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A REPORT OF THE 1995 IFLA CONFERENCE
(ISTANBUL, TURKEY)
By Nancy D. Anderson

For several years now I have reported in Sci-Tech News on the activities of the Section of Science and Technology Libraries of IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions). This year Sinikka Koskiala of Finland took over my job as Chair of the Standing Committee (SC), while fellow SLA member Patricia Yocum was elected Secretary of the Section. So I suspect this article may be my last for a while. (In IFLA an individual is allowed to serve on a standing committee for a maximum of eight years. Even though I will remain active in the SC as a special advisor, I have joined the Serial Publications Standing Committee. After all, serial librarians should hear the viewpoint of a sci-tech librarian, especially where electronic journals are concerned!)

Last year I was disheartened with the poor attendance of committee members at the IFLA conference in Havana. In 1995 we nearly doubled our SC attendance, but in Istanbul, unlike Havana, we were unable to attract many Turkish sci-tech librarians to our SC meetings as observers. The good news is that two librarians from the Developing World were elected to the SC: Ms. O. Dilebanye from Botswana and Mr. J.C. Anafu from Nigeria (as a corresponding member). In general the Section is one of the largest in the Special Libraries Division with 102 registered members.

As always, the SC focused the greater part of its attention on projects and conference programming.

Projects:

World Survey of Availability of Theses in Science and Technology: Due to incomplete data, SC decided not to publish the guide in paper format. The electronic file was sent to IFLA and is now on the following IFLA web site: http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/ifla/pubs/general/wgdst/wgdst.htm). Even in this format, the guide is pretty useful: it describes what constitutes a doctoral dissertation in the various countries, what guides and methods of bibliographic control exist for these dissertations (in science and technology), and what access is available for dissertations not covered by bibliographic tools listed previously.

Electronic Deposition of Full-Text Grey Literature Documents: This project “examines the problems of access to and conservation of sci-tech grey literature in Eastern Europe, FSU, and Asia and will make recommendations for ensuring improved access internationally to this material.” The feasibility study includes (1) a survey of which 25% of the 286
questionnaires have been received, (2) a study of ongoing sister projects, and (3) a pilot project at National Public Library of Science and Technology (Moscow) of monitoring full-text analogs of sci-tech journals and in-house conversion to CD of electronic files. Findings have been reported at the IDT conference in Paris, June 1995, and an international librarians conference in Krakow-Przegorzały, August 1995. These reports are available from NPLST. The principal investigator will be presenting further results at the Science and Technology Libraries workshop in Beijing, August 1996.

Survey of the Content and Structure of the Information of WWW/Gopher Services of the IATUL and IFLA Section of Science and Technology Libraries. A report of the initial phase of the study was presented at the August 1996 IFLA University Libraries Section and User Education Roundtable co-sponsored Workshop on Internet Training and Use Internationally by Irma Pasanen-Tuomainen, “Design of WWW browser navigation applications for improved Internet access.” Her abstract is as follows: Different design aspects of the navigation method applications of the WWW browsers for improved access are presented as issues for discussion. The approach highlights the similarities to the present environment where guidance in an electronic library bears a resemblance to the physical libraries and there is a likeness between the network and the structured databases concerning information searching procedures. Second phase of the study will focus on in-depth analysis of the content and structure of the WWW/Gopher services’ information presentations. A final report will be issued in 1996.

The Section’s informational brochure has been published in English, French, Russian and Spanish. A shortened Chinese-language version will be published for Beijing IFLA conference.

Istanbul Conference,
20-26 August 1995

This year the Istanbul conference did NOT follow the pattern of previous IFLA conferences. There was not a coup as in Moscow (1991), travelers’ revenge as in New Delhi (1992), thunderstorms knocking out the electricity as in Barcelona (1993), nor President Clinton recalling our charter flights as in Havana (1994). The PKK was reticent and did not set off any bombs against tourists in Istanbul until the day after our departure. Instead, more librarians attended this IFLA conference than any other previous conference.

Open Session For the last few years the Section’s open session program did not have simultaneous interpretation. However, this year it did not affect attendance as the room quickly filled—with 60-70 persons attending and many more turned away. Our program was one of several focusing on the issues of electronic publishing. Patricia Yocom, past-Chair of SLA’s Biological Sciences Division and fellow IFLA member not only planned the program but will also be editing the Spring 1996 issue of the IFLA Journal, which will contain the better papers from the IFLA conference on electronic journals. The theme chosen for the open session was “Archiving the Electronic Journal.” This program featured a new format (for IFLA) of 5
 speakers and 2 reactors. The reactors were J.-P. Accart, Centre de Documentation, Centre Hospitalier, Argenteuil, France and Yasar Tonta, Associate Professor, Dept. of Library Science, Hacettepe University, Ankara, Turkey. Abstracts of the presentations follow. (Please e-mail me at andanders@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu for more information.)

Presentations:

1. “Archiving electronic journals from the serial information provider’s perspective” by Wim Luijendijk, Vice President and General Manager, EBSCO Subscription Services—Europe, Aalsmeer, The Netherlands.

Abstract: We are in a time when many people involved in the library community are uncertain about what their and others’ roles will be in the near and distant future. All participants in the library community today will have to be flexible and understand the true nature of their existence and their missions. Products and services provided by all will have to change, but missions will stay the same. Although traditionally handled by librarians, the archiving of electronic journals could be handled by publishers, libraries, serial information vendors or even back issue dealers. Document delivery providers will be involved in the archiving of articles in anticipation of customer requests for them. Eventually, however, the party that can archive information the most effectively, efficiently and inexpensively while providing the most access will be the one to do it.


Abstract: L’édition electronique en mode caracteres bouleverse l’équilibre qui s’était etablir entre les acteurs de la chaine de creation et de distribution de l’information. Le document electronique permet a l’auteur d’etre son propre editeur et a l’editeur d’etre son propre diffuseur. Sa structure comporte tous les elements qui servent a leur catalogage et a leur indexation. Donc les bibliotheques n’auront plus a effectuer le catalogage original, ni l’indexation, ni le resume documentaire. La recherche de l’information et la navigation entre les documents amenent a coupler les activites de production de bases de donnees et de catalogues a la recherche des documents primaires. L’édition electronique oblige des bibliotheques et les centres de fourniture de documents a modifier profondement leur methodes de travail, leurs infrastructures informatiques et de telecommunication. L’INIST, qui est a la fois createur de donnees bibliographiques et fournisseur de documents primaires, se place dans une perspective de liaison entre ces deux activites en collaboration avec tous les partenaires de la chaine documentaire.

Abstract: After being heralded for many years, electronic journals have arrived and are here to stay—and in ever increasing numbers. Authors, publishers, vendors, and librarians must resolve a number of critical issues about this new medium. In addition to technical standards, these issues include a wide array of legal, cost, bibliographic control, and archival matters. This paper will concentrate on this latter group of concerns.


Abstract: Introduction: The origin of the journal is in the creation of knowledge—or consensus belief. It plays the role of taking academic conversations and discussions—via a panel of respected peer referees—to a wider domain. It is therefore a center piece in the knowledge creation conversation. This model will also apply to the electronic journal. Electronic journals and the profusion of other electronic media are challenging the role of the information profession in making the body of knowledge available to society in an organised manner. This will continue. In my view the development of the electronic journal will occur at the same time as the re-organisation and redefinition of the role of the information professional, the society they serve and the information industry, within which we all work. For me the future of our industry is the creation of a worldwide library. In this library all of the digital sources in the world will be available in a well-organised context. The worldwide library will be available to all users, independent of location or computing platform and at utility prices.


Abstract: This paper deals with the first commercial pilot project in Europe on the electronic availability of some 120 journals published by Elsevier Science (ES) in the fields of economics and computer sciences and (applied) mathematics, at the campus network of Tilburg University. After an introduction and a short history the paper will discuss the most important topics in the license such as: authorised user community, authorised usage, user feedback and commercial terms and conditions. Finally, the role of the library and computer centre will be discussed.

Workshop

The Section co-sponsored a workshop with the User-Education Roundtable on “Electronic Journals: Access, Use and Implications for Training,” moderated by Mr. Kesselman. Speakers included Tom Nisonger (Indiana University) on “Electronic journal collection analysis”; Jan Olsen (Cornell University; her synopsis was read by Martin Kesselman) on “Scholars and e-journals”; Tuira Sonkkila (Helsinki University of Technology) on “Training issues”; and Suzanne Grefshem (National Institutes of Health) on “Technical access issues.” Following these presentations a publishers’ roundtable of Arnoud de
Kemp (Springer Verlag), Ted Caris (Cambridge Scientific Abstracts), and Robert Kimberley (ISI) offered their views on electronic publishing. The open discussion which followed these presentations was lively and informative. Americans tend to forget that librarians from other cultures are not as comfortable in the more informal “vendor updates” such as we have at SLA conferences, so it was rewarding to note that this approach was such a success.

**Upcoming Conference Programs**

**Beijing (1996):** The theme chosen for next year’s open session is “Management of Sci-Tech journals in a time of change.” David Price will be program planner. The SC accepted one of the papers offered to the Section by the Chinese Organizing Committee: “Research on the collection and distribution of foreign-language sci-tech journals in China,” offered by the Section’s corresponding member, Xu Hong-Ying. The workshop theme is “The role of grey literature in science and technology.” As mentioned above, the principal investigator of the Section’s project on Grey Literature will organize the workshop.

**Copenhagen (1997):** The theme for the open session is not yet decided. SC discussed having another session on electronic journals (bringing the topic up-to-date from 1995) or, alternatively, to focus on the broader subject of “changes in scientific communication.” Two SC members volunteered to be the ad hoc planning group for the open session. Possibilities considered for the workshop include a “vendor update” much like this year’s session in which several important sci-tech publishers will inform the audience of their publishing plans. Another possibility is a workshop co-sponsored with IATUL.

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