



International Leads

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Library Modernization: A Visit to Russia

By Barbara Moran

A group from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH) had the opportunity in May and June of 2003 to spend three weeks in Russia. The three of us (Evelyn Daniel and Barbara Moran, faculty members in the School of Information and Library Science at UNC-CH and Nadia Zilper, Curator of Slavic & East European Collections at UNC-CH Library) were part of a larger delegation from UNC-CH supported by a grant from the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (BECA) who visited Russia. The BECA grant is intended to help strengthen the newly emerging public relations programs in Russian universities. The library and information science experts on the UNC team were charged with evaluating the library collections, gauging the amount of access to online information available to faculty and students, and examining the involvement of librarians and the use of the library by faculty and students in the PR programs.

Our visit to Russia had two parts. Before we began our university visits, we attended the annual meeting of the Russian Library Association called Rossiiskaya Bibliotchnaya Assotsiatsiya, or RBA which was held in the historic city of Pskov from May 12-17, 2003. The RBA, a member of International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), is the national library association of Russia. It is structured very much like the American Library Association (ALA) with a number of sections and roundtables. More about RBA can be seen at its website <http://www.rba.ru:8101/english.html>. The conference in Pskov was like an ALA conference, but smaller. Librarians from all across Russia attended. There were presentations, papers, and panel discussions. Each of the three of us made a presentation on various trends in libraries in the U.S. The presentations were well attended and we were asked many questions. We were pleased with the number of Russian librarians who were able to understand our English language presentations.

The city of Pskov was a wonderful site for the conference. The city has a rich history and was celebrating the 1100th anniversary of its founding this year. We were able to visit many interesting places, including a number of academic, public, and school libraries. We also had the opportunity to talk to many librarians from all parts of Russia who were able to tell us about what was happening in libraries in their part of the nation, and who were very interested in what we had to say about U.S. libraries. Like most of the other attendees, we traveled to the conference by train. One of our lasting memories will be the train ride from Pskov back to Moscow. The train left the station at Pskov in the early evening for the overnight trip. The train was almost completely full of librarians. There was car after car filled with them.



The 175 years old Russian State Library (former Lenin Library) in Moscow with the Fedor Dostoevsky Statue.

(Photo: Paul Jones, May 2003.)

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A Visit to Russia

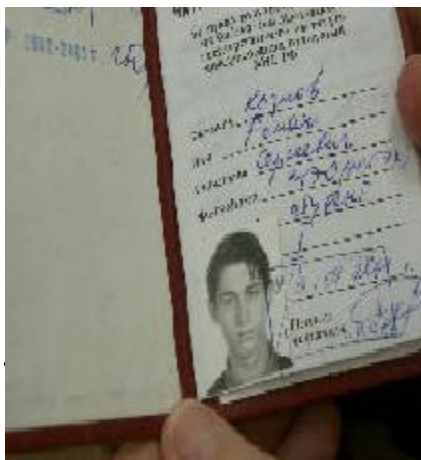
Continued from page 1

They had packed picnic dinners for the journey and there was much eating, drinking, and visiting during the long trip back to Moscow. For some it was an all night opportunity to have fun with colleagues they see rarely.

After returning to Moscow, we continued on with the other members of the UNC-CH delegation to the city of Irkutsk in Eastern Siberia. It is sometimes easy to forget how very large Russia is. Moscow and Irkutsk are over three thousand miles apart. Since Irkutsk is a major stop on the Trans-Siberian Railroad, we were very tempted to take the train until we discovered that the trip takes 75 hours. Instead, we opted for Aeroflot, which got us there in six hours.

Irkutsk, located near Lake Baikal, is one of the largest cities in Siberia. We were a bit apprehensive about what the weather might be like in Siberia in May; we were pleasantly surprised by the warm and sunny weather. The university we visited, Irkutsk State University (ISU) (<http://www.isu.ru/english/index.htm>), was founded in 1918 and is the oldest university in Siberia. It has an enrollment of over 14,000 students and a faculty of almost 900. The Public Relations program, located in the Faculty of Philology and Journalism, is relatively new.

During our week long stay in Irkutsk, the UNC team did a number of things. During the initial days of our visit, we gave a series of formal lectures that were attended by faculty, students and librarians from ISU. We spent a great deal of time in the ISU University Library, which is one of the largest in the region, with a collection of over three million volumes. The Library Director Raisa Vasil'evna Podgaichenko provided us with an opportunity to see all the parts of the library and the department heads gave us detailed presentations



Library card at Moscow State Institute of International Relations(MGIMO)
(Photo: Paul Jones, May 2003.)



A meeting with the librarians at MGIMO.

(Photo: Paul Jones, May 2003.)

about department functions and services. We had many good discussions about librarianship in Russia and the U.S. The ISU library has a highly professional staff; we were especially impressed with the director who has done an excellent job of keeping the library up to date with extremely limited resources. The Library website provides information about printed and electronic resources. The Soros Foundation has provided resources for access to important EBSCO databases and JSTOR; there are links to some useful Russian sites, and full descriptions of materials are available on CD-ROMs. The ISU library is taking the lead in developing an online union catalog for all the libraries in Siberia.

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shali.zhang@wichita.edu

A Volunteer with the World Library Partnership

By Ken Venet

A plaintive voice sang out that crisp, pitch-black, star-studded South African night. And although our stroll through the sand to his aunt's house was only about half a mile, I would never have found my way back if it weren't for Thula leading the way. The 17-year-old became not only my guide for that evening, but my "brother." He was the son of my hosts, Luke and Julia Zikhali, in Mbazwana, Kwazulu Natal, where I served as a World Library Partnership volunteer for three weeks this past summer.

The Partnership, based in Durham, NC., was created in 1996 by a former Peace Corps volunteer. Since 1998 it has been sending volunteers to work in assisting various types of libraries in Zimbabwe, Honduras and South Africa. Eighteen librarians, library science students, and community workers from throughout the United States, Canada, and Switzerland, met in Pretoria for three days of workshops and training before boarding a bus for a 10-hour trip to Mbazwana, a village on the northeast coast of South Africa.

Once there, another volunteer and I were assigned to the Mntanenkosi High School library. The library was a simple affair: one room with a bare cement floor that had to be swept free of dirt every morning, unfinished posts and planks forming the one row of shelving, several wooden tables and benches and some plastic chairs making up the sparse furnishings. Databases? No way. Internet? Hardly. Most of Mbazwana has no electricity, although electrification is expected by the end of next year.

Some of the challenges facing the Mntanenkosi library sound surprisingly familiar. How do you generate student interest and get them to understand the importance of the library? How do you encourage the faculty to collaborate with the library staff? How do you build a collection with a minimal budget? The students, from two sections each of grades eight through 12, all went to the library. Kirk, the second volunteer, and I talked about where we were from and our long journey to South Africa. We discussed atlases, globes, dictionaries, encyclopedias, non-fiction, fiction, the importance of reference books, the Dewey Decimal system and checking books out of the library. Then we invited students to take books off the shelves, look through them and ask questions. These were definitely hands-on sessions. Kirk's harmonicas and walk-man, along with the chess set and scrabble game were big draws and helped fill the library with students. No shushing in this library. We wanted to make it fun.

Our instruction sessions got to be finely honed comedy routines. We were serious about the information but presented it with liberal doses of humor. We also met with the faculty to generate ideas for drawing students into the library and to determine the needs for resources to support their classes. We came up with ideas for books and other materials to be purchased, but as far as getting the students into the library, we were on our own.

Another challenge was the budget: there was no budget! The World Library Partnership (WLP) distributed approximately \$600 U.S. dollars to each school. These funds were spent at a book fair our last day in Mbazwana. Several publishers came from Pretoria and we purchased books based on the library's needs. A South African organization working with WLP also donated many boxes of relevant materials – books by African authors, books in Zulu, much needed sets of encyclopedias – and distributed them to Mbazwana's schools.

South Africa is many things to me: thought-provoking conversations with the students; hearing a lion roar as it walked down a dirt road at night; bouncing down a sandy road in a truck, African music blaring from the cassette player, and seeing parallels to our own history in the history of apartheid.

We were fortunate that Mntanenkosi's principal, Luke Zikhali, was very supportive of the library and never missed a chance to stress its importance to the students. He was also our host and we lived with his family, including Mr. Zikhali and his wife Julia, his sons Gcina, 14, Thula, 17, and a teenage daughter we called Sam. An older daughter was away at university and a much younger daughter was away at a private school.

Zulu is the native language but everyone in the family spoke English. We had to speak slowly and clearly, however, because they had difficulty with our American accent, as we did with their South African accent. Language misunderstandings created many comical moments. African languages are also "click" languages, with many different

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The Adventures of an IFLA First-Timer

By Marilyn Wilt

My experiences at the World Library and Information Congress: 69th IFLA General Conference and Council in Berlin, Germany, formed a technicolor, polyglot extravaganza. I had never before traveled to the European continent, and I was thrilled to have the opportunities to visit several cities in addition to Berlin, to sample the foods, and to see the historic structures that are all part of my familial roots. I am the Training and Learning Coordinator for Rutgers University Libraries. I am responsible for the professional development of the Libraries' faculty librarians and staff. I joined two of my librarian colleagues for the Conference adventure.

We flew first to Frankfurt, then took the train to Mainz. From Mainz we traveled up the Rhine to Cologne on a multi-decked ship that leisurely made its way up the river. We explored Cologne's historic Old City, toured the Dom, the grand cathedral of Cologne, and took a small trolley on a side trip to a delectable chocolate factory on the riverbank. The next day we boarded the train for our trip to Berlin.

A huge banner heralding the Conference festooned the front of the Berlin Convention Center. There were also some "happy bears" outside—painted in bright colors and patterns, celebrating and welcoming all visitors to Berlin. Each registrant received a plastic pouch on a lanyard with your registration card and a miniature program book, along with a sturdy backpack filled with a variety of materials and booklets, giving information on the Conference, on some of the exhibitors, etc. Berlin was in the throes of the summer's heat wave that baked all of Europe. Whenever we could be in air-conditioning (like in the Convention Center), we took advantage of the opportunity!

With so many of us speaking a variety of languages, communication was always challenging! We all got quite creative in using hand gestures, drawing pictures, using fractured German phrases [usually badly mispronounced] to get what we needed. Ordering food in restaurants became a great adventure. Some of the restaurants had English menus, or even pictures of the entrees, but many did not, so we had to learn to identify the German words for meats, vegetables, etc. The most critical word for us—"der Eiswürfel" (ice cube)!

The three of us presented a workshop, "Using Assessment as a Tool to Improve Information Literacy," at the University of Applied Sciences in Potsdam, sponsored by the Information Literacy Section. About forty people attended—a great challenge to deliver a half-day workshop in a lecture hall with no windows and no fans, and 90-degree heat outside!

We each took a segment of the workshop, with activities planned so that our participants were active partners in creating the learning. Even in our final activity the participants got so involved in dialogue that we had to stop them, reminding them that they needed to leave to make the train back to Berlin!

I joined the Continuing Professional Development and Workplace Learning Section meetings, and enjoyed networking with and learning from colleagues from Germany, United Kingdom, Australia, France, Botswana, Nigeria, India, South Africa, Ethiopia, as well as from the United States. In the section meetings, the plenary sessions, and the social gatherings, I was in awe of the diversity of talents and experiences shared. I also found myself challenging some of my own assumptions and those of others in developed countries, where we have more ready (and easy) access to technology, the Internet, etc. For example: our colleague from Nigeria reminded us that she could not always count on having electricity, never mind accessing the Internet!

Despite the disparity of resources and experiences, we still often found common ground on which to build partnerships and future relationships. The Section's planning for the 2004 Conference in Buenos Aires was influenced by learning and relationships that developed in Berlin. We particularly focused on ways to involve our Latin American colleagues in the 2004 Conference, the first IFLA Conference to be held in South America. *(Marilyn Wilt is Training and Learning Coordinator at Rutgers University Libraries.)*

A Volunteer

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clicks, pops, and assorted sounds made by the tongue while speaking. It was a source of endless amusement for them to hear us attempt these sounds. Our hosts, at the school and at our "home," were very gracious. I was always made to feel welcome, comfortable, and part of the family. This was a big part of what made the trip such a wonderful experience. I went to South Africa to work and contribute to the development of Mntanenkosi high school's library. I brought home so much more. For more information on the World Library Partnership, please visit its website: <http://worldlibraries.org> *(Ken Venet is Assistant Director of Library at Barry University in Florida.)*

IRRT and IRC Meetings at 2003 ALA Midwinter in San Diego (January 9 - 14, 2004)

International Relations Committee Meeting I

Friday, January 9, 2004
2:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.
San Diego Marriott-Hall 4

International Relations Committee Meeting II

Tuesday, January 13, 2004
1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
San Diego Marriott-Hall 6

International Papers Subcommittee

Saturday, January 10, 2004
8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
Hilton San Diego Gaslamp Quarter-Coronado Room
Closed meeting

IRC/IRRT All Subcommittee Meeting

Saturday, January 10, 2004
8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
San Diego Marriott-Marriott Hall 2

Humphry/OCLC Forest Press Award

Saturday, January 10, 2004
8:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
San Diego Marriott-La Jolia Room
Closed meeting

Bogle Pratt Award Committee

Saturday, January 10, 2004
8:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
San Diego Marriott-Anaheim Room
Closed meeting

International Poster Session Subcommittee

Saturday, January 10, 2004
8:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
Manchester Grand Hyatt-Oxford Room
Closed meeting

IFLA Sponsors

Saturday, January 10, 2004
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.
San Diego Convention Center-Room 31C

IRRT Executive Committee Meeting

Sunday, January 11, 2004
8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
San Diego Marriott-Chicago Room

IFLA 2004

Sunday, January 11, 2004
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.
San Diego Convention Center-Room 8

Meeting locations**Hilton San Diego Gaslamp Quarter**

401 K Street
San Diego, California 92101
Tel:(619) 231-4040

Manchester Grand Hyatt

One Market Place
San Diego, California 92101
Tel: (619) 232-1234

San Diego Convention Center

111 W. Harbor Drive
San Diego, CA 92101
Tel: (619) 525-5000

San Diego Marriott Hotel Marina

333 West Harbor Drive
San Diego, CA, 92101
Phone: (619) 234-1500

Welcome New IRRT Members!

Clara M. Chu
Stanley R. Conrad
Carolin Crouse
Annette W. Davis
Roberta L. Dougherty
Gina Greenlaw
Davin Hamblin
Darren Hoerner
Robin Kear
Moy H. McIntosh
Mohammad Mirkfakiai
Patricia Overall
Jordan M. Scepanski
Roxann M. Swain
Wendy Thomas

International Leads Editor's Notes

By Sha Li Zhang

When I completed editing the December 2003 issue of *International Leads* (Leads), I felt much relieved with a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. In the sixteen issues published from 2000 to 2003, I have maintained quality of the publication through actively seeking articles and reports, timely reporting the IRRT's activities and events, and maintaining balanced coverage on the regions to which American librarians made positive contributions to library development. I am very pleased that the IRRT members have enjoyed reading Leads.

Many American librarians have played an important role in the international scale of the library community. They are also willing to share their experiences with the Leads' readers. For the past four years, more than fifty librarians, library educators, and library friends have contributed to Leads through their articles, reports, photos, and briefs. Those items have provided our readers with windows through which our understanding to the world's library community has been much enriched. I would not be able to produce the quality publication without their willingness to share what they have experienced.

For the past four years, I have also received continual assistance from many individuals. I worked with four chairpersons of IRRT. Each of them has provided me with full support and encouragement to produce a quality publication. Lucinda Covert-Vail, Fred Lynden, H. Lea Well, and Karen Starr diligently wrote their columns for each issue of Leads. They allowed me much liberty to cut and revise their materials in order to fit them into limited space. They from time to time offered me suggestions

to potential authors to get good articles for Leads. I want to sincerely thank them for their time and efforts. All chairpersons from the International Relations Committee, including Jordan Scepaniski, Nancy John, Betty Turock, and John W. Berry, never missed the deadlines to convey the activities and events of the committee through their columns. Their timely reports have kept the Leads' readers stay current with American librarians' endeavors on the international stages. Michael Dowling, Director of the International Relations Office, has served an instrumental role. His patience and gentle push helped me meet the publication deadline. Delin Guerra, Michael's able assistant, made certain that all IRRT and IRC events and activities covered on Leads were accurate and current. Donald Riggs, my friend and former editor of *College & Research Libraries*, has offered editorial enhancement to make all articles and report read better on Leads. Barbara Kile, chairperson of the IRRT Publications Subcommittee, made sure that I had all needed tools when I started editing each new issue. May Chang and Jeannette Pierce, IRRT web masters, always took priority in posting Leads on the IRRT's web site.

Many other individuals have helped with the publication in various ways, though the space does not allow me to list all of them. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with all of them on Leads for the past four years. Now I look forward to devoting my time for something that I have put aside since I took the editor's post in January 2000. Let me quote Garrison Keillor's trusting words to end my notes, "Be well, do good job, and keep in touch." (*Sha Li Zhang was International Leads Editor, March 2000 - December 2003*)

International Leads Authors, March 2000 - December 2003

Carol Alabaster	Mary-Bess Halford	Rhonda L. Neugebauer	George Shatirishvili
John W. Berry	Nerses Hayrapetyan	James P. Niessen	Karen J. Starr
Nancy M. Bolt	Alvin Hutchinson	Marie Paiva	Rosemary Talab
Chen Ching-Chih	Phyllis Hytten	Lester Pourciau	Thelma H. Tate
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Barbara J. Ford	Sirous Monajami	Julia Schneider	Sha Li Zhang
Zewdie Gudeta	Barbara B. Moran	Robert A. Seal	Lisa Zhao

Report from the International Relations Committee

By John W. Berry, Chair

IFLA Pre-Summit Conference: “Libraries@the Heart of the Information Society” -- Last May, I accepted an invitation from Swiss librarians and IFLA organizers to serve as a moderator for the pre-Summit Conference called: “Libraries@the Heart of the Information Society,” which was held at UN facilities in Geneva on November 3 - 4, 2003. About 200 delegates from seventy nations attended. American library associations were well represented by Winston Tabb, Johns Hopkins University representing ARL, Gary Strong, UCLA also representing ARL, Janice Lachance, SLA’s Executive Director, and Janis Johnston, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign and AALL President with me representing ALA in the photo on this page.

The International Relations Office and chair spent time this fall preparing for the UN World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) on December 10-12, 2003, in Geneva which will be followed by a follow-up Summit in November 2005 in Tunis. We were very pleased to learn in October 2003 that Robert S. Martin, Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), secured an appointment as one of the official U.S. Government delegation to the WSIS in December 2003. The U.S. delegation is led by Ambassador David A. Gross, U. S. Coordinator for International Communications and Information Policy, Department of State. Other delegates are representatives from State, Commerce, USAID, IMLS, Justice, FTC, Copyright Office, FCC, NASA, NSF, and other federal departments. The American delegates to the Pre-Conference fully supported the following IFLA statement developed at the November Pre-Conference:

To support and extend the existing global network of library and information services to make available and preserve knowledge and cultural heritage, to provide information access points and to develop the twenty-first century literacies essential of the realization on the information society. High quality library and information services provide access to the information required by the communities they serve. A modest investment in them would quickly return significant dividends.

Four PrepComs (preparatory committee) have been held since July 2002, the most recent in mid-November 2003 in Geneva to try to resolve substantial areas of contention on issues surrounding Internet governance, Internet security, intellectual property, the right to communicate and human rights and issues around the global digital divide. See the IFLA web site for many more details on the issues: <http://www.ifla.org/III/wsis.html>

Cuba -- The IRC spent much time discussing Cuba at the ALA/CLA joint Annual Conference in Toronto in June 2003. The IRC introduced a resolution at ALA Council III. Council discussed the resolution in an “informal” session for a half an hour. Once back in session, Council voted to refer it back to both the IRC and the Intellectual Freedom Committee (IFC) for further study. Nancy Kranich, IFC Chair and I have appointed a six-person Task Force to work this fall ahead of the January Midwinter Meeting in San Diego. A Canadian Library Association resolution on Cuba passed in Toronto called for IFLA to mount a mission to explore the current situation in Cuba related to the March 2003 trials and subsequent jailings of about eighty dissidents on the island. At its final meeting in Berlin in August 2003, the IFLA Governing Board concluded that a mission of the kind envisaged in the CLA resolution would cost about 15,000 euros. After discussion, it was agreed that IFLA was not in a position to carry out the proposed investigation without contributions from external funding agencies and it was agreed not to pursue the issue at this stage and to respond to CLA accordingly.

IRC Planning Documents -- ALA is beginning its strategic planning process for 2005-2010 this year and well into 2004 and it is essential that an international component is available for broader planning for this important association-wide work. The IRC, with input from divisional IRC’s and units within ALA, created an ALA International Relations Planning Document for 2000-2005 in 2000. Work that began last year to update the planning document continues this year with discussion of the current draft Planning Document by the IRC at the ALA Midwinter Meeting to be held in San Diego.



The American delegation was Gary Strong, Winston Tabb, Janice Lachance, Janis Johnston, and John W. Berry at the IFLA Pre-Summit Conference. (Photo: John W. Berry)

A Visit to Russia

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Although the library provides reference services to faculty and students, there is little done in the way of user education.

There is a facility in the Department of Philology and Journalism which is termed a library but which is actually a reading room for students in the department. Typically the only access to course textbooks for students is through the reading room; students do not buy their text books. The collection is small containing several copies of each textbook (based on a formula set nationally) and little in addition to the textbooks. There are no computers and no link from this facility to the main university library.

On May 29th, 2003, the group returned to Moscow where we began our visit to Moscow State Institute of International Relations, usually called MGIMO (<http://www.mgimo.ru/>). MGIMO was founded in the 1940s to prepare specialists to work in various spheres of international relations. Today it is one of the most prestigious universities in Russia. MGIMO's program in Public Relations is the oldest in Russia; it is

located in the School of International Journalism. Because MGIMO serves as the accrediting agency for all Russian degree programs in public relations, the university exercises considerable influence over the rest of the Russian public relations programs.

MGIMO is one of the best funded universities in Russia with its funding coming from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, not from the Ministry of Education. This higher level of funding is reflected in all of the facilities at MGIMO, including the library. Although the library collection at MGIMO is somewhat smaller than that at ISU, is generally more up to date, and has more foreign language literature. We were pleased to have the chance to visit again with Marina Reshetnikov, Director of the Library at MGIMO, who had spent one semester studying at UNC-CH. We found the same situation at MGIMO as we had at ISU; there is little connection between the library and what goes on in the classroom. The departmental library that supports the public relations program at MGIMO is very new; it has a small collection of journals and monographs and several computer stations with access to the Internet.

While we were in Moscow we also had a chance to visit several internationally known libraries located there. We had an extensive tour of, the Russian State (or Lenin) Library, one of the largest libraries in the world (<http://www.rsl.ru/eng/defengl.asp>). In addition, we spent half a day at the M.I.Rudomino All-Russia State Library for Foreign Literature (<http://www.libfl.ru/index-eng.shtml>). This library has a collection of more than 4.5 million items in 140 languages. The library is also the home of the American Center, the U.S. government sponsored American style "public library" which is open to all.

It is hard to even begin to describe all of the experiences we had during our stay in Russia. We left with the overall feeling that the libraries in Russia are modernizing very quickly and that the libraries in Russia and the U. S. are very much alike with many similar issues and concerns. Most of all, we left with a feeling of great gratitude to the many Russian librarians who taught us so much about their libraries and their culture. (*Barbara B. Moran is Professor in the School of Information and Library Science at University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill.*)

International Relations Office

American Library Association
50 East Huron Street
Chicago, IL 60611 USA

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