

# The Librarian as the Organizer of Information and Knowledge of the Reader

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The present paper substantiates the necessity of comprehending the function of the librarian as that of an organizer of information and of reader's knowledge, which is today formed in conditions of information saturation of society, which has appeared as a logical continuation of such traditionally recognized functions of the library as storage and collection of information. (Author)

One of the recognized methods of mastering of knowledge and the reaching of its apex is reading as a specific cognition-communication activity, which ensures active processing of textual information and its comprehension. By organizing this activity, the librarian promotes the organization of information and knowledge of the reader. Today the function of the librarian forms in conditions of information saturation of society and appears as a logical continuation of such traditionally recognized functions of the library as the storing and collecting of information. The formation of this function is also stipulated by the fact that already from the middle of the 20th century, in conditions of steady growth of the "information boom", there appeared a need not only to receive information, but to protect oneself from it, a phenomenon noted by many researchers. In this connection the function of the contemporary librarian is identified with the organization of the information environment of the library so that it would be interiorized, e.g. profoundly assimilated by the reader with the utmost economy of intellectual energy and time on his part.

This thesis seems to be a correct one for many reasons. Firstly, the library is not merely a form of storage of information, but of its organization, too (collections, bibliographical methods of organization of knowledge, the library environment, etc.); secondly, it is being more and more widely recognized that the main function of the present-day library is the informative one; thirdly, the very propinquity of the librarian to the information flow permits such a formulation of his function. It should also be mentioned here that today the users more and more frequently express the desire to receive not merely information, but organized knowledge. The non-equivalence of the concepts 'information' and 'knowledge' is generally known. Information is apprehended as materialized and alienated knowledge. In society the process of transformation of an individual's knowledge into information and of



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information, stored in the information environment, into knowledge acquired by the individual, is going on continuously. And it is obvious that in the conditions of the library the second part of this complex process is more strongly manifest.

The process of organization of information and knowledge of the user is determined both by external and internal potentials, the most important of which is the comprehension by the librarian of his role and possibilities. In the capacity of information means of organization of information, in conditions of the library, many researchers distinguish the following types of information: guiding, bibliographical, factographical and conceptological. From the point of view of communication of knowledge, the latter type is most productive. However, as observations show, frequently the librarian does not ponder on the conception of this or that problem, which he reveals in a library procedure, and he does not aim to adequately reflect it.

The absence of the appropriate approach to the organization of the information environment impedes the turning of that information stored in it into individual knowledge of the user. We regret to state that this aspect has not been fully recognized by professional consciousness.

However, this situation can be changed if the necessary data will be introduced into the circle of professional knowledge (at different levels of training). To these data belong: ideas about the structure of scientific knowledge; ideas and thesauri as systems of conceptions of the problem with which the librarian is working; methods of communication of knowledge in a system-oriented form; solution of problems of communication (language, terminology, communication) in the transfer of knowledge.

The problem of organization of information and knowledge of the user has one more painful aspect. Any organization presupposes a certain selection in which some researchers see a threat to the user's freedom. In our opinion, a sufficiently strong argument in favor of the organization function of the librarian is provided by the statement made by the well-known philosopher José Ortega y Gasset to the effect that freedom should not be at variance with common sense. ("Mission of the Librarian").