

**MORRIS RIEGER  
(1919-1984)**

**NATIONALITY: UNITES STATES OF AMERICA**

**COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE: UNITES STATES OF AMERICA**

**EDUCATION**

- New York City College
- Graduate work at Columbia, Johns Hopkins, and American Universities

**AREAS OF ARCHIVAL SPECIALIZATION**

Archival Appraisal; International Archival Cooperation; Archives in Africa

**ACHIEVEMENTS IN ARCHIVAL FIELD**

Rieger served as a key liaison between Archivists of the U.S. and the international archival scene. A SAA Fellow since 1965, he served as chairman of the Society's International Archival Relations Committee, and in this position helped organize the 1966 Washington Extraordinary Congress of the ICA.. Rieger frequently wrote and lectured internationally and travelled to all continents. He attended and reported on international archival meetings, served as the representative of the Society of American Archivists to the Fifth International Archival Congress in Brussels in 1964, and attended the 1972 Congress in Moscow. He was committed to facilitating international archival cooperation during the Cold War and to developing archival exchanges and providing technical assistance and training for archivists in developing nations, especially in Africa. Rieger wrote a groundbreaking paper on establishing regional archival training centers in Francophone and Anglophone Africa (in Dakar, Senegal, and in Accra, Ghana), as well as in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, as well as an article on the history of the ICA.

**CAREER HISTORY**

- U. S. National Archives, 1941
- Administrator, Nation Archives/ Labor and Transportation Branch, 1948 -1962
- Senior records appraisal specialist at the new Office of Records Appraisal, 1962
- Staff member of the Archivist of the United States as Special Assistant for International Relations, - 1972
- Deputy Secretary General of the International Council on Archives; secretary of the committee on Archival Development

**HISTORICAL BIOGRAPHY**

Morris Rieger (1919-1984) was born in New York City, graduated from City College and did graduate work at Columbia, Johns Hopkins, and American universities. He served in the Navy during World

War II. Rieger began his career at the National Archives in 1941, where he worked in various offices and positions: from 1948 until 1962, Rieger administered the Labor and Transportation Branch, National Archives. After the branch was discontinued in 1962, Rieger became senior records appraisal specialist at the new Office of Records Appraisal. Until his retirement in 1972, Rieger was on the staff of the Archivist of the United States as Special Assistant for International Relations. A SAA Fellow since 1965, he served as chairman of the Society's International Archival Relations Committee, and in this position helped organize the 1966 Washington Extraordinary Congress of the ICA, which had the general theme: "Archives for Scholarship: Encouraging Greater Ease of Access." One of his particular interests was archival development in African nations. Rieger frequently wrote and lectured internationally and travelled to all continents. He attended international archival meetings, was the representative of the Society of American Archivists to the Fifth International Archival Congress in Brussels in 1964, and attended the 1972 Congress in Moscow. Rieger served as Deputy Secretary General of the International Council on Archives, where he served as secretary of the committee on Archival Development, and continued to be active with the ICA after his retirement. He also helped prepare the Eighth International Congress in Washington, D.C. in 1976.

Rieger's writings, published mostly in the *American Archivist*, give an idea of his broad interests, experience, subtle sense of humor, and his engagement in international archival affairs. As a long-time employee of the National Archives, SAA Fellow, and active member of the ICA, he was a key mediator between U.S. Archivists and the international archival scene. Especially his detailed reports from the 1966 extraordinary Congress and the 1972 Congress in Moscow illustrate his deep commitment to facilitating international archival cooperation during the Cold War, and to developing archival exchanges and providing technical assistance and training for archivists in developing nations, especially in Africa. Rieger wrote a very enlightening paper on establishing regional archival training centers in Francophone and Anglophone Africa (in Dakar, Senegal, and in Accra, Ghana), as well as in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. He was involved in international regulations and standardization of finding aids and in the development of policies helping archives around the globe to improve access to their collections. His descriptions of the somewhat stiff readings of pre-prepared statements by participants at the 1972 Moscow Congress are written with a fine sense of humor, and he was among those archivists who pushed for a reform of the session format to facilitate more vigorous discussions and make conference sessions overall more interesting. Rieger's wife, Rebecca Rieger, a clinical psychologist and linguist who spoke Russian, French, and Yiddish, translated at some of the meetings Rieger attended. Morris Rieger, unfortunately, left no papers, and the institutional archives of the National Archives and the ICA will have to be consulted to reconstruct a more detailed account of his life and work.

#### **PARTIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY LISTING BOOKS AND THEN ARTICLES**

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- Morris Rieger. "Archives for Scholarship: The Washington Extraordinary Congress of the International Council on Archives." *American Archivist*, vol. 30, no. 1 (January 1967): 81-251.
- Morris Rieger. "Archives in Developing Countries: The Regional Training Center Movement." *American Archivist*, vol. 35, no. 2 (April 1972): 163-171.

- Morris Rieger. "The Function of Archives in Public Administration." In: UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries, vol. 27, no. 1 (Jan-Feb. 1973): 40-42.
  - Morris Rieger." The VIIth International Archives Congress in Moscow, 1972: A Report. The American Archivist, vol. 36, no. 4 (October 1973): 491-512.
  - Morris Rieger. "The International Council on Archives: Its First Quarter Century," The American Archivist vol. 39, no. 3 (July 1976), 301-306.
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**AUTHOR OF BIOGRAPHICAL ENTRY/DATE OF SUBMISSION**

Katharina Hering, November 2015

**SECONDARY SOURCES FOR BIOGRAPHY**

Morris Rieger, Obituary, Washington Post, June 15, 1984.

**EDITOR/EDITING DATE**

Susanne Belovari, November 2015