

Libraries of the Faculty of Philology of the University of Belgrade – Responding to the Challenges of Our Time

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Abstract: Libraries of the Faculty of Philology of the University of Belgrade are extremely rich in funds and entirely unique in Serbia in terms of their number, quality and age of materials, as well as their professional profile. Based on numerical and value indicators, the collection of the above-mentioned libraries, with its overall fund of 898.200 units, represents the fifth library collection in Serbia, after those pertaining to the National Library of Serbia, University Library “Svetozar Markovic”, Library of SASA and Matica Srpska. Library and information activity of the Faculty of Philology takes place in 18 separate seminar libraries, developed in accordance with the linguistic principle, which means that their organization is decentralized, since each library belongs to a particular department of the faculty. In addition, the faculty offers adequate conditions for studying the rich library funds and for the research work within its reading rooms, thus enabling study of the history and structure of Serbian and foreign languages along with historical and comparative philology.

Being aware of the necessity of modernization of already existing research capacities and infrastructure and by recognizing the need for redefining and establishing new scientific and educational contents at the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade, we have formed a Digital Library of the faculty and we are diligently working as to further develop the Museum of the faculty. Digital Library of the Faculty of Philology provides almost free access to numerous publications of the faculty, particularly those from conferences held at its premises, but also rare and old library materials, which are essential for further studies in the respective domains. The activity of the Museum of the Faculty of Philology should contribute to the study of history of philology through thematic exhibitions and modern multi-media presentations of cultural heritage, thus giving an insight into the valuable documents and artifacts in the possession of the faculty. Moreover, we are constantly seeking new ways as to provide access to electronic resources to our students. The latest agreement was achieved with the Russian State Library, whereas we enabled our students to access the Virtual Reading Room of the mentioned library, the only one of this kind in our region. This implies attainability of over one million texts in full, and

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at the same time, the access to the particularly important, in terms of postgraduate studies, 800,000 doctoral dissertations. Each student will have his/her own virtual reader cabinet where the texts he/she reads will be stored. To conclude, the Faculty of Philology, as an ideal environment for creating future place of philology in digital age, will continue to strive to create modern conditions for the study and promotion of philology science, motivate a greater number of students to continue philological studies at the master's and doctoral levels, encourage its researchers for the continuous improvement of their knowledge and development of their research, which will ultimately give crucial impetus to the further improvement of philology, literature and culture studies in Serbia.

Keywords: Libraries, Faculty of Philology, Challenges of Time, Digital Library, Museum, Electronic Resources, Russian State Library, Virtual Reading Room;

1. The future of academic libraries

Modern era has brought many changes in the functioning of public institutions, such as libraries. This primarily refers to the increasing implementation of digital technologies, leading us to wonder what is the future place of academic libraries in digital age? David W. Lewis indicates that “given the new Internet tools and the explosive growth of digital content available on the Web, it is now not entirely clear what an academic library should be.”¹ Scholars continue to strive to answer the question of how can we respond to the challenges of our time, but still preserve what is unique of libraries as educational and cultural ambassadors of the entire humanity? “While some have resigned themselves to putting libraries on life support, others have responded with aggressive treatment: installing “social” spaces like cafés, museums, and theaters; creating collaborative group study spaces; and developing “information commons.”² In addition to that, library funds are being increasingly digitized, i.e. as Armstrong, Edwards and Lonsdale indicate in their article *Virtually there? E-books in UK academic libraries*: “electronic publishing, scholarly electronic publishing, delivering content, e-journals and now also e-books have become increasingly a part of the literature in both the library/information science and publishing arenas.”³ On the other hand, Lynch and Smith consider the “question of how computer technology is changing jobs and being assimilated into all aspects of academic librarianship and how the new technologies may be influencing change, not only in library work, but also in the profession itself”⁴, thus emphasizing the changes that occurred in the 21st century concerning the tasks that modern librarians should perform. In this regard, librarians are nowadays “important personnel to cooperate with educators in the integration of

¹ Lewis, D. W. (2007). *A strategy for academic libraries in the first quarter of the 21st century*. *College & Research Libraries*, 68(5), p. 418.

² Gayton, J. T. (2008). *Academic libraries: “Social” or “communal?” The nature and future of academic libraries*. *The journal of academic librarianship*, 34(1), p. 61.

³ Armstrong, C., Edwards, L., & Lonsdale, R. (2002). *Virtually there? E-books in UK academic libraries*. *Program*, 36(4), p. 216.

⁴ Lynch, B. P., & Smith, K. R. (2001). *The changing nature of work in academic libraries*. *College & Research Libraries*, 62(5), p. 407.

information literacy in the teaching and learning.”⁵ Furthermore, expectations of academic library users have also altered, or as Andaleeb and Simmonds noticed “each year new students enter the academic environment with varying library usage and information-gathering skills. Student perceptions and expectations of service from academic libraries also vary, making it imperative to better understand and define specific student needs and to provide the type and level of service that meets them.”⁶ Charles T. Townley notes that knowledge management in academic libraries “offers the opportunity to expand the role of libraries in the academic community and to result in strengthened relationships with related units, inside and outside the university.”⁷ Bearing all this in mind, the Faculty of Philology seeks to improve and modernize activities of its seminar libraries through digitization of its valuable publications and by enabling access to electronic resources via virtual environment.

2. Overview of the academic library activity of the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade

Libraries of the Faculty of Philology, with their overall fund of 898,200 units, preserve the fifth largest library collection in Serbia, after those pertaining to the National Library of Serbia, University Library “Svetozar Markovic”, Library of Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SASA) and Matica Srpska. They consist of 18 separate seminar libraries developed in accordance with the linguistic principle. Their organization is decentralized, as each library belongs to a particular department of the faculty. The Faculty of Philology also offers suitable conditions for the study of its rich library fund, as well as for the research work within its reading rooms, and hence enables study of the history and structure of Serbian and numerous foreign languages along with historical and comparative philology.

Library activity of the Faculty of Philology is related to the departments of: Serbian literature and Serbian language, Serbian language with South Slavic languages and General Linguistics, Slavic studies, Romance studies, Romanian language and literature, Italian, Iberian, English, German with Scandinavian studies, Albanian language and literature, Oriental studies, General Literature and Literary Theory, Library and Information Science, Hungarian and Neo-Hellenic studies. Each of these libraries acquires and stores literature, processing it and issuing it, as well as performing all other library tasks independently, except for coordination in the implementation of COBISS (Cooperative Online Bibliographic System & Services).

⁵ Maitaouthong, T., Tuamsuk, K., & Tachamanee, Y. (2012). *The roles of university libraries in supporting the integration of information literacy in the course instruction*. Malaysian Journal of Library & Information Science, 17(1), p. 62.

⁶ Andaleeb, S. S., & Simmonds, P. L. (1998). *Explaining user satisfaction with academic libraries: strategic implications*. College & Research Libraries, 59(2), pp. 156-157.

⁷ Townley, C. T. (2001). *Knowledge management and academic libraries*. College & Research Libraries, 62(1), p. 54.

The total fund of monographic publications in the libraries of the Faculty of Philology is 736,503; the total number of serial publications includes 161,626 publications; the total fund of non-book materials is 5,200; types of catalogs, which are made depending on the needs of users, include alphabetic, subject, professional and analytical catalogs. Bibliographies of researchers are created within these libraries with the help of electronic software COBISS2/Cataloguing, Bibliographies of researchers. The total number of separate reading rooms with reference collection is 15, while the total number of registered users is 18,350, of which 1,300 teaching and research staff and 17,050 students. The annual growth rate of the fund is 19,200 units on average for the entire faculty. The total number of exhibitions within libraries is 22 per year and the total number of employed librarians is 27.⁸

3. Seminar libraries of the Faculty of Philology

Library of the Department of Serbian language with South Slavic languages ranks amongst the richest libraries of this kind in the Balkans due to its immense and valuable fund. The library of the Department of Serbian language consists of monographs and serial publications. Library material is divided into several units. In addition to the Seminar library, the following library units form its fund: Library of Vatroslav Jagic, which is purchased in 1919, consisting of 11,824 inventory units, Library of Ljuba Stojanovic (2,974 inv. units), Zivko Stefanovic (1,665 titles with 3,586 volumes, of which 57 journals), Library of Radosav Boskovic (447 inv. units), Library of Mihajlo Stevanovic (462 inv. units), Library of Berislav Nikolic (530 inv. units), Library of Higher Teachers' School and the latest Library of Drago Cupic. This seminar library preserves 110,837 titles of monographs and 1,001 title of serial publications (32,818 volumes). A significant part of the library fund consists of dictionaries (932 titles) and a large number of reprints (over 6,000 titles). Since 2008, library materials are inventoried exclusively electronically in the COBISS system (each fund has its own inventory book). Library fund can be searched by means of the card catalog within the library, for a fund that has been acquired before 2003 (author and subject catalog), while the newer fund, acquired after 2003, can be searched only through the electronic catalog. Library users are the students and professors of the Faculty of Philology (primarily students of Group 01, 02 and 36, as well as all other students who chose Serbian language as an elective course).

Library of the Department of Serbian literature with South Slavic literatures is valuable for its collections just as the Library of the Department of Serbian language. The library has a large number of users: over 6,000 students, professors and other scholars. Reading room has 45 seats. The library fund contains 109,900 titles of monographs and 730 titles (35,918 volumes) of serial

⁸ Information Booklet on the work of the Faculty of Philology, University of Belgrade. (June 2015). Available at: <http://www.fil.bg.ac.rs/wp-content/uploads/dokumenta/InformatorORadu-Juni2015-latinica.pdf>, accessed on: 23.03.2016.

publications. Library possesses 1,000 copies of old and rare books and valuable legacies of the following notable people: Pavle Popovic (about 20,000 units), Vladan Nedic (about 400 units), Velibor Gligoric (about 250 units), Mirosljub Todorovic (about 150 units), Miodrag Popovic (about 530 units) and Zivan Zivkovic. The latest legacies include those of Ivan V. Lalic (about 4,100 units) and Aleksandar Vuco (about 100 units).

Library of the Department of World Literature and Literary Theory disposes with 34,859 titles of monographs and serial publications, as well as with 5,069 volumes (60% of the fund consists of theoretical texts and reference library, while 40% of them belong to fiction). From 2009 until today, the library fund increased by 1,635 titles of monographs and 251 volumes of periodicals. Library of Tanja Kragujevic (about 316 units) was also added recently as a whole. This library has over 5,000 active and 1,500 potential users.

Library of the Department of General Linguistics has a total of 4,003 monographs and 597 volumes of serial publications.

Library of the Department of Library and Information Science preserves 9,448 monographs and 105 periodicals pertaining to different linguistic areas, i.e. 4,082 volumes of periodicals, as well as a small number of video tapes. Library fund responds to the needs of students and professors of the Department, hence it contains reference collection, literature in the field of library and information science, history of books and libraries, museology, cultural studies, archival science, a number of domestic and foreign publications. Titles of periodical publications meet the needs of students of library-information profile, and, in addition to Serbian, they are also available in the languages of different European nations (Russian, English, Dutch, Macedonian...). One of the biggest donors of foreign books and periodicals was repeatedly the Embassy of the United States. Librarian of the Department manages the Electronic Library of the Faculty of Philology and represents the chief coordinator for the use of COBISS.

Library of the Department of Slavic Studies offers materials classified in wholes in accordance with the languages: Russian, Polish, Czech, Slovak, Ukrainian, Sorbian, Belarusian, Serbian and other world languages. Library fund consists of monographs, serial publications and non-book materials. The library has: 107,811 titles of monographs, 11,165 serial publications and 422 units of non-book materials. Library fund users are students of five linguistic groups belonging to the Department of Slavic Studies, professors, teaching assistants and teaching associates employed at the Department or at the University of Belgrade.

Library of the Department of English Studies disposes with the fund of 79,969 monographs, 2,134 journal titles and 15,595 volumes, as well as with 452 cassettes and CD-ROMs. The fund is primarily composed of books in English and covers the area of English language, English and American literature, general linguistics and literary theory, history and criticism, including a significant number of publications in various other areas. The library is arranged in accordance with the Dewey Decimal Classification and has two catalogues: author and subject catalogue. Since 1995, librarians work on the automation of

libraries in the software package Pergam, but from 2004 the software package COBISS is used as well. At the Department of English studies there is about 1,000 undergraduate students and 250 students enrolled in the master studies, as well as a total of 45 teachers and staff.

Library of the Department of Iberian Studies has 14,503 monographic publications: textbooks, manuals and reading material in accordance with the study programs, mostly in Spanish, as well as monographs on the Portuguese language. Part of the fund consists of reference collection - dictionaries, encyclopedias, major monographic studies. Library fund includes books in Serbian language (translated literature), but also in Catalan, Galician and Basque language. It contains 52 serial publications with a total of 1,289 volumes, mostly in Spanish. Library of the Department of Iberian Studies has a reading room with 20 seats and 5 computers, all with Internet connection (4 in the reading room and 1 in the librarian's office).

Library of the Group for French Language and Literature currently has 57,326 titles of monographs and 207 titles of foreign and domestic serial publications or 5,215 volumes of serial publications. It also disposes with five legacies which together consist of 5,293 publications and 75 titles of doctoral thesis defended at the Department. Library users of the Group for the French language and literature are the students and professors of the Faculty of Philology (Department of Romance studies has about 550 undergraduate, master and postgraduate students), although services of this library are also used by colleagues and associates of the University of Belgrade and diverse scientific institutes.

Library of the Group for Romanian language and literature is relatively new library dedicated to the students of the Romanian language and literature with a total fund of 11,018 titles of monographs and 232 volumes of serial publications.

Library of the Department of German Studies owns 65,340 monographs and 17,603 volumes of serial publications or 221 title in its fund. Journals, like most books, were procured as a result of domestic and foreign donations. In the reading room of the Library there are 3 computers that are used by students for literature search and overall research.

Library of the Department of Oriental Studies (Group for Arabic, Turkish, Oriental Philology) has a total of 41,164 monographs and about 15,254 volumes of periodicals in all the languages of the world, but mainly in Arabic, Turkish, Persian, English, Russian, French, German and Serbian. The need of students to use the library is increasing each year, but it especially came to the fore with the transition to the Bologna way of studying. According to the statistics the number of users of this library is constantly growing.

Library of the Department of Albanian Language and Literature has 14,204 titles of monographs and 1,428 volumes of periodicals. Fund of this library is used by students of Oriental studies and Balkanology.

Library of the Group for Japanese Language and Literature is among the youngest libraries of the Faculty. It consists of 17,336 monographs, 1,228 volumes of serial publications and 2,700 units of non-book materials. As this is

the only library entirely dedicated to the Japanese language and literature in the region, the number of its users is around 3,000.

Library of the Department of Italian Studies has a total of 27,822 monographs and 10,284 volumes of serial publications. The library fund mainly consists of books in Italian language and covers the field of Italian language, Italian literature, general linguistics, as well as literary theory, history and criticism, including a significant number of publications in various other areas.

Library of the Group for Hungarology has 4,968 monographs, 710 volumes of serial publications and 526 units of non-book materials. The library preserves the legacy of professor Savo Babic (1,027 units).

Library of the Department for Neo-Hellenic Studies consists of 10,024 monographs and 680 units of periodicals.

Library of the Department of Scandinavian Studies is only recently established and counts 16,211 monographs, 2,461 serial publications, and over 3,000 units of non-book materials (maps, notebooks with musical notes, videos).⁹

4. The Faculty of Philology's response to the challenges of the digital era

The Faculty of Philology of the University of Belgrade is one of the oldest Serbian faculties with more than two hundred years of tradition in higher education. "The organisational structure of the Faculty is the result of a tradition of many decades of organising the study of philological disciplines at the Advanced School and the University of Belgrade, as well as the Faculty of Philosophy in the pre-World War Two period; more recent disciplines, introduced after World War Two, and especially after the Faculty of Philology became an independent institution in 1960, are also included in the organisational scheme of the Faculty today."¹⁰ The Faculty of Philology is nowadays unique in the educational map of Serbia and Europe in terms of development and dissemination of knowledge from the domain of the philology of a great number of living languages. It fosters the scientific thought related to the study of 34 languages, literatures and cultures, as well as in the fields of library, archival and information science. In order to respond to the challenges of the digital era, the faculty modernized its library activities by becoming a part of COBISS (Cooperative Online Bibliographic System & Services), through creating its own Digital library and most recently through offering the access to virtual reading room of the Russian State Library.

In order to unify library funds of the former countries of Yugoslavia in a shared cataloging system through unique COBISS program, which was developed by

⁹ Official website of the Faculty of Philology. *Libraries of the Faculty of Philology*. Available on: <http://www.fil.bg.ac.rs/lang/sr/biblioteke/biblioteke-filoloskog-fakulteta/>, accessed on: 26.03.2016.

¹⁰ Bajic, Lj. (2011). *Guide of the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade*. Faculty of Philology, University of Belgrade: Guidebook (author Ljiljana Bajic); General Editor Aleksandra Vranes – Belgrade: Faculty of Philology, 2011 (Belgrade:Belpak). – 12 pages : illustr. ; 24 cm, p. 1.

the Institute of Information Science (IZUM) from Maribor, the Faculty of Philology has recognized it as the only program to be used in its libraries, thus becoming a full member of COBISS. This decision was motivated by the fact that almost all the most prominent and largest libraries of Serbia (National Library of Serbia, University Library "Svetozar Markovic", Library of Matica Srpska, numerous libraries of the University of Belgrade) have already been working in this program. Therefore, the faculty's library fund is being processed throughout the COBISS system from 2003. Publications that were processed in previously used Pergam system converted to COBISS in early May 2008. Converted files are only available in the local database. Their storage into a shared database is in progress.

The Faculty of Philology opted for creating virtual library and putting it into a function of distance learning. Digital library of the faculty allows absolute searchability of articles and facilitates educational and scientific process of our students, researchers and professors. It provides access to numerous publications of the faculty, particularly those from conferences held at its premises, but also rare and old library materials, which are essential for further studies in the respective domains. Development of the Digital Library was ensured by the company MFC Mikromerc, while the technological performance was enabled via Microsoft Windows Azure. This company used the application called Digital Library (LibIt), which was designed for quick and easy searching of digitized content such as books, articles and manuals. Windows Azure platform allows easy handling of a large number of data. Digitized contents are fully cross-searchable by author, title, subject, chronological criterion, but also by every word of the text. They are equally represented in Latin and Cyrillic alphabets, hence virtual users can carry out their search in both of these letters.

We have digitized and made absolutely searchable 121,000 pages of important publications, which include faculty's prominent periodicals (Annals, Literature and Languages, Yearbooks of the Department of Serbian Literature, Philology review, etc.), editions of PhD thesis defended at the Faculty of Philology, proceedings of international scientific conferences, monographs, anthologies and collections. The written legacy of Ivo Andric, Desanka Maksimovic and Ivan V. Lalic will hopefully become the most important part of this virtual library and will be of paramount importance for the presence of Serbian literature and culture on the Internet. The Faculty of Philology will continue to develop its digital library, thus offering future generations an important digital legacy of Serbian language, literature and culture.

The Faculty of Philology constantly seeks new ways as to provide and facilitate access to diverse electronic resources to our students, researchers and professors. The latest agreement was achieved with the Russian State Library, whereas we enabled our students to access Virtual Reading Room of the mentioned library. Namely, within the premises of the Russian Centre of the Faculty of Philology, we have provided a sufficient number of computers with access to the Virtual Reading Room of the Russian State Library. This implies attainability of over one million texts in full, and at the same time, access to particularly important, in terms of postgraduate studies, 800,000 doctoral

dissertations. Russian State Library's Virtual Reading Room is the only one of this kind in our region. Each student will be able to create his/her own virtual reader cabinet where the texts he/she reads will be stored, so that they can be easily reused and as to facilitate the citation of sources.

We should also mention our efforts to launch the Museum of the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade, bearing in mind that libraries and museums, as well as archives, share "a common goal, the preservation and presentation of cultural heritage (...), and moreover, they share it with the digital memory institution. Digital memory institutions do not compete with archives, libraries and museums; on the contrary, the memory institution increases the visibility of these institutions".¹¹ Specifically, it is our intention to adapt the exhibition area of the Museum of the Faculty of Philology, where rich Serbian cultural heritage would be presented, such as the oldest editions of valuable books that are preserved in faculty's seminar libraries, as well as medals and honors of our most eminent writers, linguists, literary theorists, students and professors. Museum activities would contribute to the study and further research of history of primarily Serbian, but also foreign philologies, literatures and cultures. In the next phase, the Faculty would organize interactive exhibits by using modern digital multimedia as to present Serbian cultural heritage in a modern way. We took into consideration that "the majority museum experts were consent that museums are increasingly positioning themselves in the market as places for rich learning and experiences in the way of mission statements that highlight their main duty in public learning and education responsibility. Most of their research has shown that people visited museums for the "learning" and "experience" reason. "Free-choice learning" such as hand-on, mind-on, multimedia technology and other type technological devices has a position to perform "lifelong learning" and "educational leisure" through exhibition techniques."¹²

Modern digital technologies have altered the scope of library activities and services they provide, the role of librarian (who increasingly deals with knowledge management) and the expectations of library users. In addition, "new information and communication technologies are changing the learning process in higher education. ICT based learning becomes more and more widespread in higher education institutions and therefore quality assurance processes and quality management systems are of highly importance."¹³ The Faculty of Philology in Belgrade has acknowledged these changes and embraced them

¹¹ Kirchhoff, T., Schweibenz, W., & Sieglerschmidt, J. (2008). *Archives, libraries, museums and the spell of ubiquitous knowledge*. *Archival Science*, 8(4), p. 252.

¹² Ahmad, S., Abbas, M. Y., Yusof, W. Z. M., & Taib, M. Z. M. (2013). *Museum learning: using research as best practice in creating future museum exhibition*. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 105, p. 378.

¹³ Pavel, A. P., Fruth, A., & Neacsu, M. N. (2015). *ICT and E-Learning-Catalysts for Innovation and Quality in Higher Education*. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 23, p. 708.

particularly within its seminar libraries by digitizing valuable editions in the fields of language, literature and culture and by enabling access to electronic resources and thus facilitating distance learning.

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