

Fons largus
The Library: a Source of Inspiration - Biblioteka, źródło inspiracji
International Scientific Conference on Humanities
Warsaw, BUW, IS PAN, from 14th to 17th May 2012

The Session Overview

Session I: *Animi voluptas*. The Scholar's Library.

Referring to the vision of the 17th century encyclopaedist, Claud Clement S.J (1596-1642), for whom the library, described as *the soul's delight*, was an institution directed both at forming intellectual interests and the spiritual formation of scholarly disciples and their mentors, the organisers would like to encourage participants of the sessions to draft an **answer to the questions: what was or what is the library of a scholar?; what functions did it serve or still serves?; how did it contribute or how does it contribute to scholarly achievements?** The aim to be attained by the reply is not only to provide an overview of the reconstructed libraries that used to belong to scholars and writers, but also to take into account those libraries that the scholars only used, whose resources and layout could have left a permanent, clearly perceivable mark on the direction of their research and creativity. In order to identify the sources of the inspiration and erudition of famous scholars and thinkers, a trend recently arose to analyse not only the concepts and resources of the scholars' libraries, but also their works, with the aid of philological methods. An excellent example is the jubilee exhibition *Leon Battista Alberti. La biblioteca di un umanista* presented at the Bibliotheca Medicea Laurenziana in Florence in 2005 and 2006, and the catalogue of this exhibition, which was published under the editorial supervision of Roberto Cardini. Nevertheless, even analyzing the inventory of great scholars' and famous writers' libraries constitutes an invaluable aid on the road to cognition, understanding and drawing the intellectual profile of the owners and users of these libraries. The organisers of the session would like to put forward the subsequent issues for discussion: **what methods are used to research the library resources of scholars and what methods can still be employed; to what extent does the knowledge of the scholars' library resources that has hitherto been acquired make it possible to identify and track the phases of the crystallisation and development of scholarly concepts; what was or what is the role of the book and the library in forming the public image of scholars? Did it undergo changes and what were they?**

Session II: *Ingeniorum consecratio*. The Artist's Library.

The library was a place owing to which an outstanding artist – *doctus artifex* – supported his skill with study, refined the virtues of his mind and gave them a lasting quality, so that his immortality – *ingeniorum consecratio* – should become a fact. Avid reading helped many painters, etchers, sculptors or architects not only to gain and enrich their knowledge, develop and successfully propagate the art trends they represented, but also to develop their own trends, so that form could find its expression supported by theory. It also helped them maintain contacts with scholars and draw on their knowledge, to aspire for high social and cultural positions at royal courts, to make themselves equal to the nobility, and strive to confirm this status by obtaining prestigious court or state posts and above all to become the

intellectually equal to their enlightened patrons, in this way meet their expectations and as a result acquire fame and recognition. The library resources of artists, particularly architects, notes they made on their reading and their theoretical arguments, the scribbles they wrote on the margins of texts - have always drawn the interest of researchers. The aim was to promote the image of the artist as a reader. Considering the development of research methods and interpretational tendencies that resulted from this interest, the organisers would like to encourage the participants to **devote the *Ingeniorum consecratio* session first of all to developing an overview of traditional and new research methods and then to illustrating this suggestion with examples of specific collections and the work of particular scholars and artists. It is also important to answer the question what conclusions art historians and historians of architecture were apt to draw from the contents of the book collections, scripts, journals and theoretical statements of modern painters, etchers, sculptors or architects in the past and how they view this problem nowadays.**

Research on the libraries of artists is usually aimed at drawing up their intellectual profile to see the sources of their erudition, and then, less importantly, finding out the cultural and ideological conditions of their work. The introduction of the concept of a “readers’ community”, or perhaps a “community of thought” encourages the broadening of the topic of the session, so as to include the relations between the powerful patron and the intellectually equal artist to build a community of readership, to draw up juxtapositions and comparisons in order to answer the question **whether and in what way the libraries of patrons and their taste in reading influenced the reception of individual works of art or architecture, or even whole trends. An example that can be analysed is, for example, the classicizing architecture of Inigo Jones and Tylman of Gamerem. It is interesting to deliberate how to research and analyse such relations in the context of a community of readers.**

Session III: *Locum et armarium*. The Library Space.

Referring back to *De bibliothecis syntagma* (1602), the work of Justus Lipsius (1547-1606), devoted to the admirable model provided by ancient libraries, which gave rise to cognition and knowledge, **the organisers suggest that the topic of this session should be the relation between the changing concepts of libraries and their architectural setting and the furnishing of the interiors. The organisers wish to suggest that an analysis and discussion should be undertaken of both some outstanding examples of library buildings and the practical solutions implemented there and the evolution of theoretical thought in this area.**

In the first part of the deliberations, the organisers suggest focusing on the times when the obligatory model library was the universal book collection. The assumption was that it included the global picture of all the knowledge accessible to humanity. This was particularly true in the 17th and 18th centuries, when owing to the dynamic increase in printing, library edifices were enlarged and enriched, so that they began to resemble palaces. Library interiors were designed in such a way as to maximise the possibility to store prints in a transparent, readable way, which was made possible by emblematic covers. The organisers wish to devote the second part of the deliberations to the radical

changes in the architecture of libraries and in designing library space. In the 19th and 20th centuries these took the form of a constant process brought on by the continuous development of construction engineering and technology. Such a trend is still being maintained, due to the dynamic enlargement of book collections. Both trends in designing library space in the 19th and 20th centuries – i.e. the system of tri-partite construction and the modular system, bore fruit in the form of magnificent constructions giving testimony to the development of theory. The organisers would like to encourage the analysis and comparison of such examples. **Now we are witnessing subsequent changes in the principles of designing library buildings and interior design.** These are mostly due to the dynamic development of technology. When referring to these – **the question arises whether they are taking place in a strict correlation to the library collections and the specific functions of scholarly and academic libraries, or remain indifferent to their character.**

Session IV: *Arbor sapientiae*. The Library: a Centre of Studies.

The organisers extended the invitation for participants to join in the *Arbor sapientiae* session so as to encourage discussion on the function and meaning of different library collections for developing trends and selecting the subject matter and methodology of research, and to consider their resulting impact on the general development of research, or the fulfilment of some other objectives in social life. The organisers would, therefore, like to look at historically important libraries, or ones that are significant nowadays from the perspective of the importance of the research and editorial work undertaken, and also to discuss them looking at the impact that their collections had or could have had on the scholarly and literary creativity or the intellectual and spiritual formation of the scholars who used their resources.

In order to appreciate the efforts of libraries in promoting advanced studies or carrying out documentation work or research, it is worth going back to the roots of the *tree of wisdom* and analysing the influence of a particular cultural model formed on the basis of the famous Library of Alexandria and the old Musaeum or Mouseion at Alexandria, which were the most renowned ancient centres of scholarship and teaching. Ideas about it turned the Library of Alexandria into a symbol of perfection. It became an idealised, irreplaceable model, or at least a significant point of reference for the concepts of many modern and contemporary institutions. The organisers would like to devote the first part of the session to works which were created or developed on the inspiration of the Library of Alexandria, to how they were constructed, how they functioned and bore testimony to their cultural model. This gained particular splendour and impact in the writing of Justus Lipsius (1547 – 1606) and Claude Clement (1594 – 1642). Many rich libraries, such as that of the Vatican and the Library of Congress refer to the tradition of the old Library of Alexandria, while their versatile book collections, which are freely accessible for research purposes, and have for centuries offered magnificent opportunities for research, also allow for interdisciplinary discourse.

The dynamic development of particular branches of scholarly thought and areas of study would not be possible without specialist centres and their collections of expert writing, which when consciously formed serve as a structural entity adapted to meeting

the expectations and catering for the tasks of the institution and the cognitive expectations of those who come to the centres even from remote places. A classical example is the former Kulturswissenschaftliche Bibliothek Warburg, open in Hamburg in 1911, now the library of the Warburg Institute in London with its collection of prints whose origins date back to the private collection of Aby Warburg (1866 – 1927). It is also worth mentioning the Villa and Tatti Institute in Florence, which is important due to work on the Italian Renaissance. Its library was started by the rich collection of another art historian, Bernard Berenson (1865 – 1959). One should also remember about the Newberry Library in Chicago, and Dumbarton Oaks Research Library in Washington and not forget about many others, including many modern “mouseions” - institutes of advanced studies, which support research and are connected with temporary residence. Therefore, bearing in mind the role which has been played in the history of scholarship by the many specialised and general library collections, **the organisers would like to encourage participants to review and analyse the influence of these centres on the development of particular currents in research and interpretation trends in the humanities, in theology and social sciences, as well as feedback implications – the significant expanding of the collections or correcting them as a result of interesting scholarly achievements. It would be particularly valuable to discuss the library inspirations on regional studies and on different spheres of culture and closely related disciplines, such as art geography, cultural anthropology and general studies of culture, iconological studies and semiotics, phenomenology and hermeneutics, the psychology of artistic expression and the perception of art, Oriental and post-colonial studies, as well as various currents in musicology and research on the theory and history of the theatre.**

Even if a **scholarly library** did not undertake or publish any research work, it **could never be perceived only as a passive tool for its readers.** The **systematic and critical gathering and selection of written resources adapted to the current needs of research and to the tasks which have been planned that are undertaken in the library create the conditions which are indispensable for the further growth of knowledge.** Contemporary **IT technologies gave an additional impetus to libraries and librarians, opened new possibilities to carry out huge documentation and research projects, and paved the way for other undertakings aiming at ordering the information on resources of knowledge and coining the terminology necessary for precise descriptions of phenomena. They also made it possible to publish the effects of their work** (e.g. the thesauruses which emerged as a result of the work on the Getty Vocabulary Program, or the information on the content of the emblem books in Emblematica Online, the joint programme of Herzog-August-Bibliothek in Wölffenbüttel and the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign). **Are these projects carried out to satisfy the current needs of scholarly thought, or rather the future ones? To what extent are the products of specific library work adopted and used in research and didactic practice?**

Session V: *Gigantium humeris*. Historic libraries: Relevance to Today.

This session is dedicated to the memory of the late Professor Philipp Fehl, a historian of art from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Director of the Cicognara

Library Program. Thanks to the generosity of the Professor, a copy of the microfiche edition of Count Leopoldo F. Cicognara's Library, a splendid source presenting the principles of the history and theory of fine arts and architecture, of classical archaeology, art criticism and taste, has enriched the Special Collections of the Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences and made this valuable resource accessible to Polish scholars.

The great legacy of Count Leopoldo F. Cicognara (1767-1834), one of the founding fathers of the discipline of art history, is his library, which consisted of a wide and generous range of nearly 5 000 books on art, architecture, classical archaeology and related subjects, which has been part of the Vatican Library since 1824. The *Fondo Cicognara*, as it is usually described, was well known thanks to Count Cicognara's own *Catalogo ragionato dei libri d'arte e d'antichità posseduti dal Conte Cicognara* published in Piza in 1821 and praised by historians of art, especially those connected with the traditions of the Viennese School, manifested by Julius von Schlosser (1866-1938) in his *Kunstliteratur* (1924). In order to make the contents of this precious collection available to scholars around the world in its entirety, Prof. Philipp Fehl (1920-2000) made the effort to prepare a microfiche edition of Count Cicognara's Library. This became possible, because the Vatican Library regarded the idea of making its resources available to researchers with great favour. In addition, the Samuel H. Kress Foundation decided to back the joint program of publishing the *Fondo Cicognara* undertaken by the Vatican Library and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign by providing adequate financial support. This made it possible to conduct editorial work and turn the films taken from books by the Photographic Department of the Vatican Library into microfiches by Chadwyck-Healey in England.

Referring to the example of Count Cicognara's Library, emphasising the work and figure of Professor Fehl, and his great interest in the printed sources of art history, the **organisers would like to encourage participants to consider the former and current functions of historic library collections, especially those which were founded for research purposes by men who significantly affected their disciplines, as it was done by Count Cicognara.** If we compare a list of titles from Count Cicognara's Library with similar lists of libraries that belonged to other eminent figures of Count Cicognara's period, for example Antoine Quatremère de Quincy (1755-1849), Giuseppe Bossi (1777-1815) or Stanisław Kostka Potocki (1755-1821), it seems worth paying more attention to the beginnings and asking the question: **why were the libraries of the fathers of art and cultural history as a discipline and of other erudite people of the 18th and the first part of the 19th centuries founded and in what way were they developed?** The time of the scholars mentioned here resulted in a breakthrough in thinking about the nature of works of art and architecture, about the artistic creativity and the history of art. Therefore, **in the context of Count Cicognara's Library and in comparison to this collection,** it also seems worth analysing all the acts, processes and phenomena which led to forming the canon of required reading of that time. **What were the reading preferences of these people and why? What premises can be seen to indicate the rules of the selection and acquisition of books for their libraries, which became scholarly workshops of that time?**

Some historic library collections survived partly or nearly in their entirety for centuries or decades, others were widely dispersed and are known only from entries in preserved inventories or auction catalogues. These records and such evidence are subjects of detailed analyses and comprehensive studies. In effect, it is possible to consider a theoretical, virtual or even real reconstruction of these libraries. The constantly updated techniques of saving and cumulating data, or displaying collections might make such reconstruction more attractive and easy to use in practice. **What would be the research value of such projects and what is their relevance today? What is the fate of all the elaborate compilations of entries in former inventories or catalogues, of the analyses of annotations to such descriptions or notes left in books and catalogues by the owners of these collections? What scientific results should we expect making historic libraries accessible on microfiche, or on the digital platform?** Some historic libraries have been founded thanks to a collector's passion for books and learning, others also for specific purposes related to documentary works, scholarly research or academic projects, still others more to propagate certain ideas or conducts of society. **Should the microfiche or digital editions of historic libraries be recognised as clear, comprehensive and unquestionable evidence of former reading and records of thoughts, principles and ideas linked with artistic or scientific creativity?** The interest in modern printed sources of the theory and history of art and architecture remains strong - in some academic centres it is stimulating and truly profound. Examples are provided by such book series as the *Fontes. Quellen und Dokumente zur Kunst 1350-1750* edited in Munich, or the activity of the Fondazione Memofonte in Florence and its website. While regarding the microfiche edition of Count Cicognara's Library as a groundbreaking project in this field, there is still the need to ask a question about the research and didactic significance and merits of such historic libraries - **what would be the value of introducing them directly into the didactic process?**

Session VI: *Thesaurus desiderabilis*. The Arts and Humanities Library of Tomorrow.

In this session the focus will be the concept of the library which is reader-friendly, designed in a functional way and properly organised, where the collections cater for the research needs of the users and are located and presented according to clear, logical principles providing for on-going, intellectually and physically approachable access, so that readers can effectively find their way around them and retrieve sources which are necessary for their work. Such a list seems a kind of repository of wishful thinking, presenting not only the image of the volatile dreams of the librarian, but in a way a presentation of remedies to the stress brought on by the necessity to learn forever new, ever more perfect technology to access information. In encouraging participants to take part in this session, **the organisers would first of all like to confront the expectations and demands of readers, as representatives of the world of arts and humanities libraries, with the present state of these institutions and the foreseeable directions of their future development.** In this way they would also like to pose questions about the **functioning and social role of the arts and humanities library, and the way it will fulfil and develop the functions it has hitherto carried out connected with the collecting and cataloguing of collections, their protection and rendering them accessible. It is also interesting to consider to what extent such work**

will be extended to include problems of administering the electronic forms of texts. Will the library preserve its social functions connected with reading texts and exchanging ideas? The miracle of digitalisation created a new reality which will doubtlessly require special preparation from librarians who can provide help in using new technologies. **What will, therefore, be the future model of librarianship? Will arts and humanities libraries expect to implement a specific type of training for their personnel, particularly adapted to their specifics and the character of their collections?** The reality created by the development of IT will also give rise to changes in the organisation and functioning of library space. What can the scholarly humanities library of tomorrow look like? Will the almost mythical example of the Public Information Library (Bibliothèque publique d'information) located in Centre Pompidou in Paris set any standards? What points of reference can be adopted? **Moreover, the reality created as a result of digitalisation requires, and doubtlessly will continue to do so in the future, to conduct research on the preparation, maintenance and further development of capacious and effective artificial systems managing the texts being collected, their enormous number and variety, and developing research on human perception. What can cognitivists say about the future form of the scholarly humanities library and the perception of digital texts?**

Problems of the perception of texts whose large numbers are delivered from databases and digital repositories, indexed and retrieved for presentation with the help of automated systems, are connected with the issue of reading and using various electronically accessed publications. **What are, therefore, the consequences for research conducted in the humanities - both positive and negative ones, of today's easy access to reading a vast number of sources and texts provided by publishers of specialist databases and administrators of digital repositories?**