

FROM THE HISTORY OF THE LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE DEPARTMENT OF THE FACULTY OF PHILOLOGY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BELGRADE

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Education of librarians in the former Yugoslavia had been carried out in Ljubljana, Zagreb, Sarajevo, Belgrade and Novi Sad (in Hungarian). The idea of interdisciplinary study had been developed on several occasions: the 10th Assembly of the Association of the Societies of the librarians of Yugoslavia was held in Opatija in 1984, the 11th Assembly in Ohrid in 1986, the Second Inter-Department Meeting of Professors of Library Science that took place in Zagreb in 1986, and the Third Inter-Department Meeting of Professors of Library Science that took place in Belgrade in 1988. Although their development in that period was significantly marked by the political and economical conditions of that time, these related departments were based on similar foundations, and hence continued to develop independently after 1990, following their previously set common paths. New departments emerged at the universities of Pale, Varaždin and Osijek. In Montenegro and Macedonia, however, they have yet to be established. The National Library of Macedonia tried towards the end of 1999 to initiate cooperation with the other universities from the former Yugoslavia, including the University of Belgrade's project for higher education of librarians, but had not succeeded. The professional qualifications in Macedonia have thus remained on the level of the state professional examination.

State exams are a necessary and desirable form of verifying and confirming knowledge. However, they were for a long time, before the Second World War till today (perhaps even more

so), the form of additional training for personnel. In 1948, mainly through seminars and training courses, Belgrade established a three year secondary-school for librarians as an answer to the recognized inadequacy of education for library workers. In this school twenty-one subjects were thought, six of them being professionally oriented. In 1950 this school became a four-year secondary-school and since then 31 generations of assistant librarians have finished this school and have been, as many of them are still today, the pride of Serbian librarianship. In conjunction with the secondary school in Belgrade, this school was run in Priština at the Workers University, from 1967 to 1976. In 1962, the University Education of Library Personnel was established at the Faculty of Philology of the University of Belgrade, where lectures on library science, booktrade and archive administration were given by respected professors Miroslav Pantić, Dimitrije Vučenov and Vladan Nedić. Unfortunately, only four generations graduated before the group was dismissed.

Professionally oriented education has re-established a program for assistant librarians on the secondary-school level, while at the Faculty of Philology work has begun on a Program for Library Sciences as a four semester interdisciplinary program. During their third and fourth year, students that had enrolled into this program were permitted to choose courses not only offered by their main group of studies, but also specialized courses in library operation, such as Library Organization, Systems of Catalogues,

Bibliographies and Scientific Information, and the History of Books and Libraries. This form of education was acceptable and recommendable at a time when university level studies of one scientific discipline which in many respects had the character of a supporting science, which had just begun. It enabled the realization of a cycle of regular education of personnel, for one vital and promising profession that was founded upon a solid base of professional qualifications. Moreover, this could have been achieved without excessive financial, personnel and organizational difficulties. The interdisciplinarity of under-graduate studies had been given up with the abandonment of professionally-oriented secondary-level education. However, conditions had been met for the establishment of a Library and Information Sciences Department as an independent educational and research unit of the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade that had managed to retain interdisciplinarity in graduate and doctoral studies.

During the school year of 1986/87 endeavors were undertaken to confirm the appropriateness of librarianship studies at the university level, within the scope of four years and to prepare a report for the establishment of a Department for Library Sciences. Following the recommendation of the dean of the Faculty of Philology Prof. Nikša Stipčević (mentioned at the meeting held on 10th January 1989), the invitation was sent to Prof. Radoslav Anđus, assistant professors Milan Božić and Ljubiša Rajić, Dušan Vitas, MSc and Ljubomir Žiropađa, MSc. They were to attend the meeting on the 18th January 1989, in order to examine the characteristics of the suggested project with the professors of then existing seminar for library sciences (assistant professors Desanka Stamatović and Kosara Vukasović and Aleksandra Vraneš, MSc). Milan Božić and Prof. Radoslav Anđus did not attend the meeting. The conclusions of this meeting were to accept the suggested curriculum for a Library and Information Sciences group with the following corrections:

- Classification of subjects into general-education, general-professional and professional.
 - Conflation of the subject names and their contents in order to enable the existing educational staff to perform teaching activities in accordance with laws in effect.
 - Enhancing the content of the subject of “The History of Books and Libraries” to include topics that deal with traditional and modern technologies of printing.
 - Transferring information science subjects to the first years of studies.
 - Synchronization of the contents of the subjects Serbian language and the Application of Computers in Linguistics.
 - English language should be made an obligatory subject.
 - The instructions for information science subjects should be performed in cooperation with the colleagues from the Faculty of Mathematics¹.
- The members of the department attached the curriculum to the minutes of this meeting, which had grouped the subjects as follows:
- Professional Subjects:
 - Fundamentals of Librarianship²;
 - Organization of Libraries and Library Operation;
 - Systems of Catalogues;
 - Systems of Classification and Indexing;
 - The History of Books and Libraries with Fundamentals for Archivistics;
 - Information Science and Information Systems;
 - Bibliography and Science Information;
 - The Application of Computers in Linguistics and Literary Sciences;
 - Methodology of Education for Library and Information Occupations;
 - Pedagogical Psychology;
 - General Professional Subjects:
 - Serbian;
 - General Linguistics;
 - Sociology of Culture and Art³.

The discussion about this report continued at a meeting held on the 27th of January 1989,

where members of the Department were accompanied by Prof. Nedeljko Parezanović as a representative of the Faculty of Mathematics, Duško Vitas as a counselor and representative of the Computing laboratory of the Faculties of sciences and assistant professor Ljubiša Rajić. Prof. Parezanović proposed, and it was thereafter accepted, to incorporate the information science subjects into the curriculum from the second semester, in order to improve the competence of graduate professionals for work in computer centers. Mr. Vitas stated that the quality of teaching would be significantly improved if the Faculty of Philology and the Faculty of Mathematics would sign a cooperation agreement that would enable the Department to use the computer classroom of the Faculty of Mathematics. This proposal initiated discussion about the need to connect the Faculty with the "Svetozar Marković" University Library and the National library of Serbia with software packages and databases applicable to librarianship, archivistics and linguistics. Prof. Nedeljko Parezanović and Duško Vitas committed themselves to formulate detailed programs for the information science group of subjects⁴.

The report regarding the establishment of a Group for Library and Information Sciences was sent to the dean of the Faculty of Philology, and attached to this document, was also a proposal that the tuition of the information science programs would be performed by the professors of the Faculty of Mathematics as follows:

- The Foundations of Information Sciences and the Application of Computers in Linguistics were to be done by Prof. Nedeljko Parezanović.
- The Information Systems were to be done by assistant professor Gordana Pavlović-Lažetić.
- The Mathematical Foundations of Information sciences were to be done by assistant professor Milan Božić⁵.

The report on the establishment of a Group for Library and Information Sciences consisted of three parts in which conditions and needs for such a group were presented, as well as the cur-

riculum itself. At that time, in the territory of Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia, library science was studied at the faculties of philosophy in Sarajevo, Zagreb, Ljubljana and Novi Sad (in Hungarian), as well as at the Faculty for organization and information sciences in Varaždin and at the Department for Library sciences that was established at the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade during the school year of 1980/1981. By this time 150 students had attended and one student obtained their master degree. Also, five students obtained the degree of a doctor of science. As professional librarians and informatitians were scarce at that time it was considered that regular education for these professions was necessary and Prof. Nedeljko Parezanović and Duško Vitas considered the suggested curriculum was "the best for the proposed studies in our country⁶". At that time, different interpretations, from both legal and educational authorities, would not enable the establishment of a Group for Library and Information Sciences in the scope of some separate organizational unit of the faculty.

The commission for the preparation of the report for the establishment of for Library and Information Sciences Department was formed once again at the meeting of the council of the Faculty of Philology that was held on the 11th of May 1989. With this, the procedure for the establishment of the Department was initiated. The members of this commission were: Prof. Miroslav Pantić, the president of the commission, Prof. Zlata Bojović, assistant professor Desanka Stamatović, assistant Aleksandra Vraneš, Jovan Janićijević and Smilja Tomašević.⁷ The first meeting of the new session of the commission was held on the 15th of January 1980.⁸ This meeting was attended by the dean of the Faculty of Philology Prof. Nikša Stipčević and by the vice-dean Prof. Slobodan Grubačić. Prof. Pantić, who was not satisfied how literature was presented in the proposed curriculum. However, he characterized the proposed curriculum in all other segments as perfect for the education

of librarians for general types of libraries.⁹ The Faculty of Philology became a domestic institution for the scientific field of “library sciences” through adoption of this report at the University of Belgrade. Following the adoption of the report, the first generation of students of Library and Information Sciences enrolled at the Faculty of Philology in 1990.

The official letter of the Library and Information Sciences Department from the 12th of November 1990, addressed to the Center for Graduate Studies at the Faculty of Philology of the University of Belgrade, confirms the continuing development of graduate studies. It contains a proposal for professional matters that should be responsible for the professional subjects on the VII₂ level: Prof. Miroslav Pantić, Prof. Nedeljko Parezanović, Prof. Branko Knežević, assistant professor Desanka Stamatović, assistant Duško Vitas (or assistant Cvetana Krstev).¹⁰ The tuition of information sciences subjects (for which Prof. Nedeljko Parezanović was responsible), took place from 1991 in the computer classroom at the Public Library of Belgrade.¹¹

Seventeen generations of students have enrolled thus far, with approximately 60 students in each generation. This confirms that the education of this profile of personnel is necessary for society and that the interest of young people in this scientific field is steadily increasing. The fact that almost all graduated librarians and informaticians are adequately employed proves that the adopted curriculum is flexible and scientifically founded, and that the knowledge it offers is applicable in real environments. It should also be mentioned that many graduate students were able to continue their studies abroad, since their diplomas had been successfully validated.

The status of librarianship in society depends on how successfully it forms the educated, active, efficient, progressive, motivated, flexible and forthcoming librarian. Such a person has to be educated at a university, in order to be able to develop his or her creative potential in a library. The education of librarians at the University of Belgrade, due to the adopted Bologna declaration, enables the fulfillment of these aims through the basic group of obligatory subjects (Covering the following scientific fields: History of Script, Books and Libraries, Library Operations, Organization of Libraries, Library Legislation Systems of Catalogues and Classification Systems, Historical and Theoretical Development of Bibliographies both on a Global and National level, the Management and Marketing of Libraries, Scientific Information, Information Systems, Computational Linguistics, The Establishment and Usage of Databases, Information Organization and Retrieval, Archivistics, Museology, Methodology of Research and Citation). Besides this, a student can form their own profile by choosing optional subjects from the groups of pedagogical, psychological, philological or bibliological disciplines. In this way some potential drawbacks of the previous curriculum can be overcome.

The prosperity of the Library and Information Sciences Department relies on solid foundations that have been laid during the previous decades. Prof. Nedeljko Parezanović has added significantly to the stability of these foundations with his knowledge, enthusiasm, kindness and cooperation. He has done both the professors and the students a great service, through creating the curriculum of information science subjects for the Library and Information Sciences Department and also by teaching some of them.

¹The archive of the Department for Information and Library Science of the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade, registration number 299, 19th January 1989.

²This subject was at the same time a general-education subject for the students of other groups at the Faculty of Philology.

³The archive of the department for Information and Library Science of the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade, registration number 299, 19th January 1989.

⁴Ibid. – registration number. 301 from 28th January 1989.

⁵Ibid. – registration number. 303 from 3rd February 1989.

⁶Ibid. – registration number 301 from 28th January 1989.

⁷Ibid. – registration number 356a from 12th May 1989.

⁸Ibid. – registration number 416 from 9th January 1990.

⁹Personal notes of Prof. Desanka Stamatović, taken during the meeting of the commission on 15th January 1990.

¹⁰The archive of the Department for Library and Information Sciences of the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade. – registration number 464 from 12th November 1990.

¹¹Ibid. – registration number 475a from 24th January 1991.