What in the World . . . Cataloging on an International Scale

Introduction

Daniel W. Kinney

Two important events in the field of cataloging occurred in the fall of 1997: the International Conference on the Principles and Future Development of AACR, which was held in Toronto in October, and the completion of the IFLA *Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records*. The final report of the IFLA Study Group on the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records was approved by the Standing Committee of the IFLA Section on Cataloguing in September. These events and the focus on international librarianship that was planned for the 1998 ALA Conference gave impetus to the preconference "What in the World . . . Cataloging on an International Scale."

Dorothy McGarry, who was then chair-elect of the Cataloging and Classification Section (CCS) of ALCTS, suggested the theme of the preconference. The original intent was for CCS and the CCS Cataloging Committee: Description and Access (CC:DA) to present a program that featured presentations on the Toronto Conference and the IFLA *Functional Requirements*. At the 1997 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Washington, D.C., CC:DA agreed to sponsor the program with CCS, and Joan Swanekamp, chair of CC:DA, appointed the following committee members to the task force: Daniel W. Kinney, State University of New York at Stony Brook (chair); Brad L. Eden, North Harris Montgomery Community College District; Lynne Howarth, Faculty of Information Studies, University of Toronto; Laurel Jizba, Portland State University; Glenn Patton, OCLC; Cecilia Sercan, Cornell University; Barbara Tillett, Library of Congress; Patricia Vanderberg, University of California, Berkeley; and Martha Yee, University of California, Los Angeles.

So much was happening in cataloging at the international level that the CC:DA task force members found that they needed a large block of time to cover the essential aspects of the topic. When the program was proposed to the ALCTS Program Committee, the committee asked CC:DA to develop a preconference instead of a program. The CCS Executive Committee agreed to the preconference, but requested a summary program so that ALA members who were unable to attend the preconference would be able to hear brief reports on the Toronto conference and other international cataloging issues. The summary program was presented the day after the preconference during the ALA Annual Conference.

"What in the World . . . Cataloging on an International Scale" was held at the Washington Hilton, Washington, D.C., on June 26, 1998, from 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. CC:DA chair Daniel W. Kinney was the moderator. The preconference consisted of nine formal papers and a panel discussion with questions from the audience. Barbara Tillett moderated the panel. The preconference was a joint

Daniel Kinney (dkinney@notes.cc. sunysb.edu) is Assistant Director of Libraries for Collections and Technical Services, Melville Library, State University of New York at Stony Brook and a past chair of CC:DA.

presentation of CCS and CC:DA. It was cosponsored by the ALA International Relations Roundtable, the ACRL Western European Specialists Germanists Discussion Group, the ALCTS/CCS Committee on Cataloging Asian and African Materials, ALCTS/LITA/RUSA MARBI, and the LITA/ALCTS/CCS Authority Control in the Online Environment Interest Group.

ALA president Barbara Ford's theme for the 1998 Annual Conference was "Global Reach, Local Touch." A global perspective is familiar to catalogers, as they have long thought in terms of the global library. More than a quarter of a century ago, the theme of the IFLA 1973 conference was "Universal Bibliographic Control" (UBC). It is an ideal that Jewett put forth almost a century and a half ago in his *Smithsonian Catalogue System.* Jewett proposed to stereotype the titles of books separately and preserve the plates in alphabetical order. New titles could then be inserted in the proper place and the catalog reprinted. Other libraries could participate in this system by submitting their cataloging records to the Smithsonian to be stereotyped, thus making it possible to publish a general, or union, catalog, which would form a national bibliography. Jewett realized that uniformity was crucial, and that it would be necessary for all libraries cooperating in the program to use the same cataloging rules. An important aspect of Jewett's plan was the formation of an American bibliography, and he hoped that a copy of every book registered for copyright in the United States would be deposited in the Smithsonian. Jewett believed that his system could be adopted in other countries and that the aggregate of these catalogs would form a universal bibliography (Jewett 1985).

The essential elements of Jewett's plan for a universal bibliography—a system of international cooperative cataloging with uniformity of cataloging rules and the use of technology for wide-scale distribution of bibliographic records—was formalized in 1974 as IFLA's Universal Bibliographic Control Programme. Anderson's plan for UBC comprises a "network made up of component national parts . . . all integrated at the international level to form the total system" (Anderson 1974, 11). Anderson, like Jewett, recognized that standardization is essential for the development of UBC, and her plan included two levels of standardization: content and physical form. Kaltwasser defines these as standardization of cataloging rules and standardization of the organization of bibliographical information on machine data carriers (Kaltwasser 1972).

The *Statement of Principles* from the 1961 International Conference on Cataloguing Principles held in Paris provided the basis for standardization of choice and form of headings and entry words. Uniformity of the descriptive information in bibliographic records was accomplished through the International Standard Bibliographic Descriptions developed in the 1970s. In the 1980s, standardization of data structures was brought about by the development and promotion of the UNIMARC format for the exchange of machine-readable records among the national bibliographic agencies (Roberts 1989). The recognition of the interdependence of cataloging and automation and the two levels of standardization led to the merger of the UBC and International MARC Programme in 1987, which became the Universal Bibliographic Control and International MARC Programme.

Heymans (1982, 167) wrote: "In the last two decades, more efforts have been made and more results achieved in the field of international bibliographic control than in the twenty centuries before. Existing international standards and recommendations testify to librarians' willingness to work together." The 1990s witnessed continued and increased cooperation among librarians at an international level.

Both Jewett and Anderson saw UBC as an "ideal and an objective" (Anderson 1976, 4). The 1998 preconference papers included here describe projects and activities that have brought the library world closer to reaching the ideal and achieving the goal of Universal Bibliographic Control. The ALCTS Program Committee was correct in realizing the need for a preconference to cover all the exciting developments in international cataloging that were occurring at the time. The contributions to this volume deal with the two levels of standardization in Anderson's plan for UBC: cataloging rules and automation. As the preconference papers prove convincingly, the future of cataloging is at the international level.

Acknowledgements

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