

ABSTRACTS

STUDIES

Towards a code of ethics

PAPP, István

Könyvtári Figyelő (Library Review), vol. 14. (50.) 2004. no. 2. pp. 243–278.

This background study was commissioned by the Association of Hungarian Librarians and the Hungarian Library Institute in order to assist the ethics working committee in creating the first Hungarian code of professional practice for librarians. The author provides an overview of the topic that will be further discussed by the committee and other professional bodies.

In the past, the Hungarian librarian community had to resolve professional ethical issues without the formal adoption of an ethical code. Librarians stood up for the unwritten rules of the profession against the official political values in several cases, e.g. in the debate around the educational / guiding role of librarians versus unhindered access by readers to open shelves, or in the protection of the personal rights of readers. Librarians had no other guidance in dealing with such issues than their own conviction. The issue of ethical code was first brought up at the annual conference of the Association of Hungarian Librarians in 1975, yet the discussions had no practical outcome. After the change of regime, in the beginning of the 1990s, the issue was raised again.

After presenting general issues of professional ethical guidelines, the author justifies the need for a code of ethics for librarianship. A code of professional practice, while stating the fundamental values of the profession, would facilitate everyday decision making, promote the use of libraries and enhance the role of libraries in the society. The code lays down the principles of professional commitment and responsibility to which librarians should aspire. The code of ethics means obligations, but at the

same time, it states certain rights and helps resolve work-related conflicts at libraries. In the present study, the author deals with the following issues: fundamental ethical values of librarianship, the relation between librarians and users, the collection development, the ethical criteria of reference and user services, the respect for intellectual property, the refusal of censorship, and the responsibilities of librarians towards their professional community.

In connection with creating the code of ethics, the following decisions need to be made: the scope of competence, the committee carrying out the work, the signatories as well as the supervisory body. Competence should be defined generally enough, allowing for supporting authorities to formulate specific missions for their libraries (e.g. libraries open to all users and libraries only serving their own supporting institutions.) The convergence of public collection institutions as well as the diversity of the profession may also loose the framework of the code. The code of ethics has to state the values of the profession and define the main objectives of the professional practice in a neutral and impartial way, in harmony with the national cultural policies. It should define the main tasks of librarians, but should not contain prohibitive clauses.

The structure of the code will comprise a section on the fundamental ethical principles, followed by a section applying these principles in professional practice. In order to make the document more user-friendly, the author suggests that it was published primarily in electronic form.

Proposal for the position of Director of the National Széchényi Library for the period 2004 – 2008

MONOK, István

Könyvtári Figyelő (Library Review), vol. 14. (50.) 2004. no. 2. pp. 291–306.

The text of the proposal is published by the applicant himself, currently the director of the National Széchényi Library. The proposal outlines the overall concept of the Library's services for the next five years, with a focus on the following areas: collection development, current cataloguing, national bibliographic services, readers' services, the national shared cataloguing system, storage and preservation, research activities, professional training activities, cultural relations, publishing policy, as well as core activities and special projects carried out in cooperation with national and international partners. Issues of management and representation are also dealt with. The concept of the coordination of national digitisation

programmes in the library field is also presented. Some priority areas will see further expansion, e.g. the collection of interest of the National Library, the range of services for the national library system, as well as the Hungarian National Bibliography.

Public libraries and cultural inclusion of the Romani population

NAGY Attila, PÉTERFI Rita

Könyvtári Figyelő (Library Review), vol. 14. (50.) 2004. no. 2. pp. 307–340.

According to 2003 survey results, the number of Romani people living in Hungary is about 600.000. The vast majority of them are living in disadvantaged conditions, struggling with poverty as well as social and cultural exclusion.

National cultural policies, including the strategic objectives of the library system, have a special focus on the support of social groups at disadvantage. It was in this context that two researchers of the Hungarian Library Institute carried out a study in autumn 2003 in order to ascertain the initiatives going on at public libraries that specifically serve the Romani population. The limited financial resources only made it possible to study a few county libraries and share the good practices with others.

As a first step, letters were sent to the directors of the 19 county libraries and to the director of the Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library in Budapest, asking them to provide information on any library programmes or services specifically targeting Romani users. No response was received from 11 libraries, however, reports on ongoing successful activities were sent by 3 libraries. The rest of the answers reported on various special projects that were launched but stopped afterwards, for one reason or another.

The article contains selected reports from the county libraries in Debrecen, Szekszárd, Nyíregyháza, Miskolc, Salgótarján, and from reports by branch libraries of the Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library, as well as interviews held at various locations. The reports by libraries are followed by three case studies of local initiatives aiming at the cultural inclusion of Romani people: one of them in Ózd, one-time socialist industrial centre, another one in Nagykanizsa, and the third one in Uszka, a small village in Szatmár county.

Already this preparatory phase of the study revealed the complexity of the situation. The authors aimed to select and present the exemplary practices that can be adopted and further developed by others. The study re-

confirms the fundamental role of nursery schools, primary schools, churches and cultural institutions – with a special emphasis on the library network – in helping overcome cultural and social disadvantages. All these types of institutions, with the support of the printed and electronic media, need to join their competences in order to reduce prejudice and to deal with the problems in their complexities. Spreading good practices is an important part of this work.

About the names of Hungarian public libraries

GERŐ, Gyula

Könyvtári Figyelő (Library Review), vol. 14. (50.) 2004. no. 2. pp. 341–349.

According to a study of Hungarian library directories published at different historical periods, library authorities in Hungary – perhaps as opposed to other countries – often choose to name libraries after famous people. The legal regulation in force leaves the responsibility of choosing the name with the supporting authorities, on the stipulation that the opinion of the local community are also taken into consideration. Comparing the directory of libraries of 1965 and the most recent directory called Library Minerva (1996), a rise of the number of libraries named after celebrities can be seen in the case of all library types (e.g. from 24 to 70 in the case of municipal libraries).

In the history of Hungarian libraries there have been approximately 175 libraries named after celebrities, representing 120-125 names (as a result of some overlap). The author provides statistics on the types of names, including classic writers, 20th century writers who have died recently, historical persons, scientists, printers, theologians, library founders, librarians and politicians. A few new names are also recommended for the consideration of libraries.

Commemoration

Several outstanding personalities of the Hungarian library field died in the past few months. This section pays tribute to the deceased colleagues.

Béla Babiczky (1919 – 2004), a prominent figure of the library sciences in Hungary, was a professor of the Faculty of Library Sciences of the Eötvös Loránd University. A significant part of his work was dedicated to creating the Hungarian version of the UDC system. His handbooks on theory and history of classification were used by generations of students. The commemoration is written by one of his students who later became his colleague, Ágnes Hangodi.

Könyvtári Figyelő (Library Review), vol. 14. (50.) 2004. no. 2. pp. 351–353.

Zsuzsa Sándori (1957 – 2004), an outstanding specialist of chemical information, was director of the library of the pharmaceutical company Richter Gedeon Ltd. She was also a visiting professor at the Faculty of Library Sciences of the Eötvös Loránd University. One of her areas of research was the international trends of library management. She was also a member of the Library Review's advisory board. (by Katalin Kovács)

Könyvtári Figyelő (Library Review), vol. 14. (50.) 2004. no. 2. pp. 354–355.

Tibor Futala (1929 – 2004) worked at the National Széchényi Library, then at the Library Department of the Ministry of Culture before he became the director of the National Technical Library. He was the editor in chief of „Scientific and Technical Information”, a Hungarian journal of library and information science. His vivid personality and his deep knowledge of the field were reflected in his numerous publications. He was a dominant figure of Hungarian librarianship over the past fifty years. (by Miklós Fogarassy).

Könyvtári Figyelő (Library Review), vol. 14. (50.) 2004. no. 2. pp. 356–357.

Synopsis of the chapter „1979 – 2000” of the monograph on “The History of the Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library”

FUTALA, Tibor

In commemoration of the author, the Library Review publishes his last and unfinished piece of work.

Könyvtári Figyelő (Library Review), vol. 14. (50.) 2004. no. 2. pp. 359–363.

FROM ABROAD

Library outreach services for rural areas

TÓTH, Máté

Könyvtári Figyelő (Library Review), vol. 14. (50.) 2004. no. 2. pp. 365–402.

A review of studies from the international literature of the subject, both from professional journals and Internet sources (webpages). The range of services selected by the author include mobile libraries, container libraries, transportable libraries, books-by-mail services, deposit collections, branch libraries, cable TV services and various types of institutional cooperation. The review also

deals with operational and financial issues. Each chapter contains a detailed index of references.

Professional competences for reference and user services librarians – guiding principles of the Reference and User Services Association of the American Library Association (ALA).

Translated by Tibor Koltay

Könyvtári Figyelő (Library Review), vol. 14. (50.) 2004. no. 2. pp. 403–412.

Collections in Slovakia

DANCS Szabolcs

Könyvtári Figyelő (Library Review), vol. 14. (50.) 2004. no. 2. pp. 413–422.

The study deals with historical libraries in Slovakia, among others the Library of the Matica Slovenská in Martin, which can be considered as the first Slovak public library, and the library of the Institute of Slavic Studies in Bratislava. The study summarises the role of these libraries in the Slovak national movements in throughout the 19th century and till the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic.

BOOK REVIEW

Libraries and power.

Ed. Ferenc Kégli and István Monok. Reviewed by Ágnes Hangodi

Könyvtári Figyelő (Library Review), vol. 14. (50.) 2004. no. 2. pp. 423–433.

Libraries without walls

Ed. Brophy, P., Fischer, S. Reviewed by Tibor Koltay

Könyvtári Figyelő (Library Review), vol. 14. (50.) 2004. no. 2. pp. 434–436.

Cooperation in action

Ed. Pilling S., Kenna S. Reviewed by Tibor Koltay

Könyvtári Figyelő (Library Review), vol. 14. (50.) 2004. no. 2. pp. 437–438.

FROM FOREIGN JOURNALS (ABSTRACTS)

Az IFLA 70. nyári konferenciájának vezető témája a könyvtár mint az oktatás és fejlődés eszköze lesz. A világtalálkozó színhelye Buenos Aires (Argentína), időpontja 2004. augusztus 22-27. (KIT hírlevél, 2004. 15. sz. április 14.)



„Romániai magyar társadalomtudományi bibliográfia a weben. – Meister Róbert mindent elolvasott helyettünk. 15 folyóiratból válogatta össze mindazt, ami a társadalomtudományi szövegek közül lényeges: az 1989-1999 közötti termés több mint 10 500 címre rúg. Az Erdélyi Magyar Adatbank újabb digitalizált fejezete Meister Róbert kolozsvári könyvtáros-bibliográfus munkája: A romániai magyar társadalomtudományi irodalom bibliográfiája 1989-1999 között.

<http://meister2.adatbank.transinex.ro>

(KIT hírlevél, 2004. 15. sz. április 14.)



Figyelmükbe ajánljuk Meister Róbert lapunkban megjelent tanulmányát ugyanerről a témáról (Könyvtári Figyelő 2003. 4. sz.) (A szerk.)