

**MARTÍNEZ COMECHE, JUAN ANTONIO, JUAN CARLOS MAR-COS RECIO y JUAN MIGUEL SÁNCHEZ VIGIL** (editores), *Actas del VIII Seminario Hispano-Mexicano de Biblioteconomía y Documentación: Información y Documentación: investigación y futuro en red [Official minutes of the Eighth Hispano-Mexican Seminar on Librarianship and Documentation: Information and Documentation research and future online]*; Madrid, España: Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Departamento de Biblioteconomía y Documentación, 2011.

por Amado Vilchis-López

Each Hispanic-Mexican Librarianship and Documentation Seminar seeks to enrich and elucidate contemporary academic issues, and especially to promote individual and collective, institutional and inter-institutional, national or international work in the communities where information professionals work.

The eighth annual seminar held in Complutense University of Madrid with an emphasis on information and documentation, collectively proposes to address the topic of “Research and Future on the Internet.” This topic is discussed in the opening conference and thirty-five papers organized under four headings: Reading; Communications Media; Library Science/Technology and Education/Users. These papers are presented by forty-six experts belonging to diverse participating institutions: Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Univer-

sidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Universidad de Extremadura, Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí and la Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua.

The seminar addresses online research and the future, stating that “[...] now more than ever libraries, and information and documentation centers are at a crossroads entailing how to face the future that guarantees sustainability of their collections [...]”, and asks itself:

We are doing our job well? Do we have the proper tools? Are we facing a reality which because it's known we don't know how to approach it? Is information the most important raw material for humanity? Should libraries and documentation centers continue thinking in terms of printed materials? Should they become entirely digital? To what degree does society contribute to the operation of our libraries and documentation centers?

In the opening paper, José López Yepes discusses the essence, space and the Library Science-Documentation craft, stressing that “[...] the essence of our discipline, the raw material, the focus of all Library Science-Documentation action [...] and I see the Library Science-documentation field as a set of tasks, activities, etc., carried out by documentation institutions within the context of the information society [...] in this factory of knowledge that is the academic or professional milieu, each and every one of us works in a certain area on the basis of a given concern

and specialization.” One of the urgent concerns is “[...] to incorporate an added value to contents that allows these to be used as authentic, reliable sources on which to base new contents [...]”, and in this way “[...] immediately facilitate the power of information, turning it into contemporary news that is true and useful.”

The first section, Reading, is represented by thirteen contributors in six conferences, which provide answers to the initial questions. As such, “[...] the role of reading and writing is potentiated in the university, not only as tools for work, but also as vehicles for integral promotion of the university [...]”, and serves to create a model that provides hard, processed and analyzed data to support the improvement of regional culture.

According to the statistics, the state of reading is grim and not particularly encouraging; however, “[...] public libraries must design their reading programs in order to attract as many users as possible [...]”; in such a way that:

[...] through facilitation of information resources, the librarian strives to understand the user's perception of the reading programs offered by their library, while attempting to present the library as an inviting place to read and socialize.

The cultural heritage entailed in material and immaterial artifacts (i.e., monuments, and oral and musical traditions, respectively), offers a *sui ge-*

*neris* context of reading and writing as immaterial manifestations of culture, while extracting from these material the *genius loci* or “soul of the place.” In this sense, we can appreciate

[...]narrations and choreographs as distinctive elements of the idiomatic tourism based on two elemental tools: the language and the culture, which attempt to create elements not only of reading, but also multimodal artifacts that lead to new narratives through photography, video and digital narratives.

The importance of “[...] the management and integration of files as entities constituting an important source of information depends on awareness and diffusion [...]” As such, it is important not only to make these materials visible online, but also to allow access and digital consulting well before definitive and required reading *in situ*.

The establishment of a documentation center to study the online issues, such as reading, writing and diverse practices of written culture is predicated on that fact that today “[...] everything is information and that which is not communicated does not exist; and that which does not inform is condemned to the rigor of nothingness.” The idea is to bring together

[...] all of the existing university research on reading in a single collection, and in this way the center shall serve not only as a simple online information shelf, but also as a mediator between universities, faculties, etc.,

supplying them with all of the knowledge needed to carry forward their research work and a filter between the entities and the all of the vast material published in the field.

The digital culture “[...] is transforming the ways in which we inform and are informed, and reality and interpersonal relationships. This digital culture has its foundation in written culture.” In this digital environment “[...] adolescents play, learn, entertain themselves, are informed, build social networks and, through these activities, they establish friendships and groups for different purposes “[...]”, as such it is important that libraries inform about and strengthen this culture in such a way that is remains incorporated and achieves “[...] development of abilities that produce web agents rather than cybernauts or consumers without the ability of discerning, deciding and creating.”

The second section, Communications Media, consists of eight contributors offering six papers that emphasize that “[...]the information society has propitiated the existence and proliferation of files, including audiovisual files, which are important because they contain the testimony of recent centuries of humanity [...]”; making public and private access to them a matter of transcendental importance, through the implementation of proper methods of organization and systemization, while weighing their historical, social and

cultural value, which added to the advantages of the internet shall facilitate access and consultation, which “[...] uses the internet as a communication channel to empower their transmission and dissemination.”

Photography “[...] has always been a pioneer in fixing images [...]” as a document. Because of this, it “[...] constitutes a documentary heritage with regard to society’s historical memory, and as such photography deserves specific treatment, classification, organization and description, allowing [...]” errorless retrieval as a function of context and temporality. To this end the ISAD (G) Standard is used in conjunction with enriching new technologies, so that

[...] photography fulfills its documentary function of confirming facts and events, because photography is born and develops to provide answers to a series of needs.

The postcard was designed as “[...] a communication and dissemination medium to inform about cultures, cities, monuments [...]”; however, it is not afforded a specific treatment, because the gathering of such materials has come about on the basis of catalogue, rather than any system of organization and classification, even when their origin is perfectly defined (1869) and the topicality is provided in “[...] countless military, tourism, advertising, political and critical references [...].” The proposal for organization of postcards consists of

fourteen elements and their analysis is executed on the basis of Standard UNE50103:1990.

An interesting review analyzes the impact of catechism stamps in Mexico as effective communication media along two fundamental lines: the knowledge of indigenous culture and the translation of doctrine into vernacular languages, a very important historical event in the Old World. This motivated the celebration of several councils called for the purpose of homogenizing doctrine, which centuries later would find in the Second Vatican Council its complete materialization, but to its credit it preserves the pillars on which it was founded. In this tenor the researchers address the topic of general interest regarding the measures for the protection of bibliographic heritage, that “[...] secured historical protection because of their cultural importance, and on this basis the documentary security in Library Science and information centers is determined and essentially exists because of the need to safeguard the collection with greater warranties for their accessibility and consultation.” In addition to bulls and other protection laws, currently there are more sophisticated systems, such as bar codes, electro-magnetic devices, radiofrequency transponders, and biometrics.

Finally, the new ecology of the documents in the knowledge society establishes that for “[...] the creation of wealth we are increasingly dependent on the exchange of data, infor-

mation and knowledge, and another form to prepare, edit and write the information is required that addresses two issues: images and the new textual features, agility and dynamics.” The key to current information is in the spectator/information generator, which “[...] this is the new ecology of media: more information counted by everyone.” In this context we see the *Infoscopos* project, which is posited as the “[...] main objective of the study of change in the media in the first decade of the twenty-first century, and [...]”; more specifically, the analysis of the information sources and the model of documentation.

The Library Science/Technology brings together fifteen contributors reading twelve papers and places a special emphasis on a descriptive model of information policy, which “[...] has been used as a model for promulgation of the Federal Transparency and Access to Public Government Information Act of Mexico [...]”. Said model is based on twelve stages, highlighting their usefulness in contextualizing and meeting the actors, and for understanding the problem and the circumstance. This outline provides the framework for the topic: “[...] social access vertices of knowledge, technology, communication, control, assets and participation [...],” and diverse questions are raised, in light of the availability of information and includes the social world that refers to “[...] a way of organizing that has four elements: voluntary identification,

partial involvement, multiple identity and mediated interaction [...].” This is the world where the library can realize its social characteristics.

This research also stresses the importance of the binomial information and creativity, pointing out that “[...] the discovery of information and the emergence of new ideas fuel creative intellectual activities [...], allowing creativity to catch up with Library Science and Documentation. This connection occurs on the basis of the desire to create new knowledge, and exerts itself especially on the behavior artists who employ a broad array of information sources base in a given information system.” The question arises from this point of “[...] why new catalogues must adapt to the new technological; standard and guidelines of Web 2.0 [...].” In principle, the answer arises from the way in which catalogues have evolved in successive versions from the early 1980s to 2000, entailing radical changes in digital environments, and the stress on “[...] access over achieving the unity of a friendly interface environment allowing users to exploit more fully the data displayed, which has the potential of creating new ways of communication [...]” between users and services.

In the light of these antecedents, it is manifest that “[...] Library Science knowledge is constantly in movement and transforming as it seeks to respond to the challenges that recorded information offers in each context, and “[...] it is in the field of Library

Science where [...] the humanities and science coexist like in no other [...],” and “[...] the human condition leaves behind information about itself in each historical era in the form of documents that survive the ravages of time thanks to files, libraries and other information units.” This shows that Library Science plays a strategic role in society and is “[...] the link that puts the public into contact with the information and knowledge created by researchers.”

Since, “[...] the accelerated technological changes that affect the modalities of production, storage, organization, dissemination, retrieval, access and use of information [...] has led to questions about the very nature of Library Science itself and the need to identify new essential elements [...]”; where the objective is to arrive at a “[...] consensus within the scientific community of Library Science with regard to the object of study and the conceptual apparatus of the same, [...] in order to achieve [...] unity in diversity.”

Along these same lines, it is important “[...] to know, document and assess the evolution of the bibliographic organization in terms of subjects cataloguing, [...] a job that was carried out in the UNAM and about which, after doing the corresponding bibliographic analysis, especially with regard to the use of subject heading lists, one can conclude that:

[...] practically no tools have been created with the subjects to be assign-

ned to documentary contents and that the lists are translations of LC lists. As such, modern terminology proposes the conversion of terminology rather than simple translation, in the opinion that index systems should be created on the basis of one’s own culture.

This leads to the consideration of the establishment of new competencies for librarians who need to keep abreast of ICT in such a way that they can meet the information needs of users, and in this way aid users in their development by satisfying their demands within the library environment. In this sense, “[...] one of the most important online information transmission and re-dissemination media is the syndicated content channels, [...] “which the ReSync program is designed to solve [...] by facilitating research of this object of study, while introducing concrete operations and functions for treating syndication channels and their contents.” Along this same line, wiki and peer-to-peer (p2p) systems constitute two emerging paradigms for collaborative production and information exchange, which in the context of the network society have driven

[...] new modalities in our lifestyles, and manner of sharing, working, learning, interrelating and getting information [...]. From the social and cultural perspective, the wiki model is primarily an alternative medium which is emancipatory and libertarian [...], while the P2P phenomenon depends on relationships distributed across networks.

The conclusion to this section is comprised of the project to develop the digital observatory of digital academic-scientific publications erected in response to the “[...] vast amount of information that remains unknown or otherwise never consulted [...],” which drives “[...] the attempt to create a virtual space for consulting the output of the institutions of higher education at the national level.” In the context of retrieval of digital files, it is also important to consider the terminological phenomenon, since it is identified on the internet, such as social networks=online communities, Facebook, Tuenti, Twitter, seen from a non-Library Science perspective: “[...] the social theories help us understand how interaction between users of the internet occur and they search for and select information.”

The fourth section, Education/Users, brings together nineteen contributions and eleven papers. One of these papers posits the Teaching Outreach Units as “[...] flexible instruments allowing thematic contents to be adapted to curricula as a solution to the problem of economic and social development [...],” and concretely the case of a school-based library that worked as a learning resource center in a Tzotzil community.

In this tenor, information literacy is deemed “[...] a necessary condition for attaining the information and knowledge society [...],” but with a vision to establishing national strategies that would be materialized through

diverse government actions. It is relevant to determine “[...] whether these action constitute a plan, program, policy and/or national strategy for information literacy [...]”; for which this must “[...] be seen as a phenomenon that involves all of the instances and institutions of the country [...].” In this context we can consider the evaluation/ accreditation programs in higher education institutions, which spur the question: What is implied, especially in the field of Library Science, by submitting to an external evaluation and what are the concomitant challenges for educational institutions and authorities of the same?”

On this plane where information literacy projects become “[...] a sort of functional discipline more than a set of personal abilities, which should be seen in the light of their broad social relevance beyond the issues of librarians and the academy [...],” and naturally interoperable with a wide array of complementary disciplines.

Another timely topic is the digital book, which from its beginnings has posed problems entailed in edition, supports and copyright. I stress that the study shows that “[...] all sectors save distribution agree that the central problem is piracy of digital contents [...],” for which a law is needed to strengthen copyright protection and commercial exploitation.

We shall conclude this reflection with a note by Butler cited in Michael Gorman’s book, *Our Enduring Values*:

“[...] the librarian has come to see his role as that of a secular priest, who administers the sacrament of cultural communion for the souls of individuals.”

