



library services to
newsletter
multicultural populations

No. 3
December
2005

Chair's Column



Kirsten Leth Nielsen

First of all: Thank you for trusting me and choosing me as new chair of the Committee! I will do my best to be a good chair.

Committee Involvement

I have been a member of the committee since 1999.

The situation in the committee in 2000 was rather critical. There were few active members and most members who had been engaged as officers were outgoing. That is why I attended my first midyear meeting I got involved immediately in planning the Section's session in Jerusalem. At first sight Jane Driesig and I hit the right note in the planning of the session. At that time Jane was secretary and Souad chair. However, it was impossible for Souad to attend the conference in Jerusalem due to the political situation in the Middle East. Fortunately, Jane and I had worked together with the programme and ever since we have had a very constructive and good teamwork!

Secretary since fall 2001

Therefore it was natural for me to run for the office of secretary in 2001. I have now finished my second term as secretary. There have been problems – at the beginning of my second term as secretary the IFLA Headquarters rejected my nomination in the Committee and consequently the office of secretary. That was a problem for me, but it was also a problem for the committee who had no secretary and no other candidate to choose from. But luckily the situation was solved due to hard work from our beloved chair Jane Driesig.

I have been head of the Multicultural Library at Oslo Public Library for nine years. During these years I have gained a lot of experience. It is my hope that this experience will be of use for my contribution as chair of Multicultural Section. As chair you must have vision and it is important that you initiate and follow up activities. I hope that I will be able to live up to these expectations.

Libraries worldwide need the IFLA organization. I believe that IFLA is an important organization and that IFLA will be even more important in the years to come. If we want libraries to be important factors with great impact on society in the future we need a strong and visible organization.

Continued on Page 2

The Newsletter is the official publication of the IFLA Section on Library Services to Multicultural Populations.

The Newsletter is made available to all Section members as a benefit of membership. Articles for publication and/or requests for information should be sent to Jane Pyper at jpyper@torontopubliclibrary.ca

EDITOR: Jane Pyper

CHAIR: Kirsten Leth Nielsen

DESIGN & PRODUCTION: Diana Mohammed

Editor's Note



Jane Pyper

As this newsletter comes to completion, winter is setting into my home city of Toronto. Since our last issue the annual IFLA conference has come and gone. You will find articles on the very successful pre-conference held in Stockholm by our Section and the swap-and-shop workshop in Oslo. It was also the 25th anniversary of our Section this year and a former chair of our Section, Charles Towney, provides us with some thoughts on that major and important milestone, looking both backwards and forwards.

Earlier this fall the Metropolis conference was held in Toronto. Metropolis is an international forum for comparative research and public policy development about population migration, cultural diversity and the challenges of immigrant integration in cities around the world. We were able to provide workshop on the role of the public library in aiding immigrant settlement. A Dutch colleague, Ton van Vliimmeren, from the Public Library of Utrecht also spoke about their experiences in this area. It was an interesting and lively discussion. Perhaps even more importantly, it took place amongst other presentations on the role of schools, health care providers, day care, and many other municipal public services in contributing to the important goal of successful immigrant reception and settlement. Looking at the role of the library in the broader public context and recognizing that this is a global issue faced by many countries was important.

Enjoy this issue and all the best for 2006!

Don't forget to visit our Section's website at:
<http://www.ifla.org/VII/s32/index.htm> ■



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1	Chair's Column/Editor's Note
2	Thank you to Jane Driesig
3	Swap & Shop Highlights By: Kirsten Leth Nielsen
4	Moe Thauk Kye: The Morning Star By: Yasuko Hirata // Meet our New Members
5	Multicultural Librarianship for Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence By: Charles Townley
7	The Stockholm Conference – A Summary By: Ann- Katrin Ursberg
9	Resolution on Strengthening IFLA's Position on The Theme Cultural and Linguistic Diversity
10	Multicultural Library Services – A Special Service for Minorities or a Mainstream Service for all Library users? By: Kirsten Leth Nielsen
11	Professional Education for Multicultural Librarianship By Brian Hall

IFLA is on its way to becoming that but still has a long way to go. I would like to participate in this development and I am convinced that the committee is a strong pillar in this work. I do have a vision for the work in the committee. In the near future the IFLA organization will have to undergo a comprehensive change. The multicultural diversity of the world's societies is one of the most significant features of the modern world. Libraries in most parts of the world do not reflect this.

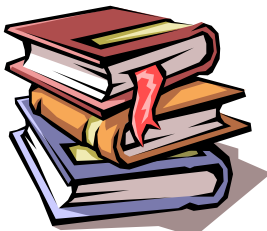
Today, multicultural library services in general are considered "special services for special people" and not a part of mainstream library management. A consequence of this is low priority and low status on these issues. This attitude has to be changed. We need a much broader perspective on library goals and missions due to the fact that the world is increasingly becoming more multicultural. Therefore we need enthusiastic staff members and people with vision. And we need strong advocacy and capable people to address the issue. And how do we handle this within the IFLA organization?

How do we maintain a strong focus on multicultural issues in a new and slimmer organization with fewer committees? This will be our greatest challenge in the near future. I have no final answer to this question. But I am sure that we as a group will be able to draw up a strategy for this work.

What I do think is that we will not be able to maintain status quo in the future. Our challenge will be to convince the organization that:

1. the demand for multicultural library services will increase in the years to come as a consequence of the economic and demographic development in the world
2. multicultural library services is an integral part of the mainstream library service, not a special service intended for minorities (We do have our 10 reasons)

As a consequence, the multicultural issue must have a strong position in a new organization. In this work, cooperation, building of alliances and networking will be key activities. ■



THANK YOU TO

JANE DREISEG A TRIBUTE FROM THE INCOMING CHAIR TO THE OUTGOING CHAIR

Dear Jane Dreisig,

Warm thanks from new chair Kirsten Leth Nielsen to Jane Dreisig; the outgoing chair of the Committee.

It is hard for me, and for the other members of the Committee as well, to understand and comprehend that after the Conference in Oslo, you will no longer be an elected member of the Committee. You have been chair of Library Services to Multicultural Section for 4 years, and before that, the secretary for another 4 years.

To me, you are a brave and fearless person. I shall not forget the way you handled the situation in Jerusalem where you on a very short notice had to take over the office as chair and at the same time, function as secretary. That was well done! That event showed all of us that you are a person of great responsibility, you are hard working and you are very conscientious in all your doings. The task to deal with formal matters so I could continue as secretary in the Committee also shows that you do not give up if you are fighting for a cause you believe in.

During all the Committee meetings, your leadership has been very visible. The meetings has been well prepared, you always bring extra copies of documents for those of us who forgot to bring them and the meetings itself has been carried out in an efficient and professional manner.

Your hospitality and kindness is well known by all of us and a majority of the Committee members have had the pleasure of visiting you! You are a warm-hearted and positive person.

To me personally, working together with you and sharing your company during many meetings and conferences, has given me new perspectives and a lot of positive memories! You are not only a colleague, but also a very good friend. I am sure that these feelings are shared by all of the other members of the Committee!

That is why we by no means will dismiss you from the Committee. Thank you so much for your contribution to the Committee and welcome back as a corresponding member.

Kirsten Leth Nielsen

“THE MULTICULTURAL BAZAAR – SWAP AND SHOP” IN OSLO - A GREAT SUCCESS!

By: Kirsten Leth Nielsen

The Multicultural Bazaar - Swap and Shop, hosted by Deichmanske bibliotek/Oslo Public Library on August 16, 2005 as a part of the programme of the IFLA conference in Oslo, was a great success. Our modest expectations were blown away when approximately 200 people gathered for the event. The conference room was packed with guests browsing through hundreds of pamphlets and other materials from libraries all around the world.

The Power Point presentation of the history of the Section was of very high quality and all members did a fantastic job. A lot of people stated that this was a new and valuable way of exchanging ideas.

A part of the event was the designation of the award for best material submitted at the Swap and Shop. The criteria for the award were: 1) eye catching, 2) multilingual, and 3) communicative in reaching the target group. The award working group had a difficult task selecting a winner among all the great candidates. However, after demanding discussions the group selected the Danish pamphlet: *Use your Library*. The winner was The State and University Library. Danish Central Library for Immigrant Literature (DCLIT). The award, a book about Norwegian landscapes, and a bag with the text "Use your Library" in eight languages was accepted by Chief Executive, Svend Larsen. The bag is produced by the Section on Library Services to Multicultural Populations in connection with the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Section. A Spanish language pamphlet *Plan Integral para La Inmigracion en Andalucia* produced by Junta De Andalucia. Consejeria de Cultura was awarded runner-up.

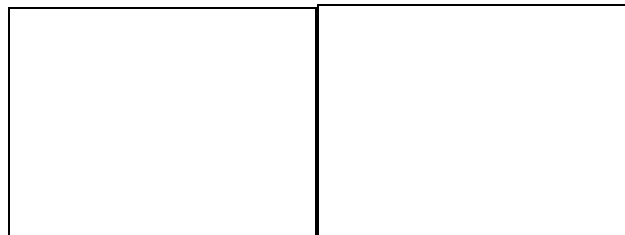
After the event, the Committee and the staff of the Multilingual Library agreed that this was a perfect event. And we were not the only ones. Aud Jorunn Aano, Leader, International library in Stavanger, Norway, stated: "I am very pleased to have had the opportunity to attend the first "Swap and Shop" at The Multilingual Library in Oslo. This was the best day of all IFLA for me. It was a mingle of people with interesting ideas, and a mingle of lovely ideas to share with each other. It was also a chance to meet people from all over the world who work with the same subjects and with the same interest as one self. There were a lot of people, but not too many. There were a lot of ideas, but not too many. I believe this was a creative and inclusive meeting-place for librarians and others working with minority-groups. Thank you."

However, we could have done parts of the session differently. The time slot for the event was too long. Two hours for the whole event would have been enough. We should have announced that people could experience on-line material as well as printed copies on the four PC's installed at the venue, since very few did that. We also had a lot of material left when the event was over. Next time we will ask for a number of 20 pieces and not up to 50.

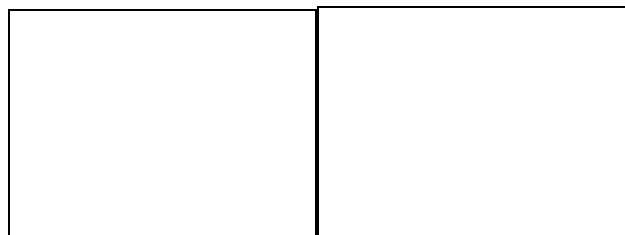
The Section's aim is to submit an article of the event reporting experiences and details of the occasion. As mentioned before, the event was very successful and we believe that this way of arranging a session is a good alternative to a session with lots of speakers and few discussions. Our aim is to submit the article to IFLA Journal Vol. 32, no. 2 March 2006 and hopefully get it accepted by the Editorial Committee of the journal.

Read more about the happening, experience the Power Point presentation of the history of the Section or take a look at the pictures for the event at the website, published and hosted by The Multilingual Library at Deichmanske bibliotek/Oslo Public Library: <http://nyhuus.deich.folkebibl.no/deichman/dfb/lister/swap&shop/index.html>

1st prize: *Use your Library (The State and University Library. Danish Central Library for immigrant Literature)*



■ **2nd prize:** *Plan Integral para La Inmigracion en Andalucia (Junta De Andalucia. Consejeria de Cultura)*



■

MOE THAUK KYE: THE MORNING STAR

By: Yasuko Hirata



Rainbow Bridge and Tokyo Tower

Moe Thauk Kye is the name of a library voluntarily operated by Burmese in Tokyo, Japan. There are almost 10,000 Burmese living in this country. They are short-term workers, refugees, students and so on. In the winter of 2000, some Burmese opened a private library named Ahhara, which means nutrition for the brain. And when it was moved to a new place in 2004, the name of the library was changed from Ahhara to Moe Thauk Kye, which means the morning star.

Moe Thauk Kye Library has about 6,000 volumes of books and magazines. The collection occupies a whole room in a small apartment. Books are imported not only from Myanmar (Burma), but also from other countries. Many books are published in Japan. The goal of the library is to sustain and disseminate Burmese literature and culture. Library activities are various. They include lending, providing cultural events such as lectures and meetings, passing on language and culture to the next generation, supporting Burmese in detention institutions in Japan, publishing newsletters, and so on.

Burmese status in Japan is not always stable. Some of them are authorized as refugees, and some of them are in detention institutions because they have overstayed. However, they are very active, charming, and like reading and talking. Moe Thauk Kye is not just a library to use, but a meeting place for the people who are interested in Burmese culture.

This report is based on the article written by Eiji Kurosaki in the Newsletter of "Musubime 2000" No. 52 (2005.8) entitled "From Ahhara to Moe Thauk Kye Library". The Newsletter of "Musubime 2000" is published quarterly by Librarians Network for a Culturally Diverse Society.

Yasuko Hirata provided a summary and translation of the article. ■

MEET OUR NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to: Galina Raykova

Ms. Raykova graduated in LIS from Cheliabinsk State Institute of Culture and Arts (1990) after attending Tyumen Technological Institute (1974). She is currently Chief of the Department on interlibrary interaction with Russian and CIS libraries in the Russian State Library and has been in that position since 2000.

Her previous positions include Chief of Research-methodological Department of Russian State Children Library (1996-2000), librarian in Research-methodological Department of the Tyumen regional research library and lecturer in Tyumen State Institute of Culture and Arts. She has also served as the vice-president of Tyumen regional library association (1984-1993).

During her husband's mission in Skeftea (Sweden) she finished a course in Swedish and had practiced in the library of Tradshogskolan (1993-1995).

She has written several publications in the professional press, on the themes of ethnic pluralism, the multinational population in Russia, diverse ethnic cultures and library services. ■



MULTICULTURAL LIBRARIANSHIP FOR MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY AND INTERDEPENDENCE

By: Charles Townley,
Chair 1991-1993

25th Anniversary Address

It is a great honour for me to be invited to make some remarks on the occasion of the Section's 25th Anniversary. I join all the former Chairs in declaring that the Section on Library Services to Multicultural Populations is the most imaginative and forward looking in IFLA. And now that the Section is a mature 25 year of age, we expect the Section will be even more effective in assuring that every individual has access to personally and culturally meaningful library services wherever they may live in this interdependent world.

Today, I will focus on the "big picture." I will demonstrate how the Section's goals inter-relate with globalization and other major social changes in our time. By showing how the Section responds to these forces, I will demonstrate how central the Section's work is to IFLA and all its participating library organizations. By demonstrating this global centrality, I frankly seek to encourage more IFLA member libraries to join and participate in the vital multicultural work of this Section.

I will begin by putting the Section's multicultural mission into context. Everyone knows that the world is increasingly interdependent. Economic globalization is a fact and change is ubiquitous. Let me share several personal examples. I teach simultaneously in China and the U.S. using WebCT instructional software and videoconferencing over the internet. The database I edit is used by scholars throughout North and South America. I use Skype VOIP software, developed by a Swedish and Estonian collaborative, to talk with colleagues in Europe, Asia and Africa about my research. The car I drive in the U.S. is the same model I ride in on official business in China. The computer I purchased this spring was designed in the U.S. and Europe, built in China, and supported with excellent technical support from India. The standard of living for those who can take advantage of this interdependence is increasing. On the other hand, for those who are not able to participate, the standard of living is stagnant or declining.

The political facet of globalization was foreseen by Marx and Engels over 150 years ago. They said:

All fixed, fast, frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. ... The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere. The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country. To the great chagrin of reactionaries, it has drawn from under the feet of industry the national ground on which it stood.

Tom Friedman, the Pulitzer Prize winning journalist who writes for the New York Times, describes our interdependence as "the flat world." He identifies 10 economic and technological "flatteners" which, together with new business practices and the emergence of new global players from Eastern Europe, India and China, are reinventing the world order in a fully interdependent form. Outsourcing, offshoring, the internet and other flatteners are causing much of the world to collaborate as never before.

For those of us in IFLA and especially the Section on Library Services to Multicultural Populations, interdependence cannot be explained solely in economic or political terms. We ask questions about the human side of interdependence. Margaret Mead, the famous anthropologist, developed the concept of "mutual responsibility" as a framework for describing the social component of global interdependence. She asks how we as cultural communities should seek to maintain our distinctive identities, our languages, our unique values, and our sense of belonging in a flat world. How do we make sense of the life we lead? How do we share and borrow with others in a responsible manner? Dr. Mead encourages us to balance the economic and political benefits resulting from a flatter world with our ability to use these benefits to improve the quality of human life. Each cultural community must seek to strike a balance that makes sense for them. Each individual must work within their own cultural system to define and live a meaningful life. Individuals and systems must interrelate to achieve both integration and identity.

The IFLA Section on Library Services to Multicultural Populations plays a vital role in supporting mutual responsibility in an interdependent world. For a quarter century, the Section has supported efforts to generate mutual responsibility through library services. It has provided constant leadership in supporting multicultural communities as they respond to a flatter and more interdependent world.

Continued on page 6

Today, I celebrate with you four areas of activity the Section has promoted constantly throughout its existence. From the beginning, the Section has sought to define and promote culturally responsive library services for multicultural communities, be they immigrant, refugee, migrants or national minorities. The Sections' *Guidelines*, now in their third edition and available in many languages, guide librarians throughout the world who seek to provide effective library services to cultural groups. As the result of the Section's guidelines, Indigenous peoples of the Americas and the Pacific, immigrant communities in Europe, as well as national minorities in Africa and Asia have access to information essential for cultural and economic development, increasingly in their native language.

During our 25 years the Section has developed and implemented specific multicultural services in partnership with librarians in developing countries. The Section has supported multicultural publishing and book fairs in African and other languages. We have published a widely regarded handbook of multicultural library practice and many other services. As a result of our efforts, multicultural library services are stronger in both the developed and developing worlds.

In an interdependent and mutually responsible world, general administration of libraries is increasingly collaborating with multicultural librarians to achieve key organizational and program objectives. Indeed, as people move in our flat world, general populations are becoming multicultural. At my university in New Mexico, for example, the majority of students are no longer from the general U.S. population group. It is incumbent on general libraries, like mine, to partner with multicultural specialists to develop library services that address culturally specific information needs and information seeking behaviours. The Section's highly successful satellite meetings and workshops, often conducted in collaboration with other IFLA sections and often resulting in widely distributed monographs, have been effective in guiding general library personnel who seek to develop responsive multicultural practices. The Section's marketing continues to encourage general libraries to become Section members, both for the health of the Section and the effectiveness of general libraries.

Perhaps the greatest achievement of the Section is its' efforts to create a multicultural community of practice for librarians. From a standing start 25 years ago, the Section has created a community where librarians can become more effective practitioners of multicultural librarianship. Publications, newsletters, and a website provide access to information and training. Workshops and satellite meetings provide opportunities for hands-on skills development. An electronic network leads people to appropriate contacts for further assistance. And this,

in turn, leads to more effective library service for all cultures in our interdependent world.

For the past 25 years the Section on Library Services to Multicultural Populations has been IFLA's main constituency for addressing the library needs of increasingly multicultural societies. The Section has provided access to an interdependent community of diverse professionals committed to mutually responsible library service for all peoples regardless of their location or their economic or political power. The results of the Section's work can be seen throughout the world. I have every confidence that the Section will continue to aggressively expand its role in IFLA and it's member libraries and organizations in order to meet the burgeoning needs of multicultural library service in our interdependent world.

And what are the Section's activities likely to look to be over the next 25 years? I believe we will see four characteristics woven into most of the Section's work:

1. The Section will continue to focus on promoting multicultural librarianship by setting goals, guidelines, management strategies, and professional development.
2. The Section will strengthen its collaborative networks by facilitating the transfer of knowledge about multicultural librarianship. Electronic discussions, symposia and web casting workshops will strengthen expertise in multicultural librarianship.
3. The Section will become an evermore central part of IFLA. Section expertise and programs will be seen as part of the IFLA mainstream. More and more IFLA members will identify membership in the Section on Library Services to Multicultural Populations as essential for providing general library services to their evermore diverse communities.
4. The Section will celebrate its successes with a range of activities. The Section will honour multicultural library leaders and libraries that outstanding multicultural programming with recognition and publicity.

I congratulate the Section on its outstanding success. I know the Section will become even more effective in the future. While it may be a little premature, I invite you to join us again in 25 years for an update! I already have it on my calendar!

■

THE STOCKHOLM CONFERENCE – A SUMMARY

By: Ann-Katrin Ursberg

Starting at the 10th of August, some days prior to the IFLA Congress in Oslo, the three days arrangement was taking place at a conference center in the rebuilt old tram hall of the city. In fact the programme began already on the 9th in the evening, when a reception opened the IFLA Satellite Conference. The welcome address was made by the Head of the Swedish National Board for Cultural Affairs. The setting of the evening was the solemn banquet hall at the Swedish Academy and the Nobel Library, and attendees were able to have guided tours of the facilities. The Nobel Museum in the same building hosted a buffet offered to the visitors.

The first conference session next morning included a welcome speech by the Head of Board to the Swedish Library Association, Ms Britta Lejon, who focused on aspects of democracy and multiculturalism within libraries. The conference was honoured by the presence of the President of IFLA, Ms Kay Raseroka, who made an engaged speech of defence for the Library and all the values it stands for, being an institution open to all and everyone in need of its services.



From left: Brita Lejon, Swedish Library Association, Kay Raseroka, IFLA and Ann-Katrin Ursberg, Conference Organizing Committee

Next the participants under the heading of Language Rights, devoted themselves to the issue of threatened languages through Mr Peter Austin from School of Oriental Studies, University of London, UK, and Mr Edgardo Civallero, National University of Cordoba, Argentina. Both of them highlighted different aspects of increasing threats, leading to a substantial loss of languages - and many more being on the edge of extinction. It was noted that there are about 6500 languages spoken today in the world, and as many as half of them are endangered, which was described as a social, cultural and scientific disaster! The

Swedish linguist Leena Huss, Center for Multiethnic Research at University of Uppsala pointed out some examples of national language policies on minority languages in the Nordic countries, aiming to strengthen their position in relation to the surrounding majority languages.

After lunch the main theme of staff training was introduced by Ms Kirsti Nilsen, Prof. Emeritus at University of Western Ontario in Canada. She shared her profound knowledge of educating librarians-to-be and re-training existing staff on multicultural issues.

She described which competencies are essential to improve and maintain the specific knowledge needed to provide the ultimate multicultural services required by the target groups. She was followed by Mr Bernhard Dione, at present carrying out research studies in LIS subjects in Montreal, Canada. He was mainly speaking about the current situation for librarians in his home country of Senegal in West Africa, but broadened the picture to the conditions of libraries and diversity matters all over the vast continent.

Ms Tracie Hall from the American Library Association made a deeply committed speech on the conditions of the underserved groups of citizens in her home country, while Ms Mirjana Djukic, State Library of NSW, Australia, focused on diverse information seeking behaviour, suggesting methods in order to face situations in connection to visitors with various backgrounds. In the end of the day the Head of the International Library in Stockholm, Mr. Larry Lempert briefly introduced himself and his institution as a gateway to the study visit in the evening.

Later, the participants were guided through the International Library and its numerous collections of media in different languages. The evening was closed by a musical performance in the vast main hall of the Public Library, presenting a truly cross-cultural musical experience, which was greatly appreciated by the audience - and after that a meal with a mix of Swedish and international dishes.

The theme of staff training was continued the next morning by Ms Anna Kwan from Toronto Public Library in Canada, who described the organizational culture built up at her institution, aiming to support accomplishment of multicultural services throughout the city of Toronto. This urban area rightfully claims to be "one of the most multicultural regions of the world". A completely different scenario was painted by Ms Barbora Horavová from Multicultural Center in Prague, Czech Republic. It should be noted that the Center is a non-governmental, non-profit organization, relying on funding from different sources. Starting up the activities as late as 1995, the Center houses a young and creative group of staff, obliged to break new tracks in a country where not much attention has been paid to multicultural issues. Barbora stressed that the center has constantly focused on public libraries as means of reaching out to the people.

Continued on Page 8

The Stockholm Conference – continued from Page 7

As libraries are accessible to every individual, they are expected to "play a key role in intercultural dialogue" within the Czech Republic.

Mr Adriaan Swanepoel from Tshwane University of Technology in Pretoria, South Africa, discussed in his presentation the hardships of a merger between three different libraries, where the newly founded institution includes widely diverse organizational cultures – a truly multicultural challenge in a South African setting! Mr Domenico Ciccarello reported on diverse activities in Italy, where much effort has been made to promote multicultural training initiatives, ie The Multicultural Library Training Course, which is an on-line course within the ABSIDE project, aiming to improve cross-cultural skills among library staff.



Domenico Ciccarello

The two Danish librarians from Odense Central Library, Mr Sören Dahl Mortensen and Ms Bente Lund Weisbjerg were responsible for the planning and implementation of a "Cross Cultural Bridge Building" project. The purpose was very concrete: To ensure that some persons with a diverse background were accepted as trainees at the public library. After the one year training period had ended some of them were offered jobs at the library on permanent basis. And the conference audience got a lively picture of the sorrow and joy encountering the project leaders, as they were living very close to their mission for a long period of time.

The session ended with a presentation by Ms Kristina Virtanen, Helsinki Public Library, Finland. She has been working with some long term projects, ie with leadership courses for librarians in Russia. She described how project ideas can develop, from the first exchange of thoughts into a fundamental concept, and how funding can be obtained, within the EU and other organizations. She ended by inviting the participants to share their project ideas with her for future collaboration! An interesting finale.

The afternoon was devoted to study tours, including three different alternatives. The first alternative included a visit at Södertörns University College, a recently opened institution known for its gender and multicultural profile, and furthermore to the Multicultural Center in Fittja, a knowledge, research and documentation center on immigration and diversity, situated some distance from the city center. The second tour consisted of a visit to Rinkeby Public Library, in a suburban area where the great majority of people have a multicultural background. The third tour alternative included another markedly multicultural library in Fisksätra, along with the so called Diesilverkstaden (The Diesel Engine Workshop), a rebuilt industrial building nowadays serving as a library and as a meeting spot, especially designed for young people in the area. -For more information about the tour libraries please look at: www.ifla-stockholm2005.se and click on 'Links'.

The evening reception took place at the City Hall, where Lord Mayor Barry Andersson addressed the visitors in the Gallery of the Prince with a magnificent view over the waters of Riddarfjärden, one of the spots in Stockholm where salt and fresh water are mixed through the blending embrace between the lake of Mälaren and the open sea. An evening buffet was offered followed by a guided tour to the banquet hall (named Blue Hall) and the ballroom of the Nobel festivities every 10th of December. On leaving the City Hall the visitors boarded a tour boat taking them on a two and a half hour trip onto the Baltic Sea and back – and on this evening even the weather was cooperative...

The third session day the attention was given to the theme of Multilingual Catalogues. It is considered to be an issue on everyone's lips, but the real development of systems and solutions of relevance has proved to be a quite laborious and expensive process. No matter how, Mr David Whitehair from OCLC (Online Computer Library Center) contributed in a convincing way to the removal of some questions marks through his presentation of multiple scripts within the WorldCat cooperative concept. Two Australian speakers, Catie Jilovski and Frances Riva reported on their experiences of the technical and practical implications of multilingual cataloguing, and discussed, from two diverse perspectives, how the introduction of this technology has improved access to existing multilingual collections in the context of libraries.

The last matter became evident also in the speech of Ms Anna Gustafsson-Chen, information professional at the International Library in Stockholm. She showed visually how access to the collections of her library simply had improved by means of its multilingual catalogue – and not only for the benefit of her own institution, but also to libraries all over the country and to individuals using the internet from home, the basic idea being that libraries and all other users alike, could access at any time around the clock. Anna's search examples accompanied by displaying of the actual web pages on the screen, suggested how

Continued on page 9

simple - and complicated - the matter of multilingual cataloguing may be. Pointing on an initiative which can be viewed upon as a first step, she simultaneously indicated that we are on our way...

As a surprise for the closing, the conference was visited by the Sami musician and storyteller Åsa Simma, who provided the audience with some unique pieces of music - the traditional sami joik - and some words of wisdom for the road..



Sami musician and storyteller: Åsa Simma

Resolution On Strengthening IFLA's Position On The Theme Cultural And Linguistic Diversity

By: Kirsten Leth Nielsen

IFLA Section on Library Services to Multicultural Populations Standing Committee/32 submitted a resolution "**Cultural and Linguistic Diversity: Strengthening IFLA's Position.**" To be discussed at Council II at IFLA, WLIC Oslo, Norway 2005.

The text of the resolution is based on IFLA's aims, core values and tree pillars.

Background:

IFLA's aims and core values:

Whereas IFLA's Core Values embraces the belief that people, communities and organizations need universal and equitable access to information, ideas and works of

imagination for their social, educational, cultural, democratic and economic well-being and that IFLA is committed to enable all members to engage in, and benefit from, its activities without regard to citizenship, disability, ethnic origin, gender, geographical location, language, political philosophy, race or religion;

And whereas the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity highlights the importance of respecting, preserving and promoting cultures;

And whereas IFLA supports the World Information Summit which recognizes that in building the Information Society, particular attention needs to be made to marginalized and vulnerable groups of society, including migrants, internally displaced persons and refugees...minorities and nomadic people.

IFLA's three pillars: Society, Membership and Profession Society:

The Society Pillar focuses on the role and impact of libraries and information services in society and the contextual issues that condition and constrains the environment in which they operate across the world. Those issues are addressed currently through FAIFE, CLM, Blue Shield, and our advocacy in the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and other arenas.

Membership:

The Membership Pillar is central and important to IFLA. It includes the services IFLA offers to members, management of their membership of IFLA and conferences and publications. Members must work together to make IFLA more vibrant and attractive and beneficial for all members throughout the world.

Profession:

The Profession Pillar focuses on the issues covered by the long established Core Activities - ALP; ICABS, PAC, UNIMARC – and the Sections and Divisions. They lie at the core of our professional practice and help libraries and information services to fulfil their purposes and to shape responses to the needs of clients in a rapidly changing global environment.

Text of resolution:

Therefore, be it resolved that IFLA establish a **working group** to implement the following recommendations within its Three Pillars:

Society Pillar:

IFLA should create and adopt a manifesto which emphasizes the important role of libraries in a culturally and linguistically diverse society and ensure that the manifesto is permeated throughout the entire IFLA organization and used for external advocacy. Once adopted, IFLA should present the manifesto to UNESCO for approval.

Continued on page 10

Professional Pillar:

- The ideas of the manifesto should be incorporated into all the strategic plans and guidelines of IFLA and all of its sections and divisions.

Membership Pillar:

- IFLA should create and maintain a database of best practices relating to cultural and linguistic diversity for the benefit of its members; and,
- Sections and divisions should be encouraged to develop stronger networks and partnerships and demonstrate these partnerships through joint conference programs, publications and activities on cultural and linguistic diversity.

The resolution was produced by a Working Group consisting of the Committee members: Jane Dreisig (Denmark), Mijin Kim (Canada), Kirsten Leth Nielsen (Norway), Domenico Ciccarello (Italy) and, Benedikte Kragh-Schwarz (Denmark). The Working Group worked hard and fast and did a fantastic job. The Resolution was a result of perfect teamwork!

What happened?

The resolution was not accepted as a resolution due to IFLA rules for submission of resolutions: All Professional Resolutions should be submitted 5 months prior to Council (Statute 14.7). However, we got the following answer:

*"Parliamentarian advises:
Refer the resolution to Governing Board via Professional Committee – ICM to do this. The FB should ensure that they have an answer*

All Professional Resolutions should be submitted 5 months prior to Council (see Statute 14.7).

The only exceptions are "Urgent and exceptional matters". (RoP 3.9, 3.10)

This does not fall into that category, and is something with which IFLA agrees in principle, BUT there are organizational and financial implications in establishing a Working Group."

We hope for a positive answer

The matter will be on the agenda on Governing Board meeting in December. Chair of the Section Kirsten Leth Nielsen will follow up and we decided to keep the Working Group active for the time being. The Working Group will prepare a draft manifesto referred to in the resolution prior to the Governing Board meeting in December.

The aim of the Section is to get approval of the content of the resolution and if so - hopefully we will be able to submit a Manifesto which will be accepted and approved by UNESCO. ■

MULTICULTURAL LIBRARY SERVICES – A SPECIAL SERVICE FOR MINORITIES OR A MAINSTREAM SERVICE FOR ALL LIBRARY USERS?

By: Kirsten Leth Nielsen

Today multicultural library services are a special service to a special group, namely immigrants and refugees. My vision is that in the future, multicultural library services will be a mainstream service for all library users!

Globalization

The 21st century is the century of globalization. No one can deny that fact! People are travelling all around the world, and a great number of people have a trans national personality. A person might grow up in one country, get her education in another, and get her first job in a third country. At the same time her family is spread all over the world. She has her roots in the world – not in one country. Migration is also increasing. People from poor areas try to find better living conditions in richer countries. Others are fleeing from persecution due to political attitudes and others are pursuing better work opportunities.

The globalization of the world is accelerating at such high speed that most of us have difficulties catching up. This development has many dark sides, but fortunately also many bright elements!

One of these elements is diversity. To me, the first and foremost resource in the world society is diversity. And among all the varieties of diversity, cultural and linguistic diversity is at the top of the list. Cultural and linguistic diversity inspire creativity and makes the world go round! Today most societies consist of populations with great variety in their racial, cultural and ethnic make-up. Most continents of the world are highly multicultural

When I say cultural in this context, I mean the elements of culture which come to terms in literature, music, art, clothing and so on.

Linguistic diversity is to me as said before, another great force in society. Imagining a world where all people have the same mother tongue is fascinating and would make communication so much easier, but from my perspective variety in language leads to variety in cultural expressions and way of life. As in nature we need diversity to survive. Today the world consists of approximately 6500 languages. Many of these languages are endangered and a majority of them are based on oral traditions only. A very important issue in this context is preservation of the languages and cultures of indigenous peoples. If we want to keep this variety we must take action.

Continued on page 11

Why is cultural and linguistic diversity such an important issue?

I am convinced that cultural inheritance and languages are intimately linked and that they together form and strengthen the identity of human beings. Anyone who has had the experience of being forced to present a speech or to argue or express strong feelings knows that. Without the possibility to communicate with people around you, verbally and in behaviour the great silence invade your mind. And this again influences your capability to comprehend new impressions and your capability to learn and adapt to a new and unknown society. A strong and secure identity is one of the conditions for being able to adapt to, participate and appreciate a multicultural society.

How can libraries contribute to strengthening the identity of people and preserve, promote and set a positive focus on the different cultures worldwide?

In my opinion, libraries of all kinds can play an important role in raising awareness and highlight languages and cultures worldwide. Library services, if reflecting the needs of the population in its surrounding, can have a great impact on people's lives.

As learning centres libraries can promote and give access to learning materials, languages programmes and other relevant materials both in print and electronic. By providing this access the whole society has the opportunity to learn about each other's communities, learn each other's languages and gain knowledge of various topics being explored in different cultures.

As cultural centres the libraries preserve, promote, highlight and give voice to different cultures and their literature, art and music. This access give all kinds of people from all cultures the possibility to read each others literature, hear each others music and get inspired to develop new ways of expressing themselves.

As meeting places, libraries can be the arena of interaction between all kinds of people from all kinds of cultures. Events, exhibitions and joint sessions on cultural issues will give all kinds of people from all kinds of cultures the opportunity to learn from each other, practise or improve their language skills and make new friendships.

As librarians, we can advocate and raise awareness of the importance of a linguistically and culturally diverse society.

In this way, libraries also can play a role in the effort to combat ignorance, intolerance and discrimination and thus minimize the gaps between cultures, created by a lack of knowledge.

But if we want to succeed in this we have to adopt a new perspective, including the values of cultural pluralism in society.

We might need a redefinition of the missions and goals of the libraries if we want libraries to be genuinely multicultural in all aspects of its management, functions, collections and activities!

How can we achieve these ambitious goals? Is it possible?

Yes I believe in this vision. But we have a long way to go. As a first step on the way, the Section will submit a resolution at the IFLA Council Thursday urging IFLA to:

1. Create and adopt a manifesto which emphasizes the important role of libraries in a culturally and linguistically diverse society. A manifesto which can be used in the organisation and for external advocacy!
2. To incorporate the ideas of the manifesto into all the strategic plans and guidelines of IFLA and all of its sections and division
3. Create and maintain a database of best practices relating to cultural and linguistic diversity
4. Sections and divisions should be encouraged to develop stronger networks and partnerships through joint conference programs, publications and activities on cultural and linguistic diversity.

Hopefully IFLA Council will adopt the resolution and if they do I, as new chair of the Section, will follow up!

For information on the future of the Resolution see page 10.

■

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION FOR MULTICULTURAL LIBRARIANSHIP

By: Brian Hall, Senior Lecturer (retired)
School of Information Studies,
University of Central England in Birmingham, UK

Although multicultural librarianship tends to be subsumed under a wider equal opportunities strategy in UK libraries in the 21st Century, this area of professional practice still presents not only unique challenges but also opportunities for service development.

At the pre-IFLA seminar on library services to multicultural communities held in Stockholm in August 2005, surprise was expressed by many delegates that this was a subject that could be taught and that it was even in the syllabus of some library schools in the UK.

In fact, my colleagues and I ran such a module throughout the nineties at the School of Information Studies, University of Central England in Birmingham. I hoped to get the module made compulsory for all students on our undergraduate programme but those students on our Business Information or Information & the Media pathways objected on the grounds that it was not relevant to their needs. I was however successful in making it a compulsory module for all those on the Information & Library Studies pathway of our degree programme.

This was just a short time after racial tensions in the UK had come to a head in so-called 'race riots' in many of our inner cities including Birmingham – the 'Handsworth Riots'. The events of the late eighties had horrified and saddened those of us who had spent many years celebrating the rich cultural diversity which Birmingham had to offer, though it has to be said that those events were not only foreseen but predicted by many who had some awareness of the problems faced by those living in our inner cities.

Libraries have a tradition of serving the whole of their communities regardless of race, colour or creed and it is important that all cultures are validated within a community and that people are encouraged to take a pride in their own culture and its associated values. In many ways libraries are ideal institutions for promoting the virtues and values of a true multicultural society being free of any vested interests whether they be economic, cultural or political.

It was my intention, therefore, to try to produce a course that would not only show the range of opportunities offered to librarians by the challenges of working in inner cities, but also to help students understand the underlying causes of racism, stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination. To this end I recruited the help of one of my colleagues who was a sociologist by training and he undertook to teach the wider social background while I concentrated on the more specific librarianship aspects.

We very quickly discovered that our students had a level of ignorance about the nature and culture of minority ethnic groups broadly in line with that of the general population. We decided therefore to spend some time dispelling some of the myths and misconceptions that they had, starting with some basic demographic statistics. All of them overestimated the size of minority ethnic population in the UK and everyone failed to give the correct answer to the question 'from which country have most immigrants into the UK come since 1945?' The answer, of course, is the Republic of Ireland. They also failed on the question 'by how much has the UK population risen as a result of immigration since 1945?' The answer is actually less than none as more people have emigrated than have come into the country in that time.

I was fortunate also to be able to enlist the help of Ethnic Services Librarians from both Birmingham and nearby Coventry who were able to support our teaching. It is interesting to note that in the UK most advertisements for posts as Multicultural Librarians or Ethnic Services Librarians, etc. require a good understanding of Urdu and/ or Punjabi and/ or Hindi thereby effectively suggesting that other communities require no special support.

The reality is, of course, that this type of provision needs to be done on a team basis to include the needs of, for example, Poles, both Greek and Turkish Cypriots, Afro-Caribbean communities, and Chinese, and more recently people coming into Britain from those mid-European countries that are now part of the European Union. We were also concerned to ensure that students had a good grasp of the concepts involved. What is a multicultural society? To many it meant 'making them more like us' (sic) and we had to dispel such out of date ideas. We also had to make them aware that a multicultural library service is not just a matter of putting a few books in foreign languages on the shelves.

Continued on page 13

A key reading on our reading list for the course was 'The Whole Library Movement' AAL Publishing, 1992, which I consider to be a seminal work in the field. It was edited by Ziggy Alexander and Trevor Knight, now Chief Librarian at the London Borough of Sutton but formerly Children's Librarian in Walsall, near Birmingham and he was in fact born just outside the city boundary. It is important because it includes the views of users on the attitude of librarians to their needs, and reading it is a salutary experience.

It was also important to stress that when developing such services simply extending services to the minority ethnic communities from within an essentially Eurocentric library structure would not constitute a true multicultural library service. Emphasis was placed on materials selection, including non-print formats, and the associated problems of identification and acquisition. Many library authorities within the UK sent their ethnic services librarians to India to buy materials in situ. It is also important to remember that some cultures rely more on music, song and dance for communication than the printed word.

The organisation of materials within libraries also presents problems not only in the need for transliteration of titles but also in the use of essentially Western classification schemes. There is a real need to review the terminology used in traditional schemes and to reconsider the appropriateness of say, Dewey, for such collections.

Staffing and especially staff training were other major issues for consideration. It is essential to have a balanced team in order to provide a service to the whole community. A range of language skills together with an understanding of different cultures are essential.

Space alone prevents me from writing about the very wide range of services discussed in this course. Librarians are actually very good at developing a wide range of initiatives – support for mother tongue collections for which both materials and accommodation for classes can be provided; support for English as a second language; support for Saturday schools for both Muslims and Afro-Caribbean children; support for adult literacy classes; etc.etc.

A number of outreach services were also being developed – loan facilities to day centres, nurseries, clinics, doctors' surgeries, playgroups, mother and toddler groups, etc. Talking newspapers for Asian language speakers, collections in mosques, gurdwaras, temples, as well as support for local culture – Asian dance groups, Black drama groups, reggae concerts in libraries (yes – really!), Black writers-in-residence, etc. Students never ceased to be amazed at some of the wonderful work being done in UK libraries. We also looked at services to children both in and out of school and the need for wider and better promotion of library services to these communities.

On the broader themes of the course, my former colleague, Dr Chris Hart covered such issues as Empire and Ethnocentrism: perspectives on Cultural Superiority; Moral Panics – witches, communism and censorship; Information and Extremism – the case of Nazism; as well as the general themes of Stereotyping – its origins, practice and consequences. All of this made a very valuable contribution to students' understanding of the issues.

Inevitably, in such a sensitive area, there were problems. Because people were wary of confronting their own prejudices I suspect that what the course did was to raise their awareness but also teach them to keep quiet and not express themselves in case their views were thought to be politically incorrect – a problem anyone who has undertaken staff training in this area will recognise.

Nonetheless, students did, on the whole, produce some excellent coursework which consisted of a report and presentation on some aspect of the syllabus and a better understanding of the issues was clearly more evident at the end of the course than at the beginning. They also realised that a multicultural library service is not something that is just not going to happen – it has to be consciously worked for! ■