Conclusion

Filippos Tsimpoglou and Elena Diomidi-Parpouna

During 'Knowledge is Power', the 3rd International Scientific Conference of the Sylvia Ioannou Foundation, organised jointly with the University of Cyprus, five library models were examined in the Meet the Experts Session:

A university library	–	The UCL Library
An art and museum library	–	Museum of Modern Art Library (MoMA)
A digital library	–	OpenAIRE
A public library	–	Copenhagen Public Libraries
A national library	–	National Library of Finland / Helsinki University Library

Obviously there exist several differences among these libraries, which concern mainly the target user groups they serve, the subject scope they cover in terms of collection and types of information sources as well as the organisations / authorities to which they belong. Beyond their differences, however, they also share characteristics, such as their common mission, which in all cases adopts the principle that 'the user is the king'. Moreover, there is a shared need for specialists to serve the 'king' and the fact that those specialists need to be trained. Consequently, in order to have specialists, we need to invest in staff training and lifelong learning, so that they can be up-to-date and serve the 'king', who is none other than the end-user of information. Yet it is not only specialists who must be ready to fight: end-users also need continuous training, in which information literacy, provided by the specialists, is the main weapon.

During the Conference we agreed on a saying, 'Neither knowledge, nor art, nor research, nor information are only for the elite', and there are several ways to achieve this. By saying 'elite' we do not refer solely to individuals and social classes, but also to countries.

An additional common characteristic is the library buildings and premises as a necessary infrastructure. The space dimension is a real and important parameter for libraries, with the exception of OpenAIRE, which does not rely on a single space but rather on several digital ones, which in turn require their own physical spaces. Consequently, as this Conference took place in Nicosia in honour of the Stelios Ioannou Learning Resource Centre, the University of Cyprus' new library building under construction, we have to admit that space remains very important for libraries and their users, both for knowledge storage as well as being a suitable space for the users to meet and collaborate.

Technical and technological infrastructure also forms a fundamental parameter, and this is another common characteristic of libraries. It consists of the general equipment (technical, technological, furniture) that completes a library's wealth, along with the valuable collections in electronic and printed information resources.

Cooperation is another highly important tool for libraries to achieve their goals. This regards not only interconnection of data, but also networking of organisations, individuals, flows and relations through synergies aiming for mutual benefit and more generally the development of each country's social and educational level – because in this way we become more intelligent and more efficient.

We are living in an 'information' revolution. We are not in the middle of it, but still at the very beginning. We do not know how it will develop, but we do try to detect the future and the abundance of challenges. One such challenge is called 'Open Access' and leads to the non-print library, a paperless library, beneficial not only for the forests but for its other characteristics as well, as an essential tool for electronic information. When we talk about electronic information we seek, at the same time, to achieve Open Access for everyone with no exception.

Another challenge we face is the conversion of the library as a space of study to the library as a space of action. How do we transform libraries from fragmented information to a universal approach to information, that is, to holistic knowledge? We would oppose the view that fragmentation is inherent in the digital age: we actually have available the technological infrastructure and through interconnected digital information we can achieve more 'holistic' information, since with interconnection and interoperability, which make much more available to us and allow the mind to focus on obtaining rounded and up-to-date knowledge, we can overcome the barriers of time and space.

An important task for every library is to approach non-users (potential users). Many of the library models we saw across the whole spectrum of library types are turning their development and activities from collection-oriented to user-oriented or at least they adopt a more user-oriented approach.

Information preservation is another significant undertaking. Books and manuscripts in national libraries, such as the National Library of Greece, are centuries old; digital documents are not. Twenty years of access to digital documents feel like an eternity. This should not make us technophobic, but aware of the need for preservation. For the time being, digital curation is a choice, but is considered much more difficult that digitisation.

Tools to face the challenges posed are national libraries, national policy councils that have a vision to shape the future of libraries, technical and semantic interoperability, supranational or international regulation of legislation (mainly for copyright), the utilisation of global technical tools/standards and so on. Our willingness to experiment and to not take for granted or constant today's realities is a necessary requirement for adaption to the new developments. We must adopt an 'Open Access' approach and invest in the younger generation, the new users, respecting their needs and particular characteristics. In addition to those mentioned above, a very important tool is measuring and evaluating user satisfaction, through which performance indicators derive. Users' views can be a valuable source of information for libraries.

Finally, in assessing the 3rd International Scientific Conference of the Sylvia Ioannou Foundation 'Knowledge is Power', we can admit that we conducted an experiment – we put the participants through the process of not only presenting their own library and their own views, but also of reading and commenting on the presentations of the other speakers, and we would like to thank them for this. There were no negative comments about this innovative approach. We believe that the audience found the content and organisation of the Conference to be particularly stimulating. Librarians have already praised the Conference for its important information approach, as well as the fact that they were informed about a range of topics in their field under the prism of current international developments. As there is always room for improvement, we would like to express the need for more time to be made

available for the audience to express their views and to pose further questions, something we promise to do at the 4th International Scientific Conference of the Sylvia Ioannou Foundation.

We would like to thank all who participated and we hope to see you again at the next Sylvia Ioannou Foundation Conference.