

PREFACE

As the entire world is increasingly engulfed in globalisation and universality issues of nationality, national identity, and their preservation become especially important. One of the major priorities of the European Union cultural policy have become cherishment and dissemination of the cultural heritage as a value system of the nation's living culture, an instrument for maintaining national identity and uncovering possibilities for a comprehensive expression of the national culture in the context of the global cultural diversity. The European Commission communications of the previous years and multiple current international programmes which integrate various long-term preservation and dissemination aspects of the cultural heritage could serve as a clear evidence of such concern. The cultural policy of many European countries tends to take precisely that direction and encourages cherishment of national languages, traditions, and arts with a strong emphasis on public access without time and space limitations.

This edition is intended to present an exhaustive coverage of multiple aspects related to long-term preservation and dissemination of the cultural heritage, discussed in publications by various authors from different countries. The project of the National Library of the Czech Republic introduced by M. Baliková integrates efforts by the Czech Republic, Croatia, Lithuania, Latvia, Macedonia, Slovakia, and Slovenia of several years to develop the multilingual subject approach to catalogues of national libraries. The successful implementation of the project will determine a possibility for the user to address integrated systems in the native language.

Some meaningful efforts have been made by the Library of Congress to improve its catalogues which, in J. D. Byrum's opinion, should meet the requirements of the modern information user – their functional possibilities of information retrieval should not fall behind the user's experience. In the author's words, "... a new generation of OPACs that offers significantly enhanced functionality, much of which can be based on standard features of Web search engines and online bookstores" should emerge.

In the above-mentioned context, metadata standards for digital objects remain particularly significant. Alongside with well-known and widely used descriptive standards for metadata and those for digital object preservation, new standards are constantly being produced which allow more efficient object management in the digital environment. The publication by S. H. McCallum, an expert from the Library of Congress, deals with one of the recent models – PREMIS.

The model of "Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records" could be considered a transformative step to the improvement of library catalogues as its practical implementation significantly increases functional possibilities for information search and access. G. E. Patton introduces possibilities and advantages of another model – "Functional Requirements for Authority Records".

Though electronic resources are universally acknowledged as a significant part of the cultural heritage and are being archived and covered by national bibliography publications in a great number of countries issues of their bibliographic control remain very urgent. A survey by the IFLA Bibliography Section, the results of which are presented in B. Wiggins' publication, are very significant for the improvement of legislation on electronic resources archiving and for bibliographic control.

Publications on digitisation projects which unfold various aspects of that sphere of activities: application of open standards (T. Erjavec, M. Ogrin), metadata management in a heterogeneous digital library (B. Haslhofer, R. Hecht), creation of catalogue descriptions for digital reproductions (S. Klarin), organisational activities and initiatives (D. Mladenčić, M. Grobelnik, A. Kavčič-Čolić) compliment the concept of the issue.

As usual, "Bibliography" presents publications on the content of national published heritage, its protection and dissemination. S. Kvietauskienė and J. Steponaitienė introduce selection criteria for the most important cultural heritage segments to be digitised at the Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania; V. Černiauskaitė analyses aspects of Lithuanian book advertising after the abolition of the Ban of Lithuanian Press; R. Misiūnas' publication analyses the situation of publishing activities of Lithuanian displaced persons in Western Europe in 1945–1952; A. Pacevičius introduces the Former Library of Old Regula Carmelite Monastery Near St. George Church in Vilnius which was functioning in 1506–1797.

S. Stakulienė introduces the contribution of Dr. K. Griņius, a prominent initiator and participant of the Lithuanian national rebirth movement and a promoter of medical scientific knowledge, to the Lithuanian medical press heritage. In her publication, J. Steponaitienė takes a close look at a neglected section of the national cultural heritage which had been accumulated and preserved at scientific and cultural institutions of Königsberg.

Professor O. Janonis presents one of the most fundamental disciplines of the bachelor study programme at the Vilnius University, i.e., "The Theory of Bibliography".

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