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## Nouvelles des bibliothèques, des archives et des musées

¶ ADDIS-ABEBA, NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND LIBRARY OF ETHIOPIA. — Le ministère de la Culture d'Éthiopie s'est récemment doté d'une Agence gouvernementale chargée de la conservation du "patrimoine documentaire", la NALE (National Archives and Library of Ethiopia), dont les missions très étendues ont été définies par un texte de loi promulgué en 1999 (proclamations nos 179/1999 et 209/2000) Si la Bibliothèque nationale existait depuis la fin de la Seconde Guerre mondiale, cette proclamation renforce son cadre légal. De même, elle définit précisément le rôle des Archives. L'importance de cette réforme est à la mesure de la richesse et de la complexité du patrimoine éthiopien, qui tient principalement à deux faits : d'une part l'existence d'une très longue tradition littéraire (savante et religieuse) donnant lieu, dès le XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, à la constitution d'importantes bibliothèques [voir ci-dessus, p. 14-25], d'autre part à la mise en place, dès le début du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, au sein d'une administration moderne organisée autour de ministères spécialisés, d'un système d'archivage assuré par des bureaux d'ordre coordonnés par une chancellerie ou « Ministère de la Plume ».

L'ampleur des problèmes posés par la conservation et l'accessibilité de l'ensemble de ce patrimoine a été soulignée depuis les années 1970. La loi de 1999 leur apporte une première réponse, en donnant l'étayage législatif indispensable à l'action de la NALE. C'est dans ce contexte l'Ambassade de France à Addis Abeba et le Centre français des études éthiopiennes ont proposé en 2001 la mise en place d'un programme de coopération. Deux experts français, un conservateur du patrimoine au Centre historique des Archives nationales, Denise Ogilvie, et une spécialiste des manuscrits éthiopiens, Anaïs Wion, ont ainsi défini et piloté un programme financé par l'Ambassade de France articulant plusieurs interventions dans le domaine de la collecte, du traitement et de la conservation des archives, de la conservation et du catalogage des manuscrits et de la formation dans le domaine des bibliothèques. Outre ce financement, ce programme a reçu le soutien, de la Direction des Archives de France (Archives nationales - CHAN et CAC) Direction du Livre (BnF et Inspection des bibliothèques); du ministère des Affaires étrangères (Archives diplomatiques); du ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche (CNRS).

En décembre 2005, le directeur général de la NALE, M. Atkilt Assefa, a rencontré à Paris ses homologues français. Cette visite a permis la signature d'une convention tri-partite avec la DAF et la BnF qui permet de formaliser les rapports de coopération entre les deux pays et de leur donner une dimension nouvelle. — Denise OGILVIE, Anaïs WION.

¶ AVRANCHES, SCRIPTORIAL. — Le *Scriptorial* d'Avranches, musée des manuscrits du Mont-Saint-Michel, ouvrira ses portes au public au mois d'août 2006. Les visiteurs seront invités à un voyage qui débutera par une découverte de l'histoire d'Avranches évoquant les liens qui l'unissent au Mont-Saint-Michel. Plus loin, ils découvriront les différentes étapes de réalisation d'un manuscrit; la visite permettra ensuite d'admirer les précieux manuscrits dans la salle du Trésor. Ce parcours sera jalonné de bornes multimédia, de jeux, de manipulations d'objets et de films qui permettront au visiteur d'approfondir sa

découverte de manière ludique et interactive. *Le Scriptorial* sera également un musée contemporain dédié à l'écrit, au livre électronique avec des expositions temporaires thématiques. — [http://www.ville-avranches.fr/Scriptorial/tourisme\\_scriptorial1.htm](http://www.ville-avranches.fr/Scriptorial/tourisme_scriptorial1.htm).

¶ CESENA, BIBLIOTECA MALATESTIANA. — La Biblioteca Malatestiana, esempio unico di biblioteca umanistica del Rinascimento, è il primo bene italiano a essere inserito nel prestigioso Registro Internazionale della Memoria del Mondo dell'Unesco. Il Registro Internazionale della Memoria del Mondo è la lista di tutte le raccolte di patrimonio documentario riconosciute dall'Unesco come rispondenti a criteri di interesse universale. Attualmente sono una novantina le raccolte che sono state riconosciute Memorie del Mondo. Si tratta di documentazioni di vario tipo: fra esse compaiono, ad esempio, le Tavolettine in scrittura cuneiforme di Boghazkoy (Turchia), l'Alfabeto fenicio (Libano), la Bibbia di Gutenberg conservata all'Università di Gottinga, la Dichiarazione dei diritti dell'uomo e del cittadino, l'Archivio del ghetto di Varsavia.

¶ LEIDEN. ORIENTAL COLLECTIONS CURATORSHIP IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY ABOLISHED. — The resignation on December 1st, 2005, by the arabist and islamologist Prof. Jan Just Witkam from his post of curator of Oriental collections in the Leiden University Library, is the sad culmination of a process of continuous reorganization to which the Leiden Library has fallen victim for the past few years. Witkam is not the only one to leave the Leiden Library. Head-librarian Paul Gerretsen had already preceded him on January 1st, 2006. And as recently as February 1st, 2006, his deputy, Janus Linmans was promoted away from the library which he had served for more than 25 years. And more high-profile Leiden librarians are in for a rough ride in the near future, rumour has it.

Witkam, who served the Library for more than 31 years, was appointed professor of 'Paleography and Codicology of the Islamic World' in the course of 2001. Now it is this professorship by which he continues his work with manuscripts in Leiden University. In his post of Oriental collections curator he is to be remembered as the author and instigator of a detailed catalogue of Arabic manuscripts in the Leiden library, still in progress. His active acquisition, together with the continuous necessary fundraising, made him almost double the Oriental collections of the Leiden Library. In just over thirty years he emulated an effort of four centuries of acquisition by all his predecessors together. In addition, he instigated the publication of several detailed catalogues of Oriental manuscripts in the series *Codices Manuscripti*, to the most recent of which, Chinese manuscripts by Koos Kuiper (2005) he was a co-author. We pass over his many other activities in silence. His active presence in the Leiden Oriental collections will be sadly missed.

Leiden's Special Collections are still in the process of being reorganized to the extent that their formerly semi-independent components will be fully integrated. Responsibilities of expert staff of all special collections departments are in the process of being taken away from them, and a new class of managers is being positioned between Library directors and Collection curators. Such managers pride themselves for their ignorance of the contents of 'their' Special Collections. The less they know of content, the better suited they are for their management. Absence of knowledge enables them to take — as they call it — unprejudiced decisions of Salomonic wisdom. It is a development which

can be observed all over the world, and certainly not in the field of libraries alone. In this context it is hardly surprising that Witkam will not be succeeded in Leiden. This simply giving up of a coordinated responsibility for a non-western library activity by a Library, which derives most of its international fame from that very coordinated activity, is an evident loss by all standards. The new team of management of Leiden's Library, now for precisely one year in charge and without previous managerial experience, has yet to show to the world what they are capable of except in persuading their most valued human resources to leave their organization. These managers' worship for everything equipped with a keyboard and a monitor, not as a utility but as a goal in itself, is a trend, which will, unfortunately, continue to have its effects for the time being.

§ NEW YORK, PIERPONT MORGAN LIBRARY. — The Pierpont Morgan Library, home to priceless collection of artworks and manuscripts, has reopened on April 29, after an extensive expansion and renovation project. The 75.000 square feet of new space will allow the Morgan to display more of its collection of 350.000 objects than ever before. The additions include a cube-shaped gallery (designed by Renzo Piano) inspired by Italian Renaissance villas, underground vaults to protect the rare books and a new auditorium with nearly 300 seats. — <http://www.morganlibrary.org>.

§ NOTTINGHAM, UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM, DEPARTMENT OF MANUSCRIPTS AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS. — Anyone intending to use the material in the Department of Manuscripts (Portland Papers, Archdeaconry material, Middleton MSS...) should note that the Department will be closed from Easter to the Autumn this year as it is relocated from the University Park Campus to new premises in the King's Mill Campus. — General information and FAQ : <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/mss/about/kmc/>.

§ PARIS, BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE DE FRANCE. — M. Thierry Delcourt, actuellement directeur de la Médiathèque de Troyes, a été désigné pour prendre la direction du Département des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque nationale de France à compter du 1<sup>er</sup> septembre 2006, en remplacement de M<sup>me</sup> Monique Cohen, admise à la retraite.

§ UTRECHT, UNIVERSITY LIBRARY. — The profound professionalism and knowledge of the management of Utrecht University Library has caused the curator of manuscripts, Drs Koert van der Horst, due to a sense of superfluity, to leave the library after thirty-and-a-half years, somewhat prematurely. Convinced and aware of the depth of its scholarship, the management doesn't think it is necessary to appoint a successor in the near future.

For information and questions on the Utrecht manuscripts, from now on you can contact Ms N. J. Grygierczyk, 'sector manager PD', a.o. of the sub-sub-sub section without a name (but having still something to do with data carriers called 'manuscripts', as some people still happen to believe), of the sub-sub-section 'Special collections' of the sub-section 'Informatiebemiddeling en Marketing' (I&M), of the sector 'Publieksdiensten' (PD); her e-mail address is <n.j.grygierczyk@library.uu.nl>. Please try!