

REPORT ON THE MEETINGS OF THE DOCUMENTATION COMMISSION OF F.I.A.F.

Wiesbaden October 20th - 23rd

The Commission began by considering the draft agenda and added to it an item on the storage and preservation of related materials.

It then studied the new rules which had been prepared by the F.I.A.F. Executive Committee and went on to the election of a Vice-Chairman. Mr. Spiess was elected and agreed to act in this capacity.

Before proceeding to the first time on the agenda there was a brief discussion on communications within F.I.A.F. and it was felt that although the principle of addressing letters and enquiries to the Head of an archive was a good one, in practice it sometimes led to delays and it was therefore suggested that in the case of enquiries directly relating to a specific department, such as a library, the letter might be addressed to the librarian with a copy for the Head of the archive.

The Commission studied the programme proposed by the F.I.A.F. Executive and decided that items relating to all the points mentioned were already included in the draft agenda.

We then proceeded to a long and complicated discussion of the problems of exchanging information on the indexing of periodicals and considered also the Rumanian publication 'Cinematografia in Presa' although of course our Rumanian delegate was unfortunately not able to be with us. It was felt that all that could be said at present about this publication had already been said in the Chairman's letter to the Secretary General at the New York Congress. The main obstacles to its more general use are 1) the language problem - the article abstracts, being in Rumanian, are inaccessible,

2) the time factor - for many archives it is necessary to have the indexing information almost as soon as a publication appears. However, for those archives where time is not of the greatest importance and/or where indexing is done only by film title or personality the publication is a most valuable tool and the Commission proposes in its next circular on indexing problems to draw the attention of all archives to 'Cinematografia in Presa' and to recommend its use in the limited sense already mentioned. Should it become possible to issue and circulate a French edition it will be necessary to consider to what extent this could replace the indexing guide sheets which are at present being exchanged on an experimental basis among the archives represented at the Brussels meeting of the former Cataloguing and Documentation Commission.

We proceeded to take a further look at the methods proposed at that meeting for exchanging indexing information and realised that our long term aim in this matter was the exploration of possibilities of standardisation and centralisation of this kind of information. As a first step in this direction it was suggested that the information at present

being circulated might be presented in the form of cards and some sample entries were worked out on this basis. The advantage of cards is of course that they would form a ready-made card-index for new archives while they are no more difficult to transfer to an existing system than sheets. They would be slightly more bulky to post. It was then agreed to send a set of such samples (on sheets of card which can be divided into 3 standard 6"x4" index cards) to all archives and ask whether they felt that this method would be acceptable as an alternative to the guide sheets. In the meantime the circulation of the guide sheets would continue. It was emphasised that whatever method is used the time factor is of the utmost importance.

During a discussion on indexing only periodicals it was agreed to attempt a co-operative project on 'Photoplay'. A list of holdings will be compiled and the appropriate archives asked to participate.

There was a short discussion on problems of bibliographic information. Most archives receive annual requests for such information from the Venice Biennale and from the Rumanian Archive. It was agreed, in the absence of the Rumanian delegate, to write to Rumania asking whether co-ordination of these two annual requests was possible.

Machinery for exchange of information within F.I.A.F. was discussed briefly and the value of the Brussels Secretariat as a clearing house was emphasised.

On the subject of book indexing Mr. Spiess offered to produce an index to Der Deutsche Film by Albus.

Realising that the Commission is already collecting information from many archives which may not be generally accessible throughout F.I.A.F. and feeling that there is a general lack of published information on the work of F.I.A.F., the Commission suggests for itself the task of compiling a F.I.A.F. Documentation Directory which it suggests might also be available for film and library organisations outside F.I.A.F. It presents for the consideration of the Executive the following table of contents :

1. Introduction explaining the aims and objects of F.I.A.F.
2. List of names and addresses of member archives, with names of principal officers and heads of departments.
3. Explanation of F.I.A.F. rules that enquiry must be initiated in the enquiries own domestic archive.
4. Information on holdings of documentation material within F.I.A.F.:
 - a) books - size of stock and whether available for loan
 - b) periodicals - whether list of holdings available
 - c) list of film periodicals available on microfilm

- d) related material holdings.
- e) areas of specialisation
- f) availability of information services
- g) details of viewing facilities
- h) list of F.I.A.F. and archive publications or availability details of such as list
- i) availability of photo-copying or micro-film reading facilities in archives
- j) holdings of scripts in archives - whether lists of titles available
- k) list of Documentation Commission projects and any other research projects known to the Commission
- l) book indexes already prepared for Commission and where they can be obtained
- m) other bibliographic information (e.g. availability of book accessions lists and bibliographies from archives or any other sources).

The Commission feels that much of the information on holdings necessary for such a project will be contained in the replies to Mr. Klaue's proposed circular on related materials and it hopes to collaborate with him in sending out a joint enquiry. We visualise the Directory as being cheaply produced - perhaps duplicated or photo-printed.

The Commission discussed the preservation and storage of related materials and reports were made on the present position in London and New York on stills and the microfilming of news clippings. The Commission has now received from the Dutch Film Museum its illustrated booklet on the preservation of posters and it recommends this publication to all archives and other organisations in the field as a manual of advice on this form of material preservation. We also discussed acquisition and preservation of scripts and some questions on the security of collections.

Finally, returning to our periodical indexing problems it was felt that the Commission should be in a position to study methods of subject indexing and it was proposed to set up two projects :

- 1) a study of the use of numerical systems with particular reference to the Dewey extension in use in Copenhagen (to be undertaken by Miss Jones in collaboration with the Librarian, N.F.A.).
- 2) A study of 'Key Word' systems - advice sought in an archive who can provide expert opinion in this field (the N.F.A. is already studying a revision of its own system and would be willing to collaborate).

Notes on the meetings of The Documentation
Commission of F.I.A.F.

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The Commission began by considering the Draft Agenda & added to it an item on the storage and preservation of related materials.

It then studied the new rules which had been prepared by the F.I.A.F. Executive and went on to the election of a Vice-Chairman. Mr Spiess was elected and agreed to act in this capacity.

Before proceeding to the first item on the Agenda there was a brief discussion on communication within F.I.A.F. and it was felt that although the principle of addressing letters & enquiries to the Head of an Archive was a good one, in practice it sometimes led to delays and it was therefore suggested that in the case of enquiries directly relating to a specific department, such as a library, the letter might be addressed to the librarian with a copy for the Head of the Archive.

The Commission studied the programme proposed by the FIATF Executive and decided that items relating to all the points mentioned were already included in the Draft Agenda.

We then proceeded² to a long and complicated discussion of the problems of exchanging information on the indexing of periodicals and considered also the Rumanian publication "Cinematografia in presa" although of course our Rumanian delegate was unfortunately not able to be with us. It was felt that all that could be said at present about this publication had already been said in the Chairman's letter to ^{the} Secretary-General at the New York Congress. The main obstacles to its more general use are 1) the language problem - the article abstracts, being in Rumanian, are inaccessible and 2) the time factor - for many Archives it is necessary to have the indexing information almost as soon as a publication appears. However, for those Archives where time is not of the greatest importance and/or where indexing is done only by film title or personality the publication is a most valuable tool and the Commission proposes in its next circular an indexing ~~for~~ problems to draw the attention of all Archives to "Cinematografia in presa" and to recommend its use in the limited sense already mentioned. Should it become possible ~~for~~ to issue and ^{circulate} in a trench edition it will be necessary to consider to what extent this could replace the indexing guide sheets which are at present being exchanged on an experimental basis

Among The Archives represented at the Brussels meeting of The ~~Panel~~ Cataloguing & Documentation Commission.

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- a) Books - size of stock whether available for loan
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- k) List of Documentation Commission projects and any other research projects known to The Commission
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- 2) A study of "Key Word" systems - advice sought on an Archive who can provide expert opinion in this field. [The NFA is already studying a revision of its own system and would be willing to collaborate]