



LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Krystyna K. Matusiak



DEAR COLLEAGUES,

It is my great pleasure to write this column in my new role as Chair of the Library Theory and Research (LTR) section and welcome LTR new and continuing members. We held the elections of new officers at the business meeting of the Standing Committee (SC) at the World Library and Information Congress (WLIC) in Athens on 24 August 2019. I am honored to have been elected as Chair of LTR for the next term. I would like to thank past Chair, Theo Bothma for his excellent leadership and hard work on behalf of LTR. I would like to introduce the officers and members of the communication team who were elected at the August business meeting:

- Secretary: Egbert John Sánchez Vanderkast
- Information Coordinator: Agnese Galeffi.
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In addition, the following SC members assumed new roles in the communication team:

- Social Media Coordinator: Carla Colombati
- LTR Blog Coordinator: Debbie Schachter
- Newsletter Editor: Rebecca Vargha.

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I would also like to welcome all new members that joined the Standing Committee in 2019.

A list of new and continuing members is available at: <https://www.ifla.org/standing-committee/24>

Reports and Action Plans

The committee members have been very active since the 2019 Congress in Athens. We completed the Annual 2018-2019 Report and finalized a two-year Action Plan. The documents are available on the LTR website under Publications. The 2019-2021 Action Plan is a result of the discussions that the committee members held over Zoom and during the business meetings at the 2019 WLIC. The proposed activities are closely aligned with the IFLA Global Vision Strategic Directions and include the plans (Action Plan 1 and Action Plan 2) for two focus areas. Action Plan 1 outlines activities for a new project that is focused on improving training of library professionals in research and evaluation methods. The activities encompass an international study investigating library and information science (LIS) education in research methods and practice-oriented workshops.

Action Plan 2 represents activities for BSLISE (Building Strong LIS Education), a continuing collaborative project of LTR and SET.

This project focuses on advancing the profession through understanding best practices in library and information science education. In the coming year, BSLISE team will focus on drafting an international framework for the assessment of quality standards in LIS education and refining the core and other competencies for transferability and reciprocity.

Midterm Meeting and Research Methods Workshop

LTR will hold its midterm meeting in Mexico City on March 6, 2020. The midterm meeting is organized in conjunction with a regional conference at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). Many thanks to LTR Secretary, Egbert John Sánchez Vanderkast for organizing the meeting and hosting us at UNAM. We recognize that many SC members will not be able to attend the midterm meeting in person. We plan to offer an option of joining the meeting over Zoom and encourage all SC members and corresponding members to participate.

LTR is participating in the conference in Mexico City along with IFLA LAC and IFLA News Media. As part of the conference, LTR will offer a four-hour workshop, "Becoming a stronger researcher-practitioner: Research methods in library and information science (LIS)." The workshop is part of LTR Action Plan 1 activities. It is intended for library professionals in the Latin American region and will include presentations and materials in English and in Spanish.

Planning for the 2020 Satellite and WLIC in Dublin

The plans are underway for the Open Session at the 2020 WLIC and for the Satellite meeting in Dublin. The BSLISE Working Group will present a concept for an international framework for quality assessment and qualification in the library and information profession and associated resources at the WLIC 2020 Open Session. The session title is:

"Working together to develop an international framework for quality assessment and qualification in the library and information profession: Engagement, connections, pathways and hurdles." Thank you to Clara M. Chu and Jaya Raju for leading BSLISE Working Group and serving as Open Session coordinators.

The 2020 LTR Satellite meeting, "International Research in LIS: Challenges and Opportunities" will be held at the Library of Trinity College Dublin on August 13 and 14. LTR is organizing this two-day satellite conference jointly with the IFLA Social Sciences Section and *IFLA Journal*, and in collaboration with the Association for the Information Science and Technology (ASIST) and the Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE). The conference is focused on practical aspects of research methods and research design for international and comparative research in library and information science field. The call for papers is available at:

<https://2020.ifla.org/cfp-calls/library-theory-and-research-with-social-science-libraries-and-ifla-journal/> .

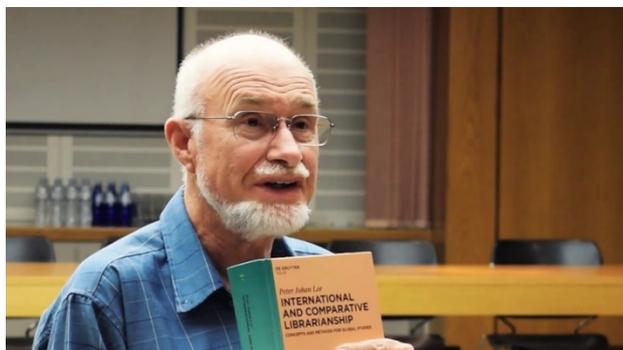
Thank you to the following SC members for serving on the planning committee: Theo Bothma, Debbie Schachter, Stefan Schmunk, Rebecca Vargha, Jennifer Weil Ams, Zuzanna Wiorogórska, and Steven Witt. Peter Lor, past LTR member and former IFLA Secretary General deserves special recognition for spearheading this Satellite conference.

I would like to use this opportunity to thank all Standing Committee members who have generously contributed to the new and ongoing research projects, conference planning, and communication and publication initiatives.

Krystyna K. Matusiak
Chair, Library Theory and Research

SPOTLIGHT ON PETER LOR:

Lor, Peter Johan, *International and Comparative Librarianship: Concepts and Methods for Global Studies*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter Saur, 2019. xlv, 905 p.



Professor Peter Lor's new book was published in 2019 and is titled *International and Comparative Librarianship: Concepts and Methods for Global Studies*. The monograph is Volume 4 in the IFLA Global Studies in Libraries and Information Series published by De Gruyter Saur.

AN INTERVIEW WITH PETER LOR

by Rebecca B. Vargha

Question: What is your background, early life and library career experiences?

I was born in the Netherlands in 1946, and came to South Africa as a young child when my parents emigrated in 1952. I grew up in the Western Cape and studied at the universities of Stellenbosch, Pretoria and Caen (France), where I obtained degrees in languages, linguistics and library science. My M.Bibl. (1978) and D.Phil. (1991) degrees in library and information science are from the University of Pretoria. From 1968 I worked in special and academic libraries and as a teacher of library science at the University of Stellenbosch and the University of South Africa, where I became a full professor in 1991. In 1992 I was appointed as the Director of the State Library, a national library with responsibilities for the Southern African

bibliographical and resource-sharing infrastructure. During the 1990s I participated in a number of initiatives to develop national policies for post-apartheid library and information services. I played a leading role in forming a non-racial library association, the Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA), to replace the former racially-based library associations. In 2000 I became South Africa's first National Librarian and Chief Executive Officer of the National Library of South Africa (2000-2003), with the task of merging South Africa's two existing national libraries (the State Library in Pretoria and the South African Library in Cape Town). I have been actively involved in international librarianship since the 1980s, attending my first IFLA conference in 1983.

I served as chairman of the Conference of Directors of National Libraries (1996-2000) and undertook various international consulting activities, including the drafting of Guidelines for legislation for national library services, for publication by the General Information Programme of UNESCO. Following my term at the National Library, I served as Secretary General of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) in The Hague, the Netherlands (2005-2008).

I was then appointed as a visiting professor in the School of Information Studies (SOIS) at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (2009-2011), where I developed a course in International and Comparative Librarianship.

From 1998 to 2016 I was an Extraordinary Professor in the Department of Information Science, University of Pretoria. From 2017 onward I'm as a Research Associate there.

Here is the link to Peter's CV:

<https://pilor.files.wordpress.com/2019/09/lor-cv-for-blog-2019-09-22.pdf>

Question: Who is the intended audience for your peer reviewed book?

At first I thought it would be a resource for the academic community, especially for graduate students and researchers in international and comparative methods. I was also thinking about their supervisors—the PhD committees who are not always well informed about the differences and variations in doing research from country to country from a global perspective. Later on as I was writing the chapters about influence and aid for libraries, I realized it would be useful for practitioners as well as people who are involved in aid programs and are also undertaking projects in other countries. For that type of work you need background and perspective. You have to be a humble person with a sympathetic imagination. You must be prepared to look at what you see in other countries through the eyes of the people who live there and not immediately impose your “superior” systems, ideas and technologies on them even if your systems may indeed be superior. You can impoverish yourself if you are not attentive and careful in your judgements.

Visitors don't always do their homework before visiting other countries. During the 1990s, when I was the State Library in Pretoria, with responsibilities for the Southern African bibliographical and resource-sharing infrastructure, I was visited by a librarian from the United States who told me we should be compiling a national bibliography. I went to the display shelf in my office, and took a volume of our national bibliography to show to my visitor. The State Library in Pretoria, South Africa had been using a computer system since 1958. We were the second national library in the world to have a computerized national bibliography.

Question: How long did it take for you to write the manuscript? And what about the editing process?

I wrote the earliest chapters in 2011 while I was on the faculty at the School of Information Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in the United States.

During that time, I developed a graduate course in International and Comparative Librarianship.

I joined the faculty there in 2009 and found that I did not have a lot of time to work on my book since I taught several classes—especially the foundations class which was interesting, but it took considerable time to review the literature.

And I enjoyed teaching the LIS management class, although it also took a lot of time. I continued to write and publish a lot of articles during that time. I retired in 2011 and we moved back to South Africa, specifically to Sedgefield, which is on the Garden Route of the Western Cape province. I then taught online at SOIS online for two years and at the University of Pretoria. The book was dragging on and on so I stopped teaching to spend more time on it. In fact, the new series editor told me that she thought he might not finish the book! That spurred me on. Then I spent two years of intense writing to finish the project.

Your book is divided into four parts:

- A. Concepts-origins and evolution of international librarianship
- B. Methods with an emphasis on theory
- C. Political economy-background for Part 4
- D. Influence examining the flow of ideas and innovation globally

Question: Did you decide to create this structure at the beginning of the project or did the divisions evolve as the writing of the manuscript progressed over time?

The four parts are a bit like reverse engineering. The political economy chapters came in late as I became more and more aware of the connections between political

economy and international library development. At one point I wanted to change the title, which was not possible since the publisher already had advance sales.

Question: How does your book connect with previously published books on international and comparative librarianship?

My book is – I hope – is both a capstone and a foundation stone. I was dissatisfied with the somewhat fragmentary state of current literature. People put together edited books with contributed chapters and while I don't want to disparage this work, that type of book does not give a coherent overview of the field. A lot of literature about "international librarianship" is really about librarianship in other countries, often librarianship in other countries as seen by Americans. I understand and use the term "international" in the British sense which is more to do with the relationships between countries. International and comparative librarianship have been nebulous concepts and it was time for someone to synthesize what the basis for the subject is in a coherent manner.

MEMORIAM FOR FLAVIA RENON

Contributed by Anna Maria Tammaro

Flavia Maria Antonietta Renon passed away on March 19, 2019, at the age of 55. She was a reference/instruction librarian at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada in the area of active learning. In her research she examined lifelong learning skills and informal learning, in particular, examining how informed physical and virtual spaces, or third spaces, on campus can be used to provide students and teaching faculty with cross-disciplinary insight into who they are as learners and how they can best learn.

Her commitment to improving access to education was evident in the work she undertook throughout her career. She was an

accomplished researcher and a frequent presenter and invited speaker in the areas of high school to university transition; integrated literacies, personal learning environments, libraries as learning spaces, self-study and professional practice, and library and information studies education. She was also instrumental in the practical implementation of programs that would help students navigate the transition from high school to post-secondary education. Flavia was very involved with organizing a High School Partnership program that worked with local high schools every year to bring students into the Library to help prepare them for university.

Flavia was also the recipient of Carleton's Professional Achievement Award in 2006 and 2015, recognizing the value of her mentorship to colleagues and her students. It was also an acknowledgement of her many collaborations at Carleton, including those she had built with Neuroscience, Psychology, the Educational Development Centre, and the Discovery Centre. Her impact also reached beyond the Carleton community as she partnered with colleagues not just at Carleton, but also other universities across Canada and the United States including a research collaboration with Purdue University.

<https://futurefunder.carleton.ca/giving-fund/flavia-renon-memorial-fund/>

Flavia was very active in IFLA, serving as member of IFLA's Standing Committee on Library Theory and Research Study, and a member of an IFLA Working Group on Building Strong Library and Information Science Education (BSLISE). She served as the IFLA LTR Newsletter Editor until 2018. Our sincere condolences to her family, friends and colleagues.

FOLLOW US!

IFLA offers several convenient channels to keep you current with the LTR's portfolio of activities and events. You can join the conversation at:

Twitter: @IFLA_LTR

News: www.ifla.org/news/5794

Blog: blogs.ifla.org/library-theory-research/

Web: www.ifla.org/library-theory-and-research

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See you in August at the
2020 WLIC in Dublin, Ireland!

