

EDITORIAL

Past and Future

Stephen Parker

In the previous issue of *IFLA Journal*, we looked back at the history of IFLA over the past 75 years, and also reviewed the present situation of libraries in the United Kingdom, in preparation for the Glasgow Conference. That Conference is now almost upon us, and it is now time to look forward to the next, to be held in Berlin from 1–8 August 2003, and beyond.

The overall theme of this current issue is encapsulated in the title of the first paper by Patrick Cadell, former Keeper of the Records of Scotland. 'Building on the Past, Investing in the Future through Genealogy and Local History Services' is the title of Mr Cadell's keynote address to the Glasgow meeting of the new IFLA Section on Genealogy and Local History. The paper points out that, while the study of genealogy and family history has become more rigorous and demanding in recent years, it has also become more interesting and rewarding, thanks in part to the application of modern technology in archives and records offices. Although modern research tools have their drawbacks, Mr Cadell considers that the future is bright; but he reminds genealogists that "We have profited from the work of past scholars; by publication or by making our research available, we must allow future scholars to profit from ours".

Preparations for the Berlin Conference have been well under way for several months, if not years. One feature of the preparations is a series of workshops designed to raise awareness of IFLA and its activities among German librarians before the Berlin Conference. The second workshop in this series, on International Aspects of Intellectual Freedom and Libraries, was held in Berlin on 18 January 2002. The aim was to introduce IFLA's Free-

dom of Access to Information and Freedom of Expression (FAIFE) core activity to German librarians. Three papers related to this workshop are included in this issue.

The first paper, by Susanne Seidelin, Director of the IFLA/FAIFE Office in Copenhagen, Denmark, discusses the outcome of the Berlin workshop from an international perspective. It introduces the mandate of FAIFE and its 2001–2003 priorities and related activities and results, and gives examples of how FAIFE responds when the intellectual freedoms are at stake. It describes how FAIFE aims to collect information on the global situation on freedom of access to information and to publish it in the IFLA/FAIFE World Report Series. FAIFE cooperates closely with IFLA on policy development; a recent example is the recently-published IFLA *Internet Manifesto*. Ms Seidelin concludes that, encouraged by the interest shown in the Berlin workshop, FAIFE hopes to take the message around the world through similar seminars and meetings – though this will require the support of sponsors interested in supporting IFLA/FAIFE activities on a global scale.

The second paper, by Barbara Schleihaugen, Secretary General of the Berlin Conference, reports on the workshop from the perspective of the German librarians who participated. The programme included presentations on: historical aspects of censorship and the legal framework in Germany as well as IFLA/FAIFE initiatives and activities and the FAIFE PhD project on Internet-accessible information. Those present participated actively in discussion groups on political, religious and ethical and moral aspects and completed a questionnaire on their attitudes to intellectual freedom and censorship in libraries. Ms Schleihaugen's report concludes that the workshop achieved its aim of rais-

ing awareness on the issues and on the importance of separating personal attitudes from professional obligations.

The third paper in this group is an updated version of one presented at the Berlin workshop by Stuart Hamilton on 'Internet Accessible Information and Censorship, Intellectual Freedom and Libraries – a Global Overview'. Stuart Hamilton is a PhD student at the Royal School of Library and Information Science in Copenhagen, Denmark, and his paper gives a progress report on his PhD project on libraries, censorship and barriers to accessing information on the Internet, which is co-sponsored by IFLA/FAIFE. The paper provides an overview of the current situation regarding access to information on the Internet in the international library community and describes the global rise of the Internet and the 'informatization' of society and the consequences for libraries. It includes examples from around the world showing how some governments try to prevent access to information or monitor user activity, and discusses the implications of the September 11th terrorist attacks for the future of Internet-accessible information. Mr Hamilton concludes that libraries must continue to voice their discontent with censorship through international bodies such as IFLA/FAIFE.

The final paper in this issue focuses on the future of one of IFLA's sister organizations, the International Association of Libraries and Museums of the Performing Arts (SIBMAS). 'Documenting the Performing Arts', by Willem Rodenhuis of the University of Amsterdam, is based on an interview with the President of SIBMAS, Dr Claudia Balk. Immediately after her election in 2000, Dr Balk announced her intention of intensifying the existing bonds with IFLA and with the International Council of Muse-

ums (ICOM), two organizations with which SIBMAS has been closely associated for many years. She also stressed the need to developing a concrete vision of the possibilities for cooperation now that a wide range of digital technologies is available. One example of the application of such technologies is the recent mounting on the web of the *SIBMAS International Directory of Performing Arts Collections and Institutions*.

The next issue of IFLA Journal (Volume 28, nos. 5/6) will be a true double issue containing a selection of the best papers presented at the Glasgow Conference. We hope to include papers representing the professional and geographical range of IFLA's activities, including some

of the main keynote addresses. The Chairs of the Divisional Coordinating Boards and the Advisory Boards for the Core Activities will be invited to recommend to the Editorial Board the best papers presented at Conference sessions held under their auspices. From these recommendations, the Editorial Board will select the papers to be published in the next – and possibly subsequent – issues. An invitation is being issued to all IFLA Officers to ensure that any Conference papers of outstanding quality are brought to the attention of the appropriate Division or Core Activity Chairs for possible inclusion in their lists of recommendations. We also extend this invitation to all members of IFLA; please let your Section officers know of any Glas-

gow Conference papers you think deserve to be considered for publication in *IFLA Journal*.

To help ensure that the *IFLA Journal* is read as widely as possible by all IFLA members and those associated with them, we will be asking participants in the Glasgow Conference to answer four simple questions about access to the *Journal* in print and online. Even if you are not planning to come to Glasgow you can still help us to assess the views of IFLA members on this topic by sending your answers to these four questions to the Editorial Offices at IFLA Headquarters by the end of August 2002. For further details, please see the item 'Access to the *IFLA Journal*' in the News Section of this issue.

Building on the Past, Investing in the Future through Genealogy and Local History Services

Patrick Cadell

Patrick Cadell joined the National Archives of Scotland (NAS) in 1991 from the National Library of Scotland, having previously worked in France and in the British Museum. He was Keeper of the Records of Scotland from 1991 to 2000. He retired at the end of 2000 and was made a CBE in the New Year Honours List. During his career in the National Archives of Scotland (NAS), Mr Cadell steered the organization through several significant developments, including the change of name from the Scottish Record Office, the publication of the Guide to the National Archives of Scotland and the launch of the Scottish Archive Network. His time as Keeper also saw the development of the first computer cataloguing system, the transfer of the first electronic records from the Scottish Office, and the implementation of an IT strategy for the department.

He was closely involved with the legislative aspects of archives, and his determination to maintain a position for archives at the heart of government was rewarded when the NAS secured the role of record keeper for the Parliament of Scotland. He was Chairman of the Society of Archivists from 1997 to 1999. At an international level, he has worked extensively with the International Council on Archives (ICA). As Secretary of the European Board of ICA he helped forge new links with archives in Eastern Europe, and also worked to secure the approval of the Council of Europe to a new policy on access to archives in 2000.

Source:

http://www.nas.gov.uk/miniframe/whats_new/I_about_news1retir.htm.

In the matter of genealogy and the study of family history, it is remarkable what advances have been made in recent times – certainly



over the three or four decades during which I have been involved. I recall two quite separate incidents, both from the 1970s, and both from my own professional experience. They perhaps demonstrate both the work that was needed for successful genealogical research, and the standard of proof that people were prepared to find acceptable at that time.

One Saturday morning an elderly American lady came into the manuscripts reading room of the National Library of Scotland, and said that she was descended from the family of Cumming of Presley which had emigrated to America at about the time of the second Jacobite rising. She was quite clear about this, and she had all the proofs necessary. What she wanted to be able to show was that the Cummings of Presley were descended from the Cummings of Altyre, and thus from the head of the clan. She had discovered that the Cumming papers were in the Library and she was determined to

see what could be found. On that day, and on many others, with the calendar of the papers and the original documents, she laboured through some very complicated 17th century deeds, but eventually she came across, under the unpromising title of a 'bond of caution', exactly what she wanted.

One of the lairds of Altyre of the 1670s was a very wild young man, and in order to save him from prison or perhaps from the gallows, members of his extended family came together to form an agreement that they would guarantee his good behaviour. All these people, who included the Cumming of Presley of the day, proclaimed their loyalty to the Cummings of Altyre 'from whom we are all descended'. The American lady had the proof she wanted even if it still lacked some precise details, and was absolutely delighted. But she had had to work long and hard for the information she needed.

My second incident relates to a man who wished to prove his descent from someone who had flourished in the 1770s and 1780s. The proof of this descent did not seem very good, to me anyway. However as if to clinch the argument, he brought out a photograph of a portrait of this gentleman, and asked me if I did not think there was a strong family resemblance between him and his supposed ancestor. As I still must have seemed less than convinced, he produced a further photograph of himself wearing just such a bobwig as was being worn by the man in the picture. I need hardly say that our conversation ended inconclusively, but as it was conducted in an open search room well within the hearing of other researchers, I noted the handkerchiefs that were being put to mouths, the splutterings of mirth and the heaving shoulders. That particular genealogist's standard of proof was not high.

The Pleasures of Genealogy

The point I wish to make is that genealogical research is now in many areas a lot easier than it used to be, but that it is also a lot more rigorous. It is also, I rather suspect, a lot more interesting. I shall return to the first two of these; let us look at the interest of genealogy.

There is no doubt that at one time what was considered a sufficient achievement in itself was the linking of one person – usually male – with his father, and so on back with a few dates and places but often little else, in the faint hope of finding a royal or at least a noble ancestor. A Danish archivist once wondered aloud in my hearing why it was that everyone seemed to want to prove how they had come down in the world. Even fully written up family histories were exceptional if they made any effort to deal with anything beyond military or political achievements. Female members of the family, however influential, were simply cardboard cutouts. Agricultural, industrial or social activities are little mentioned before the 18th century, and then only grudgingly. As for musical or artistic skills – one thinks of the Burnetts of Leys, the Maules of Panmure, the Roses of Kilravock or the Clerks of Penicuik – you will have a task to find much reference to this aspect of their characters in the histories of those families, though evidence of their skill is readily available. As for the skeleton that lurks somewhere in every family's cupboard, it is simply overlooked.

Now, I believe, we are beginning to look for more rounded characters in our genealogies. The family tree needs a bit of foliage on its bare branches, and we are no longer satisfied with a simple relationship and a date. We realise that people who emerge from old documents, in difficult language and script, nevertheless had feelings, interests, worries and preoccupations which are not absolutely different from our own.

I lay some emphasis upon this because I think it is something which has brought what one might call 'respectability' to genealogy. There are still, I regret to say, a few archivists who do not like dealing with genealogists, and who consider that family history is not true research. I like to think that they are a dying breed. I also like to think that many people interested in family history arrive in a library or archive with very much more information at their disposal than would formerly have been the case, and are therefore ready to move on to more interesting research – to an examination of what lies behind the life events of which the bare record tells us little.

In 1789, William Malcolm was condemned to be transported to Australia for stealing a horse, but why did the judge at the trial find it necessary to pay for him to have a complete new set of clothing before he went? Agnes Murray Kynynmound died in 1778. How do we know so much about the development of her breast cancer? Sir William Forbes of Pitsligo, 7th baronet, died young, but is always thought to have married and had a son. Why is there not a single scrap of paper in the family archive for the period of eighteen months or so covering the marriage, the birth and Sir William's death?

These are matters which a true family historian would wish to know about, and because so much basic information is so much more readily available now than it was in the 1970s, those interested in family research have the time and the opportunity to extend their studies. Sometimes this will be into the life and work of an individual; sometimes into that of the locality in which the family flourished. What I find remarkable is the quality of the research being done. I do not speak here of the professional researchers and record agents whose knowledge and efficiency never cease to astonish me. I speak of the 'ordinary' family historian, if such a person exists, who wants more information certainly but who can now look for it on the basis of

greater knowledge, and of a better understanding of what the records will offer and of how to make best use of them.

The Ways into Genealogy

It is nevertheless a feature of the last thirty years that record offices receive a much higher percentage of first time users. In June 1998, the Public Record Office (PRO) conducted a survey of its readers. It showed that 22 percent were visiting, not just the PRO, but any record office for the first time. These first time readers are in a very large majority people who are interested in family or local history. One of the reasons why family historians take up such a disproportionate amount of the archivist's time, and perhaps why some archivists so dislike them, is just that. They are more demanding because their needs are greater. Their perfectly reasonable questions keep the search room archivists from other tasks. But this very fact has encouraged archive services, and indeed those such as the Latter Day Saints (LDS) church with a particular interest in the matter – and in the case of the Scottish Archive Network both together – to move into making basic genealogical material available in more easily accessible ways.

I suppose the earliest examples of this in this country were the publication by the Scottish Record Society of lists of burials, testaments, apprentices etc, along with the lists of professional people, advocates, writers and of course ministers of the Church of Scotland. The involvement of the LDS Church made possible the microfilming of the Old Parochial Registers (OPRs), and subsequently their indexing, and for the first time brought the search of genealogical records within the scope of modern technology. I should admit at once that this process was not viewed without some suspicion when it first began. It was justified as a necessary conservation measure, but of course it also meant that when, considerably later, technology per-

mitted, there were several ways in which the information in the Old Parochial Registers could be managed and manipulated. This gave the researcher as much information as he or she could obtain from the registers without having to search, in volume after volume possibly in vain, for people who moved from one place to another, or for whom no record survives.

This type of access is now being dramatically extended by the Scottish Archive Network. Scanning the wills and testaments of Scottish men and women up to 1875 (the records most heavily used for genealogical purposes after the OPRs and the census records), and provision of networked access to the catalogues of the archive repositories in Scotland, are further examples of what new technology can offer. They will allow the researcher to do more and more work at home, or at least off site, before he or she has to consult those troublesome original documents. Mr MacKenzie will be speaking to you later about the Scottish Archive Network (SCAN), but I mention it to make the point that much is being done to help the genealogist – and let us admit it – to help the archivist, so that when the family historian does arrive in the search room his or her visit will be of real value.

The Rigours of Genealogy

If all these developments make genealogical research easier, they also make it more rigorous. At least I would like to think so. Though there will always be points that are not absolutely clear, and others that are open to discussion, there is, on the whole, little use in arguing with the official record. Its compilers had no particular axe to grind, and I have only once come across an official document of the last two or three centuries which had clearly been tampered with. By offering a higher standard of accuracy in the traditional areas of genealogy, is it not reasonable to hope that higher standards will be maintained elsewhere?

The publication of *Roots* was groundbreaking in a number of ways. Perhaps the most obvious was that the author, as an American of African descent, wanted to find out where he came from and who his ancestors had been, and in particular, both in the title he chose and in the avowed aim of the book, he stated his purpose of needing to find a fixed point in the past of his own ancestors. Although the ancestors of most of the people in this room have not been subjected to enormous social or political upheaval, there are probably few who live where they were born. Most Scotsmen if pressed will admit that a few generations back their forebears arrived from the Highlands, Ireland, England, the continent of Europe or even further away. But this is the generation, perhaps more than any other, which has seen social movement. People go from one side of the world to the other in search of work, and people settle in places to which they have no attachment beyond that of employment. As a consequence people naturally wish to have a better understanding of the family traits, the physical characteristics, and the instinctive loyalties with which they are blessed or cursed. The remarkable novel *No Great Mischief* by Alistair MacLeod is all about this personal heritage, which can be difficult to understand, but which it is impossible to escape. There is in fact an ever-increasing demand to meet what for many people has become a psychological need – the need to find a few fixed points in a world of constant change. The locality in which you have settled offers one fixed point, but so does your family. You may not like your family; you may not consider your ancestors particularly estimable; but they are unalterably yours.

The Future of Genealogy

The future of genealogy itself I suspect is more of the same. Advances in IT and scanning technology suggest ways in which classes of records might be made available electronically. In Scotland, some of

the great Registers – Deeds and Sasines in particular – might perhaps be given the same treatment as the wills. It is interesting that this idea was considered when SCAN was being set up, but was rejected as being altogether beyond what it was reasonable to undertake with the technology of the time – just a few short years ago. Now it is a definite option. Access to existing catalogues and indexes will little by little become easier. And just as advances are taking place in IT technology, so advances are taking place in popular understanding of and skill with IT. It is perfectly reasonable now to ask a prospective researcher what Internet investigation he or she has made before coming to a record office, and it is to be hoped that the huge efforts made by archives and libraries to make their holdings more user friendly will be to everyone's benefit.

Modern Technology and Genealogy: the Pitfalls

However there are problems associated with all of this which ought not to be underestimated. In a traditional library or archive search room there was a professional person who could explain and evaluate the records or books being used, and who could assess them properly in relation to other records which might be available. There was thus perhaps less danger of giving greater value to the material being consulted than the material would really bear. The fact for example that one of those marvellous town directories, which are so common for the 19th century, indicates that your ancestor was the best drawer of teeth for miles around, does not indicate either that the information is true, or that he practised in a particular place for longer than the time necessary to get his name into the directory.

The besetting virtue of the genealogist is optimism. Hope is always there and links are made which the actual evidence will not support. There was an Alexander Edward, known as a mathematician

and musician; another was minister of Kemback in Fife; another was a garden designer of more than passing importance. Alexander Edward is also a rather uncommon name. The assumption that these people are one and the same – correct as it happens – is one which one might be tempted to take for granted. But I know from my own family that many people have assumed that Thomas Cadell, father and son, who were very successful publishers in London in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, must of course have been related to the equally successful Robert Cadell who published the works of Sir Walter Scott. In fact they are completely unrelated, though they operated at the same time in a small profession, and share an unusual name of Celtic origin. One lot comes from Wales, the other from Scotland.

I make these points because, with an increasing use of IT, there will be less need, and possibly less opportunity, for the genealogist to interface with that best of all finding aids, the archivist or librarian behind the desk. We have to be careful to see that the information available through the computer is properly described, not just as to its content, but as to its value. Frankly I have no suggestions as to how this should best be done, though I know that the many courses on genealogy run by universities, libraries, archives and evening schools take the matter very seriously. The difficulty is more to do with the extent to which all potential genealogists are prepared – not just in terms of the information available to them electronically, but in terms of the value of that information – for the work they hope to do.

There are other difficulties. For many years it was assumed that one of the main functions of an archive service, particularly a national one, was to publish the records it held. This could be done in the form of calendars of documents – into which of course the archivist's own value judgements intruded – or by printing them in

full, and in both cases providing an index. Indeed publishing the records of Scotland was one of the main tasks of the National Archives of Scotland as set out in the various reports produced in the early years of the 19th century. Of the great series of state papers, only that of parliament has been published in what might pass for its entirety. If anyone fancies tackling the transcription of the many series of which there are incomplete published versions, I'm sure no one would stand in his or her way. The great advantage of the publication process was that it got over the difficulties of palaeography, if not necessarily those of language, and was much appreciated by researchers of all sorts. Indeed, although the cost of doing so had become prohibitive, and the demand seemed limited, I was still under some pressure in the early 1990s as Keeper of the Records of Scotland to continue that kind of activity.

Scanning it seems to me is the modern way of doing the same thing. Its advantages of speed and accessibility are obvious. It has, however, at least two drawbacks: it can only scan what it sees – that is the original text – and there is as yet no reliable means of indexing original documents automatically. This task has to be undertaken by teams of dedicated people as part of the scanning process – as the LDS Church has shown. In the case of material already printed, the problems of reading and indexing are perhaps less significant, but not those of choosing what to make available, and of course the wider the range of the material brought into an electronic system, the less actual research value it is likely to have, but the more expensive it will be to produce in the first place, to maintain, to make available and to preserve.

However I believe that these are problems which will resolve themselves as technology advances. I envisage, at some point in the future, that genealogists will be able to do the bulk of their work at home, that they will be able to or-

der copies of documents electronically, and that their direct use of our archives and libraries will fall. In some ways I would regret this, but the objectives of making genealogical research easier, and lightening the genealogical load on the librarian and archivist, obviously tend in this direction. Perhaps we shall one day begin to miss all those family historians. We shall certainly be ignorant of what work is being done on material of which we hold the originals. Separating access to documents from the source of those documents removes a level, not so much of control, but of knowledge on the part of the repository of what research is in progress. Even now, researchers are not as careful as they should be – in their own interests as well as those of libraries and archives – to say what they are working on. When, in future, for example, someone can sit at his or her desk in New Zealand and carry out, very effectively, research which would once have involved a lengthy and expensive stay in Scotland, this situation will simply become worse. It is a brave and exciting new genealogical world, but not altogether without its hazards.

Modern Technology and Genealogy: the Disadvantages

So we are making, and will continue to make the best use possible of the wonders of modern technology. I would like to come back to the one or two down sides that there are to the use of IT in historical research. While one can generally assume the accuracy of what appears on screen, the same is by no means true of its completeness. One may get the truth and nothing but the truth, but not necessarily the whole truth. While the SCAN wills project does indeed aim at being exhaustive, and in any case is involved with the processing of a well defined series of records, the same is far from true of networked catalogues. Can we be sure that the description of a family archive contains all the in-

formation necessary to allow us to assess the value of it – or otherwise – to our research? In any case the fact that there is a computer catalogue in an archive service does not mean that everything is in that catalogue or indeed that the original catalogues on which the computer access is based are of even quality. Even with modern attempts to create cataloguing standards, ISAD(G) for example, archival description remains highly subjective. What may take my fancy in a collection of papers, and what I would therefore wish to mention in a catalogue description, may not be what you would find interesting, and vice versa. But the temptation to assume that what appears on screen is complete is a very powerful one. It allows us to assume that we have done all that it is reasonable to do, and at the same time it can excuse us from the tiresome chore of checking as to whether some archive at the other end of the country has material that might perhaps be relevant. Laziness is in fact a great motivator.

There is however something worse. This comes in two forms. There is beginning to be a breakdown in the distinction between archives and information. Librarians I suspect have been dealing with this for ages – the phenomenon of expecting repositories of books or documents to be able to offer instant replies to questions on matters of fact, even on matters of easily ascertainable fact. It is almost as though people were beginning to lose any understanding of where information comes from, rather like children who say that milk comes from a carton or from the supermarket, and are unable to relate it to a cow. The archives of the European Commission, for example, suffer from this in a big way, and are repeatedly being asked for basic information about the constitution and history of the European Union which is perfectly accessible on websites and in easily available reference books.

The second problem relates to the use of e-mail for research purposes.

Again, because people are so accustomed to working on screen, they always assume that on the one hand others do the same, and on the other, that those others can work at their rhythm. There is a tendency to assume that if you send off an e-mail message you should get a response almost at once. But of course that is not necessarily so. The e-mail may demand just as much time for a proper reply as did a traditional letter, but because it is easier to send, more are sent. Archives are beginning to develop defence mechanisms against this, which mainly boil down to the very traditional refusal to do someone else's research. It is one thing to say what an archive holds, to suggest that certain collections would possibly interest the researcher, and to describe the facilities available at the record office. It is another to say that a particular collection does not relate to a researcher's area of work, or that there is reference to a particular person or event in a bulky series of papers. In addition because e-mails are so easy to send out, they may for example be sent out indiscriminately to all the major archive services of the country. Many of them will be irrelevant, but will still add to the workload of the duty archivist.

I do not associate genealogists in particular with this, but it is a trend which has developed over the last few years. It was certainly very apparent in the National Archives of Scotland before I left at the end of 2000, and genealogists are not altogether innocent.

These are caveats which need certainly to be born in mind, but I think it is fair to say that the old reservations which archivists tended to have about genealogists and local historians have almost disappeared. The quality of research is improving; the means of carrying out that research are better and are improving all the time. What is pleasing, as I have already pointed out, is that the motives which lie behind the demands for access by the genealogist and bodies with similar interests on the one hand,

and those which lie behind the need for archivists to make their holdings more readily accessible, may be different, but they are equally powerful, and are pushing us all in the same direction. I have great expectations of genealogical research, and the fact that it has found this important slot at IFLA's conference shows perhaps that I am not alone.

The Preservation of Genealogy

Finally may I add a plea? We are told – especially by those bodies which are responsible for funding us, and also occasionally by those archivists who do not consider family history to be 'proper' research – that genealogists are doing no more than enjoying their leisure. It follows from this, does it not, that what they are doing is not serious, and that in any case they should pay for the privilege of doing it. I do not think it is for anyone to question a researcher's motives. Just because I am studying people rather than things, does not make the difference between enjoying or not enjoying the work of research. I imagine that the academic researcher gets just as much pleasure from his or her work as does the genealogist. If not, he or she should be in a different job.

However, the fact that the research process is pleasurable does not, it seems to me, remove from the researcher the obligation to make the results of that research available to a wider public. I rather suspect that many family historians have piles of notes at the back of some drawer which have great potential interest, and which, if they can be used, would certainly save others from going through the same documents. We all know of examples in Scotland of our debt to researchers who looked at and then transcribed, or at least described, documents which are now lost. Without the work of the antiquaries of the late 16th and early 17th century – the Earl of Hadington, and Balfour of Denmilne,

in this country, Sir William Dugdale, John Selden for example in England and many many others – our knowledge of earlier periods would be much diminished. We should not underestimate the value of what we do, and we should make sure that it is preserved. Just

because we do it now, does not somehow devalue it by comparison with work which has gone before. Balfour and Haddington and those other early researchers were not always right, but their work has in many cases provided a foundation on which others have

been able to build. Research is an isolated activity, but its foundations are the work of others, and its results should be available to others. What may seem to you a comparatively modest investigation may lead on to other things for other people.

Intellectual Freedom and Libraries: International Perspectives

Susanne Seidelin

Susanne Seidelin has been the Director of the IFLA/FAIFE Office in Copenhagen, Denmark since February 2001. She worked for fourteen years at the Danish National Library for the Blind as head of audio production, as a senior consultant and as a liaison with international bodies such as IFLA section of Libraries for the Blind, and as a Board member of the DAISY Consortium, an international body on technological development of new media for the blind and visually impaired. She has worked as head of a Danish newspaper archive and with library services and international cooperation with regards to mentally disabled.

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Introduction

IFLA/FAIFE was invited to the Berlin seminar on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries in the capacity of both co-organizer and lecturer.



Apart from generally raising the IFLA flag in regard to the IFLA conference in Berlin 2003, our main objective was to raise awareness of the importance for the international library community to engage in the issue of freedom of access to information and libraries worldwide. The Berlin seminar provided an excellent opportunity to meet with German colleagues, introduce our work and, with special attention to censorship and freedom of access to information in Germany, put the issue on the German agenda once more, so to speak.

The IFLA/FAIFE Mandate

To set the framework for the work group discussions later in the day, we started the morning's introductory session giving a short overview of the five-year history of IFLA/FAIFE, presenting our mission and the basic principles of our work. To put these issues further into perspective the current state

of libraries and intellectual freedom was discussed.

The IFLA/FAIFE mandate is clearly drawn from Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Everyone has the right to freedom of expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

On this background, the IFLA Governing Board has defined our objectives as follows:

- FAIFE is an initiative within IFLA to defend and promote the basic human rights defined in Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- The FAIFE Committee and Office further freedom of access to information and freedom of expression in all aspects, directly or indirectly, related to library and information services
- FAIFE monitors the state of intellectual freedom within the library and information community worldwide, supports IFLA policy development and cooperation with other international human rights organizations, and responds to violations of freedom of access to information and freedom of expression.

IFLA/FAIFE World Report and Summary Report Series

One of the tasks of IFLA/FAIFE is to collect information with regard to the global situation on freedom of access to information. Last year, the first *IFLA/FAIFE World Report 2001. Libraries and Intellectual Freedom* was published. The

report was launched at the IFLA Conference in Boston. It represents a significant achievement but covers only 46 countries, around 30 percent of the countries represented in IFLA. The report should cover all those countries and present a reliable and authoritative summary of the state of intellectual freedom in regard to libraries around the globe. The *World Report* will be published every two years.

A shorter report, the *IFLA/FAIFE Summary Report* on the global status of intellectual freedom and freedom of access to information will be published in the alternate years. The *Summary Report* should also focus on the international political situation in terms of its impact on IFLA/FAIFE key areas and the development of the international library and information community. Thus the *Summary Report* should identify areas of special interest and concern. In 2002 these are: libraries and conflicts; the Internet; and how to respond when the intellectual freedoms are at stake.

Current State Of Libraries and Intellectual Freedom

Using the first *IFLA/FAIFE World Report* and the PhD project co-financed by IFLA/FAIFE and the Royal School of Library and Information Science in Copenhagen, Denmark as a background, we introduced the state of affairs in regard to freedom of access to information around the world.

The *World Report* confirms that all is not well. Though we have seen some progress and lifting of restrictions it is evident that more awareness of the problems, followed by a focus on actions to safeguard access, should be on the agenda of the international library community.

We had been heartened to see the lifting of some restrictions in Indonesia. There are other positive

signs in the region with the reconstruction of libraries in Cambodia and Laos. But there is a long way to go, especially in Burma (Myanmar).

As we ended the IFLA conference in Bangkok, the people of East Timor voted in a plebiscite. In the ensuing wave of destruction, murder and rape, all the libraries were destroyed. The people of the new nation of Timor Lorosae need the assistance of the world's librarians to rebuild their libraries and to assist them in creating a civil society.

The Chair of the IFLA/FAIFE Committee has been in discussion with those involved with the redevelopment of the razed university library in East Timor, and with a support group which has been gathering funds and materials. It is clear that the needs of East Timor are extensive and include the development of a national model for library provision. However, there seems to be little coordination of the needs of national, university, polytechnic, school, public, law and medical libraries. Against this background we met UNESCO representatives in February to discuss how best to support the development in the country.

Trends in other parts of the world can be discerned from the *World Report*. In Eastern Europe, there have been positive moves towards protecting free access to information and freedom of expression. However, inadequate funding prevents library services from meeting even the most basic needs of their clients and compromises professional standards. Eastern European professionals demonstrate their commitment to free access to information through many initiatives such as opening collections of banned books.

In Africa, censorship plays a key role in some countries and violation of human rights is a part of daily life. In others, we see the tentative development of free library services. In many countries around the world, censorship of the Internet is attempted.

In an increasingly globalized world, it is inevitable that the key issues facing libraries and librarians in offering freedom of access to information should be global. Many of them echo the big challenges facing the countries of the world: economic, political and cultural. However, freedom of access to information, and its counterpart, freedom of expression, is a crucial element in seeking to solve the world's problems. Without ready access to information, it is impossible to understand, let alone address, problems such as the catastrophic HIV/AIDS epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa.

Responses

Though the morning's introduction did not result in a lively debate in plenary, it certainly led to a lot of questions and discussions in smaller groups during the first break. Great interest was shown in the PhD topic and the censorship problems facing the Internet. Other questions concerned IFLA/FAIFE reports and our daily work: How do the IFLA/FAIFE Committee, Chair, Advisory Board and Office cooperate on the daily practical level when those involved are literary spread all over the world? The short answer is that we mostly communicate by e-mail and over the telephone, and discuss directions and initiatives at the annual meetings in connections with the IFLA conferences.

Strategy and Action Plan

As the last input to the work group and plenary discussions in Berlin, the IFLA/FAIFE priorities, related actions and results were all presented. The actions and initiatives especially highlighted will be presented below under the headings: Seven priorities; How to respond when intellectual freedoms are at stake; and IFLA/FAIFE Network Centres. These initiatives could serve as examples of why international cooperation with regard to safeguarding intellectual freedoms globally is relevant for the devel-

opment of library services and the roles of libraries around the world. More importantly, they hopefully demonstrated the vulnerability of those freedoms and thus the role of the international library community in embracing mutual core values to defend and promote freedom of access to information. The full wording of the plan is available at www.ifla.org.

Seven Priorities

At the IFLA Conference in Boston 2001, the IFLA/FAIFE Committee identified seven priorities to form the basis of the strategy and work plan for the period 2001–2003:

1. Concentrate our efforts on libraries and the safeguarding of free access to information for all individuals.
(Relates to IFLA Professional Priority: Defending the principle of freedom of information.)
2. Make IFLA/FAIFE the authoritative source on libraries and intellectual freedom through the *World Report* and other communication initiatives.
(Relates to IFLA Professional Priority: Defending the principle of freedom of information.)
3. Strengthen the process for responding to incidents, including the development of an IFLA/FAIFE alert manual.
(Relates to IFLA Professional Priority: Providing unrestricted access to information.)
4. Establish a Network of IFLA/FAIFE Centres.
(Relates to IFLA Professional Priority: Defending the principle of freedom of information.)
5. Heighten the importance of bridging the digital divide.
(Relates to IFLA Professional Priority: Supporting the role of libraries in society.)
6. Free and equal access to digital information.
(Relates to IFLA Professional Priority: Supporting the role of libraries in society.)
7. Build the funding base for IFLA/FAIFE.
(Relates to the IFLA policy for Core Activity funding.)

In short the objectives are:

- go global
- involve colleagues worldwide
- produce visible results.

How Do We Respond when Intellectual Freedoms Are At Stake?

When intellectual freedoms are at stake in regard to library services, IFLA and IFLA/FAIFE can react in different ways according to the concrete matter at hand. Individual cases in various countries will often be addressed with letters to the authorities, whereas published statements, declarations, or manifestos address more general problems. In some cases special reports are published or special projects initiated, e.g. the Kosovo Report and reports on library services in Cuba, and the current focus on a possible project on the re-building and development of library services in Afghanistan in cooperation with UNESCO.

In 2001 we responded to reported cases in e.g. East Timor, France, South Africa and Zimbabwe and we are currently investigating reports on the destruction of libraries in Palestine.

To investigate and verify the reported cases, and to obtain additional information, we cooperate with IFLA Headquarters and the various IFLA bodies, library organizations and NGOs such as independent human rights and organizations of the press. It is should be mentioned that IFLA/FAIFE does not take a political stand in conflicts. We act solely in the interest of promoting freedom of access to information as defined in our objectives. For the sake of our credibility when responding to violations this independent status is important to maintain. To further develop the professional approach we are currently developing an alert manual that will identify the nature of the cases we respond to and which cases we would direct to other organizations. The manual will also describe step by step the working process of IFLA/FAIFE in

terms of responding to reported incidents.

This summer we are celebrating the 75th anniversary of IFLA. To this end the IFLA/FAIFE Committee last year took the initiative of suggesting the development of an IFLA declaration for adoption at the Glasgow conference. The draft version has just been adopted by the Governing Board and subsequently translated into the official IFLA languages. The declaration proclaims its support for fundamental human rights and intellectual freedoms, among which is the right of freedom of access to information, and affirms the objectives of library and information services in this connection.

Another example of an IFLA/FAIFE initiative relating to IFLA policy development is the *IFLA Internet Manifesto*, recently adopted by the Governing Board and officially issued on 1 May 2002. Concern regarding the increase in Internet filtering, while the use of the Internet as an information source becomes more widespread, is the background for this initiative. The manifesto supports the principle of freedom of access to all Internet-accessible information and will be followed up by workshops in various regions of the world if we can find hosting sponsors. The workshops will address the implementation of the manifesto in the regions and recommendations will form the basis for the subsequently development of best practice guidelines.

The decision to develop the manifesto was taken before 11 September 2001. In the wake of these terrible events, the so-called 'terrorist acts' have been passed by legislatures in several countries, underlining the relevance of this initiative. It should be mentioned that IFLA also issued a statement on 'Terrorism, the Internet and Free Access to Information' on 4 October 2001.

These initiatives are good examples of how the international library community, through IFLA,

can react collectively to help safeguard freedom of access to information for the sake of the worldwide development of libraries and professional services. Likewise, the documents are also meant as a practical tool for supporting the daily work in libraries.

UNESCO adopted the *Public Library Manifesto* and the *School Library Manifesto*. It is our hope that UNESCO will adopt the *Internet Manifesto* as well.

To further the IFLA/FAIFE initiatives on issues regarding the Internet and bridging the digital divide, the PhD scholarship, mentioned earlier, was initiated in November 2001. The project, taken on by Stuart Hamilton of the UK, is focusing on freedom of access to Internet-accessible information from a global perspective. Interim reports on the results will be issued regularly in connection with meetings, workshops and in written reports.

IFLA/FAIFE Network Centres

To support the work of IFLA/FAIFE and engage more colleagues around the globe, we will develop a formal IFLA/FAIFE network consisting of small numbers of IFLA Centres for Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression around the world, operated by Association or Institutional members of IFLA. A proposal adopted by the Governing Board identifies the activities of Network members as:

- Centres may act as a rapporteur for the identified country or region, promote intellectual freedom in relation to libraries and translate documents to or from relevant languages. They will be expected to develop documented policies and procedures for the approval of the FAIFE Advisory

- Board, to maintain records of their activities and submit reports at least twice a year.
- Centres will not normally be authorized to take action on any incidents or to make announcements in the name of IFLA. Incidents must be promptly reported to the Office, which will coordinate investigation and the development of responses. Action on incidents may only be taken with approval from the FAIFE Chair or IFLA Secretary General in accordance with established practice. Where possible, Committee members will be polled for quick response prior to any actions in case they should have relevant specialized knowledge or contacts.

Network members must make a formal commitment to:

1. support fully the IFLA Statement on Libraries and Intellectual Freedom
2. be active in a specified nation or region, and
3. be self-supporting.

At present, the Library of Foreign Literature in Moscow and the American Library Association Office of Intellectual Freedom in Chicago have expressed their interest in establishing centres as pilot projects. After an evaluation period, we hope to find interested hosts for centres in Asia, Africa and South America as well.

Conclusion of the Berlin Workshop

From the perspective of IFLA/FAIFE the overall structure of the workshop proved very useful and rewarding. The combination of introduction and background papers

combined with the questionnaire, followed up by discussions in groups and plenary turned the whole day into a process of contemplation and growing awareness of the important role of libraries in safeguarding freedom of access to information nationally as well as globally.

Though some participants felt that libraries should hold back materials, or place them in closed shelves to protect children and young people, thus touching upon the very difficult question of accepting self-censorship, it seems more relevant to highlight the interest and engagement of the thirty-eight participants. Their mutual understanding of the workshop as yet another step in a process to clarify the standpoint of the German library community became evident during the day and in the discussions following the seminar.

The introduction to Dr Robert Vaagan's book *The Ethics of Librarianship: An International Survey*, which will be published in the autumn in cooperation with IFLA, may have been the inspiration behind the follow-up seminar on librarians' ethics. The IFLA conference in Berlin next year will hopefully help keep attention alive and inspire further initiatives and results.

IFLA/FAIFE has been encouraged by the interest and debate shown in Berlin and hopes to incorporate some of the experience gained in future workshops. Ideally, we would like to take the message around the world through similar seminars and meetings. However, our resources are limited and do not enable us to spread the word as widely and effectively as we would like. We are therefore constantly looking for sponsors interested in supporting IFLA/FAIFE activities on a global scale.

Intellectual Freedom and Libraries: German Perspectives

Barbara Schleihagen

Barbara Schleihagen is currently the Secretary General of the IFLA 2003 Berlin conference, coordinating in close collaboration with the National Organizing Committee the preparations for this big event. Previously she worked for four years as the Director of the European Bureau for Library, Information and Documentation Associations (EBLIDA), based in The Hague, lobbying for libraries at the European institutions and coordinating several European projects. Before that she worked for the Deutsche Bibliotheksinstitut (German Library Institute) in Berlin. In this capacity she was responsible for the organization of an extensive book aid programme for libraries in Central and Eastern Europe financed by the German Government. She was also involved in the work of the national focal point for the libraries programme set up by the European Commission. Before she joined the Deutsches Bibliotheksinstitut, she worked in various positions for the British Council in Germany, during the last three years in the position of Literature Officer.

Workshops Promoting IFLA

The Workshop on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries: International Aspects was the second in a series designed to promote IFLA and its



activities in Germany and was co-organized by the IFLA 2003 Berlin Secretariat and the Department of Continuing Education at the Free University of Berlin. The aim was to raise awareness and interest among German librarians in the IFLA 2003 Berlin conference, due to take place from 1–9 August 2003.

The first half-day seminar, which took place on 13 March 2001 in Berlin, presented an overview on IFLA as international organization and some of its activities in a more general way. This first seminar was organized in connection with a visit of the IFLA President Christine Deschamps and the IFLA Secretary General Ross Shimmon to Berlin. Due to its success it was agreed with the co-organizer of the seminar, the Department of Continuing Education at the Free University of Berlin, to continue with seminars, which would focus on specific activities to promote IFLA and especially the IFLA 2003 Berlin conference to German colleagues.

It was agreed to focus in the second workshop on issues of intellectual freedom and censorship in libraries, mainly to introduce one of IFLA's core activities, but also to show that IFLA activities on international level are also of relevance to libraries and librarians in Germany. Therefore IFLA/FAIFE was invited to the Berlin seminar on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries in the capacity of both co-organizer and lecturer. Financial support was gratefully received from the German agency for international library cooperation, Bibliothek & Information International (Library & Information International).

Workshop on Intellectual Freedom and Censorship in Libraries: International Aspects

Intellectual freedom involves controversial and complex issues and librarians have different attitudes and interpretations. Therefore the seminar on 18 January used a variety of techniques to encourage active participation and to increase interest in learning more about the topic. In the morning, several lectures provided basic information about specific aspects of intellectual freedom and IFLA/FAIFE activities, complemented by group discussions in the afternoon. In order to encourage participants to think about their attitudes and feelings about censorship, a short questionnaire was designed and distributed at the beginning of the workshop. The questionnaire was completed anonymously and spontaneously. The results were compiled during the morning session and presented to the workshop group at the beginning of the afternoon session to give feedback to participants as a good start for the group discussions.

Thirty-eight librarians participated in the seminar, representing all kinds of library – public, academic

and special. The seminar languages were German and English, without translation. The morning started off with a short introduction by Dr. Rolf Busch of the Department of Continuing Education at the Free University (FU) of Berlin and Barbara Schleihagen, IFLA 2003 Secretary General. Next, Dr. Georg Ruppelt, President of the Bundesvereinigung Deutscher Bibliotheksverbände (BDB) e. V (The German umbrella association of library associations), gave a lecture on some aspects of the history of censorship presenting some odd but also amusing cases of censorship. This was followed by a presentation of IFLA/FAIFE and its activities, policies and procedures by Susanne Seidelin, Director of the IFLA/FAIFE office. Stuart Hamilton, a PhD student at the Royal School of Library and Information Science, Copenhagen and the IFLA/FAIFE office then introduced his PhD project on Internet accessible information. The legal framework in Germany regarding intellectual freedom and libraries was presented by Gabriele Beger, Director of Zentral- und Landesbibliothek Berlin/Berliner Stadtbibliothek and legal adviser to the BDB. She also raised several possible problems that a librarian might face in handling library materials of doubtful content. Susanne Seidelin then introduced an international survey on the ethics of librarianship by Dr Robert Vaagan of Norway. The three parallel afternoon workshops on politics, religion and moral and ethical aspects were moderated by Dr. Christoph Bruch, Free University of Berlin, Professor Dr. Hartmut Zinser, Free University of Berlin, Department for Science of Religions and again Gabriele Beger. After some feedback from the working groups and a plenary discussion the seminar concluded with some ideas on further initiatives.

Free Access to Information in Germany – the Legal Framework

'There will be no censorship'. This is the last sentence of article 5, paragraph 1 of the Basic Law

(Grundgesetz) in the Federal Republic of Germany. And indeed, there is no censorship in the sense of preliminary censure. Pre-publication scrutiny and approval by a state agency is prohibited by the constitution. Since the foundation of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949, freedom of opinion and information, including freedom of the press, have been guaranteed by the Basic Law as a fundamental right for each citizen. After reunification the purview of the Basic Law was extended to the whole of Germany. Both censorship and considerably restricted freedom of opinion, information and the press had existed in the former German Democratic Republic.

The right to freedom of opinion and information is, however, not boundless, and limits are set by the law and the law only. Exempted from any restrictions are the arts and science. The limitations to freedom of opinion and information are defined mainly in the Code of Criminal Law, the Law on the Distribution of Publications and Media Content Liable to Endanger Juveniles, the Law on the Protection of Juveniles in Public Places and the fundamental right to personal honour. The following offences are indictable: incitement to aggressive war; distribution of propaganda material emanating from constitutionally prohibited organization; incitement of the people; incitement to a criminal offence; portrayal of violence and incitement to racial hatred; revilement of religious faiths, religious communities and ideological associations; distribution of pornographic publications; slander and libel.

In most cases it is prohibited to disseminate materials containing one of the above-mentioned elements, which means that adults may well possess them but may not distribute them to the public. Only in a few cases is even the possession of the material prohibited (e.g. incitement to racial hatred or hard pornography). However, there are special regulations with regard to children and juveniles. Publica-

tions in any form, which fall under the above-mentioned restrictions, may not be made available at all to children and juveniles. This applies also to materials offered on the Internet. Therefore public libraries offering their users Internet connections are required by law to adopt some kind of technical protection measure to ensure that websites containing content like those mentioned above can only be accessed by adults. The installation of filter software is sufficient to comply with the law even if juveniles should manage to circumvent such software. There is no legal obligation to install filter software or to control Internet access if the Internet computer terminals are only accessible for adults.

The librarian is therefore free to decide which kind of media he or she acquires and includes in the library collection. The librarian may also acquire and keep in the collection those materials which fall under the above-mentioned restrictions, and may also issue works that may not be disseminated to the public to the individual adult user if this user provides a written declaration that the material is to be used personally and exclusively for research purposes. Material which falls under the prohibition of possession must not be issued on loan at all. As mentioned above, it is in most cases not prohibited to possess this kind of material but to disseminate it to the public. According to German law, making materials accessible to individual users is not an act of dissemination. Only if the material is kept on open shelves does an act of dissemination take place. Material under restriction therefore has to be kept in stacks with restricted access or in closed cabinets, but can be issued on loan on request if it does not fall under the prohibition of possession.

It seems that everything in Germany is well regulated by law, that limitations are clearly described and easy to understand and that there should therefore be no problems for the day-to-day practice of librarians. However, publi-

| Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement by using the four different possible answers. Please tick the relevant field. | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No answer |
|---|----------------|-------|----------|-------------------|-----------|
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | |
| Libraries play an important role to maintain intellectual freedom in Germany. | 25 | 13 | | | |
| No matter how much librarians talk about intellectual freedom, there are just some controversial books in public libraries that should not be placed in open shelves but in rooms with restricted access or cabinets. | 2 | 26 | 9 | 1 | |
| A censorship controversy over a single book or a single magazine is not worth the negative image which it could cause for the library in the general public. | 2 | 10 | 18 | 7 | 1 |
| Library users who want to read erotic novels should not expect to find them in the library but should buy their own. | 3 | 5 | 22 | 7 | 1 |
| It is appropriate that a public library collection also include material which reflects the view of not generally accepted religious groups and sects (e.g. scientology). | 4 | 22 | 10 | 2 | |
| It is appropriate that a public library collection include material which is critical of the generally accepted information about the Jewish Holocaust. | 3 | 25 | 8 | 1 | 1 |
| A public library is not the place for either right or left wing extremist political literature. | 3 | 11 | 21 | 2 | 1 |
| The meeting rooms of a public library should be available equally to all groups in the community regardless of the religious beliefs or political affiliations of its members. | 10 | 19 | 8 | 1 | |
| The multinational media conglomerates are a serious threat to intellectual freedom. | 8 | 13 | 14 | 2 | 1 |
| The use of Internet filter software in libraries is not acceptable as it is the task of librarians to ensure free access to information. | 2 | 14 | 18 | 4 | |
| Cuts in the library budget have an impact on the intellectual freedom in a library. | 20 | 12 | 5 | | 1 |

Table 1. Results of short questionnaire on intellectual freedom and censorship.

N.B. Original questionnaire in German. 38 German speaking participants, 38 returned questionnaires

cations do not wear little signs saying something like: 'Please note, this book incites to aggressive war on page 3'. In most cases, it is the user who draws the attention of the librarian to certain contents. Then it is the difficult task for the librarian to decide whether the content falls under one of the above-mentioned elements of crime. Although, for example, some publishing houses are known for their neo-national socialist publications, in the majority of cases the different attitudes towards decency, morale, ethics and politics become visible in the claims of the users. The limits of decency have to be defined according to what the majority of citizens feel, says the Code of Criminal Law. It is therefore not possible for the individual

lay person to take a decision on these limits and only the courts may decide when these limits have been exceeded.

The librarian is first of all committed to freedom of opinion and information. He or she may only restrict this basic right in accordance with existing laws. The librarian in Germany has to be very conscious about the fact that libraries are publicly financed institutions designed to ensure that each citizen may exercise the basic right to freedom of information and opinion. The consequences for the librarian are threefold: if in doubt, the publication is only to be taken off the open shelf, advice has to be sought from third parties and public agencies and in proven cases

the publication has to be kept in closed stacks but must be still available on request for adult users. It is not for the librarian to decide whether a citizen really has an interest to become better informed or whether he might have other reasons to request a certain book.

Outcome of the Questionnaire

It was one of the aims of the workshop to make librarians more conscious about their own personal beliefs and attitudes towards intellectual freedom and censorship and to contrast these with their professional ethical obligations. Therefore workshop participants were asked at the beginning of the work-

| | Strongly agree/ agree | Disagree/ strongly disagree | No answer |
|--------------|----------------------------------|--|------------------|
| Statement 1 | 38 | | |
| Statement 2 | 28 | 10 | |
| Statement 3 | 12 | 25 | 1 |
| Statement 4 | 8 | 29 | 1 |
| Statement 5 | 26 | 12 | |
| Statement 6 | 28 | 9 | 1 |
| Statement 7 | 14 | 23 | 1 |
| Statement 8 | 29 | 9 | 1 |
| Statement 9 | 21 | 16 | 1 |
| Statement 10 | 16 | 22 | |
| Statement 11 | 32 | 5 | 1 |

Table 2. Results combined.

shop to complete a short questionnaire to indicate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with some given statements. The purpose of the questionnaire was not to collect data for a scientific survey, but only to stimulate debate among participants. This is why most of the statements were kept rather general. They were designed to make participants think about the pros and cons of a statement and any specific cases which might speak for or against a certain statement. And indeed, already during the completion of the questionnaire, some whispered debate among colleagues had started. The results can only show how these thirty-eight participants as a group felt about certain statements on that day. The results cannot be extended to make general statements about how librarians in Germany would react to this questionnaire.

Table 1 was presented to participants at the beginning of the afternoon session in order to stimulate discussions in the working groups. This feedback to participants was given without much comment.

In order to show more clearly where preferences of this workshop group were, the answers 'strongly agree/agree' and 'disagree/strongly disagree' are here again displayed in a table which combines the answers (Table 2).

Here is a short summary of the results: the answers show that nobody in the group had any doubt

that libraries play an important role to maintain intellectual freedom in Germany (38). The majority (28) of the group thought that there are some controversial books in public libraries that should not be placed in open shelves. It was pointed out to the group that the important word to note here is 'controversial'. The majority (25) of the group thought that despite the danger of causing a negative image, the library should enter into a censorship controversy even over a single book or magazine. The majority of the group (29) also felt that readers might expect to find erotic novels in the library. Concerning material which reflects the view of not generally accepted religious groups and sects, the majority (26) thought it appropriate that a public library also includes that material in its collection. A similar majority (28) of the group thought the same about material which is critical of the generally accepted information about the Jewish Holocaust.

Interpretation of the answers to statement 7 caused some problems as the negative wording of the statement might have led to some confusion among participants. However, a majority of the group (23) seemed to disagree with the statement that a public library is not a place for either right or left wing extremist political literature. This might mean that a majority thought that a public library collection should also include extremist political literature. This would correspond with the pattern of

opinion expressed in statement 5 and 6.

The majority of the group (29) also thought that the meeting rooms of a public library should be available to all groups of the community. A very small majority (21) agreed that multinational media conglomerates are a serious threat to intellectual freedom. An equally small majority (22) thought that the use of Internet filter software is acceptable in libraries. This might be the result of some confusion over the precise applicability of the German law which requests only technical protection measures for Internet computer terminals for juveniles. A more precise statement explicitly referring to filter software and juveniles and filter software and adults might have led to a different result. However, as already said, the main purpose of the questionnaire was to lead participants into some discussion in order to clarify certain positions for themselves. Finally, a large majority (32) agreed that library budget cuts have an impact on intellectual freedom in libraries.

Outcome of the Discussion Groups

After the presentation of the results of the questionnaire, the participants continued in three small working groups looking specifically at one of the following aspects: politics, religion and moral and ethical aspects. After an hour each group reported back in plenary.

The group dealing with political aspects reported that they neither discussed in any detail how and where certain information should be held back for political purposes, nor went into depth about the problems of a new rise of neo-national socialist literature. But in their discussion they realized that they as librarians would rather wish to hold back certain information in order to protect juveniles and to ensure that material of a politically doubtful nature does not fall into the wrong hands. They also discussed issues connected with the

decision to acquire certain material and the criteria they would use to justify their decisions. Furthermore, they talked about whether libraries are obliged to keep presentation copies sent by publishers in the same geographical area and whether donations have to be accepted or not. The group realized that there is a need to discuss these questions in much more detail during the education of librarians. They felt that more seminars should be offered to explain the legal framework and how librarians should deal with these issues.

The group dealing with religious aspects looked at reasons that might be given by librarians not to collect certain literature such as lack of finance, lack of space or organizational reasons. They agreed that in Germany it is not the official churches or religious groups who would try to influence acquisitions by a library. Some reported their experiences with religious materials in the former GDR, e.g. the debate about the acquisition of the Bible in libraries.

The group dealing with moral and ethical aspects concentrated their debate on literature which is neither indexed nor prohibited but which presents a kind of borderline case in the 'grey area'. The question was raised whether and when librarians can restrict access to information. They debated this point by using some concrete examples (e.g. a catalogue of lay persons' photographs of nudes, right-wing political literature) and realized how different are the moral and ethical boundaries of individual librarians. Opinions as to when a specific book should be taken off the open shelves ranged considerably. They became more con-

scious about their own individual moral attitudes and realized how difficult it sometimes can be to balance these with their professional ethics.

They concluded that in a pluralistic library collection other books on the same topic in the same collection could balance books with doubtful contents. The group agreed that one of the tasks of the library is also to safeguard the cultural heritage of a given time, so they found it necessary to present a mirror of that time for future generations. One of the criteria that could be used in deciding on acquisitions might be how well a certain book would fit into the profile of the library collection.

All groups realized in their discussions that librarians have to be very conscious of the fact that their work is always coloured by individual moral attitudes and different life experiences. They agreed that it is important to realize that there is a need for ethical guidelines to help make decisions in difficult situations.

Conclusion and Results of the Workshop

The workshop certainly managed to get participating librarians more involved in the discussion of intellectual freedom. The participants not only showed a vivid interest in the debate, but some of them reported back a few days later that they continued the discussion with friends, colleagues and family.

Participants were asked at the end of the workshop whether they would answer the questionnaire in the same way as they did in the

morning and some of them said that they viewed things a little differently after what they had heard and learned during the day. One participant admitted that it had become very clear to her that a librarian should not act as a self-appointed upholder of moral standards in society. It seems that the workshop was able to make a difference for many participants.

One of the participants' requests was to continue to work on ethical guidelines for librarians in Germany. A follow-up seminar on this topic will be offered by the Department of Continuing Education at the Free University of Berlin in Summer 2002. Participants also expressed their interest in more seminars on the legal framework regarding intellectual freedom issues and practical advice on how to deal with borderline cases.

Several participants commented afterwards that they appreciated the combination of presenting international aspects and discussion of the specific day-to-day problems they face in their libraries. One participant even decided to join IFLA to become more directly involved in these matters.

The series of seminars will be rounded off by a third seminar to take place in Spring 2003. It will focus on specific aspects of the work of individual IFLA sections and their relevance for German libraries, e.g. performance measurement for public and academic libraries, interlibrary loan, conservation and preservation. In addition, the seminar will provide information on and examine the involvement of German library associations in the forthcoming IFLA 2003 Berlin conference.

Internet Accessible Information and Censorship, Intellectual Freedom and Libraries – a Global Overview

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At the Berlin Workshop – L. to R.: Barbara Schleihagen (IFLA 2003); Dr. Rolf Busch (Free University of Berlin); Stuart Hamilton; Susanne Seidelin (IFLA/FAIFE Office); Dr. Christoph Bruch (Free University of Berlin); Gabriele Beger (Zentral- und Landesbibliothek Berlin/Berliner Stadtbibliothek); Prof. Dr. Harmut Zinser (Free University of Berlin). Photo by Kathrin Lehmann.

The Global Rise of the Internet

According to statistics produced by NUA.com, an online source for information on Internet demographics and trends, the number of Internet users worldwide continues to grow at an amazing pace. In their most recent figures, NUA suggest that there are now 544.2 million Internet users worldwide, a 19.4 percent increase on user figures from 12 months before and a figure that equals 8.99 percent of the world's population. Since their surveys began in 1995 the number of worldwide users of the Internet has increased by over 2000 percent.

As more individuals, institutions and companies go online more

information than ever before is being passed along the highways of the Internet. This explosion in information availability is backed up by a rise in personal hardware ownership stimulated by falling costs of hardware in many areas of the globe. The future for Internet access, in the home, in the workplace and in community institutions such as libraries, looks rosy.

The 'Informatization' of Society

It has been proposed by theorists such as Jurgen Habermas, Anthony Giddens and Herbert Schiller that the world we live in today is seeing an 'informatization' of established relationships. This means that in-

formation has a heightened presence in society and the flow of this information has a special significance for individuals, businesses and governments, all of whom are adjusting to the new medium of the Internet and the opportunities it brings with regards to information access.

Librarians, as facilitators of information access, have had to adjust very quickly to the new demands placed upon them by society. Between 1996 and 2001 I worked in the public library system in England, where I saw attitudes of staff and library users towards Internet use change dramatically. Experienced staff, initially suspicious of the long-term benefits the Internet would bring, commented to me that they find it hard to remember a time before its presence in the library. Users, especially new, younger users, demand the presence of the net in the library as essential, along with expertise and guidance in its use. The library now offers access to more information resources than ever before and a freedom to investigate the like of which most users have never experienced previously.

New Freedoms

These new freedoms are not only available in the library; they are in theory available to any Internet user across the world. Individuals are now free to express themselves globally via the Internet, and to get their point of view across to a vast audience with the greatest of ease. Previously marginalized sections of society have found the Internet provides a great forum for the exposition of ideas and beliefs, whether they are distasteful to the majority of people or not. The last five to ten years have seen the Internet adopted by the oppressed and the disenfranchised but also by the more underground elements of society such as pornographers and the criminal fraternity.

As these elements continue to grow online their presence is felt by society's watchdogs such as the me-

dia, and their activities are brought to the attention of the authorities and governing powers. The Internet has in some parts of the world become a byword for all that is wrong with society – it is where one can find instructions on bomb-making, information on race-hate movements and access to every sort of deviance and perversion known to man. It has become a scapegoat at the same time as a saviour, and now it finds itself having to answer its critics only a few years after its incorporation into mainstream society.

Society

The freedom to express oneself on the global stage has led to the belief that the Internet is inherently democratizing and therefore the saviour of those living in oppressive regimes. Without a centralized headquarters, and by being everywhere at once, it may seem that everyone will have access to the information that is available via the web. The oppressed will be heard and tyranny overthrown. In reality however, this may not be the case.

The 'informatization' of society places an emphasis on the special significance of information in the world today. The theorists behind this belief are also keen to point out, however, that the form and function of information are still subordinate to long-established principles and practices. This means that we should not see this heightened presence of information as the dawning of a new age but instead we should be aware that the central feature of the present is the continuities it has with the past.

Gradually, instead of a new equality of freedom for all Internet users around the world, cultural, political and religious barriers are being reproduced on the net. According to the head of a Syrian computer society, in the Arab world, where protection of society's values from outside interests is seen as an important factor in the consolidation

of the Islamic faith, the Internet provides 'an important service in relaying and distributing information but ... [it] also has a negative side that conflicts with ... faith and Muslim traditions'. In light of this Saudi Arabia has moved to 'bar access to information contrary to Islamic values and dangerous to [their] society'. Societies all over the world are seeking to impose restrictions on Internet use, often in the form of Internet-specific legislation or the extension of existing print and broadcast regulations to cyberspace. Government-controlled servers can filter content and block sites, and even force surveillance equipment on to Internet Service Providers in order to monitor Internet traffic and communication.

Rise of Corporate Society

Alongside the reclamation of power by governments through legislation and surveillance, globalization has also interfered with the flow of data on the Internet by taking some of the control of this flow away from nation states and placing it in the hands of the corporations. The corporate world, keen to protect its economic well-being and exploit the new medium, has begun to impress the values of the market upon many areas of the Internet, not only on the high-profile e-commerce sector that it is in their interests to promote.

After a slow start, the corporations have rallied to protect their interests online through the use of legal action and business expansion. The downfall of Napster – a file-sharing service that enabled users to download music from each other's computers free of charge, regardless of copyright – is an example of the music corporations seeking to protect their profits and their monopoly over music distribution.

Perhaps more relevant to libraries, Oxford University Press put hundreds of its dictionaries, mini-encyclopaedias and companions on a subscription website in March

this year. A few years ago it was doubted whether users would be prepared to pay for information services such as this, but now OUP believe they will be making a profit in four years.

Actions like this, according to the theorist Herbert Schiller, are examples of how information and communications constitute part of an established capitalist order where information is tuned to selling goods. By following Schiller's theories it is possible to suggest that the Internet, and the flow of information on it, will eventually revert to an 'advanced capitalist' model – that a combination of information as a commodity, class inequalities in the distribution and access of information, and the priorities of the large corporations will transform the Internet from a tool of democracy and a voice of the disenfranchised into an extension of the High Street, where all information costs money.

The Consequences for Libraries

The increasing commodification of the Internet and the apparent recreation of the divisions in society with regards to information access should be of some concern to us as librarians. If we are committed to free access to information for all, regardless of background, wealth or personal lifestyle, we must take careful note of the emerging global trends that are seeking to impose restrictions on Internet-accessible information. As librarians we are presented with a difficult set of choices. How do we react to the barriers that are being erected to accessing information on the Internet? What can we do about users being priced, filtered or monitored out of accessing information?

The work I will be undertaking over the next three years will try to address some of these issues. In collaboration with IFLA/FAIFE I shall be seeking the opinion of national library associations regarding some of the topics I have

talked about. To begin with I am monitoring the barriers to access that are being erected around the world, and identifying the trends in world politics that will create or reduce barriers in the future. For the second part of this paper I shall give you some selected examples from around the world that show the ways various governments are seeking to prevent access to certain types of information or monitor user activity. I shall also talk briefly about the implications of the September 11th terrorist attacks for the future of Internet-accessible information before concluding.

The One-Party State

Different approaches to censorship on the Internet have been taken by China, Cuba and Burma, where governments have been keen to control the flow of information into their countries.

China established its first connection to the Internet in 1993 and since then user numbers have grown sharply each year. NUA estimates that in January 2002 there were 33.7 million users in China. The government's need to maintain the authoritarian single-party state conflicts with its dependence on the global information infrastructure for economic growth, and this clash directly affects Internet use in the country. As Internet use grows in China the amount of information travelling over networks increases at the expense of the ability of the government to control it. China's first response to this problem was to censor subversive material on the Internet such as foreign news sites, hostile political discussion in chatrooms and sites owned by banned religious sects. This was, and still is, done via the 'Great Firewall' of China which operates by restricting connectivity at an international level through control of the country's ISPs. Now, however, Internet use has grown to a point where the government can no longer filter out all objectionable material and new methods must be employed.

'Golden Shield' is a sophisticated system of filtering that takes place at the level of the individual user. It is a huge surveillance architecture designed to weed out those circulating pro-democratic or subversive material, which are crimes punishable by prison or even death. Golden Shield links national, regional and local security agencies in a database-driven remote surveillance system that provides access to records on every citizen at the same time as linking to a vast network of security cameras. Internet users will have their movements tracked by software that is being developed by Western companies such as Nortel Networks of Canada and Cisco Systems and Sun Microsystems in the US in collaboration with the Chinese authorities. This monitoring of online activities means that user privacy is impeded and, ultimately, freedom of expression curtailed.

Cuba, another one-party state, also censors information available on the Internet. Like China, the Cuban government is worried about the wide range of information available on the net and the conflict this causes to the goals of the state. However, where the Chinese government has blocked websites to restrict access to information, the Cuban government has censored by restricting access to the Internet itself. Cuba has been online since 1996 and the state controls the only Internet gateway and the four national ISPs. Out of 11 million Cubans only 40,000 people are allowed Internet access and e-mail accounts, and most of these are academics or government workers. Enterprising ordinary Cubans can access the net at university, via the black market in passwords or use e-mail by borrowing foreign friends' accounts, but they run the risk of surveillance by the authorities at all times.

Despite this, dissidents are turning to the net as a means of getting their message out to interested parties overseas. There are two main websites that carry articles from independent journalists but it is unlikely many ordinary Cubans

would ever see these articles due to the paucity of places offering access and prohibitive costs. This is due to the government's policy of granting access only to 'entities and institutions most relevant to the country's life and development'. Individuals at home are almost never granted Internet access and it is left to institutions such as universities, some places of employment and, in the near future, libraries to provide connection facilities. At the same time as controlling access points, the Cuban government is also developing a national Intranet which would allow access to web pages hosted in Cuba and national e-mail but not to external sites, which in effect continues a policy of information censorship.

The military junta in Burma (Myanmar) is in control of all known Internet access in the country. Like China and Cuba, the government is keen to limit access to information online and communications with opposition sympathisers abroad via e-mail. To this end, several measures have been undertaken to ensure that the facilities needed for Internet access remain in government hands. To begin with, all telecommunications devices – be they telephones, fax machines or modems – have to be registered with the authorities, and possession of an unregistered machine is punishable by imprisonment for 7 to 15 years. It is illegal to network a computer. The government has authorized 5000 people (mostly government supporters) to use e-mail and access a national Intranet system but has stopped short of granting access to the full worldwide web. In May 2001 it was only government ministries and the twenty-five IT companies (also connected to the government) in the country that have access to the Internet. Perhaps not surprisingly, the solitary cyber-café in Rangoon only offers access to CD-ROMs.

Legislation has also been passed to prevent the posting of anti-government information on the web. In January 2000 the junta outlawed the posting of political texts

on the web and declared that government authorization was required to create web pages. At the same time, pro-government sites, such as Myanmar.com, have been developed to disseminate government propaganda. The government regularly intercepts the few authorized e-mails within the country and has been known to send viruses to its opponents abroad.

Recently the government has allowed private periodicals and journals to launch their own website, although it has to be through one of the government-approved IT companies. This means that the sites have to be approved, and editors are often unable to see their sites once they have been posted online. The journals, while popular abroad, are updated irregularly, and contain no anti-government sentiment.

Despite this slight opening of the market with regards to journals, the country suffers infrastructure problems. Even if the government did grant more access, the country's telecommunications networks would be unable to handle traffic – with only one government controlled ISP, an average of one telephone line for every 181 inhabitants and regular electricity blackouts the future for access is uncertain at best. Even joining the Intranet costs USD 50 – several times the average monthly wage.

The Middle East

In the Middle East there is a greater concentration on the blocking of materials considered sensitive to both government and religious authority.

Saudi Arabia allowed public use of the Internet in 1999 after spending two years designing a centralized blocking system that would enable the government to restrict access to sites it considers offensive. The government is keen to harness the Internet for e-commerce but, like in Saudi society in general, personal freedoms are restricted when it comes to surfing habits.

Use of the net has boomed, with 500,000 people going online in the last two years, and according to unofficial statistics two-thirds of these are women who find on the net the freedoms lacking in their daily lives. Despite this, a royal decree states that all traffic to and from the country must go through a single central control centre near Riyadh, where sites offering porn or anti-government material are filtered out using the latest technology provided by US firms. The *New York Times* reports that the blocking software prevents access to sites such as the Committee for Defence of Human Rights in the Arabian Peninsula, the Movement for Islamic Reform in Arabia or others recounting the history of Saudi Arabia.

A similar distrust of non-conformist religious websites occurs in Iran, where Internet use has increased greatly since President Khatemi came to power in 1997. Over 90 percent of the country's universities are connected to the net, and a number of cybercafes exist in Tehran. There used to be over thirty private ISPs in the market in 1999, but in November 2001 the Iranian government outlawed these and they have had to be dismantled or go into state receivership. Now all Internet traffic must go through the Data Communication Company of Iran (DCI). The DCI filters out content considered profane or immoral, and the decision to bring all ISPs back under government control was to avoid exposure to 'indecentcy'. The DCI also tries to filter opposition sites in and out of the country.

It is interesting to note that the private ISPs and cyber cafes were previously filtering along these lines, on a self-censoring basis, in light of the government's stance. Further control over users' surfing habits extends to a connect contract, with Reporters Sans Frontiers stating that when Iranian Internet users sign up to the government's ISP they are supposed to sign a written document stating that they will refrain from viewing 'non-Islamic sites'.

The Far East

In the Far East, a different type of censorship is occurring in South Korea, where authorities in charge of regulating Internet use are involved with content rating systems. In South Korea, amid much protest, the government introduced filtering on all machines in public PC centres, schools and libraries in July 2001. In future, websites must carry a tag indicating content in an effort to prevent minors from harmful materials. This tag conforms to the Platform for Internet Content Selection (PICS) which has been designed by the Internet Content Rating Association to aid website selection choices¹. PICS lets users determine a set of criteria that allows only acceptable sites to be accessed on their machines. What this means is that websites need to be rated in order to be accepted on government computers where the determining criteria have been set up to protect minors. Mainstream gay and lesbian sites have been censored, and the government has also outlawed online protest. The problem is that if government is determining the criteria sites must meet in order to be accessed, then it is acting as a censor with its own rules and perspectives. An example of this came in 2001 when one of the country's leading gay and lesbian sites was banned by the government criteria after it was labelled as 'obscenity and perversion'. Lesbian and gay groups across the country are currently attempting to overturn this ruling.

The same situation may come about in Singapore where the Broadcasting Authority is considering calls from a national parents' group to implement a PICS system on public machines that children use.

Australia

In Australia two states currently have censorship legislation under review. In New South Wales and South Australia an Internet Censorship Bill is proposing that it be

made illegal to publish content on the web that is unsuitable for children, even if this material is only made available for adults. This includes archived mailing lists and messages to newsgroups. Even if the material is placed in a secure password-protected area of a website the content provider could still be prosecuted. Content is to be judged along the guidelines set out by the Australian Board of Film Classification, where films unsuitable for minors are rated 'R'. The problem with these bills is that the legislation applies not only to pornography but also to social and political issues such as crime, suicide, emotional trauma and religion.

In the three years to June 2000 over 50 percent of films classified 'R' were so rated because of adult themes other than sex, violence or swearing. In light of this, Electronic Frontiers Australia has declared that the effects of the legislation will be a ban on adult discourse regarding social and political issues on Australian Internet sites, newsgroups, forums and archived e-mail discussions. More relevantly for our profession, if online content is classified in the same way as film, librarians who supervise premises connected to the Internet could be prosecuted for 'screening' objectionable matter to minors.

On 6 June 2002, the New South Wales Parliamentary Standing Committee on Social Issues issued a report recommending that the State Government not proceed with its proposed Internet censorship law, and there is a good chance the government will heed the committee's advice. South Australia waits to see if its bill will be passed.

United States

Even in the United States, with its enshrined principle of free speech, efforts are being made to censor information on the Internet. The main issue affecting librarians in the States over the past year was

the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) which was signed into law by Bill Clinton in December 2000. In May 2002 it was successfully challenged in the courts by the American Library Association (ALA) and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) on the grounds that it violated the First Amendment's guarantee of freedom of speech. Despite this, fresh legislation is expected in Congress following the defeat of the act. The CIPA was the third attempt by Congress to censor Internet materials after the first two were overturned by the judiciary². The CIPA proposed that libraries that receive certain forms of federal funding, no matter how small, must implement 'Internet safety policies'. This meant the mandatory installation and use of content blocking software on all library terminals. Filters were to be used at all times, by children, adults and library staff in the hope of blocking obscenity, child pornography and material harmful to minors.

The government's line was that these measures were not a direct prohibition on free speech, and instead were more of a funding provision – if libraries don't want to filter, they don't accept the cash. The ALA and ACLU argued that filtering software doesn't only block the required categories and its limitations mean that access to vast amounts of relevant information is denied. If libraries are forced to filter, they said, some agent, be it human or machine, will be responsible for a list of banned sites. This agent will be a censor, and library users will be subject to censorship. Essentially 'CIPA ... [would force] ... libraries – through the weapon of the federal purse – to violate patrons' rights'.

Europe

In Europe at present there appears to be less emphasis on censorship and more on data retention. The issue of user privacy is one that libraries have considered before and will continue to be concerned with in the Internet age.

Germany, however, does have censorship issues and far-right hate sites seem to have the highest profile. As the German constitution prohibits censorship it has come down to the ISPs themselves to remove unwanted sites from the web at the behest of users or the authorities. In December 2000 German legal authorities ruled that websites aiming racist propaganda at German audiences could be prosecuted under German law, but the problem remains as to how to deal with sites hosted abroad. In the meantime, steps have been taken to protect minors from harmful content in libraries and most libraries use filtering software to ensure that dissemination of harmful materials is restricted to users of legal age.

German ISPs and police are now working closer together since a series of meetings last February and this closer relationship is mirrored elsewhere in Europe. The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act passed in the UK in 2000 required ISPs to install software that would enable police monitoring of subscriber's communications traffic. Within the last year a voluntary code has been introduced asking ISPs to keep this information for twelve months. Previously only billing information was held. In France, where ISPs must offer their subscribers filtering software but it is not mandatory to install it, hosting companies must preserve connection data so that website creators can be identified. The trend here is retention of data and it will affect libraries too – witness the computer files in one US library that were carried away in the aftermath of the World Trade Centre attacks after a librarian alerted the authorities that a suspected hijacker had used the facilities in her library.

Post September 11th Legislation

There is a whole raft of measures that librarians will have to consider in the wake of the September 11th terrorist attacks on the World

Trade Centre, including issues of user privacy and access to information. Of the greatest consequence, due to its use as a template for subsequent anti-terror measures elsewhere in the world, is the PATRIOT act passed by the US Congress³. This gives the authorities greater access to user information held by ISPs and authorization to spy on web surfing, including terms entered into search engines. These acts can now be carried out with minimal input from the judiciary, and with a very low level of proof. The UK followed the lead shown by PATRIOT and in December passed an Anti-Terror Bill allowing easier access to information held by ISPs. In October, Germany rushed through a bill forcing telecommunications companies to install surveillance software so authorities can better intercept on-line communications. Outside of Europe, the results of America's terrorist crackdown have been seen in Somalia where the only Internet company was forced to close, along with the only telecommunications company, after its international gateway was closed and its assets frozen by the US who suspected them of terrorist links. India's anti-terror bill meanwhile, will punish anyone setting up an 'anti-India' website with five years in jail and it seems that some governments are using September 11th to shore up legislation relating to their political opponents. September 11th is of most consequence to US libraries however, where librarians have been ordered to destroy public records in an effort to purge sensitive information from public access.

European Union legislation has also been influenced by September 11th. Alongside the EU convention on Cybercrime – a piece of legislation designed to combat online fraud, hacking and terrorism but under attack from privacy groups for its vague limits on police surveillance powers and unwarranted levels of data collection and storage – is a proposed amendment to a 1997 Directive on Privacy in the Telecommunications Sector that will grant law enforcement agen-

cies access to Internet traffic and communications data previously only kept for clarifying customer bills. This information will now have to be held for longer periods than the previous two-month limit. The amendment is controversial for a number of reasons, not least because President Bush requested the EU to implement these powers – that even the USA PATRIOT act does not have – in October 2001. It was initially thought the directive would remain unamended but now increased surveillance powers have been approved, despite critics maintaining the existing text was adequate for combating terrorism.

Conclusion

Even at a brief glance it is possible to see that the idea of the 'inherently democratizing' Internet is not being realized in the world today. Whether it is state interference in the form of surveillance or filtering, or due to the accumulation and investigation of personal information by governments in the wake of September 11th, it is clear that there are barriers to access present in both developed and developing world countries. Nation states are seeking to impose their ideologies on cyberspace, as evidenced in places like Saudi Arabia and Iran, and other pressures, such as those from family groups, are leaving countries like the United States and Australia with moral dilemmas with regard to filtering out questionable materials. Add to this mix the influence of business upon the Internet and the possibilities of free, equal and unhampered access for all seem far away.

Of course, the technically gifted and technologically advantaged will find their way around the barriers that are being erected. A group of US 'hacktivists' is developing software that they hope will circumvent China's Golden Shield programme. If one has the resources, one might prevail past the censors.

But libraries have less room to manoeuvre than individuals. We have to work within the legal

frameworks laid down by our governments. For now, at least, we must rely upon traditional methods of voicing our discontent with censorship in all its forms, by making our voices heard at governmental levels within our countries and by using international bodies such as IFLA/FAIFE. If we can do this, then we might be able to keep the profile of Internet censorship high enough up on the agenda to make a difference.

Note

The first version of this paper was presented at a FAIFE seminar in Berlin on 18th January 2002. This is a July update of that paper, and further detail and updates on the world situation can be found in the forthcoming FAIFE *Summary World Report* to be presented at IFLA in Glasgow in August 2002.

Footnotes

1. ICRA is an international content advisory organization and can be found at: www.icra.org. More information on PICS can be found at <http://www.w3.org/PICS/>.
2. The first two pieces of legislation were the Communications Decency Act of 1996 and the Children's Online Protection Act of 1998.
3. The USA PATRIOT act's full name is: Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism.

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- Workshops Promoting IFLA

Documenting the Performing Arts: an interview with Dr. Claudia Balk, President of SIBMAS

Willem Rodenhuis

Willem Rodenhuis was educated as a theatre historian (University of Utrecht, University of Amsterdam). In 1990 he was appointed reference librarian for theatre research at the Universiteit van Amsterdam. Since January 2000 he has been in charge of the collections on Theatre Studies, Film and Television Studies, and Musicology. He served two terms as Secretary General of SIBMAS from 1996–2000.

The International Association of Libraries and Museums of the Performing Arts (Société Internationale des Bibliothèques et des Musées des Arts du Spectacle: SIBMAS)



Willem Rodenhuis
Photo by Leendert Jansen.

was founded in Paris in 1954 as an initiative of the late Director of the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Département des Arts du Spectacle de la Bibliothèque Nationale de France, André Veinstein.

Initially the organization was meant to be a branch of IFLA, concentrating on the fostering of performing arts collections throughout the world. In 1976 it was decided that SIBMAS would continue as an autonomous organization, with an affiliation with both IFLA and the International Council of Museums, ICOM. These affiliations were intended to give shape to the dual character of SIBMAS, aiming to unite professionals like librarians, researchers and curators working for libraries, archives or museum collections for the performing arts.

Performing Arts Collections

The main objective of SIBMAS is to bring together colleagues who are responsible for the maintenance of collections in the field of the performing arts. Documenting the performing arts bears a paradox in it: for the 'here and now' character of a given performance, the interaction during the performance between performers and audience, prevent a repetition of that very experience. Unlike the plastic arts, the performing arts do not produce artefacts; attendance at a performance and the collective memory of it is all there is and all that will remain. Taking this principle into account, performing arts collections are renowned for the large variety of material and subjects for which they have concern. The relevant sources that can help to document the world of the performing arts are indirect sources. Apart from books and magazines, one will find clippings from newspapers and magazines, announcements of performances, posters, drawings, promptbooks, scrapbooks having belonged to actors, diaries, registrations of performances on photo, audiotape, records, compact disc, film, videotape or digital video disc. These sources cover performances ranging from the theatre and dance to opera, operetta and musicals, from puppetry to mime and performances in the street. Moreover, you will find in most performing arts collections specific holdings like costumes, puppets and marionettes, scale models of theatre buildings and stage settings, props, photos and paintings. There is also a general tendency to collect not only material related to a given national realm, but also to include the very richness of genres, forms of theatre and dance, historic parallelism and varieties from all over the world.

These holdings, and their specific character, require specialist treatment and care. The platform SIBMAS offers to its members during its biennial conferences is an important one, enabling delegates to exchange their views, their experiences and know how, their research and publications and solutions to practical issues like funding, public access and education. These subjects have proved their importance for members from libraries as well as from the world of museum collections.

A second and related objective of SIBMAS is to encourage international exchange between professionals in the field and to promote research with regard to the many aspects that belong to the world of the performing arts. With regard to this, SIBMAS is closely linked with the International Federation for Theatre Research (FIRT), uniting researchers in the field of drama.

During the 1990s a strong development in technology and automation has considerably influenced the work of SIBMAS-members. Collection management, in combination with the possibilities the Internet has to offer, has made colleagues aware of being part of a larger community, challenging them to cooperate. At several congresses the main issue was to report to each other about these developments, to inform each other, and to find applications of these findings in day-to-day professional activities.

Partnership

SIBMAS is only a small international organization (though officially recognized by UNESCO) with about 260 members worldwide. Most members belong to the staff of branch-collections belonging to larger bodies. These are mostly robust players in the process of technological innovation like the New York Public Library, the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, the Società Italiana degli Autori ed Editori, several national libraries and museums, and larger university libraries, both in Europe and North

America. This helps to ensure that the exchange of experiences and know-how between members is of top quality, and smaller organizations have benefited from such exchanges over the years.

Still, the notion of being affiliated with ICOM and IFLA has weakened, and this has fuelled the wish to re-strengthen these bonds for the benefit of members.

Against this background Dr. Claudia Balk, elected President of SIBMAS in 2000 during the 23rd Congress in Paris, expressed her view of the need to make an effort in the direction of closer cooperation. Being herself a museum curator she underlined recently the importance of sharing experiences by meeting with ICOM secretary-general Manus Brinkman. Something similar took place with regard to IFLA in January this year, bringing together Willem Rodenhuis (ex-committee member SIBMAS), Ross Shimmon (Secretary-General IFLA) and Sjoerd Koopman (Coordinator of Professional Activities IFLA).

Claudia Balk is working and living in Munich, and is responsible for the holdings of the Deutsches Theater museum, housing one of the most important collections documenting the rich history of the theatre and the dance in Germany over the centuries.

Future Planning

In a recent interview, Claudia Balk underlined the mixed character of SIBMAS, uniting libraries, archives and museums. She also stressed the latent tension between the interests and objectives that characterize this blend of constituents of the organization. In Claudia's view the museum section of SIBMAS has proved to be weaker than the library section, backed as the latter is by strong and mostly well-funded bodies of international importance and standards. She wishes to reduce the 'the text-dominant attitude of the library section' a little by promoting the richness of non-textual sources. Here Claudia Balk



Dr Claudia Balk.

hits the nail on the head, as we have earlier seen that the documentation of the performing arts depends largely on indirect and non-textual sources like artefacts (props, costumes, posters and scale models) and performance-related writings like diaries, letters, prompt-books and other memorabilia. Right after her election Claudia Balk installed an exhibition committee, aiming at the exchange of experience and seeking cooperation between collections in their preparations of exhibitions. Themes could be researched together, artefacts could be given on loan, an inter-regional history of the performing arts could be written, and temporary exchanges of staff members researching a given subject could be arranged. New ideas are needed, set against the background of technological developments and the challenges and possibilities this implies. Claudia Balk summarizes her mandate as President of SIBMAS with three keywords: Information, Organization and Reflection. The digital world opens up opportunities for a new practice and attitude towards the presentation of a collection: twenty-four hours online, thumbnail presentation of pictorial holdings, interconnection and standardization between collections. Of even greater impact will be the presentation of pictorial material itself by entering data relating to style, genre, representation, motives and biographical information of the artist, the performers, the venue

and a given play. By presenting this information in a related context, researchers will benefit a lot. In the near future collections will be virtually on the move, towards the researcher's desk, instead of the being accessible only in a collection, forcing researchers to leave their desk when doing their job. Integration of data will be a core business in the coming years, and performing arts collections can be of great importance as they are by definition housing different sources of information on a large scale.

The upcoming 24th SIBMAS Congress will be held in Rome from 2–7 September 2002. Claudia Balk hopes for a kick-off of the potential activities described above during the congress. The theme of the congress will be 'Performing Arts Collections and their Treatment', allowing for sessions in the fields of Acquisition and Development Policies, the Preservation and Conservation of Performing Arts Collections, and the Organization of Space in Performing Arts Collections. The beginning and ending of all the considerations expected will be the digitalization process that sets the tone, including the development of online catalogues and possible strategies for document delivery and interoperability. A special focus will be on several pilot projects that are currently being carried out, aiming at the application of digital approaches towards specific non-textual materials like paintings, illustrations and realia. Moreover, Claudia Balk stresses that the Congress could be interesting to other professionals active in the field of the performing arts:

I also hope that we can establish stronger professional contacts between our affiliated boards of IFLA and ICOM from the Rome Congress on. In our Executive Committee I'd like to see that appointed members take care of and give shape to these relations.

This is also true for the ITI (International Theatre Institute), FIRT (International Federation for The-

atre Research) and for USA-based organizations like the American Society for Theatre Research (ASTR) and the Theatre Library Association (TLA). Similar organizations in Europe are already represented by SIBMAS members directly, though in a more or less informal way. In 2004 SIBMAS will celebrate its 50th anniversary when meeting for its 25th congress in Barcelona. Balk:

I do hope that the process of re-defining the relations with our collegial organizations by that time has led to a concrete and closer cooperation.

The Rome Congress will be hosted by the Società Italiana degli Autori ed Editori (SIAE) and its branch library and archive, the Biblioteca e Raccolta Teatrale di Burcardo, which houses an important performing arts collection covering all of the richness of Italian theatre history.

Since 1996 SIBMAS has been present on the World Wide Web, initially hosted by the University of Amsterdam, and at present by the SIAE server. The website (<http://www.theatrelibrary.org/sibmas/sibmas.html>) has developed to become an important tool for communication among members, and for those who wish to get in contact with particular collections. This is especially vital for people who are active in more or less remote areas. Connections with Australia (Performing Arts Special Interest Group of Museums Australia: PASIG) have been improved considerably by using the Internet. Special efforts towards Africa, Asia and Latin America could be rewarding as well.

The *SIBMAS International Directory*

By the adding to the website the digital version of the *SIBMAS International Directory of Performing Arts Collections and Institutions* an important step was made in the application of digital technology.

Editor Paul Ulrich, Reference Librarian in the Amerika Gedenkbibliothek in Berlin, forged this digital research tool with the assistance of Tatjana Manojlovic on the basis of earlier printed versions of the work. However, the database which is now available has allowed the editor a considerable extension of the entries. Covering collections and institutions in more than 200 countries in the field of theatre, music, opera, dance, puppetry and more general cultural interest, Paul Ulrich has managed to bring together over 8000 topics. Printed works of reference tend to lose their reliability at the moment they are published, due to the occasional misprinting of data and the continuous process of changes in the addresses, names and periodical information they intend to cover. The *SIBMAS Directory* offers the opportunity to tackle this problem by adding on each page a link with the editors, enabling users of the directory to add their corrections. Doing so will in the end result in a more reliable tool of research at the service of the performing arts community. The digital directory allows searching on entries like country, region and city, and also indicates where in the world SIBMAS members are active. Access to the directory is free of charge, and is made possible through the SIBMAS website.

This concrete achievement, made possible through intensive cooperation among SIBMAS members over the years in combination with current technology, may serve as an example of what Claudia Balk has in mind when proposing new pilot projects to be carried out by SIBMAS members. The Rome Congress, together with the foreseen stronger bonds with IFLA and ICOM, is likely to be the starting point of these new initiatives. President Claudia Balk is ready for it: she is eager to learn about initiatives and suggestions for cooperation. She can easily be contacted through the addresses brought together on the SIBMAS website: www.theatrelibrary.org/sibmas/sibmas.html.