Studying eastern Germany’s library landscape

By Sam Dunlap and Barbara Walden

From March 16 to 23, 2006, eleven members of WESS, the Western European Studies Section of ACRL, participated in a study tour of libraries in the former East Germany. The Tour, “Leipzig, Dresden, Weimar: Exploring a Library Landscape” was organized by the Goethe-Institut New York, with the financial support of the U.S. Diplomatic Mission to Germany, Public Affairs Section; and Bibliothek & Information International (BII), in cooperation with WESS. The trip acquainted us with developments in librarianship, publishing and culture in eastern Germany since unification and increased our competency in our German-related subject specialties, and served to establish and strengthen our contact with colleagues at home and abroad.

At either end, the Tour was anchored by the Leipzig Book Fair and the 95th German Library Conference. Germany is a nation of readers, and this year’s Leipzig Book Fair featured over 2100 publishers from 36 countries and was attended by a record number of 126,000 people, an increase of 17% over last year. It was amazing to see the throngs of readers buying new, antiquarian, and hand-made artist books, and the many young people dressing up as their favorite characters as part of the large area devoted to “Comics in Leipzig.” Within the city itself, every bookstore featured readings from morning to night, and major cultural venues were reserved for particular publishers to highlight their authors and productions of new audio books. Participants arrived early in order to find a scarce seat in standing-room only venues.

In addition to a rainy-evening reception at the American Consulate General in Leipzig, the group visited the University Library, “Bibliotheca Albertina” and the German Library, “Die Deutsche Bibliothek, Deutsche Bücherei Leipzig.” The Leipzig University Library was founded in 1543 and located on the premises of the secularized Pauliner Monastery and the collections of several Leipzig monasteries formed the core library collection which was further developed. In 1945, the Bibliotheca Albertina was two-thirds destroyed, although the relocated collections survived intact. Partial renovation of the stacks began in 1955, but financial resources remained scarce and work came to a stop. In 2002, after ten years of reconstruction and addition, the library opened in 2002 as the University’s main library, and it serves as the central humanities library and houses the archival collections. The closed stacks have a capacity of 3.2 million volumes and the open stacks

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Germany

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areas contain 440,000 volumes and space for 720 users.

The German Library, or Die Deutsche Bücherei Leipzig, comprises one part of Die Deutsche Bibliothek collections that are located in two other locations: Die Deutsche Bibliothek in Frankfurt am Main and the music archive “Deutsches Musikarchiv” in Berlin. In April 2006, the German Parliament approved changing the name of Die Deutsche Bibliothek to Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek (The German National Library). The Deutsche Bücherei Leipzig was founded in 1912 by the City of Leipzig, a historic publishing center, the Kingdom of Saxony, and the association of German publishers and booksellers, the Börsenverein der Deutschen Buchhändler. The task of the Deutsche Bücherei was to collect, catalog, and make available German and foreign language materials published in Germany and German language materials published abroad. The oldest museum in the world devoted to the history of the book and the development of printing and typography, Deutsches Buch- und Schriftmuseum, was founded in 1884 and is now a department within the library, which also houses numerous special collections including Exile Literature, 1933-1945; Sozialistica, the German Labor Movement, 1830-1912; and the Anne Frank Shoah Library for documentation on the Holocaust. More information in English may be found at: http://www.ddb.de/eng/index.htm.

The group traveled next to Dresden. This historic and beautiful city, capital of the state of Saxony, has been undergoing extensive restoration and rebuilding. Included in this renewal is the Sächsische Landesbibliothek/Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Dresden, known familiarly as “SLUB.” Formed by the 1996 union of the Saxon State Library (Sächsische Landesbibliothek), whose origins date to the royal library founded in 1556, and the University Library of the Technical University of Dresden (Universitätsbibliothek der TU Dresden), which began in 1828, the magnificent new SLUB central library building was opened to the public in 2002.

Here the group saw the latest in beautifully modern reading and stack areas, combining well-lit and inviting group and individual study space with larger reading venues and public service points, all designed to bring readers, materials, and contemporary technology together in a harmonious whole.

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Joint project aims to revitalize African libraries

By Barbara J. Ford and Susan Schnuer

The Partnership for Higher Education in Africa is a joint effort of Carnegie Corporation of New York, and the Ford, MacArthur, Rockefeller, William and Flora Hewlett, and Andrew W. Mellon Foundations to support efforts to build the capacity of universities and the field of higher education in Africa. As part of this project, the Mortenson Center for International Library Programs at the University of Illinois Library at Urbana-Champaign has received grants from the Carnegie Corporation and MacArthur Foundation to work with 10 university libraries in Ghana, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Uganda. These universities and their libraries are reemerging as critical engines for economic and social development progress in Africa. They serve as a primary locus for innovation and providing essential training for the continent’s future leaders in the public and private sectors.

Technology and strong university libraries are essential to the progress and development of universities. Lack of reliable electricity and infrastructure as well as limited and expensive bandwidth for web access have hindered progress by African libraries in implementing technology. These types of issues must be addressed at the university level, since libraries alone cannot solve them.

Some important steps already have been made by the partnership, including a bandwidth initiative. This initiative will significantly lower the cost of bandwidth, providing libraries with better access to key electronic resources and thus providing researchers with better access to the web and its resources.

Teams of librarians from the Mortenson Center completed initial assessment visits to each of the universities (in Nigeria, Bayero University, Ahmadu Bello University, Obafemi Awolowo University, University of Ibadan, University of Jos, University of Port Harcourt; in Ghana, University of Ghana-Legon and University of Education at Winneba; in Tanzania, University of Dar es Salaam; and in Uganda, Makerere University). They visited these libraries in 2004 and 2005 and prepared reports for the foundations that can be accessed on the Mortenson Center web site (www.library.uiuc.edu/mortenson). Following the visits, the Center submitted grants to the foundations proposing a three-year project to assist staff in the university libraries with using technology to address the information needs of researchers, scholars, and students.

Each year of the three-year grants, site visits to the universities will be conducted by Mortenson Center training teams to provide assistance in implementing library technologies. In November 2005 and February 2006, catalogers, reference librarians, and information technologists visited the university libraries to assist them in using technology to improve services and access resources. Outcomes of these visits include increased visibility of libraries on their campuses and the opportunity to meet with campus leaders to help them understand all the libraries can contribute when the necessary resources are available. During April and May 2006, librarians from each of the ten universities spent eight weeks at the Mortenson Center to learn more about university libraries and technology. This particular program provided an opportunity to observe best practices, see automated libraries

IRRT Member Profile

Hwa-Wei Lee, Ph.D.
Chief, Asian Division,
The Library of Congress, (Dean Emeritus, Ohio University Libraries)

IRRT member since: I have been an ALA member since the mid-1960s and became an IRRT member soon thereafter.

Most enjoyable international library project/projects: I was especially fortunate to serve as a key organizer for the series of three China-U.S. Library Cooperation Conferences, the first of which was held in Beijing in 1996. Through these conferences, attended by library leaders from both countries, many cooperative projects were initiated and a much better exchange of information and experience was achieved. When I was the Dean of Ohio University Libraries I also initiated an International Librarians Internship Program. Over a period of 20 years some 170 librarians from many of the Asian countries as well as other parts of the world participated as librarian interns.

Three words to new IRRT members: Global librarianship enriches our professional life and international understanding.

Compiled by Sha Li Zhang, IRRT Membership Committee Chair. For additional IRRT Member Profiles, see Notable IRRT Members at: http://www.ala.org/ala/irrt/irrtnotables.htm.

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ALA 2006 IRRT Meetings and Programs

IRC/IRRT All Committee Meeting,
Saturday, June 24, 8:00 - 11:00 a.m.,
Morial Convention Center - Room 394-395

The IRRT’s All Committee Meeting provides one location, date and time for all committees to meet during ALA Annual so that members can easily network and make connections.

There will be an IRRT Chair Orientation session from 8:00-9:00 a.m. Anyone interested in a specific committee’s meeting time should contact the chair of that committee using the contact information via the Committees’ web pages.

International Librarian’s Orientation, Friday, June 23, 4:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.,
Morial Convention Center - Room 394-395

An introduction to the ALA Conference and the city of New Orleans for international librarians and other attendees from abroad. ALA members will provide an overview of the conference, including recommended programs and social activities. Learn about conference transportation, the ALA’s Exhibit Hall and the meanings of the ALA’s many acronyms. Meet your mentors and representatives from ALA’s many divisions and round tables who will help international librarians get the most from the conference experience.

International Paper Session,
“National Libraries,” Saturday, June 24, 1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.,
Morial Convention Center - Room 297

The International Papers Session is designed to encourage the exchange of ideas about library services and collections among librarians from different parts of the world. This year’s program focuses on National Libraries. National Libraries have a unique mission in contemporary times as ‘custodians of the nation’s intellectual heritage’. Presenters will describe their national library, organization, and role within the library community in their respective country.

Executive Committee Meeting,
Sunday, June 25, 8:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.,
Morial Convention Center- Room 263

The IRRT’s Executive Board will meet to discuss current business and items raised during the IRRT All Subcommittee Meeting on Saturday, June 24, 2006.

International Poster Session,
Sunday, June 25, 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.,
Morial Convention Center - Exhibit Floor

This is a forum for librarians from around the world to highlight their libraries and share successful ideas with colleagues by presenting a research study, a practical problem-solving effort or an innovative library program.

International Exchanges Committee Poster Session, Sunday, June 25, 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.,
Morial Convention Center - Exhibit Floor

The ALA-IRRT International Exchanges Committee will present a poster session: “Benefiting from the International Exchanges Committee of IRRT.”

Sister Libraries Discussion Group,
Sunday, June 25, 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.,
Morial Convention Center - Room 270

The IRRT’s Sister Libraries Discussion Group will meet to discuss current business and items.

IRRT-ISLD Program, “From Nepal to Nicaragua: Sustainability in International Projects,” Monday, June 26, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.,
Morial Convention Center-Room 253

Join IRRT’s International Sustainable Library Development (ISLD) Interest Group for an exploration of sustainability in international library projects. Highlighting examples from READ Nepal and San Juan del Sur Biblioteca Movil, Nicaragua, speakers will share their experiences with these projects. Facilitators experienced in international librarianship will then lead small group discussions on approaches to sustainability.

Chair’s Program, “Intellectual Freedom: Views through a Cross-Cultural Lens,” Monday, June 26, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.,
Morial Convention Center - Room 393

How is intellectual freedom viewed and supported around the world? Are technology and globalization trends changing the dialogue about intellectual freedom in other countries? Intellectual Freedom is a concept that is fundamental to many librarians. However, understanding of intellectual freedom varies from country to country and may or may not be considered an important part of a library’s philosophy. This session will explore how the concept of intellectual freedom is perceived by our colleagues in China, the Middle East and Africa, and how intellectual freedom is implemented in their libraries.

The IRRT is also proud to host the presentation of the John Humphry Forest Press Award for significant contributions to international librarianship and the presentation of the Bogle Pratt International Travel Fund award at the beginning of the program. Co-sponsor: Intellectual Freedom Round Table.

International Librarians’ Reception,
Monday, June 26, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.,
Pimsoll Club atop the World Trade Center - Versailles Room

Open to all conference attendees, this reception offers a unique opportunity to network with hundreds of information professionals from around the world. Join us for a mixing of cultures and ideas, regional cuisine, hors d’oeuvres and open bar. Free to International Librarians outside the U.S. Tickets are available at conference registration area and at the door.

We would like to thank our sponsors for this year’s International Reception: Blackwell’s Book Services, OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc., 3M.
The LAROC Annual Conference was held on December 17, 2005, at the National Central Library in Taipei, Taiwan. American Library Association (ALA) President Michael Gorman was the keynote speaker. President Gorman spoke on “Library Values in a Digital Age,” a very important and timely topic. He also spoke at the National Taiwan University Library on “Cataloging Today” on December 18, 2005. Attendees were very excited about meeting and hearing President Gorman in person and were deeply impressed and inspired by his speeches.

The Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA) members from the United States who attended this meeting included Ai-hua Chen, Doris Tseng, Sally Tseng and Diana Wu. Wu spoke on “Information Literacy and Lifelong Learning,” while Tseng spoke on “Development of Resource Management in American Libraries under the Trend of Globalization and Digitization.” Eight more important papers were presented at the conference together with lively poster sessions and a systems exhibition.

Sally Tseng, executive director of the Chinese American Librarians Association, said, “the 2005 LAROC Annual Conference was one of the most productive and successful conferences I have attended.”

Under the leadership of Dr. Fang-rung Juang, President of the LAROC, Dr. Margaret Fung, Dr. Chen-ku Wang, Dr. Chao-chen Chen (Secretary General of LAROC), Dr. Mei-Mei Wu, Ms. Hsiao-ming Yu, Prof. Hao-Ren Ke and colleagues at the LAROC, the conference was well-organized and arranged. The warm welcome and hospitality were truly memorable. All participants went home with a wealth of information.

We want to thank the LAROC and its Board of Directors for their invitation and generous hospitality. Special thanks go to Dr. Fang-rung Juang, President of the LAROC Dr. Margaret Fung, Dr. Chao-chen Chen, Dr. Mei-Mei Wu, Ms. Hsiao-ming Yu, Prof. Hao-Ren Ke, and many colleagues at the LAROC for the well-organized conference and meetings, thoughtful arrangements and warm welcome. President Gorman enjoyed his trip and meeting library colleagues in Taiwan.

Submitted by Sally C. Tseng, CALA Executive Director

SEFLIN announces new project to provide books in Armenia

The Southeast Florida Library Information Network (SEFLIN) has announced a new partnership project between SEFLIN, ten independent K-12 school libraries, and the IRC of the U.S. Embassy in Armenia.

The purpose of the project is to build partnerships for providing selected Armenian libraries with high quality English language books/media for children and young adults. To date, the gift book project has provided more than 1,000 library books to the U.S. Embassy in Yerevan, Armenia, for distribution to the Klhko-Aper National Children’s Library and the “American Corners” operating in two Armenian libraries.

This is SEFLIN’s second major partnership project with Armenian libraries.

Through the support of Dr. William Miller and Florida Atlantic University Libraries, Ariel document delivery systems/services have been established at the Papazian Library of the American University of Armenia, the Republican Scientific Medicine Library, Yerevan State University Library, and the Fundamental Scientific Library of the National Academy of Sciences.

UNESCO-funded web repository seeks information literacy resources

Have you developed information literacy resources, created a course, developed standards or assessment tools or written a thesis on the subject? Would you like to give international visibility to your information literacy work? Then, you are invited to participate in an exciting new web directory, the International Information Literacy Resources Directory.

This web repository has been designed by the Information Literacy Section of IFLA in a UNESCO-funded project. The aim of the directory is to enable sharing of information literacy experiences around the world. Access to the database is free to anyone.

Visit the website at www.uv.mx/usbi_ver/unesco, and contribute entries for the resources you have found most useful in your own information literacy endeavors. It is your participation that will enrich this website so that it can serve as a global clearinghouse for Information Literacy resources.

Submitted by Sally C. Tseng, CALA Executive Director
A U.S. Delegation

It has been six years since a U.S. delegation participated in the annual conference of the Library Society of China (LSC), formerly China Society for Library Science (CSLS), the largest national library association in China. Coordinated through the Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA), a group of U.S. librarians wrote papers, gave presentations, and participated in discussion sessions during the conferences.

The 2005 annual conference was held from July 20-23, in Guilin, Guangxi Province, one of the popular tourist destinations in China. Twenty-eight librarians from public libraries, academic libraries, and special libraries in the United States joined their Chinese colleagues at the conference and post-conference tour. Their papers and presentations were delivered in Chinese or English.

Among them five papers were awarded as Best Papers at the conference. Sally Tseng, Executive Director of CALA and the main organizer for the U.S. delegation, encourages more U.S. librarians to take part in the conference through which a better understanding will be gained, lasting bonds of friendship will be established, and potential exchange projects will be explored.

The LSC Conference

Professor Zhan Fu-Rui, president of the Library Society of China and Director of the National Library of China, gave opening remarks at the 2005 conference. He welcomed 1,200 librarians, including those from South Korea, Hong Kong, and the United States, to participate in this annual conference.

According to the conference organizing committee, 1,374 papers were submitted to the conference when the committee issued a call for papers, a record number since the association started its annual conference in 1999. Among these papers, only 113 were chosen to be presented at the conference and to be included in the conference proceedings. The conference theme was “Innovative Library Services for the People,” which reflected a central theme of the Chinese government calling for more attention to individuals’ needs when the country has rapidly marched to a market economy.

Several presentations by the Chinese librarians explained, among other things, that libraries should pay more attention to users’ individual needs, including confidentiality, identity security, privacy, and physical and mental conditions when they seek library services.

At the conference, Sally Tseng, CALA Executive Director, and Hwa-Wei Lee, Chief of the Asian Division at the Library of Congress, were made honorary members of the society. It was the first time that honor was given to librarians outside China, for their significant contributions in advancing librarianship in China. Both Tseng and Lee are ALA and IRRT members.

A Post-Conference Cultural Tour

After the conference, a cultural tour took a group of U.S. librarians and their families to the magnificent and mysterious provinces of Guizhou and Yunnan where Chinese ethnic groups reside in the southwest parts of China. The eight-day post-conference trip visited famous places including scenic sites in Guilin and Jiaxiu Pavilion, to Anshun, Guizhou, the great Huangguoshu Waterfall, the Dragon Palace, the Stone Forest in Kunming, the ancient city of Dali, the Three Pagodas temple, the Jade Dragon Snow Mountain and sightseeing in Lijiang, then back to Kunming to visit the Western Hill Dragon Gate and the Daguan Pavilion.

The 2006 Library Society of China Annual Conference will be held in late July, in Kunming, the capital city of Yunnan Province. A U.S. delegation will be organized to participate in the conference. The main theme is “The Development of the Library and Building a Harmonious Society.” A post-conference cultural tour is being planned for Xishuangbanna in the southeast of Yunnan Province. It is a place where travelers can still enjoy the beauty of nature. For more information about the conference and the post-conference cultural tour, please contact Sally Tseng, CALA executive director at scteng888@yahoo.com.

Sha Li Zhang is Assistant Director for Collections and Technical Services at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro.
Africa
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in operation, and enhance technical skills.

The Mortenson Center has developed educational programs for more than 700 librarians from 86 countries who come to the Center for continuing education. The Center has a strong history in working with librarians in a variety of settings to strengthen libraries and the services they provide. In addition to providing education and training, the Mortenson Center is working with library vendors to negotiate good rates and dependable service for online catalog systems and other needed technologies. This is especially important since the lack of a critical mass of libraries purchasing technologies has resulted in the inability of vendors to provide needed support in some of the regions.

The Mortenson Center has developed educational programs for more than 700 librarians from 86 countries who come to the Center for continuing education.

The Carnegie- and MacArthur-funded projects focus on providing better access to research and information materials for users. Written project plans with timelines, activities, and staff responsibilities are under development. In these early stages, however, the university libraries already are developing visible and defined outreach services to the user communities, and campus support for strong research libraries is growing. The librarians are beginning to work together to discuss consortia and collaborative efforts that will help them move forward in providing needed library resources and services. Librarians also understand that automation is the key to a strong and vital presence in the university. Teams of well-trained individuals in each of the libraries and more effective relations with vendors will be critical to sustaining the progress made through these important grants.

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Compiled by Sha Li Zhang, IRRT Membership Committee Chair

ALA members bring together book donation

By Hong Wang

Four ALA members from California State University, Sacramento (Sac State) Library have been working as a team for used-book donation to the new library of Macao University of Science and Technology (MUST) in China. Started in March 2004, this project of donating 1,500 volumes of used books has been going on smoothly with active coordination between the team, the MUST Library, the Friends of the Library from the Sac State and the library Support Services. More than 300 volumes have been shipped to the MUST library and the rest will be on the way for final delivery.

The library team, originally called CSUS-Asian Libraries Exchange (CALE), was set up in December 2003 under the direction of the Director and Dean of the Library Dr. Terry Webb. The goal of the team is to initiate and promote scholarly exchange programs between Sac State Library and other libraries in Asian countries. There are six members in the team: Fang Gu, Joe Zhou, Bin Zhang, Hong Wang, Dr. Terry Webb, and Jenny Leung. The donation was awarded to the team as a generous grant by the Friends of the Library. The books cover a variety of academic fields such as information and technology sciences, political science, public administration, law, business, management, medicine, and English literature.

Macao University of Science and Technology is a comprehensive university established after the turnover of Macao to Mainland China and with the approval of the Government of the Macao Special Administrative Region. The library is in the early stage of development, including collection development of both Chinese and English books.

With this successful effort to establish an international scholarly exchange program, the CALE Team will continue the professional activities with other libraries in Asian countries.
In addition, the group was able to visit the SLUB’s state-of-the-art digitization facilities and learned about major efforts underway in creation of digital resources. The German government, via the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (German Research Foundation), sponsors significant digital initiatives in German libraries: at the SLUB this includes major projects in art and music as well as historical newspapers and other resources. A major SLUB digital resource, the Deutsche Fotothek, is a growing collection currently consisting of about 644,000 digitized photographs. More information about the SLUB is available at: http://www.tu-dresden.de/slub/

The highlight of the group’s stay in Dresden was the 95th conference of the German Librarians’ Association (Bibliothekartag), which was held in the modern Congress Center overlooking the Elbe river and city center. The conference theme, “Networking” was particularly appropriate for American visitors attending this gathering for the first time. Conference sessions on issues surrounding cultural heritage, issues of digitization and metadata, library marketing and promotion, library cooperation, electronic publication and open access, accessibility, and library history introduced us to these ideas in their German setting, and provided us with the basis for lively conversations with our German colleagues in the receptions and gatherings which accompanied the conference.

The size of this conference, about 2500 attendees, and its compact location, gave us further opportunities to network and experience librarianship in Germany in a setting which was less crowded than a typical ALA conference. The exhibits provided us with another international aspect to our study tour, as we encountered both new vendors and resources as well as some Europeans whom we have met at the ALA exhibits also. In the more relaxed European setting, conversations with exhibitors were productive and illuminating.

Several group members participated in a conference program on international librarianship focused on librarianship in the United States. At this program, Sem Sutter of the University of Chicago described issues surrounding the library as a place, including plans for storage and retrieval of collections. Axel Schmetzke of the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point’s presentation focused on issues of accessibility of websites in light of new laws in the European Union which mandate access for the disabled. Beth Remak-Honnef of the University of California, Santa Cruz discussed issues of open access and scholarly publishing, and Marzena Ermler of the New York Public Library focused on methods and strategies for library instruction and information literacy. Thea Lindquist of the University of Colorado took part in an interesting and stimulating discussion panel on international exchange and cooperation sponsored by Bibliothek & Information International (”Perspektivenwechsel durch Auslandsaufenthalt? Möglichkeiten der internationalen Kooperation”). Panel participants talked about their own experiences abroad as well as other opportunities available for international exchange. More information about the German Libraries Conference is available at: http://bibtag.slub-dresden.de/cgi-bin/bibtag.pl

By the time of our farewell dinner, held in a former tobacco factory which, with its exotic bulbous dome, dominates the Dresden skyline near the Congress Center, we realized that our study tour had provided us with a very special opportunity to learn about a library landscape that, while new to us, has unique and deep historical roots along with pathbreaking modernity, as well as current concerns which are shared on both sides of the ocean. We are especially grateful to our tour leaders, Marilen Daum (Goethe-Institut New York) and Jens Lazarus (Hochschulbibliothek Merseburg), and to all who made this experience possible.