



International Leads

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The Changing Role of Shanghai Library

By Weiping Zhang

Shanghai Library is the second largest public library in the People's Republic of China. The library has been serving the residents in the city of Shanghai since 1952. With increased collection, high demands for library services, and a rapid changing pace of the city, a new Shanghai Library was built in May 1997. The new library displays a magnificent architecture piece, a rich collection, and high networking technology. It also represents a new model for public libraries in China.

I paid many visits to Shanghai Library in recent years, conducted my research on Chinese business information, and talked to librarians there. As a Shanghai native, I had visited the "old" Shanghai Library many times before. I was truly impressed by the new library: the role of the library has been shifted from a huge collection storage house to a major information service center.

An Educational Center

Fully equipped with modern technology, Shanghai Library's Teaching and Training Center is a state-of-the-art facility where classes, seminars, workshops and lectures are offered to the public. These instructional programs cover a variety of topics interested to the public: education, art, health, environmental protection, computer technology, economic development, and international affairs. The Library



The newly built Shanghai Library
(Photo: Weiping Zhang, February 2000)

designates a display area where the manuscripts of the Chinese cultural celebrities can be viewed and appreciated by the public. Every year, Shanghai Library holds various exhibitions and sponsors many cultural events. "Paintings from Macau," "Calligraphy of Chinese-Americans," "Arts & Crafts of Shanghai Middle School Students," "Shanghai under Candid Camera-Photo Collections," "Award-winning Works of the National Computer Graphics Competition," "The New Cycle of Chinese Economic Development," and "Current Relations among Major Countries" were just a few of the events

About Shanghai Library

Opened to the Public: 1952

Collections: 40 million volumes

Average daily visits in 1999:

10,000 persons

Library Director:

Mr. Ma Yan-Liang

Address:

1555 Central Huai-hai Road

Shanghai, P. R. China

Phone: 86-21-6445-5555

Fax: 86-21-6445-5001

Website:

<http://www.libnet.sh.cn>

held between 1999 and 2000. These activities may sound common in public libraries of developed countries, but they are indeed new undertakings carried out by a Chinese public library.

An Information Provider

In October 1995, Shanghai Library and the Shanghai Information Institute were merged. Shanghai Library is actively engaged in providing business communities with much needed information and services, including conducting market surveys, collecting and analyzing business information, offering legal advice for patent,

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contain the up-to-date information.
Databases such as

providing consultation for firms that are involved in joint-venture enterprises or international business, and locating information on Chinese manufacturers for overseas companies. In many occasions, staff of Shanghai Library has been asked by Shanghai business companies to serve as interpreters in international trade negotiations. Since the merger with Shanghai Information Institute, Shanghai Library has been very active in expanding its services to the business community. For example, the library makes contacts with foreign commerce organizations and business firms, organizes product exhibits in China and other countries, and helps arrange business visits to foreign countries for Chinese companies. During my visits, I was told that the Library helped arrange about 25 overseas product exhibits between August 1999 and October 2000. The library is currently pursuing a new activity: designing web sites for Chinese manufacturers and companies and assisting in promoting their products and services. I found these new roles taken by Shanghai Library quite bold and refreshing. It is certainly a departure from a "traditional" public library.

A Database Designer

Shanghai Library is aware of the importance of database design and multimedia publishing. Several information databases with high quality have been built by the library. One good example is the *Index to Article Titles of Periodicals and Newspapers Published in China*. In addition, the library accepts requests to compile databases for government agencies, scientific research institutions, universities and colleges as well as business firms. During my visit, I used the library's Digital Reading Room to conduct my research. The entire experience was fruitful and very pleasant. Most databases are well-designed, user-friendly, and

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Message from the IRRT Chair

By Frederick C. Lynden

The International Relations Round Table Meetings in Washington, D.C. were highly successful as each

ALA Members at the 2000 FIL

Editor's notes: *in November 2000, about two hundred American librarians from academic, public, special, and school libraries attended the Fourteenth Guadalajara International Book Fair held in Guadalajara, Mexico. Barbara Ford, ALA President 1997-1998, has been instrumental in establishing the partnership between ALA and the Guadalajara Book Fair. In this issue, Barbara Ford and Christine McDonald are invited to share their experience with IRRT members.*



to contribute towards encouraging reading among children, young and adults. Every year, FIL immerses itself in the color, aromas, accents and rhythm of the country guest of honor which included Argentina in 1997, Puerto Rico in 1998, Chile in 1999, and Spain in 2000.

The book fair in Guadalajara takes place each year at the end of November. Brazil will be the country of honor in 2001. Watch for announcements of how you can expand

Barbara has this to say --

If you want to improve library service to a community of Spanish speakers, broaden your knowledge of Latin American authors, develop multicultural programming in your library, increase your cultural knowledge of Mexico, network with other American librarians who are responsible for Spanish language acquisitions and collection development, and find an easy way to purchase Spanish language materials, the Guadalajara International Book Fair is for you.

In 1997, ALA and the Guadalajara International Book Fair began an exciting partnership to expand the "global reach and local touch" by providing support for American librarians to attend the Feria Internacional del Libro (FIL). Since that time, the Free Pass program has provided lodging and registration at the expense of FIL and an ALA contribution toward the cost of airfare. This program has allowed hundreds of ALA members to have firsthand access to the latest publications in Spanish, networking opportunities with thousands of book professionals, and literary and cultural programming with Latin American authors and other experts.

The Guadalajara International Book Fair was founded in 1987 and it is organized by the University of Guadalajara each November. Its goals are: to promote Mexican and Latin American publishing, to be a place for access for information available through books, videos and electronic devices, and

From ALA's International Desk By Michael Dowling

Testing on the new ALA International Participation Form will begin in March. This website and database, which will be unveiled at Annual Conference if all goes well, will provide an opportunity for ALA members and others to input information on their international activities. We hope that this will help capture the variety of international library activities that are going on and provide contacts for those looking for country or regional information.

The office is beginning to gear up for the Annual Conference, but we are a bit short-handed right now since Alisha White left the IRO at the end of January to teach English in Spain. 'Tis the budget season at ALA and we are hoping to get some additional funding to hire a library student working part-time to help out with the website and respond to requests for information.

For those of you wishing to serve as mentors to international librarians at the ALA Annual Conference in San Francisco, please send an email to intl@ala.org

The office is also working on preparing for the "Strengthening Library Associations in The South Caucasus: A Regional Workshop" which will be held in Tbilisi, Georgia, May 5-8, 2001. Part of the outcomes of the workshop will be a bilingual website of materials in English and Russian that can be utilized by libraries throughout the region.

The office is assisting in helping to translate "Read" and "@ your library" for use in graphic materials and in the new ALA public awareness campaign. I want to thank all of the "expert" librarians who have helped in the translations. (*Michael Dowling is Director of ALA International Relations Office*)

News and Announcements

Date and Time changes of International Papers Session at ALA Annual --- This years International Papers session "Libraries in Society: Essential Links to Knowledge" will be held from 2:00 to 5:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 16, 2001. The preliminary announcement in *American Libraries* lists it on Monday morning, June 18. Please find time in your schedule to drop by to hear some remarkable presentations from colleagues around the world. The location for the program will be listed in the June issue of *International Leads*.

ALA-ZIBF Deadline --- The deadline for the ALA - Zimbabwe Book Fair Free Pass Program is April 15 2001. If you are interested in the program which provides three free nights (five star hotel) or five free nights (three star hotel) plus free registration and a \$200 travel stipend. Information and application forms can be found at <http://www.ala.org/work/international>

Theme Issue in 2002 --- *Public Libraries*, a professional library journal focusing on public libraries, is planning on a theme issue of January / February 2002 and looking for submissions within the next few months on articles about public libraries in foreign countries that contain ideas that American librarians could benefit from. Other aspects of international librarianship (articles about libraries that serve multiple countries, returned Peace Corps volunteer librarians, etc.) are also welcome. Author Instructions are available at the PLA web site at <http://www.pla.org>

New Fulbright program --- The Fulbright Senior Specialist Award program, a new start-up program to send librarians/

scholars to international posts has been created by the Council for International Exchange of Scholars. Awardees will be posted for two to four weeks, not six to twelve months, making the commitment more manageable at one's institution and home. Those librarians interested in participating in this short-term international consultation program may contact Martha McPhail for additional information at mmcphail@mail.sdsu.edu or by phone at (619)594 - 6736.

NIT 2001 --- The 12th International Conference on New Information Technology will be held on May 29 - 31, 2001, in Beijing, China, in celebration of the 90th Anniversary of Tsinghua University. Dr. Ching-chih Chen, Professor of Graduate School of Library and Information Science at Simmons College, is chief organizer of the conference. Sample topics of the conference include national information infrastructure and policies, digital libraries and systems, multiformat and multilingual problems and issues, distributed digital library development in the world, intellectual property and right protection, etc. More information on the conference is available at <http://www.simmons.edu/~chen/nit/nit2001.html> or <http://www.lib.tsinghus.edu.cn/NIT/>

NCAPAL --- The first international conference of the American Librarians will be held on June 13 - 15, 2001 at Grand Hyatt on Union Square in San Francisco. The theme

Library Conferences Around the Globe

LIBCOM - 2000 -- The Fourth International Conference and Exhibition, "Information Technologies, Computer Systems, and Publications for Libraries" was held at Yershovo Resort Center, about forty km. west of Moscow, Russia on 13 - 17 November 2000. Seventeen different countries

The ALA's International Relations Committee (IRC) is a standing committee of the ALA Council and meets regularly at the association's midwinter and annual conferences and at other times as necessary. At the midwinter meeting in Washington, DC in January 2001, the committee held two sessions. Reports were provided on International Federation of Library Association (IFLA) activities, ALA Office of Information Technology Policy issues having international implications, and plans for a conference in the South Caucasus related to president Nancy Kranich's theme of "Libraries as Cornerstones of Democracy." The committee continued consideration of its planning agenda, agreed upon a process to guide ALA participation in IFLA nominations and elections, and made recommendations for ALA nominations of individuals wishing to stand for IFLA offices. It also received a report from its Latin American and Caribbean subcommittee on a request to take up the issue of reported repression of certain "independent libraries" in Cuba.

The Caucasus conference will have as its focus the role of libraries in strengthening democratic institutions and will involve librarians and governmental policy makers from Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. The event will take place in Tbilisi, Georgia May 5-8, 2001. President Kranich and selected ALA members will make presentations and lead discussions on advocacy techniques that might be used in the three countries. One goal of the conference is to promote regional planning on issues of mutual interests among the three library associations.

With the IFLA statutes having been amended at its Jerusalem conference in 2000, a new governance structure has been put in place and nominations and elections procedures have changed. Therefore the IRC was asked to suggest a process under which requests for nomination by ALA would be considered and association support for nominated candidates determined. The committee recommended to the ALA Executive Board a process to be used for the 2001 IFLA elections.

The committee agreed its "2000/2005 Planning Document," first introduced at the 2000 midwinter meeting, should be deemed a "working document" subject to further refinement, but that implementation of specific elements in it should proceed. To that end, a draft paper was presented detailing areas of emphasis and suggesting groups and individuals who might take responsibility for realizing the stated objectives. A number of activities suggested in the plan already have been accomplished and additional items

IFLA 2001 Conference in Boston Update

By Michael Dowling

Less than six months until Boston! If you haven't registered, the early registration deadline of May 15, 2001 is coming up soon! You can register online at <http://www.ifla.org>. As an ALA member, remember to use the ALA IFLA Membership Number, **US-0002**, to save \$50 on the registration fee.

If more money is raised, we can definitely bring more librarians.

For The Latest News

As you might expect, the conference is really starting to shape up. For the latest on programs and activities just visit the website. IFLA Express, which is IFLA's Cognotes, will have a new update in May 2001 as well. The IFLA Express early issues are only being published online, so click on the "IFLA Express" link at the website.

Support the Fellows

Support is still needed for the IFLA Fellows program to bring 100 librarians from developing countries to IFLA. Around two thirds of the \$300,000 had been raised as of January. You and your library still have the opportunity to contribute to this worthwhile cause. Click on the website to see how you can help. The International Relations Office is handling the applications and we have already received over seven hundred applications for the one hundred slots.

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