

The final draft of the revised area table for South Africa has been available for comment on the Dewey home page and final comments were to be received by September 11, 1998. The revised area table for the United Kingdom is to be issued in the Fall of 1998 along with the South Africa Table. The editors are studying ways of improving Table 3 for literature and a discussion paper is available on the Dewey home page and comments are requested by December 31, 1998. Beginning with vol. 6, no.2, *DC&* will become an electronic publication and will no longer be published in printed form. (Home page address: <http://www.oclc.org/fp/>).

The Decimal Classification Editorial Policy Committee (EPC) is formulating its plans for the next five years. An editorial work plan for 1998-2003 has been approved. The removal of Table 7 (Groups of persons) from the Classification has been approved, as has a plan for limited regularization of geographic treatment in the 700s. Considerable work is being carried out in the area of translation. As indicated above the French translation of Edition 21 has just been published. The Russian translation is expected in the Fall of 1998 and ALECSO (Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization) has signed a contract to produce an Arabic translation of Edition 21. An Arabic edition of Abridged edition 12 was published earlier in 1998. In addition, work is nearing completion on the Italian edition of Edition 21 and a Spanish translation is projected for August 1999.

### IFLA Section on Classification and Indexing

At the 64th IFLA General Conference in Amsterdam, the Chair of the Section on Classification and Indexing, Professor Ia **McIlwaine** reported on several projects being carried out by the Section. The Working Group on Principles Underlying Subject Heading Languages (SHLs) has completed its work. The final report went out for world wide review at the end of 1997, agreement was reached on some minor changes and final version completed and validated. The report was to be ready for publication at the end of June 1998. At the Copenhagen conference in 1997, IFLA's Joint Working Group on a Format for Classification Data recommended that a UNIMARC format for Classification data to parallel the MARC format developed in the USA be prepared. The Section is represented on the working group and the work on the format is going forward. In 1996 the Standing Committee of the Section had a project to carry out a "State of the Art Survey on Subject Headings" The survey, which was sent out to national libraries around the world, was intended to gather data on subject indexing languages used for the purposes of

national bibliography and catalogues of national libraries, and on classifications used instead of, or in addition to, verbal indexing systems. Because of low response, it was decided to do a follow-up, and a second questionnaire was sent out in January 1998 to 110 countries which had not answered the first questionnaire. There was encouraging response, and while the results did not provide a great detail on the systems used, it was felt that the contacts made with colleagues in the national libraries was valuable for purposes of future contacts. There was discussion at the Amsterdam Conference to determine how the data could best be disseminated. IFLANET might be a possibility. As one of its activities the Standing Committee has been invited to participate in the forthcoming conference on National Bibliographic Services to be held in Copenhagen, Nov. 27-29, 1998. Professor McIlwaine will represent the Section at the conference and a discussion paper on the role of the subject approach in national bibliographies was prepared for the Conference by Lois **Chan** and Ia McIlwaine. The paper had been circulated to Standing Committee Members in December 1997.

During the 64th IFLA Conference in Amsterdam, the Section on Classification and Indexing sponsored a programme in which three papers were presented. Following the Section's tradition of presenting at least one paper on classification and indexing from the host country, Gerhard **Riesthuis** and R **Storm** (Netherlands) gave a paper on "GOO: Dutch National System of Subject Indexing". This system is used in the Dutch Union Catalogue (NCC) which integrates the catalogues of about 400 Dutch libraries. The catalogue uses the Dutch "Basic-Classification" (BC) and a national subject heading system call the "Gemeenschappelijke Trefwoordenthesaurus" (GTT). The catalogue can be searched on a large number of access points including subject headings and classification notations. The BC, available in Dutch, English and German, can be found on the Internet. It is a broad classification of 48 main classes and some 2200 subclasses. Its main purpose is to serve as an overview of available literature. In addition to "normal" descriptors the GTT contains geographical descriptors, corporate names, titles and names of works of art, bibliographic form descriptors, literary genres, and names of events, drugs, and other objects.

In a second paper, Andrew **MacEwan** (United Kingdom) discussed "Working with LCSH: the Cost of Cooperation and the Achievement of Access: A Perspective from the British Library". This paper has its roots in the fact that in 1995 the British National Bibliography reinstated the use of the Library of Congress Subject Headings - a result of retrenchment and the need to cut costs. MacEwan examines the situation that has developed at the British Library and

advances the observation that "BL's adoption of LCSH as its sole subject access system merely changes the context in which we [the British Library] contribute to such work". Not surprisingly, he refers to the fact that LCSH "needs a lot of development" and that "it is to a large extent economics which sets the agenda." In the paper he reviews "some of the familiar issues for LCSH development from the British Library perspective" and describes some of the subject indexing development in which the BL has been engaged. In general the focus on how LCSH is used at the British Library has changed from a focus on the usefulness of its records to how it provides access to the BL collections. Subject indexing for BNB has become a by-product of this and a major advantage is that subject headings for retrospective materials can now be derived into the records of the BL catalogue to provide subject access to materials not previously indexed. Relative to this change three issues are addressed: "vocabulary control, policies for the application of LCSH and the shared cataloguing environment..." MacEwan states that it is important to take advantage of the reference structure although this is not done by many libraries. As with any country outside the United States which adopts LCSH, Americanisms are a problem, but the answer for the BL and other libraries is to develop the thesaural control. Other issues are more serious, for example the need to "modernize awkward, or unsatisfactory subject headings". British history headings are a case in point where some changes would be major and the benefits of change must be considered against the cost. The change over has also involved major expensive retraining of cataloguers and the consistency of practices is a problem. The Library of Congress *Subject Cataloging Manual* is a difficult tool to use and there are good reasons for changing policy of application. This has caused the BL to reconsider the way in which cataloguing procedures are organized within the BL. Consistency in application is difficult, in particular the specificity. In conjunction with his third issue MacEwan describes the BL's involvement in a project to index fiction. The authors see the future development of LCSH into a more effective system. In this context the most urgent priorities are the improvement of OPAC software to exploit LCSH and improvements in authority control. One of the improvements already in the planning is a full authority file of free-floating subdivisions. In his conclusions, MacEwan states that "in the modern world, if LCSH does not change it will sooner or later be abandoned". There are compelling reasons for those who use LCSH to aid in its improvement, in particular through open dialogue.

The third and final paper by Yakov L. Shrailberg and Ekaterina M. Zaitseva (Russia) focused on a

"Russian-Language Database of Universal Decimal Classification: Creation and Implementation in Library Automation". The authors analyze the problems of the application of UDC in scientific and technical library and information centres with respect to their classified catalogues and in conjunction with the replacement manual catalogues with catalogues in electronic format. Specifically the authors dealt with the UDC database created in the Russian National Public Library for Science and Technology based on the 4th edition (Russian) of UDC. Unfortunately the 4th edition has not been completed and this is not likely to be accomplished in the very near future. In the light of this the discontinuance of the UDC, the process was considered impractical and a timely method for the updating of UDC has been worked out. Process of moving from the manual to the electronic catalogue while preserving the UDC during the transition was described in detail. At the same time efforts are being made to modernize the Russian usage of UDC and its maintenance in the new technologies.

### Classification Research Group

At its 314th meeting in July 1998, the CRG continued its discussion on the concept "culture" in the context of their review of the work on the *Bliss Bibliographic Classification (BC2)*. In their deliberations the Group considered various ways of expressing the term. Among other considerations, reference was made to the lengthy definition in *Longmans Encyclopedia*. Jack Mills expressed the idea that the term "concept" is "strongly delineated by Space and Time and best expressed by geographical order. However he was willing to include such terms as "Western", "Islam", "Oriental" etc. The Group also agreed that, "for example, "Europe", as a Place of Origin, might well cover former colonial areas like USA, Canada, Australia." Discussions of "the arts" centred around schedule order and the similarities and differences among the various "arts". It was suggested that schedule order in the "Performing Arts" might differ from the "Fine Arts" where the "Artist" as an Individual should be the primary facet. The discussion also focused on artists who work in more than one medium. Another issue under discussion was the value of the "alternatives" technique used in Bliss. In general this principle was accepted as being a good thing, but it was recognized that guidance is needed for the classifier. In reporting on progress, Jack Mills, editor of BC2, thanked the CRG for its support in aid of completion of the Physics and Chemistry schedules of BC2. The work is going forward and Physics was to be ready for press in August, with the hope that Chemistry will be ready in December 1998.