part of the Getty Project at the British Library, Kate Losty has systematically worked her way through Sir Aurel Stein's photograph albums, loose photographs and negatives from his expeditions and now held at the British Library. They have all been identified and labelled and details will now be entered on to a computer database for easier identification and access for scholars.

## IFLA

The 62nd General Conference of the International Federation of Library Associations will be held in Beijing from 25-31 August 1996 and the International Dunhuang Project database will be the showcase of the British Library exhibition stand. All those who are attending the meeting are welcome to come along to Stands 35 and 37 to look at the demonstration and to pick up a carrier bag which features the Project logo. A full report will be given in the next issue of *IDP News*.

*IDP News is edited and designed by:*

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*Please send contributions or comments to the above address. The newsletter is free: send a mailing address if you would like to receive a copy.*