

GLOBAL LIBRARIANSHIP INTEREST GROUP
Notes of the meeting of October 21, 2002
OCLC Smith Building

Presiding:	Win van Drimmelen
Members present:	Jeff Baskin Rhoda Channing James Estrada Charlene Hurt Jan Ison Sheldon Kaye Tom Kirk Bob Seal Jim Simonis Michitaro Urakawa Hennie Viljoen
Executive Committee Liaison:	Bob Seal
OCLC Trustees:	Christine Deschamps Maurice Glicksman
Guests:	Aziz Abid, UNESCO Yukio Fujinori, Kinokuniya Arnold Hirshon, NELINET Junko Kono, Translator Makoto Nakamoto, Kinokuniya
OCLC staff:	Libbie Crawford Deb Hysell Jay Jordan
Recorders:	Nancy London and George Needham, liaison

The second year of the Global Librarianship Interest Group began on Monday, October 21, 2002. Wim van Drimmelen called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and began with introductions around the table and of the guests. He stated that the focus of this meeting would be national libraries in a global context.

Maurice Glicksman asked if there were other examples of national libraries merging with national archives, a direction in which Canada is moving. Mr. van Drimmelen¹ said he was not aware of any; Christine Deschamps added that she knew of some in other countries, but that this was being done for financial reasons. Hennie Viljoen said that South Africa is merging two national libraries that had previously existed in Cape Town and Pretoria. Mr. van Drimmelen added that a number of nations have multiple national libraries. Mr. Glicksman said that he was more interested in the developing closeness of libraries and archives. Mr. van Drimmelen said that in a digital world, archives and libraries are coming closer together.

This led to a discussion of the fact that the United States does not have a single official national library. While the Library of Congress serves many of the functions of a national library, there are also national libraries in fields such as education, medicine, and agriculture.

¹ In these notes, I have followed the practice of the OCLC Board of Trustees minutes, using only the honorifics "Mr.," "Mrs.," "Ms.," and "Madame." No disrespect is intended for anyone holding advanced degrees or honorary titles.

What are the functions of a national library? Mr. van Drimmelen said that if OCLC truly wants to do justice to libraries globally, it must respect the differences between them. This led to discussion of these differences. Rhoda Channing asked about the role of national libraries in managing copyright. Madame Deschamps said that individual countries handle this differently. She shared IFLA's definitions of the functions of a national library as managing a national bibliography and publishing a catalog. While the Library of Congress has not published a printed catalog in several years, it still "publishes" its catalog online.

Jim Simonis said that many states have developed statewide union catalogs. Mr. van Drimmelen stated the difference between a union catalog and a national bibliography: a union catalog has holdings, but a national bibliography usually doesn't. A national bibliography is the listing of all publications originating in a certain geographic entity. He also said that national bibliographies are generally funded by the national government, while union catalogs can be financed in a variety of ways. Charlene Hurt noted that the US does not have a national bibliography because it is not within the charge of the Library of Congress. OCLC may be the de facto national bibliography and union catalog, although *Books in Print* is perhaps a commercial alternative.

Michitaro Urakawa said that according to Japanese law, the Diet (Parliament) Library collects all books published in Japan. However, the law is not binding, so some publishers do not comply and the Diet Library does not receive them all. About 90% of Japanese books are represented in the collection. There is also an online catalog that is not managed by the Diet Library. The Ministry of Education and Science has jurisdiction over education and catalogs the holdings of the national university libraries. This system also lacks binding power, so not all of the collections are completely represented. Several universities are trying to catalog their back collections.

Tom Kirk asked how public libraries get their cataloging records. Mr. Urakawa replied that the major prefecture and public libraries are connected to the Diet Library, but smaller libraries are not.

Madame Deschamps said that Germany had two national libraries before reunification. East Germany's national library was charged with collecting not only the books published within the country, but also books published elsewhere about the country.

Mr. Viljoen said that South Africa is in transition but it has a highly developed library infrastructure. Smaller public libraries belong to provincial systems for joint buying and cataloging. City libraries receive their support from their city governments, while school libraries have nearly disappeared. Universities receive their funding from the national government based on FTEs. The national library gets national funding, contracting with SABINET to build the South Africa, which is basically a voluntary system. Of course, in a country in transition, there are many other demands that always seem to take precedence. Libraries pay a 14% VAT (value added tax) on all purchases, and combined with the 50% drop in the value of the rand, librarians are hard pressed to make ends meet. OCLC could lobby to help take the VAT off library purchases. Aziz Abid noted that UNESCO, which South Africa now belongs to, has two different agreements in place, the Florence agreement and the Nairobi protocols, that deal with the exoneration of taxation on educational materials. He suggested that Mr. Viljoen bring these agreements to the attention of the government. Madame Deschamps noted that IFLA endorses these agreements and will write official letters on behalf of the library community on this issue. Mr. Baskin asked if IFLA could write a letter to the Governor of the US State of Arkansas, as the state levies these taxes on library purchases. Mr. van Drimmelen noted that Dutch libraries fact a 6% VAT on books, but a 14% VAT on electronic information.

Madame Deschamps noted that many new national libraries are being formed, in the republics of the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, for example. Mr. van Drimmelen said that many of the former Yugoslav republics have multiple national libraries, competing for official recognition. He said that considering that there are 40 different languages spoken in Europe among the national libraries, it is amazing that they can agree to any solutions to anything.

James Estrada noted that the issue of differential pricing had come up in a number of situations during the spring Council meeting. If all politics are local, then all library issues are local, too. OCLC has to be willing to tailor its responses, including pricing, to local situations.

Mr. van Drimmelen noted that the OCLC takeaway for this session was that there are competing national and union catalogs in many countries that require the coop's attention.

Mr. Abid asked if national catalogs are expanding to cover new formats, such as film and sound recordings. Madame Deschamps said that they are expanding to accommodate people's need to find this information. Mr. Baskin noted that state governments are publishing more information electronically as financial constraints preclude print versions. Mr. van Drimmelen said electronic publications and other materials are making the catalogs, but that artifacts and music are not. Mr. Glicksman observed that the cataloging of material becomes meaningless if the material itself has vanished.

He then asked how open national governments are to being part of an international information exchange. Madame Deschamps noted that this is not necessarily a two-way street. Some nations may seek information without being willing to share it. She pointed up the East German example she had used earlier as an illustration of a country that sought information without being willing to share it. Mr. van Drimmelen asked if China had access to OCLC services. Jay Jordan responded that they do. They are using FirstSearch and OCLC has a joint project under way with Xinghua University to house and share the intellectual output of Chinese universities using SiteSearch. They may or may not be willing to share this output outside of China.

Ms. Hurt asked about the situation in the Middle East. Mr. Abid described the situation with national libraries in the Middle East. Some national libraries are quite well developed, but most are not. Extremely limited in their roles, these libraries must deal with censorship of both print and electronic materials. These libraries run legal deposit programs and national bibliographies but access to information is extremely limited. Madame Deschamps noted that Israel is the only Middle Eastern country that has a Western style national library and information policy.

Mr. Abid discussed the Library of Alexandria, which he said would have a major role in expanding information access in the region. He also shattered some myths about the use of the Internet in this region: Tunisia has 20% penetration in home Internet access, for example. Lebanon and Jordan are two examples of countries that are loosening restrictions on access. Governments are learning that they can't control the flow of information as easily as they once did, resulting in a growing flexibility. UNESCO is working with governments on special tariffs for educational materials to maximize their national opportunity. Mr. Jordan also noted that OCLC is working with several Arab libraries to help develop an Arabic authorities file, to create knowledge objects, and to ascertain the depth of support for intra-regional resource sharing.

After a break, discussion centered on Mr. Estrada's question: what tools are available to pull together a national bibliography with non-governmental funding? He explained the situation that faced Harvard University in trying to accomplish its retrospective conversion. The process took millions of dollars that came from a variety of sources. Many other libraries and other cultural organizations sought funding from foundations and other agencies, as special projects of this nature are generally easier to fund than ongoing operations.

Mr. van Drimmelen asked if there is much retrospective conversion work left. If so, how will it be paid for?

Mr. Urakawa described the situation at Waseda University, a private university in Tokyo. In the 1980s, the university library began to implement MARC. In doing so, the university became a “mini-OCLC,” in that it asked its colleagues if they were interested in joining in the conversion. The university partnered with Kinokuniya to use and implement MARC for their retrospective conversion projects but also to make their records available to other institutions of higher learning in Japan. Founded in 1882, Waseda holds nearly all the major research materials (except those in the field of medicine) that Japan has produced in the modern era. They ended up converting 1.2 million items at a cost of ¥1B, or about US\$10M. They funded this by selling their MARC records to other universities. Their competitor in this is NII, a consortium of the public and private universities in the country. Each of those colleges and universities uses its own version of MARC, which NII consolidates to form a unified catalog. NII also manages resource sharing among its participants. Large libraries contribute the most, but even smaller libraries can use the system to borrow materials. The NII libraries have not completed their retrospective conversion due to limited budgets, but the union catalog is still quite large. In response to questions, Mr. Urakawa indicated that the sale of the MARC records paid for the conversion project for Waseda. He also said that Waseda has not joined the NII because it does not seek to subsume its cataloging to the NII standard. Discussion ensued on the variety of Japanese characters and how these are handled by various systems. Mr. Urakawa indicated that the Japanese Industrial Character Standard set is the norm for library records, allowing various script sets to be compatible.

The next topic was the impact of the conversion to UNICODE in the OCLC environment. The switch to the Oracle platform will allow OCLC to implement various character sets, replacing the transliteration systems that made some cataloging of materials across language lines possible but clumsy. Transliterated records are generally not comprehensible to native speakers of the original language, for example. Mr. Baskin noted that the new Gaylord OPAC system allows automatic translation of catalog records on the fly, which is quite different from a transliteration of cataloging data. It was noted that catalog records might be easier to handle on the fly because the system has the context clearly spelled out within the format of the record.

Madame Deschamps pointed up some other interesting challenges to handling multiple language forms, such as the way some languages are read right to left, or top to bottom. The age of the catalogs in some ancient institutions also makes conversion difficult, as the records do not follow any modern conventions or standards and thus require a high level of human intervention. Mr. van Drimmelen related his experiences in trying to convert old book catalogs and manuscripts, an undertaking he described as very expensive, time-consuming and labor intensive.

Mr. Estrada noted that the major US collections have completed their conversions of printed materials, but we see history repeating itself as these institutions seek funding to launch digitization projects. These are being approached as discrete undertakings rather than as ongoing projects to attract funding. Mr. van Drimmelen said that funds are available for sensational projects, such as digitizing miniatures or medieval manuscripts, but not for digitizing such mundane materials as newspapers or legislative records.

Mr. Urakawa said that Japan has nearly completed its retrospective conversion of western-style bound books, but older materials are quite problematic. For example, these materials may not fit any of the conventions of traditional bound books, may be in archaic or idiosyncratic scripts, may be handwritten, may consist of multiple volumes under single titles, or present other challenges to MARC or MARC-like systems.

Mr. Viljoen noted that retrospective conversion is just about completed in South Africa. However, the libraries still need to find a way to capitalize an Open Society Initiative to make five different EBSCO databases available in the country. This deal, underwritten in part by the European Union, is offering a huge discount for scholarly journals. Mr. Viljoen noted that this kind of arrangement shows the value of consortia for libraries: if the vendors are pushed hard enough, they will negotiate. Mr. van Drimmelen said that publishers understand that the only way to expand the number of subscribers in transitional countries is to make these deals. Mr. Kirk noted that there is considerable experience in these sorts of consortial deals in the US. For example, the program in Indiana has saved individual libraries a combined total of millions of dollars.

Much to the surprise of many at the table, Madame Deschamps said that all college and university libraries in France now have access to *Chemical Abstracts* under a national license negotiated by the Ministry of Education. Ms. Hurt said that some publishers have come to the realization that they will not be able to sell any more of their product at the retail price, so they are willing to add additional users at a lower marginal revenue; others have yet to learn this.

Mr. Viljoen said that OCLC, with its huge buying power, could assist national consortia by acting as an agent for the consortia in negotiations with vendors, and that this is the proper role for a nonprofit, member cooperative.

Mr. van Drimmelen said that this would be an excellent lead in for the second interest group meeting at the next day's Council meeting. There being no further business, he declared the Interest Group adjourned until Tuesday, October 22, at 8:30 a.m.

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Executive Committee Liaison:	Bob Seal
OCLC Trustees:	Christine Deschamps Maurice Glicksman
Guests:	Arnold Hirshon Hisako Kotaro, Kinokuniya Makoto Nakamoto, Kinokuniya Junko Kono, Translator
OCLC staff:	Libbie Crawford Joan Mitchell Edward O'Neill Phyllis Spies
Recorder:	George Needham

The second meeting of the Global Librarianship Interest Group at this Members Council meeting was called to order by Wim van Drimmelen at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, October 22, 2002. He began the meeting with introductions around the table.

Mr. van Drimmelen turned the meeting over to Edward O'Neill, Senior Research Scientist in OCLC's Office of Research. He discussed the Virtual International Authority File, a joint project of the Library of Congress, the Deutsche Bibliothek, and OCLC, with assistance from IFLA. The goal of the project is to create a linking file that will facilitate an international names authority file. The links would bring together variations of personal names in national bibliographies and permit some simple transfer of such records from one file to another. The current project will link the DB names authority file to the Library of Congress file. Neither file will predominate; instead, the file will simply resolve names between the files. In other words, Author A in the LC authority file appears as Author Ä in the DB file. Neither record will replace or supersede the other. The three initial partners will jointly own the resulting file. Mr. O'Neill² said that matching names is a tricky business, but that with LC's experience in this area, there's a good chance that the hit rate will be fairly high. Maurice Glicksman asked about the hits on family names,

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which vary widely in their appearance, placement and application. Mr. O'Neill said that this is not a major problem with German records (as it might be, say, in Spanish). This issue will be under review as the project moves forward. James Estrada asked if the file would accommodate Unicode. Mr. O'Neill said it would not in the initial phase, because none of the partners' current systems are Unicode-compliant. But this is the long-term goal. Mr. van Drimmelen noted that this is not yet truly a global system; it is more accurately defined as a North Atlantic system. Mr. O'Neill countered that the planning is underway to broaden the application. Mr. van Drimmelen asked about how much human intervention was needed to reconcile the records. Mr. O'Neill said that he prefers the term "machine-assisted" to describe the amount of work required. Christine Deschamps asked if there would be a master version of the names for transliteration purposes. Mr. O'Neill said there would be no master file, only links to say that these are simply two ways of referring to the same person. Jim Simonis asked if this would include the Library of Congress moving toward deferring to a national library's preference for naming one of its nationals. Mr. O'Neill said LC is not ready to commit to this at this point. Mr. van Drimmelen asked where the links would be made. Would the title be used, for example? Mr. O'Neill replied that a number of attributes within the bibliographic record, including title, could come into play to ensure a match, including time frames, subject areas, and publishers. Madame Deschamps asked how the system would be maintained. What would happen if a new pseudonym or variant spelling were discovered? In this case, Mr. O'Neill said, the regular practices of LC or DB would come into play. The internal authority file would be updated, and the link would move along with that change to the new entries. The linking file will only link; it will not contain independently accessible or usable data. Mr. van Drimmelen thanked Mr. O'Neill for his contribution to the meeting.

Next, Joan Mitchell, the Executive Director and Editor-in-Chief of OCLC Forest Press, the publisher of the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) System, discussed the internationalization of Dewey. The first German version of the DDC is now in process at DB. It will be published simultaneously in print and web editions, and the web version will feature hot links to the DB authorities file. The new DDC will serve as an organizing tool for three national libraries: Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. This is a major step forward for normalizing the German library corpus, which have featured 31 local classification systems in the past. Mr. van Drimmelen noted that part of a revolution for German libraries.

The 22nd edition of DDC will be published in 2003 at the time of the joint American Library Association/Canadian Library Association meeting in Toronto. To celebrate this launch, OCLC is hosting a major meeting to discuss how to share the depth of the research possibilities of the many Dewey languages with speakers of those languages in other countries and regions. Dewey can also be a thematic communicator of the depth of collections even among researchers who don't speak the same language through the use of the classification numbers.

Mr. Glicksman asked about the various abridgements of Dewey, and what is left out of these versions. Ms. Mitchell explained that mostly what is truncated is the length of individual numbers. However, the remaining information can still be used in an effective hierarchy to expose and explore information. Also, the new electronic context allows a single item to be identified with multiple classification numbers.

Sheldon Kaye, stating that school and public libraries are the primary Dewey users in the US, asked which types of libraries use the system outside of the US. Ms. Mitchell said that this usage pattern is reversed in the rest of the world. Many national libraries, large academic libraries, and other large collections use Dewey internationally.

Madame Deschamps asked how nations maintain cultural integrity in the various international versions of Dewey. Ms. Mitchell responded that local groups manage the cultural integrity of the national versions, not OCLC. Frequently, changes made in the national versions make their way back into the US edition.

Rhoda Channing asked how local librarians are compensated for their time developing the national versions. Ms. Mitchell said that OCLC hires translators to convert the text as a “work for hire,” and then local groups sell the national version. OCLC retains the underlying rights to the intellectual property.

Mr. van Drimmelen thanked Ms. Mitchell for this presentation. He then opened the topic of the role of consortia in libraries by asking, “Is OCLC a consortium?”

Madame Deschamps responded by saying that it plays this role in a number of places, such as in the joint purchase of BioOne for libraries outside the US. Phyllis Spies added that in some roles, OCLC is a consortium; in others, it interfaces with other consortia. Ms. Channing asked if there were any transnational consortia. Mr. van Drimmelen and Ms. Spies said there were not.

Mr. Estrada said that the US regional OCLC networks are consortia, brokering OCLC and other services for individual libraries that couldn’t afford them otherwise. It is not an easy task, as some companies refuse to provide any significant discounts to group purchases, regardless of the outcome. Ms. Channing noted that some US buying groups are multi-type, which spreads out the purchasing power, and Jeff Baskin added that some states are acting as consortia, especially under the rules laid out in the Library Services and Technology Act passed by Congress several years ago.

Michitaro Urukawa said that Japan has been late in coming to consortia for purchasing, but the cost of e-journals has forced them to rethink their position. The national university libraries are getting together to purchase collectively, negotiating with ISI and Elsevier. Waseda, as a private university, is considering a consortium with other private universities; the national university libraries are unwilling to admit the private universities to their consortium.

There are many pitfalls possible in these negotiations over seemingly insignificant issues. For example, Madame Deschamps said that a recent contract negotiation between the French Ministry of Education and Chemical Abstracts nearly collapsed over the issue of whose laws would govern the final contract in case of a dispute.

Mr. Simonis said a new consortium is being formed in New York to get the best prices for universities and colleges there. It is intended to level educational access for students in higher education in the state.

Discussion turned to the impact of electronic resources on resource sharing. Mr. van Drimmelen said that use of resource sharing is going down in The Netherlands due to a national Elsevier license. Ms. Channing noted that in her experience, as more information is exposed through cooperative systems, people want more access, causing resource sharing numbers to continue to grow. Ms. Spies noted that in Ohio there is a lot of sharing going on among libraries through the OhioLINK system, but they are also using OCLC systems to go national when a request cannot be met locally. Mr. Estrada said that, while librarians see an increase in resource sharing and interlibrary loan as a success, publishers, who see such transactions as lost revenue, do not share this view. A big part of these consortial negotiations is convincing publishers that a small share of a big pot is better than a lion’s share of zero.

Hennie Viljoen said that he has been very dissatisfied with the unequal treatment publishers give to clients in different countries. For example, he said that a major publisher of academic scientific materials had offered a Dutch library a one-year free trial offer as part of a package, while

offering his library, with a very similar profile, only three months with considerably fewer benefits.

Ms. Spies said that publishers nearly always feel that their products are going to be used much more heavily than they actually are, so they always set their prices high. She also related a story about a large database aggregator that forced OCLC to drop its content from a bid in South Korea by threatening to withhold that content from every other future OCLC FirstSearch package in the future. The aggregator wanted the South Korean market for itself, and did not want its products being offered through the FirstSearch interface. Obviously, the vendors are very competitive with one another. Jeff Baskin concurred, noting that the statewide purchase in Arkansas had been helped by forcing all of the potential vendors to meet with the library community at one time, revealing everything they planned to offer and the price they would charge. Tom Kirk said that once a vendor gets its foot in the door, the other libraries tend to migrate toward that company. This gives the companies a big incentive to open a market. Ms. Channing noted that this sums up the need for consortia--by having everyone in the consortium, the library community creates a united front that's needed to move the leverage to the buyer's side.

Mr. van Drimmelen said that this was a good place to close this discussion. He suggested that it might make sense to include a demonstration of the QuestionPoint package at the February meeting, as this is being used by many consortia to power their virtual reference systems. Mr. Needham said he would see about arranging this. There being no further business, Mr. van Drimmelen adjourned the meeting at 9:50 a.m.