

## IFLA '95: Where Europe meets Asia

By Barbara J. Ford

*IFLA's 61st General Conference,  
Istanbul, Turkey, August 1995*

**A**pproximately 1,765 delegates from 103 countries and 625 Turkish librarians attended the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) conference held in Istanbul. "Libraries of the Future" was held August 20-26 in Europe, but delegates could see Asia across the Bosphorus from the conference site windows. Stimulating discussions on the role of libraries in the future, particularly relating to technology, were evident throughout the conference.

A guest lecture by Frances D'Souza, executive director of Article 19, International Centre Against Censorship in London, initiated an ongoing IFLA discussion on free expression. It is Article 19's contention that the earliest indications of increasing human rights abuse are restricting free expression and increasing direct control of the media by the government. D'Souza stated that the human rights community must become more proactive in its work, collect information that warns of increasing human rights abuse, and create a network where information can be gathered and action can be taken. Part of the political network must be professional organizations which make commitments to defending freedom of expression and are prepared to take action in the form of protest when appropriate. Later in the conference, the IFLA Council and General Conference adopted a resolution on the importance

of freedom of expression and free access to information. In the months ahead IFLA leadership will be discussing the role of IFLA.

The program theme of University Libraries and Other General Research Libraries was "Document Delivery versus Ownership: Cost Implications and Decision-making." Maurice Line from the United Kingdom gave a stimulating opening presentation. He said the assumption that access is to be preferred to ownership as a matter of policy needs to be questioned. Browsing and serendipity are lost in the access model. He articulated that a strong case could be made for larger acquisition funds in view of the coming emphasis on self-directed learning. Barbara von Wahlde reported on the SUNY University Center Libraries study of the economics of document delivery. Dilek Cetindamar Karaomerlioglu, Bogazici University in Turkey, reported on document delivery versus ownership from the perspective of developing countries. He asserted that having technological infrastructure alone will not be effective since innovations in technology must be accompanied by appropriate organizational and social innovation which are related mainly to the development

**"Our struggle to revitalize libraries and librarianship is not about techniques and finance. It is essentially one of values."**

of workers. Later in the conference a workshop focused on the role of the library user in document delivery and interlending.

The Internet was a topic of discussion in a number of settings. The sections on government libraries, social science libraries, science and technology libraries, biological and medical sciences libraries, and public libraries all had presentations relating to the Internet. University Libraries and User Education sections

sponsored a workshop on "Internet Training and Use Internationally." Two perspectives were presented as Isabel Stirling, University of Oregon, and Sally Cheng-Hua Shen, Beijing University, spoke on teaching the Internet in the United State and China. Irma Pasanen, Helsinki University of Technology, spoke about designing World Wide Web browsers for improved Internet access. An open session on the Internet hosted by Nancy John, University of Illinois at Chicago, and Ed Valauskus, Internet Mechanics, drew a large audience.

### **Women librarians of the world**

The Women's Issues Section program theme was "Women in the World of Information." Dong Ziaoying, Beijing University, reported on the first study of women in Chinese libraries and their status and motivation. The issues there are much like those in other countries and the survey showed that the role of women in senior or high-ranking library administration is limited. Asli Davza-Mardin and Jale Baysal from the Women's Library and Information Center in Istanbul reported on that library, which was set up on the initiative of five resourceful women in 1989. It opened in 1990 in an Ottoman edifice that dates back to the 18th century and was restored for the library. The Women's Library issues a quarterly newsletter and a yearly diary and has published five books. With outside financial support the library has conducted three projects: a bibliography of publications related to women and women writers, pilot project on the oral history of women, and a project on the attitude of the press on women.

The 61st IFLA conference offered a host of useful programs in an interesting setting. Library visits and cultural programs provided delegates with a taste of an historic and vibrant country. In his address to the Opening Session, Robert Wedgeworth, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and IFLA President, summed up the challenge to "Libraries of the Future": "Our struggle to revitalize libraries and librarianship is not about techniques and finance. It is essentially one of values. We must be able to persuade governments, business, education, religious and civic leaders of the value of libraries as educational institutions that stimulate and inspire learning; that libraries are information access agencies that improve the quality of decision-making; and that libraries can contribute substantially to the improvement of the quality of life at all ages." ■

## **Letters**

### **Research needed on library compensation**

To the Editor:

I read with interest the "Research Agenda for College Librarianship" (July/August 1995). I was surprised that the individuals your committee consulted did not consider the issue of library compensation important enough to include. With library faculty earning 30% less than their teaching faculty colleagues who hold comparable qualifications (the master's degree), and typically having to work a 12-month contract instead of their nine, I would think that this issue merits study. If the purpose of a professional association is to represent the needs of its members, this is one major issue that is crying out to be addressed. I urge your committee not only to add it to its research agenda, but to ask ACRL to prioritize and fund such research.—*R. Neil Scott, Georgia College*

### **The committee chair responds**

As we state in the introduction to the Agenda, "the questions that follow are not intended to limit inquiry but to provide an example of concerns that might be pursued in each of the seven research areas. . . ." The issue of library compensation is certainly an important one to the profession, and agenda questions such as "What is the status of librarians in colleges?" and "What is the impact of collective bargaining on library organizations?" were intended to promote more specific research in this area. The committee encourages Professor Scott and others to submit additional questions to be included in future editions of the Agenda.—*Mickey Zemon, Chair, CLS Research for College Librarianship Committee*

### **One article fits right in**

To the Editor:

As soon as I read the article "Research Across the Curriculum," by Steve McKinzie (June 1995), I forwarded a copy to the chair of our university curriculum committee. McKinzie's ideas fit right into some plans that this committee is formulating.—*Jenny Petty, Ouachita Baptist University* ■