Developing the Library Network in Postcommunist Russia: Trends, Issues, and Perspectives

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Abstract

This paper discusses trends in library network development in Russia over the past twenty-five years. The major trends in libraries of various types and levels, from national to local public libraries, are analyzed. Statistical figures reflecting decreasing numbers of libraries in Russia from 1991 to the present are presented and analyzed. A special section is dedicated to the B. N. Yeltsin Presidential Library in St. Petersburg, the electronic national library of Russia. The public library development strategy in St. Petersburg is highlighted, along with the reform of the network of public libraries in Moscow. The two most recently renovated libraries in Moscow, the F. M. Dostoevsky Library and the Prospekt Library and Information Center, are featured. The major directions for Russian libraries desiring to go "green" are presented, along with the conditions they are to meet.

Introduction

The collapse of the communist system in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) occurred in 1991. On December 8, 1991, the agreement on the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was signed in Belovezhskaya Pushcha (Republic of Belarus). This agreement was signed by the heads of the Russian Federation, Ukraine, and Belarus, and on December 21, 1991, it was ratified at the meeting in Alma-Ata by eleven former Soviet Republics, with the exceptions of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Georgia. Therefore, the December 21st date can be considered as the starting point for the development of the library system of independent Russia. As a successor of the USSR, the Russian Federation had to deal with the problematic legacy of the Soviet system, including the system of libraries that had been used by the Communist Party of the

Soviet Union (CPSU) to help it rule. The development of the library system in independent Russia began in a meaningful way in early 1992, but in order to analyze its history after that date, it is first necessary to examine the legacy of the Soviet era.

The Soviet Legacy: What Did Libraries Inherit?

Libraries in the Soviet Union were considered to be "ideological and information institutions responsible for the public usage of books and with the purpose of promoting the people's communist education and their cultural and professional growth and to mobilize the masses to fulfill political, economic, scientific, and cultural missions" (Chubarian, 1976, p. 42). The main goals of Soviet library activities (primarily those of "mass libraries," as public libraries were called during the Soviet regime) were to support working-class communist education and promote scientific and technical progress. One of the most relevant resolutions of the CPSU's Central Committee at the time was titled "On Improving the Role of the Library in Workers' Communist Education and Scientific and Technical Progress" (1974). Consequently, the following goals, or responsibilities, were specified: the dissemination of Marxism-Leninism and industrial propaganda and CPSU policy; cultural and educational engagement; the organization of mass reading; reading management and surveillance; and the centralization of librarianship for better government control.

In order to achieve these goals, an extensive and sustainable system of libraries was put in place throughout the USSR. This system incorporated libraries of various types, although not all of them were formally linked to one another. Two parallel systems of libraries coexisted: independent libraries funded directly by the government (mass libraries and CPSU libraries), and libraries that were structural units within their respective enterprises and organizations. The latter system included libraries that supported education, such as school, college, and university libraries; also included in this category were libraries that were located and operated within an industrial enterprise (science and technology and trade union libraries, both of which were subject-specific, serving the needs of a particular industry, but also containing plenty of Marxist-Leninist literature to promote the communist ideology), as well as libraries affiliated with government agencies (for instance, libraries of the Academy of Sciences). These libraries were meant to adhere to the missions and goals of their respective parent institutions, whose responsibility was to provide the funding for library operations.

It is important to stress that when we talk about the library system in the USSR, we primarily have in mind the system of mass (public) libraries, as well as the CPSU library network. The network of CPSU libraries incorporated libraries in political education centers, as well as the area/local libraries (which operated at the republican, regional, city, and district levels) and at the lower level of the CPSU committees.

The system of mass (public) libraries in the USSR was structured like a pyramid. The V. I. Lenin State Library (LSL) in Moscow was one of a number of libraries at the top of the pyramid. The LSL was the one national library in the USSR and served as the instructional center for all libraries throughout the country, responsible for providing methodological assistance. A group of para-national libraries—which collected the nationwide materials in a certain area of specialization—were situated one level down: National Library for Science and Technology; All-Union Library for Foreign Literature; State Historical Public Library; State Central Scientific Medical Library; State Central Children's Library; State Juvenile Library; and All-Union Patent Technical Library, among others, all belonged to this group.

The next level down was occupied by the State Libraries of the Union's Republics, and by the M. E. Saltykov-Shchedrin State Public Library (SPL, formerly the Emperor's Public Library), which served as the State Republican Library and the instructional center for the libraries of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR). Immediately below this level were the regional general scientific libraries. Then came the city, district, rural, and similar libraries: the mass (public) libraries in cities and regions were unified into centralized library systems (CLSs), with one central library and a network of sublibraries—CLS branches. The structure of this public library network continues to exist today.

To assist in achieving its goals and objectives, the Soviet party and state machine designed an enormous library system and a library community of many thousands. The library community was supported by the CPSU and the state and was well-anchored in everyday life. In the Soviet state, libraries of all types acted as soldiers who guarded the ideological front; they were mobilized to accomplish ideological functions that met the Soviet libraries' goals and objectives discussed above. The Soviet regime needed mass (public) libraries to promote mass indoctrination and spread the communist ideology. What happened to this large, "ideologically purposed" library system when the USSR collapsed?

THE COLLAPSE OF THE COMMUNIST SYSTEM: WHAT IS AHEAD?

Russia obtained independence from the USSR in late December 1991. The New Year holidays passed, and on the morning of January 1, 1992, people woke up in a new country, the Russian Federation. Since 1992, the Russian Federation, the first president of which was Boris Yeltsin, pursued the development of a society based on capitalist principles, oriented toward universal human values, the eradication of totalitarianism in all its forms, the adoption of basic human rights, and freedom for its citizens; it also sought to embrace the cultural values of a precommunist past.

The renaissance of the National Library of Russia in St. Petersburg

should be considered within this shift to a precommunist era. Before the revolution of 1917, the Emperor's Public Library was the main library of the country. Since the capital of Soviet Russia was transferred to Moscow and the LSL was established on the basis of the Rumyantsev Museum Library, the SPL was demoted in status; it acted as the State Republican Library of the RSFSR and the instructional and methodological center for all libraries in the RSFRS. This situation was in force until the collapse of the Soviet Union in late 1991.

The presidential decree "On the National Library of Russia" was issued on March 27, 1992. This new status and role were officially assigned to the State Public Library in St. Petersburg. Its special place in the national historical and cultural heritage was confirmed simultaneously. This March 27th date can be considered as the beginning of the renaissance of the National Library of Russia (NLR). In accordance with the same decree, the LSL lost its status as national library and was later transformed into the Russian State Library.

The post-Soviet Russia established its own national library. Having obtained the status of national library, the NLR was granted much more independence in selecting its types of activities and areas of growth, either in the scientific or economic field, including international contacts and projects. The NLR was also assigned the prestigious task of representing the interests of the Russian library community at international events. The NLR's website contains relevant information on its historical development, functions, responsibilities, and services (http://www.nlr.ru/eng/).

However, something had to be done with the LSL, which had lost its status as national library. A solution was soon found. In accordance with the Regulation of the Soviet of Ministers of the Russian Federation of August 2, 1993, the LSL was transformed into the Russian State Library (RSL). The library lost its functions related to the coordination of activities of the libraries in the union republics, which became independent states. Since then, the RSL's connection to and coordination of activities with the NLR have strengthened and developed. During the first half of the 1990s, the library faced financial difficulties, which have impacted its evolution. Meanwhile, during the second half of the decade, it began automating its operations. The library's international contacts have developed as well. The RSL was also granted the status of National Library of the Russian Federation. Therefore, Russia was now able to boast of two national libraries: the NLR in St. Petersburg, and the RSL in Moscow. The network of para-national, research, regional, city, district, and rural libraries has remained almost unchanged.

The government brought the development of librarianship in Russia under its control. The "On Librarianship" federal law was issued on December 29, 1994, and is still in force today. From time to time, additions and/or changes to it have been approved. Other major pieces of legislation

followed: the federal law of October 6, 2003, "On General Principles of Local Self-Government Organization in the Russian Federation"; and the federal law of May 8, 2010, "On Making Changes to Some Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation Due to Improvement of the Legal Status of State (Municipal) Institutions." In accordance with these laws, all libraries located within certain municipalities were assigned to report to municipal authorities. The federal law of April 5, 2013, "On the Contract System in Purchasing Products, Works, and Services for State and Municipal Needs," regulates the acquisition of resources by libraries to support their collection-development activities. This is the system of laws regulating the activities of libraries in contemporary Russia, along with part 4 of the Civil Code of the Russian Federation.

LIBRARIES DURING THE "DARING" 1990S

During the 1990s, Russian libraries experienced a boom in automation and computerization. Russian authorities paid serious attention to the issues of automating various sectors, including governmental authorities and libraries. A series of important documents were adopted, such as the presidential decree of January 20, 1994, "On the Foundations of State Policy in Information," and the federal law of February 20, 1995, "On Information, Information Technologies, and Information Protection." The latter was in effect until 2006, when it was replaced by the federal law of July 27, 2006, with the same name. In 1995, the Council on Information adopted the "Concept of Formation and Development of the Single Information Space in Russia and Complying State Information Resources." One of President Putin's initial international actions was his signing of the Okinawa Charter on the Global Information Society in 2000. Russia participated in the two world summits on the Information Society in Geneva (2003) and Tunisia (2005). In 2008, the Security Council of the Russian Federation adopted the "Strategy of Information Society Development in the Russian Federation until 2015," which identifies the information society as a new stage in human development. The strategy encompasses libraries, advising that "the share of electronic catalogs in libraries should be not less than thirty per cent" (Sokolov, 2009, p. 4). Within this strategy, libraries in Russia are offered a clear pathway to the information society, once they "digitize their collections, implement OPACs and set up a high-speed connection between each other" (Sokolov, 2009, p. 4).

   No sooner had the communist system in Russia collapsed than the active "de-ideologization" of society commenced. Consequently, at the beginning of Yeltsin's presidency, as many Russian library professionals have indicated, changes in the structure of the library system started to take place. Arkady Sokolov (2009, p. 3), a professor at the St. Petersburg State University of Culture and Arts, has written that

the experience of the past 20 years or so has proved that a powerful and expensive library and bibliographic social institute carefully maintained by Soviet totalitarianism is no longer needed by the post-soviet state authorities. When Gennadi Burbulis [Yeltin's Deputy Prime Minister] and Anatoli Chubais [who headed the program of privatization] won it appeared to be that they needed banks and stocks, but not mass libraries.

As Sokolov elaborates, in the early 1990s,

[the] gradual dismantling of the state library system [as the Soviet state did not exist anymore, the new state did not need mass (public) libraries, as well as the libraries of similar types] started: communist party libraries were the first libraries to disappear; followed by trade union libraries and simultaneously libraries within industrial enterprises. Starting in 2003 came the turn of former mass libraries. The process of cutting down the number of rural, district and city libraries, disintegration of CLSs and other cultural complexes started. (pp. 3–4)

This process of reducing the number of libraries and/or dismantling them is still ongoing. Nearly daily there is news about a library closing in some region of the country.

As of December 1991, there were 119,500 libraries of various types in Russia (Sokolov & Afanasova, 1991). By December 2011, this number had dropped to 95,200. This figure was obtained as a result of the statistical investigation of libraries in the Russian Federation under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation (Manilova, Gruzdev, & Zaitseva, 2012). Over the past two decades, the library network in Russia has shrunk by around 20 percent.

The B. N. Yeltsin Presidential Library

The new network of libraries in Russia was effectively inaugurated in May 2009, when the B. N. Yeltsin Presidential Library was opened in St. Petersburg. The president of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, explained his decision to establish the B. N. Yeltsin Presidential Library in his message to the Federal Assembly on April 26, 2007: "This Library is to become a high-scale educational and information portal integrated into the global information society" (Mamaeva, 2009, p. 28). From the beginning, the library was planned as a completely digital library, containing only electronic documents. It collects electronic documents on the theory, practice, and history of the Russian state, and on the Russian language and other languages used in the Russian Federation. This collection is unique in the country, and providing broad access to its collections is the library's major goal.

Legislation was needed to launch the presidential library. On October 28, 2008, the president of the Russian Federation, Dmitry Medvedev, signed the law granting it the status of the national library of the Russian Federation. This library is the newest of three national libraries in Russia.

It was assigned space in the Synod Building in St. Petersburg. In her 2009 article "Presidential Library Branches in Regions: Realities and Myths," Svetlana Mamaeva highlights the major steps taken in the development of the B. N. Yeltsin Presidential Library.

For five years, the library has operated as the national electronic library of the country. It constantly seeks to develop a unique collection of electronic documents on the history of the Fatherland, on the theory and practice of the Russian state, and on the Russian language, and provides users with wide access to its digital resources. As Alexander Vershinin (2012, p. 3), the library's director, indicates, "today the electronic copies of old manuscripts and maps, historical and present official documents, photographs and films, newspapers and magazines, dissertations and monographs—165,000 electronic documents in total—can be found altogether at the Presidential Library." The originals of these digitized documents are located primarily at the NLR, RSL, Russian State Historical Archive, and at the State Archive of the Russian Federation.

The deputy director-general for information resources, Elena Zhabko, has considered the direction that the B. N. Yeltsin Presidential Library will take in terms of the future provision of information resources. According to Zhabko (2012), the library will serve as

- an integrated resource, including all types of documents (books, periodicals, official publications, authors' theses and dissertations, manuscripts and machine-written archival materials, photographs, cartographic editions, and so on);
- a multimedia resource, including audio and video documents (sound recordings of musical works, fragments of documentary chronicles, video recordings of events, virtual tours, lectures, popular and documentary films); and
- an institution that supports scholarly research on, education for, and the popularization of the history of the state, law, and Russian language.

At present, the information-resource provision of the presidential library is organized into four divisions: state authority, territory of Russia, Russian people, and Russian language.

The B. N. Yeltsin Presidential Library serves those who physically visit its premises in electronic reading rooms and serves remote users via the internet, although in the case of this second user category, Russian legislation (part 4 of the Civil Code of the Russian Federation) limits access to documents due to certain copyright restrictions. The library is engaged in active research, publishing, and educational activities. The library's website is the gateway to a wealth of information on Russia (http://www.prlib.ru).

Libraries in Russia Today

The system of libraries in Russia today is as follows. There are three national libraries, a number of para-national libraries, research and academic libraries, and central regional libraries and their systems. The three *national libraries* are: National Library of Russia (NLR) in St. Petersburg; Russian State Library (RSL) in Moscow; and the B. N. Yeltsin Presidential Library (the National Electronic Library) in St. Petersburg. There is a similar situation in Germany, where three national libraries are in operation.

The next level is formed by the so-called *para-national libraries*—that is, libraries that collect materials in a certain area of specialization and offer free access to the general public. The para-national libraries are as follows: Russian National Public Library for Science and Technology; M. I. Rudomino All-Russian Library for Foreign Literature; State Historical Public Library of Russia (the major library in the country specializing in history and history-related sciences); Russian State Art Library; Central Medical Research Library; K. D. Ushinsky Scientific Pedagogical Library; Russian State Library for Children; Russian State Library for Young Adults; and Russian State Library for the Blind. Para-national libraries report to various ministries and are not under the jurisdictions of the national libraries.

In addition, there are a number of *research libraries*: Library of the Russian Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg; Library for Natural Sciences of the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS) in Moscow; and State Public Scientific Technological Library of the Siberian Branch of RAS in Novosibirsk.

University libraries in Russia are structural units of their respective academic institutions. Each university has its own library. University libraries are not open to the general public but only to members of the university community. The major university libraries are at: Moscow State University; St. Petersburg State University; St. Petersburg State Polytechnic University; Novosibirsk State University; B. N. Yeltsin Ural Federal University, Ekaterinburg; Siberian Federal University, Krasnoyarsk; Moscow School of Social and Economic Sciences (a nonstate university); and the I. M. Gubkin Russian State Oil and Gas University.

One of the major projects, if not *the* major one of recent years, "The Development of the Information Access System to the Electronic Catalogs of the Libraries in the Sphere of Education and Science within a Framework of Single Internet Resource," was initiated by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation. The principal developer of the project is the Russian National Public Library for Science and Technology, it being the major library reporting to the ministry. The main purpose of this project is to make available online not just the catalogs of academic libraries but also digitized, full-text versions of valuable scholarly materials (mostly "gray literature"), and to make these available to academic communities not only in Russia and/or CIS countries but also

globally. It is designed to serve as a public repository operating on the basis of open access (OA) technology.

Public libraries and the geographical areas they cover are linked to the administrative/political territories in which they are located. Russia is a federal nation incorporating eighty-nine separate jurisdictions. There are twenty-two autonomous republics, five krais, forty-nine regions, eleven autonomous regions, and two capital cities (Moscow and St. Petersburg). Each jurisdiction has its own library system, with a central library located within the jurisdiction's capital city and branches in the capital and/or in minor county centers. Central libraries report to bodies in the various jurisdictional authorities responsible for cultural development. Central library branches form a network, a grouping called a centralized library system (CLS), which is not dissimilar to the previous Soviet arrangement.

Library Associations in Russia Today

Libraries of all types in the Russian network are members of the Russian Library Association (RLA). The RLA was founded on October 28, 1994, at a meeting of all major library managers in Moscow. It was established to foster professional connections in librarianship, to unify efforts, and to coordinate the activities of the teams in libraries of different types in order to secure and develop librarianship in the country. These were the fundamental concepts that prompted the establishment of the association. From the beginning, the RLA's focus was not on individual memberships because its concepts were geared towards the unification of institutional efforts. Even now, twenty years later, it still does not offer individual memberships, which means that the large community of Russian librarians does not have a professional network, does not have opportunities to express its opinions at RLA conferences, does not have opportunities to directly participate in the elections of the president and other RLA officers, and, consequently, does not ultimately have opportunities to participate in the development of national library policy. This situation explains why the Russian library community keeps silence in circumstances and situations in which librarians in other countries, such as in the United States, freely express their opinions and make the most of the opportunities provided by individual memberships in associations. The RLA sponsors an annual conference, which each year takes place in a different city, but always occurs during the second half of May. Libraries of each category, except school libraries, have their own section at the RLA. The list of sections may be found on the RLA website (http://www.rba.ru/).

School libraries are structural units of their respective schools. School libraries have their own association, the Russian School Library Association (RSLA). The RSLA, separate from the RLA, was founded in 2004. The goals of the RSLA are to expand the role of school libraries in the educational and instructional life of society and to support the social aims

and professional interests of school librarians. The objectives of the RSLA are

- the unification of school librarians' intellectual and creative potential within a single country-wide library and information space;
- the coordination and cooperation of school libraries' resources with the libraries of other systems and/or agencies;
- cooperation with domestic and foreign organizations for the purpose of school libraries' development;
- the promotion of legislative initiatives for the purpose of school libraries' improvement and their staff members' protection, at both the federal and regional levels; and
- the establishing and publication of specialized media subject to improving the new, school-age generation's information and well-being (RSLA 2007).

The RSLA publishes a journal, *School Library*, and sponsors an annual meeting, which is usually held in late October or early November, in Mikhailovskoe, Pskov Region, the place of exile of Russian poet Alexander Pushkin.

LIBRARIES IN ST. PETERSBURG

In addition to other major libraries, St. Petersburg has the V. V. Mayakovsky Central City Public Library. It unifies the main libraries of the city's neighborhoods (excluding two neighborhoods in downtown St. Petersburg, which are covered by their own CLS). Central neighborhood libraries form their own CLS. Two other neighborhoods in downtown St. Petersburg are covered by the Inter-neighborhood Centralized Library System, which holds the same status as the central city public library. These two libraries receive funding and report directly to the St. Petersburg city government, the body responsible for cultural development.

Reform of the St. Petersburg libraries was launched in 2005. It began, and continues, without the existence of a special body within the city government. Over roughly the past decade, the city government—primarily, the Committee for Culture—has made serious investments in the development of the library system. Libraries were equipped with modern computers and other equipment needed to exploit new information and communication innovations, the system of acquiring traditional and electronic documents was developed, bar-code technology in user and document-lending control was widely implemented (some libraries are now using RFID technology), and, where necessary, buildings were renovated. The renovation of libraries in St. Petersburg is ongoing; each year, the city announces news about new libraries with interesting modern designs. Although not all libraries have yet achieved a high level of service, collection development, and/or technology provision, the city constantly

demonstrates progressive and sustained efforts in library construction and in developing its library system.

St. Petersburg is the only city in Russia where libraries are unified to form a public library corporate system (PLCS). The purpose of the PLCS is to improve the quality of user services through the sharing of resources by participating libraries and through free internet access. Within the PLCS, users are offered access to valuable information in all disciplines, loans of electronic documents via ILL and/or EDD, and many other services. The PLCS's objectives are

- to provide access to corporate and/or local databases and reference information via the internet;
- to provide St. Petersburg residents with the documents they require, irrespective of location; and
- to provide residents with printed copies of full-text electronic documents at any participating library upon demand. (The electronic copy of the requested document is automatically destroyed immediately after printing.)

Libraries in Moscow: A Case of Upscale Reform

The situation in Moscow is similar to that in St. Petersburg. Libraries are unified into CLSs on different levels. The central library of each CLS reports to the municipal-government bodies responsible for cultural development. Moscow city had forty-three CLSs at the beginning of 2013. There are also seven independent libraries: I. S. Turgenev Public Library; A. P. Gaidar Central Children's Library; N. V. Gogol's House Memorial Museum Science Library; A. F. Losev House Library of History of Russian Philosophy and Culture; M. A. Svetlov Central City Library for Young Adults; S. M. Eisenstein Library for Movie Art; and A. P. Bogolyubov Library for Arts.

There is one principal difference, however, between the respective systems in St. Petersburg and Moscow: the latter is divided into fourteen boroughs, each of which is divided into neighborhoods where libraries are joined in CLSs. In January 2013, the decision was made to reform the city's public libraries. The number of CLSs in Moscow was reduced from forty-three to fourteen, corresponding to the boroughs. Each borough now has its own CLS, which manages all libraries within it. There are also seven independent public libraries, mentioned above, which report directly to the Department of Culture.

Nevertheless, this new system was unable to manage the city's libraries effectively enough. Consequently, further reforms were necessary. To realize the intentions of these reforms, the Moscow Library Center (MLC) was established in January 2013 as a satellite managerial unit reporting to the Department of Culture, the unit of Moscow's city government re-

sponsible for cultural development in the city. The MLC's main goal is to promote the city government's policy in providing library and information services to its residents. At present, the MLC works mostly with CLSs but also with CLS branch libraries. It is also worth mentioning that these reforms are aimed not only at promoting reading but also at establishing libraries as community centers.

The general profile of Moscow's library users is expected to change as well. As Boris Kupriyanov, the deputy director of the MLC, indicated in an interview with Yan Shenkman in July 2013: "Currently, libraries are mostly used by school children and pensioners, because most of them are only open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. A working adult with an active lifestyle usually cannot make it there. As soon as libraries begin working longer hours, young adults and middle-aged people will be able to join." This explains why it was necessary to establish the MLC and the nature of its goals. Moscow's libraries should be as open as possible; they should become a genuine "third place" for as many Moscow residents as possible, for anyone who perceives a library as his/her own space. A library is a great place to meet, discuss books, communicate, and talk about what is happening in the country and around the world.

The MLC's major responsibilities are

- to coordinate the city's public libraries' collection development;
- to coordinate the project management related to the construction and/or renovation of public library buildings;
- to provide library research assistance and information services to residents served by public libraries, and to conduct studies, disseminate results, and promote new trends and innovative methods and technologies; and
- to organize public events related to books and reading (Zverevich, 2013).

The MLC also provides assistance to Moscow public libraries in coordinating their collection-development efforts. The library center acquires books in bulk for CLSs directly from publishers at discounted rates; about half of the CLSs' collections are developed in this way. This system enables libraries to maximize their collection budgets, as well as to secure more funding for further acquisitions. The remaining 50 percent of budgets are supposed to be used by the libraries themselves to enhance their collections (Zverevich, 2013).

By late August 2013, the MLC had completed a series of extensive research surveys on the city's library system. These surveys were related to staff development, fee-based services, and collection development. The MLC also assists Moscow's libraries in organizing public events, such as meetings with writers and scholars, the scholars' lecture series, and master classes. These cultural events are very successful and well-attended. The library center plays only an advisory role when the calendar of events is under consideration.

Upon its establishment, the MLC was tasked with developing standard interior and exterior library design and the management of library space. It hired an architectural firm to support its projects. The task of renovating library spaces started with two neighborhood libraries, branches of their respective CLSs: F. M. Dostoevsky Library, located in downtown Moscow, and the Prospekt Library and Information Center, located in a quiet neighborhood in the southwest of the city. Both projects were completed in 2013.

As indicated in Kupriyanov's interview, "bars and heavy blinds, which create an oppressive atmosphere, will be removed from the windows; rooms will be rearranged so as to meet all reading requirements; new areas will be divided and designated for reading, recreation, conferences, lectures and displays" (Shenkman, 2013). The MLC's staff members assume that people come to libraries not only to read but also to communicate, attend lectures, obtain advice, discuss problems, and to have a space for personal work.

Ongoing Reform: Two Remodeled Libraries

The F. M. Dostoevsky Library was reopened in September 2013 after its renovation. It occupies the ground floor of a residential building (fig. 1). The interior spaces of the library are designed in a modern style. The stacks are rearranged to open up the reading room, and new Scandinavian-style chairs are furnished for readers. Lockers replaced the Soviet-era cloak room, and coffee and sandwich machines have been installed. Computers with free Wi-Fi, where users can access the internet, browse the library's OPAC (online public access catalog), read e-books and e-journals and access databases, are provided. The interior is in black and white.

The second renovated library, which also reopened in September 2013, is the Prospekt Library and Information Center. Like the F. M. Dostoevsky Library, it occupies the ground floor of a residential building (fig. 2). The interior spaces of the Prospekt Library look very similar to the Dostoevsky's (fig. 3). They are also modern in design, with only black and white in evidence. Modern-style chairs and tables are set up in the middle of the room, Wi-Fied computers are provided, and vending machines have been installed. But there are some differences between the two. The principle of "zoning space" is used in the Prospekt: the book collection is set apart, and users have open access to browse and select books off the shelves; several quiet study areas are separated from the general space.

In certain areas, the books are shelved with their spines inward. The aim of this imaginative idea is to encourage patrons to circulate around the shelves and to access books from all sides. The entire library is open space, and individual spaces are separated from one another by glass walls. This arrangement may initially seem confusing, but its attraction is that it invites patrons to explore the library.

Figure 1. Exterior of the F. M. Dostoevsky Library, Moscow. The library occupies the ground floor of the residential building in the middle of the picture. Courtesy of the author.

Figure 2. Exterior of the Prospekt Library and Information Center, Moscow. Courtesy of the author.

Figure 3. Interior of the Prospekt Library and Information Center, Moscow. Courtesy of the author.

These two remodeling projects have not been without controversy. The architects' approaches and the MLC's views did not coincide. On the one hand, the architects designed modern spaces (not necessarily *libraries*) that could attract visitors (mostly younger ones) to a certain extent. The architects and designers offered highly contemporary, fashionable interior designs, including a stark (black and white) color scheme. In terms of materials and services, in addition to traditional printed sources, they provided many gadgets for allowing users to access movies, search the libraries' OPACs, browse the internet, and read e-books and e-journals. Communication areas and classes for small groups are available as well. On the other hand, the designs used do not denote these two spaces as libraries; they could just as easily be hospitals, fast-food restaurants, offices, or a number of other kinds of spaces. It has been noted that neither project offers certain basic user services and collection arrangements. The libraries often appear to have no librarians in them, the users being left with no assistance. For example, if the OPAC is not working, because the collections are arranged not in accordance with a library classification system but instead randomly, providing high-quality library services becomes problematic. Unfortunately, there is a genuine concern that these less-than-perfect projects (branded with the letter "B" in Cyrillic, symbolizing the word *Biblioteka*) might serve as templates for all library projects of the early twenty-first century (similarly to the libraries located on the ground floors of residential buildings during the 1960s, in Khrushchev's Soviet Union) if the same architects renovate all of Moscow's 448 libraries.

If the remodeled libraries in Moscow continue to have no easily understandable scheme of collection arrangement, with no appropriate OPAC nor even a local, searchable electronic catalog, no library cards, and no librarians, they will not be able to provide adequate services to users. The two remodeled libraries described here provide poor library services to their patrons. However, the public events held on their premises attract more nonlibrary-using members of the public than they do traditional library users. If this trend continues, the result will be a "library without a library"—that is, a "dislibraried library" (Sokolov, 2009, p. 4), a library that transformed into something else. Personally, I would not like to see the network of Moscow public libraries, neither those "dislibraried" nor those marked by the Cyrillic "B," looking like these two renovations. Many librarians, including well-known professionals like Ekaterina Genieva, the director-general of the M. I. Rudomino All-Russia Library for Foreign Literature, often feel shocked at the sight of such projects. Genieva stated in her interview with *Udmurt Pravda* in May 2014: "We experienced the real shock at F. M. Dostoevsky Library: computers are everywhere around, but the book collection is unavailable."

Russian Libraries Are Going "Green"

Another popular development is the "green" library. At present, the green-libraries movement in Russia is just starting. Since 2010, several workshops have been hosted with the theme "The Role of Libraries in Providing Information for Solving Global Ecological Problems" by the Russian National Public Library for Science and Technology. As part of the international conference "Crimea 2013: Libraries and Information Resources in the Modern World of Science, Culture, Education, and Business" (which took place in June 2013 in Crimea, Ukraine), a roundtable was held on "The Ecology of Library Space as a Competitive Advantage." The keynote paper presented, titled *Green Design of the Modern Library* (subsequently published in the journal *Scientific and Technical Libraries*), described the international experience of designing and constructing green libraries and outlined the major principles and directions that Russian libraries should follow to become green (Zverevich and Pryanishnikov, 2013).

- The library is not an outsider, but a testing place for future ideas, including ideas on ecology.
- Russia should seriously promote the population's ecological culture and needs and the financial resources for designing ecological projects and implementing them.
- Russian libraries need to be more active in user ecological education and ecological enlightenment.

CONCLUSION

The Russian library community is looking at the future of librarianship in Russia with trust and optimism. The reform of public libraries is ongoing in Moscow, more and more libraries are engaged in becoming green, and libraries are paying much more attention to social projects as they become local information centers. There is still much to be done to develop Russian libraries and librarianship further; generally, however, their future appears promising.

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