

AGM was chaired by Dr. A. Taylor, representative of the Preparatory Committee. It began with a plenary forum with representatives from the various LEXES describing their experience in setting up their associations, followed by Dr. T. McArthur providing an overview of the need for - and benefits of - global links and cooperation between workers in the field of lexicography. An Executive Committee was then elected and ASIALEX was inaugurated in the presence of all the participants.

The ASIALEX Executive Committee (1997-1999) is made up of the following members:

- ◆ President: **Prof HUANG Jianhua** *Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, P.R. China*
 - ◆ Vice-President: **Prof Sangsup LEE** *Yonsei University, Korea*
 - ◆ Honorary-Secretary: **Ms Amy CHI** *HKUST, Hong Kong*
 - ◆ Honorary Treasurer: **Dr Steven LUK** *The Commercial Press (HK) Ltd, Hong Kong*
- Committee Members:
- ◆ **Dr Turki DIAB** *University of Jordan, Jordan*
 - ◆ **Dr LU Gusun** *Fudan University, P.R. China*
 - ◆ **Mr TONO Yukio** *Tokyo Gakugei University, Japan*

The Conference ended with the formal inauguration of ASIALEX. I was very fortunate to have the opportunity to be the convener of the Conference, and I would like to express my deepest gratitude to those who helped in making the event a success. From what I have observed - following a Chinese saying "there are certainly a lot of pearls buried under the hay" - much has been done in various countries in Asia but most, if not all, has not been properly documented and brought to light. In order to disseminate to other parts of the world work that has been carried out in the region, the Language Centre will work on the publication of selected papers presented at the Conference and ensure a wide distribution. In the long run, however, it will be the responsibility of ASIALEX to remedy the situation.

Towards PEOPLEX

Ilan Kernerman

I was thrilled to take part in the Dictionaries in Asia Conference and the inauguration of ASIALEX. The need for a forum of this kind has long been felt, and the event lived up to expectations.

It might seem strange no such framework existed so far, since Asia was the cradle for language and dictionary-making thousands of years ago, and its lexicographic tradition flourished through the ages to modern times. The 20th century's prominent milestones in pedagogical lexicography stem from the work of M West in India and AS Hornby in Japan. Some of the world's finest dictionaries are made in Japan and its neighbours, as well as valuable research, but they are little known of elsewhere.

In addition to economic-political factors, this lack may be mainly due to Asia's inherent diversity, not being a homogenous entity of any sort. Linguistically, unlike most European tongues which pertain to the Indo-European family - Asian languages share no common background, apart from being human.

That natural human link is true just as well for the entire world. Asia can project a microcosmos of it and, thus, establishing ASIALEX is a significant step toward forming a global lexicographical association.

A future Globalex (or Unilex, in the words of Tom McArthur) concerns globalization and co-existence in multilingual societies, English as the international lingua franca, localized Englishes, effects on the mother tongues, etc, as well as repercussions from hi-tech and tele-com, on-line interactivity and automatic translation, 'Dictionizers' and 'Quicktionaries', and so on.

This forthcoming forum should not replace national or regional LEXes, but accomodate the varied issues. As such, geography is no sound base for its foundation, nor for the soon-to-come dictionaries that will hardly be what we imagine now.

Beyond countries and behind computers there are people. First of all, and after all. People are the most common denominator for lexicography all over the world.



People in Asia, left to right: Huang Jianhua; Ilan Kernerman; Gregory James; Anne Pakir (Singapore); Turki Diab; P R Subramanian (India)