



Assessment of Democracy in Library and Information Activities

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Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analysed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

The repertoire of library and information resources, the organization of information services and the acquisition of sources in the implementation of library policy are based on historical traditions. In the digital space and in the globalizing world, this process has changed both its form and its essence.

It is known that throughout history, information resources have been censored and restricted. While these censorship restrictions are sometimes considered severe and sometimes insignificant, this problem arises and raises questions during the "dissemination" and "promotion" of information. The issue of limiting information and prohibiting its dissemination in the global information space remains relevant today. These restrictions can, at the request of a number of states, limit the scope of religious beliefs, as well as court decisions. Local, regional representations can also meet a number of restrictive requirements. I think that when it comes to free and democratic circulation of information products in the information space, it is necessary to define a mathematical model of how democratic it is. This article can be seen as a summary of the existing experience in this area.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The introduction of prohibitions and limitations on the part of dominant forces manifests itself in historical evolution as “a law of unity and struggle of opposites”. In the modern world the process of information acquisition, preservation and distribution of documentary information in libraries is transformed and, in essence, new forms are emerging. National religious “complexes”, ideology that disturb the development of strategy for determining scientific concepts in library-information system manifests itself throughout history. The laws of physics are used in the same way everywhere, but the laws of theology are different, they are used differently in Vatican than in London. This kind of discrepancy can be attributed to some concepts of Islamic theology.

In the Middle Ages, due to the existence of different versions of the manuscript, different information was spread over a vast territory. Therefore, the reliability of information and information carriers comes to the fore. The information environment characterizes the knowledge-based society. Professor Michael Onenkov wrote in his scientific article: “the impact on the information environment is the impact on the culture, knowledge and sector of art”. It would be right to add these thoughts to his political components. The experience gained from the history of library science shows that the methods of influencing the information environment have impact on use of the form of fragmentary information, manipulation of information and disinformation. So the quality of information environment is an important factor. This problem requires more detailed analysis. Society of knowledge should monitor the information from time to time and introduce democratic, documentary information and integration mechanisms. In this direction, it's useful also to study on univocal evaluation of democratic traditions in the history of world libraries' activities.

According to the data and insights gained from the literature review about the history of Library Science, it is understood that even in ancient times when books of special authors or about specific topics were gathered and burned, the functions of libraries for transmitting information

were so limited. Thus, in libraries attempts were made to modify works written by specific authors or about specific topics and disinformation was circulated in time.

Developing the idea, we'll note that introduction of technologies in modern world, the spreading of disinformation became a common tradition. Should the libraries try to solve afore-mentioned problems and prevent disinformation from spreading? What should they do in such noise information environment? Should they help to make awareness about formatted funds, the reliability of information and source in organizing the funds? Or is it contrary to democratic principles in the implementation of library policy? In the experience of number of libraries there is a concept of “our truth” and “the truth that doesn't apply to us”.

From the ancient times till today libraries faced censorship and limitations during all library information processes. If the censorship took place because of the persons who got official status, then the prohibitions and limitations which they set, must have been carried out at the different levels. Unlike medieval Europe, Islamic civilization did not have institutions of censorship. But there was an institution of “fatwa” (in Islam, the decision on any issue). Propaganda of various religious performed the function of censorship. Many propaganda campaigns were held in many regions and they didn't cover the whole Islamic world. The execution of Nasimi in Aleppo, the execution of the outstanding poet Shabbusteri in Tabriz, the burning and prohibitions of their works show that local prohibitions and limitations manifested themselves in various forms.

Censorship and information limitations existed in various forms in different peoples and culture. Experts believe that censorship in Russia began to be introduced approximately 100 years earlier than appeared the first works of art, such as “Lay of Igor's Warfare”. The register of forbidden books dating back to the 11th century was compiled, which in 1073 was translated from Greek into Bulgarian, then from Bulgarian into Russian. This document, which prohibited religious texts, shows that in this period there were no other scientific and literary works. In 1551 a “collection of 100 chapters of churches”,

and a list of books, which was forbidden for spreading and reading, were printed. In the following years, laws and decrees about prohibition of Holy Synod, churches and others were adopted in large numbers. In Europe prohibition was implemented with the help of religious institutions, especially with the reign of Vatican. The prohibitions of Vatican were controlled with the help of cardinals.

Unlike Europe, in the Islamic world the books couldn't be completely controlled by religious institutions. Especially, since the time of the Mongols in the production of books and in the variety of librarianship, liberalisation has taken place. Since the 13th century, the repertoire of library collections has been enriched, in funds of libraries that encompassed all branches of science, there was no prohibited industry and prohibited topics. Since the 13th century, according to information accessed from valuable sources, it can be affirmed that in Azerbaijan libraries of the Middle Ages many manuscripts of the Bible, of the Torah and the Gospels. The adoption of the Khazars of Judaism in the Northern Azerbaijan, the acceptance of the Christian faith by the Albanians in the West, as well as the dominant Muslim population in the Southern part, resulted in the great historical experience as a result of the production and spreading of books belonged to different cultures.

The occupation of the northern parts of Azerbaijan by the Russian Empire in the early 19th century, along with many branches of public life, also influenced the development of library and book culture. Confiscating valuable handwritten books, they were taken to the central cities of Russia, and censorship was introduced into new printed books. Despite all this, the traditions of manuscript books survived until the end of the 19th century and this process took place beyond censorship and the activities of libraries could relatively remain outside the state control and management (not including some exceptions). Only during the Soviet rule the book product in Azerbaijan and the library service completely passed under the control of the state and turned into an integral part of ideological work. Censorship in the historical traditions of states was expressed as a set of strict ideological restrictions.

Although the founders of the Soviet government complained about the restrictions during the

Russian Empire, they themselves applied a model of censorship that did not exist in the world. At different stages of Soviet power, these censorship measures were either toughened or softened, but they were called the most severe censorship in the world. The Soviet state in this matter went beyond the framework of the Russian Orthodox Church. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, censorship was lifted, banned books began to be published, new newspapers appeared, and persecuted authors began to publish. This process was not long in coming.

The transition to digital space has forced the whole world to rethink a number of rules. It is known that some themes, books, ideology and religious literature, as well as their free distribution, are restricted even in the most advanced democracies. In the United States, Great Britain, France and other countries, some literary works have been withdrawn from circulation and prohibited by a court or decision of the legislature.

Historical experience shows that prohibitions and restrictions have existed at all times either by the decision of the ruler, or by the decision of the church or court.

In connection with the abolition of censorship, each political, social and economic reform manifested each time contributed to its manifestation in a new form.

At the present time, censorship in the functioning of library information is expressed in the form of restrictions within the framework of state and library policies.

2. CONCLUSION

From what has been said, one can come to the conclusion that limitation and censorship has existed in all periods of history in various forms and still exists. If censorship is conditionally noted as "S", then the characteristics characterizing it can be divided into 3 groups:

a - Laws limiting and regulating the distribution and publication of information masses in the state or in the region express the decisive function of decrees and other official documentary masses. For this purpose the table is compiled. (For example, a ban on studying the heritage of the National Socialist Party in Germany or a law regulating the distribution and

publication of religious literature in the Republic of Azerbaijan, etc.)

b - The trait defining the national, social and cultural environment in a state or region. This includes functions that determine multinationality, multireligiousness, multilingualism, the press, media and the book mass. For this purpose, a table is compiled. (For example, percentages of non-national schools, media capabilities of national minorities, percentages of the population belonging to different religions and their opportunities for distribution and publication, religious literature belonging to them, etc.)

c - Reflects the personal and individual parameters of the librarian. This includes the level of education of the librarian, gender, specialized education, age, nationality, religious preferences, as well as practical skills.

Then we can talk only about the level of aggressiveness of censorship and regulation, expressed by the formula $S(x, y, z)$. The nature of each element that characterizes censorship determines the level of "freedom" of library and information functioning and the democratic environment of society. During such a relationship, A and B express themselves as a social barometer of society. As a result, a formula appears that defines the function $S(x, y, z)$. Respectively:

$A(X) > 0$,
 $B(Y) > 0$
 $A(X), B(Y), C(Z)$ –statistical functions

If $A(X) > B(Y)$,
then $S(X, Y, Z) < 1$
if $A(X) < B(Y)$, then $S(X, Y, Z) > 1$

When the A exponent increases, the nominal value of S increases, and the quality indicators decrease. The new restrictions and censorship becomes tougher, in a word, the indicator S. Increases with the exponent of the function B, S has a positive parameter, restrictions and censorship decrease. At this time, S is approaching zero and is becoming a tolerant democratic indicator of society. So, censorship of the information environment of society and the criterion of democratic restrictions can be calculated from this formula:

$S(X, Y, Z) = A(X)$ divide by $B(Y)$ and multiply by $C(Z)$.

Only the result of this calculation can show the level of democratic information and library functioning, and when this indicator approaches zero, it shows itself as an indicator of the level of democracy of society, protects multicultural values, and forms a free information space. Of course this is not the "democratic scenes" printed in the journal of Charles Ebdo. The owner and reporter of any magazine can have cosmopolitan, atheistic or other ideas. But his free thoughts should not be the cause of humiliation of national, religious, personal feelings of other people. A multicultural environment is formed precisely on this basis. Otherwise, the owner of "democratic thinking" will spend the rest of his life under eternal protection.

The formula that we have determined during the extreme and military regulations does not justify itself. This formula can be an indicator of a society where there is no aggressive, and there is a stable development. However, it can be stated with certainty that S is never zero, because $S = 0$ should remind us that the society is in a state of chaos. This can also be proved by examples from historical practice.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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