

**Subject and Genre Analysis of Romanian  
Library Science Literature: Books  
– published between 1945-2003 –**

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**Abstract**

The purpose of this survey is to analyze – scientometrically and bibliometrically – the Romanian literature of librarianship and information science, published between 1945-2003 in book format, in order to reveal the degree of the *de facto* contribution of this literature to the acknowledgement, affirmation and strengthening - or perhaps, weakening - of the librarian profession in Romania. Our study represents, in fact, a hermeneutic incursion into the historical and internal resorts of the profession and its literature, attempting to reveal the *manner* in which the Romanian authors have approached the issues, that is, through the *genre descriptors* - precisely conferred to each of the 430 bibliographic references - on the one hand, and the main subject fields of the decades, that are fixed in the survey by *subject descriptors*, on the other. The stages of this survey – investigation for documents retrieval, compilation of the analytic bibliography as basis for the survey, the bibliometrical calculation and result data analysis – outline a social and professional approach, by means of critical analysis and evaluation of the Romanian literature of librarianship - considered also as result of a social-cultural factors complex, and through a thorough research of its dynamics, its values system, and the social position that it is associated with.

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**I. Introduction**

This research was carried out with the conviction that the recognition, assertion and consolidation of a profession is due first of all to the *specialized literature* of the field, as this is what confirms and proves its professional and scholarly nature, imposes its status and social

recognition, and reveals and questions its mentality, evolution or stagnation.

Starting from all these, my interest has naturally turned towards the profession of the librarian, seen from the perspective of its specialized literature, in order to measure up its contribution in time to the definition of its professional identity and specificity.

My aim in this research was to evaluate the Romanian documentary corpus of library science literature published in the course of more than half a century – between 1945 and 2003 –, to analyze the frequency and distribution of its various thematic fields, independently or in direct relationship with their way of approach, and to estimate its intellectual and scientific level by the analysis of its genre categories. In other words, I will attempt to re-evaluate the status of the librarian profession from the perspective of its own literature.

## **II. The stages and methodology of the research**

The subject and genre analysis of the Romanian specialized literature of library science, as well as the bibliometrical calculus for the data interpretatio were made possible by the accomplishment of an analytical bibliography of the complete editorial production of Romanian books on library science published between 1945 and 2003. The stage of investigation as a basis for research has required a long and sustained effort in order to achieve, as much as possible, the comprehensiveness of such an endeavor.

At the same time, I considered that this analytical bibliography would have an informative value by itself, as a source for all later research, synthesis or any other kind of study of the Romanian literature of library science or connected fields. It is important to have a general view over the Romanian production of library science literature offered by a unitary bibliographic source which sheds light on the documentary corpus of this literature and its theoretical and practical achievements during half a century. Even if the value of the works included in the bibliography is unequal, variable, and sometimes inconsistent, a synopsis of the intellectual contributions of Romanian librarianship is still useful for understanding the evolution of this field and the ways in which socio-political and economical conditions have influenced it, as well as its efforts for consolidation and self-definition.

## 1. The bibliographic database

For the compilation of the bibliography of Romanian library sciences literature, I made use of the bibliographic software *ProCite* version 5, a software of great complexity meant especially for such instruments of information. All bibliographic and analytical data of the works included into the research were introduced and processed in a database with a pre-established structure, so that it could offer all the bibliographic and documentary elements required for the analysis during editing.

### 1.1 Criteria of identification

The criteria I used for the identification of the works to be included into the database implied the types of documents, and the time and place of publication.

The *non-periodic* character as a first criterion of selection eliminated all the reviews, series, or periodicals in the field, that is, all the publications which defined at their first appearance the intention of repetition in a number of editorial entities unlimited in time, but it did not exclude *monograph series* with a high degree of independence for each work in the series both for content and bibliographic data. I have selected thus primary documents with a non-periodic character, authorial works, manuals, courses, anthologies and readers, collective and cumulative volumes, collections of works presented at different scholarly meetings, symposiums, or conferences on subjects of library and information science.

I have also included *secondary documents* of the same subject areas, reference works of great importance for a rapid orientation in the field and also for the establishment of a special terminology in formation. There are thus dictionaries, vocabularies, special bibliographies, catalogues, guides included into the bibliography, that is, reference materials in general useful for the efficient retrieval of information. The published catalogues of libraries, whether of special collections or of thematic fields other than that of our research, old book catalogues, publishers' catalogues, or UDC classifiers with their several completed and adapted versions were not taken into consideration. Their extremely great numbers would have meant a distortion of the proportions of different thematic categories.

The *timeframe* I have settled, namely that of 1945 through 2003, allows a large historical perspective over the dynamics of editorial activity, reflecting the act of intellectual creation and production in the

field of library science. This overview of specialized literature published from the first years following the Second World War and up to the present also permits a comparative study of two historical periods with fundamentally different social systems.

Regarding the *place of publication* I have selected the works which were published by Romanian publishing houses, both those written by Romanian authors and translations from foreign literature. I have also included the scientific works of various symposiums, conferences, etc. organized in Romania with Romanian and foreign participants, which, although containing texts translated into languages with an international circulation, can still be considered as part of the Romanian specialized literature on account of their Romanian authorship.

Although the statistics have only considered the Romanian book production, I trust that the presence of translation can only yield further insights into the Romanian documentation of librarianship and information science.

### *1.2 Sources of identification of specialized literature*

In the first phase of the investigation, I have researched the catalogues of the “Lucian Blaga” Central University Library in Cluj-Napoca, both the traditional card catalogues and the online one. Most of the sources included in the bibliography come from the collections of this library, as one of the most consistent collections in the country, having also the right of legal deposit. Then the research has been extended to the catalogues of the Cluj branch of the Romanian Academy Library, the online catalogues of other important libraries in the country – the Central University Libraries of Bucharest and Iași and the National Library – and various hidden bibliographies and new release columns of library science periodicals. Finally, I have consulted the *Books, Albums, Maps* series of the *Romanian National Bibliography*<sup>1</sup>, for the entire period of my concern.

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<sup>1</sup> *Buletinul bibliografic al Camerei Cărții din R.P.R.* (The bibliographic bulletin of the Book Chamber of the People's Republic of Romania), *Cărți, albume, plicuri, pliante, 1952-1953* (Books, albums, envelopes, brochures); *Buletinul bibliografic al cărții, 1954-1956* (The bibliographic bulletin of the book); *Bibliografia R.P.R. (R.S.R.)* (The bibliography of the People's Republic of Romania (Socialist Republic of Romania). *Cărți, albume, hărți, 1957-1989* (Books, albums, maps); *Bibliografia națională română* (Romanian national bibliography). *Cărți, albume, hărți, 1990-2003* (Books, albums, maps).

At the end of the investigation phase I recorded in the database 430 bibliographic references of library and information science material published in Romania, works which can also be found in the analytical bibliography published as part of the study. However, I have only retained 383 volumes for bibliometrical calculus, left after the elimination of 47 entries that represented the translations of foreign works, not being thus autochthonous contributions in the field.

Each document identified from the sources consulted and found in the collection of the Central University Library Cluj and the Cluj branch of the Academy Library was directly consulted in order to insure the accuracy of document processing. The works that did not exist in the collections of these libraries, especially the older ones which were not preserved, can be identified in the bibliography by the asterisk placed before the reference. As for re-publications and multiple editions of the same work, I have only kept the new, *revised and enlarged* editions, because of the surplus of information they offer compared to the preceding edition.

### *1.3 Method of description and bibliographic data processing*

The bibliographic data of the works selected by the criteria presented above and those resulting from their analytical processing was registered into a unique database in ProCite. The structure of the work-form in 17 fields allowed the storing of all types of information, from bibliographic description to those of subject and genre. The works with an especially rich critical and bibliographical apparatus, multiple indexes and useful annexes were marked, also indicating the page range of this apparatus within the framework of the whole book. I have considered especially useful the bibliographic researches, recommendation bibliographies and webographies which offer supplementary ways to identify new sources of information in the field. In the electronic version of the bibliography a separate field also offers the abstract of the work described (the subject matter field), naturally only for those which were directly researched, as a supplementary analytical information, according to the pattern of abstract reviews.

Preceding the final editing phase of the analytical bibliography, I sorted the database in the alphabetical order of subject headings, and within each subject heading, in the alphabetical order of authors and titles.

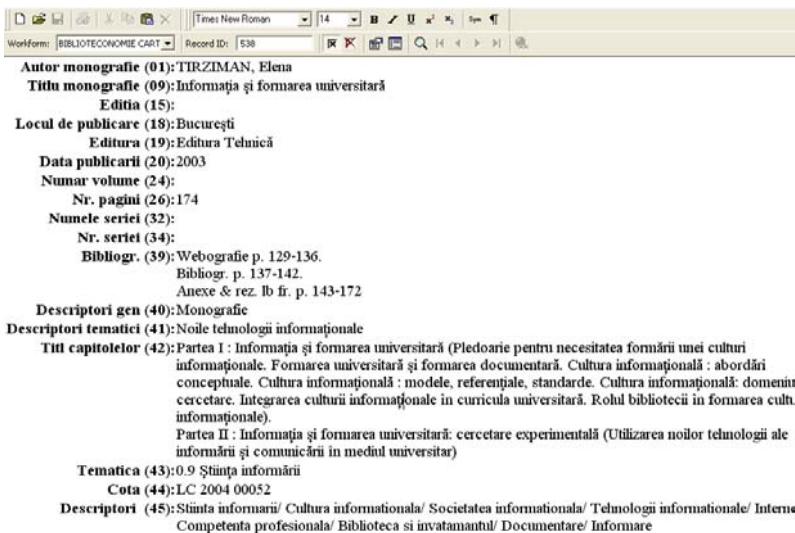


Fig. 1. Editing screen and work-form in ProCite

## 2. Indexing of bibliographic database

The documentary processing of bibliographic references was made by previously established simultaneous genre and subject descriptors.

### 2.1 Establishing the genre index

It is essential to establish the authors' approach and depth of the treatment of subjects, this being one of the fundamental aspects for the type of analysis I have undertaken. I have established thus the following genre descriptors to be applied in the course of indexation: *treatise*, *monograph*, *documentary synthesis*, *manual*, *collective volume*, *essay*, *reference work*. In order to eliminate translations from the database for bibliometric processing, I have also applied the "descriptor" *translation*, but only as a random descriptor, without any significance for the authors' treatment of their subject as in the case of the other genres.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> **Translation** – translation does not represent a distinct genre as such in the following division. I have used this descriptor for the works (of any generic category) translated into Romanian from any foreign language and published at a Romanian publishing house. They are included into the analytical bibliography of the specialized literature of the field in Romanian, but not into the bibliometric calculus as well.

Before explaining the significance of each genre category I have established, I have to make certain specifications regarding their properties and the indexation principles applied.<sup>1</sup> The genre descriptors are *univocal*, or in other words each of them designate a *single* category of publications with the same complexity level in the authors' approach to their topics. From here emerges a further characteristic of genre descriptors – *exclusiveness* –, that is, each work analyzed and indexed can be integrated exclusively in *only* one of the genre categories. Under these circumstances a new principle is called for, this time regarding the list of *established descriptors*, namely their *comprehensiveness*. In other words, the list of descriptors must cover the whole range of *possible* genres, perfectly independent from each other, and with no synonymy between them, which would insure the integration of *each* work into one and only *one* of the categories.

*The list and significance of genre descriptors*

**Treatise** – specialized work which methodically exposes all basic principles of a discipline. Requiring a high degree of exigency, the treatise sums up, following a rigorous methodology, the fundamental principles, knowledge, practical experience, etc. subsequent to a long period of theoretical and practical research in the field and based on a consistent specialized documentary corpus.

**Monograph** – an ample and profound scholarly study of a well defined subject, topic, or problem. The analysis is integrating, detailed, and many-sided, and is achieved according to a well established structure plan. The element of **novelty** brought to the theoretical and practical context of a field is very important and edifying for this genre of publications. Thus the monograph offers a clear, general, vast and detailed picture over the subject studied, whether it is problem, a field, an institution, or a person's bio-bibliography. The text is accompanied by an important critical apparatus.

**Documentary synthesis** – a work accomplished on the basis of ample bibliographic and documentary research, completed by the selection of a

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<sup>1</sup> For the method and indexation principles applied, see: Florina Iliș, István Király, and Angela Marcu, "Bibliografia analitică, de conținut și de gen a literaturii bibliologice din revistele românești de profil. Cercetare pentru perioada 1990-1997" (The analytical, subject and genre bibliography of library science literature in Romanian specialized periodicals). In : *Hermeneutica Bibliothecaria – Antologie Philobiblon*, Cluj-Napoca, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 1998, p. 83-175.

complex of data and information in the field, but without the author's direct participation by personal research or points of view. The documentary synthesis analyzes, interprets, and structures a whole corpus of documents, selected as significant for the subject of research, and it presupposes a remarkable, organized and rigorous intellectual effort. The selection, assimilation and interpretation of the material of the synthesis are all difficult tasks the responsibility of which falls almost entirely on the author of the synthesis, who must be a good specialist in the field.

**Manual** – a book with a didactic or practical purpose which concisely, clearly, and systematically exposes the basic notions and fundamental data, verified and practically applicable, of a discipline or field of activity. The manual can be the result of an individual intellectual work of a single author, or the collective work of a group of specialists in the field. The degree of complexity and depth of the exposition differs according to the categories of students addressed, and the character of practical or methodological instructions they contain. Thus, there are *school manuals*, *university manuals (courses)* (practical notebooks for students, seminar books, etc.), *manuals for professional formation* and *methodological materials* (recommendations for procedures with minimal theoretical information, instruction for the practical application of rules, theoretical principles, norms, etc.). In this study, all these categories are defined by the generic term of **Manual**.

**Collective volume** – a publication which comprises independent contributions (studies, articles, essays, etc.) directed upon a unitary complex of problems. The *Collective volume* genre is divided into two sub-classes, both of them maintaining certain characteristics of the initial genre, completed by some supplementary characteristics: these are the *collection of studies* and the *cumulative volume*. The *collection of studies* brings together the materials of various authors about one well defined thematic field, each of their contributions forming distinct chapters: anthologies, volumes of scholarly works presented at various congresses, conferences, symposiums, seminars, etc., that is, volumes which comprise the common efforts of several authors to examine, analyze, or study a certain problem. The other sub-class, the *cumulative volume*, regroups disparate texts of the same author, published previously at various places. In this study I have only taken into consideration common generic features and have only kept **Collective volume** as a genre descriptor for both sub-categories.

**Essay** – is a very valuable and thorough genre of intellectual work, which renders problematic, in an original manner and from the author's personal



point of view, various aspects of a determined thematic unit. The fundamental tendency of the essay is relative, the author “attempts” to offer solutions without wishing to exhaust the subject. In the case of books – compared to essay-like writings from periodicals – the essay-like manner in the course of the exposition extends to greater significance. The author launches hypotheses, criticisms, provokes polemics – in other words he debates a problem or subject, and equally argues his opinion on the matter based on observations and comments about the literature of the field. Thus in the case of books the significance of the essay as a genre extends to that of the debate and commentary, and its presence lends a greater importance and valor to a literature.

**Reference works** – as the result of analytic and synthetic processing of primary documents, this genre of material is essential for the search and identification of sources, and fast access to information. Reference works cover a great variety of materials with different characteristics, but, regardless of the way and criteria of their processing and the depth and complexity of the data, they all have the same purpose: fast information (general or special), and the active and efficient mediation of the access to information. I have included as a subject for analysis dictionaries, lexicons, guides, bibliographies, albums, administrative and legal material, and non-periodic reference works in general which structure the basic elements of librarianship, explain its terminology, offer bibliographic and bio-bibliographic information, etc.

As revealed by the above explanations, there are descriptors – *Manual* and *Collective volume* – which can be subdivided into sub-categories; however, as they are not autonomous, they were not taken into consideration as such, but integrated into the *generic* term obtained by post-coordination and used then in bibliometric calculus. The identification of sub-categories for these two genres was useful as it offered the possibility of a detailed analysis, separately and independently from the other genres.

It is very important to specify here that the epistemological level of a certain literature – regarding its documentary value laid down in books – is indicated by the amount of *monographs* within it, just as the amount of *studies* indicates the scholarly level of contributions in periodicals. This was also one of the priorities of the analysis of books and volumes of Romanian library science literature within the framework of this paper.

## 2.2 Subject indexing

The types of works included into our research, especially collective volumes and reference works, mostly cover multiple and very varied thematic fields, thus the descriptors only refer to the dominant fields and subjects. I have established 31 subject descriptors, generic terms of a large categorial or semantic coverage. It is enough to mention as an example the *Public libraries* descriptor which also includes the material on county, municipal, urban and rural libraries, or the *New information technologies* descriptor, which covers just as much aspects of the automation of libraries, as the telematic systems of information and communication, the Internet, online catalogues, electronic documents, etc. The latter thematic field also includes older material, much of it edited by INID, representing the first concerns of electronic data processing; thus, studying all the works indexed under this descriptor reveals a diachronic view over this discipline.

## 2.3 The methodology of data processing

Considering the extended time span of the study, between 1945 and 2003, I have grouped the data by decades, much simplifying thus the rendering of results. Naturally, the first and last periods of the study (1945-1949 and 2000-2003, respectively) did not form a complete decade, but I have considered this impediment minor as compared to the relevance of the results, especially for the latter period. The in-depth changes in the discipline connected to the introduction of new information technologies following the year 1990, and the new perspectives in library activities due to the integration of the Romanian fields of information and documentation into the global circulation of information determined the annual analysis of the period 2000-2003, both for the number of volumes published and the genre categories.

The statistical processing of the data was made in EXCEL, and most tables were also accompanied by graphic representation, both in *line* form, very suggestive for the representation of the evolution in time of editorial production and subjects, and in *columns*, for the relationship of genres and thematic categories.

## III. Presentation of bibliometric data and interpretation of results

### 1. The situation of editorial production in the period 1945-2003

The first aspect that I was interested in after the statistic data processing was the dynamics of publications during the whole period of

1945-2003. The total number of volumes published are presented separately for each decade, in two successive tables, in order to have a comparative view over the publishing activity of two historical periods with fundamentally different social-political systems.

1945-49		1950-59		1960-69		1970-79	
2	0.5%	35	<b>9.1%</b>	39	10.2%	118	31%
1980-89		Total					
31	8.1	225	<b>58.9%</b>				

1990-1999		2000-2003		Total	
83	21.6%	75	19.5%	158	41.1%

**Fig. 2.** The dynamics of editorial production in the period 1945-1989 and 1990-2003

The first finding is the fact that in 45 years 225 titles were published, that is, 58.9% of the total number of 383 printed volumes, while later, in only 14 years, the number of titles raised to 158 volumes, that is, 41.1%. The explanation of this phenomenon views both external aspects connected to the social-political and economic context of library activities before and after 1989, and internal ones, of the profession itself. The almost complete isolation from the international evolution of the discipline, the lack of a unitary national organization framework, the absence of a coherent development policy coordinated by a single authority which would also establish an adequate legal framework, and, last but not least, the insufficient funding had a strong impact on the community of Romanian libraries. Seen as a somewhat auxiliary field of the larger context of education, research, and culture in general, the profession of librarian could not find its internal resources to impose its own identity.

One of the determining causes in this respect was the lack of a stable and lasting institutional form of training for specialists in the field. The superior training course which functioned at the Faculty of Letters of the University of Bucharest between 1953 and 1958 only produced two series of graduates, half of whom never worked in their field of training. The short-term courses organized at the three-year Pedagogical Institute in Bucharest before 1973, or those organized by the Librarianship High-school in the framework of the High-school of Typography in Bucharest

before 1975, as the only forms of higher training on a national level, hardly succeeded to cover the ever growing need for specialists in the course of the following three decades. The specialized training of librarians after the dissolution of higher education in the field was achieved by the courses organized by the Center of Staff Improvement of the Ministry of Culture, and especially by the libraries themselves through programs of professional training on different levels and focusing on practical courses and applications.

One of the serious consequences of the complete dissolution of higher training in librarianship was the inconstancy of the interest for scholarly research and the publication of results in consistent works of a fundamental importance for the evolution of the field.

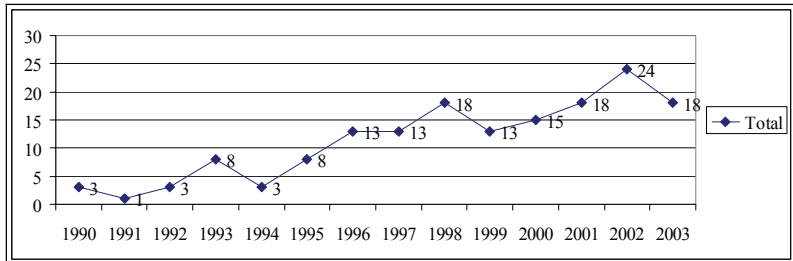
However, the concern for research in library science can still be found to some extent in the course of the decades investigated, especially in collective volumes and in the pages of specialized periodicals. The authors' tendency to turn with their works to periodicals in order to present them in public may be explained by the fact that the specialized reviews were usually coordinated by an editorial board consisting of professionals who were directly involved into library activities and consequently well acquainted with professional life. Thus the points of view of critical evaluation and selection of the materials were mainly concerned with their value, and less with their ideology, and the restrictions imposed by censorship were laxer than in the case of state publishing houses.

Regarding the books and volumes, it can be observed that the authors of the majority of the most important studies came from outside the profession, being trained in other areas than librarianship. This fact was all the more obvious during the 1970s when 118 titles were published, that is, 31% of the total number of 383 volumes studied. These were written especially by authors who worked in the framework of the INID and who were trained in sciences – mathematics, physics, technical sciences, etc. The fact that they enjoyed the financial and logistic support of the INID, an independent institution with a republican rank and direct governmental support, also explains the highest rate of publications during the 1970s. I will return to this problem at the statistic representation of thematic fields and genres.

On the other end of the scale there are the 1980s, when the smallest number of works of the entire period were published, 31 titles, representing 8.1% of all the publications (except for the 1940s, with only 2, that is, 0.5% of the publications). While the motivation for this latter

situation is obvious – the many destructions of the war –, the 1980s represented the most critical period of the communist regime, having disastrous effects in all the aspects of life of the Romanian society.

The second table illustrates the efforts to recover this distance, to integrate into the international community of information and documentation institutions, and to redefine the place of the profession of librarian within the new information society. Even if the latest years of opening, searching, and transformation continue to be marked by hesitations, inconsistency of decisions, and the lack of a general view over the discipline, the emergence from the massive isolation of half a century, the free access to sources, the freedom of circulation and the possibility of getting acquainted with the state of the profession abroad brought about a sudden improvement in library science publications. While in the 1990s 83 volumes, that is 21.6% of the publications left the print, beginning with 2000 through 2003, in only 4 years, 75 volumes, that is, 19.5% of all the publications were published. Below, one finds the graphic representation of the dynamics of editorial production in the 1990s.



**Fig. 3.** The dynamics of editorial production in the period 1990-2003.

The tendency of the publications is ascending, with certain fallbacks during the years 1991, 1994, and 1999, which however seem rather unsystematic, and do not affect significantly the general picture of book production in this period (external social-economic factors, political instability in the year 1991, difficult publishing conditions, lack of funding, maybe even the lack of interest of publishing houses for such publications which do not guarantee immediate profit, etc.). Regarding the year 2003, the trend is *falsely negative*, considering the defective way in which the publications are delivered to the users; thus it may happen that at the end of the research phase for this study I did not have access to the entire book production from 2003 (especially the volumes of “grey

literature”, which appear irregularly, are not included into the *Current National Bibliography* and cannot be obtained through the usual ways of acquisition).

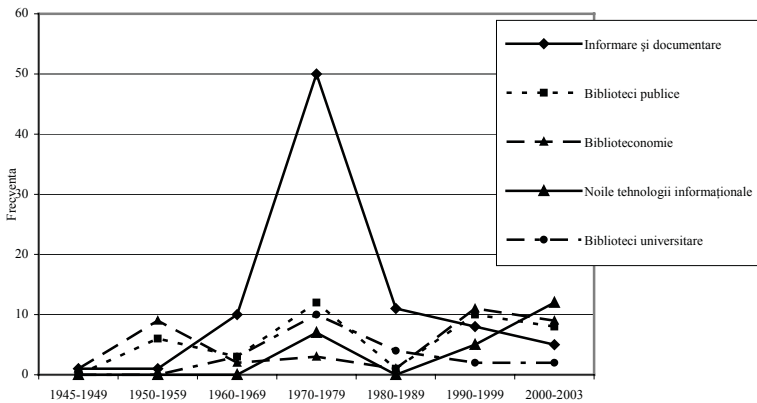
At this point of the discussion, a prospective statement can be made. Reckoning with an average number of publications per year, in the 2000s an average number of 18 titles were published yearly, compared to an average number of 8 titles per year in the 1990s. If the rhythm of increase is preserved and if no external factors occur which could affect the process of publication, an estimation can be made that the editorial production will double by the year 2009.

## 2. Dynamics of editorial production from the perspective of subjects

For the statistic analysis of the subjects of highest frequency in the period 1945-2003, I have only taken into consideration the first ten positions, that is, 281 titles, 73.37% of the total number of 383. Please find attached the table with the decreasing order of subjects divided for decades – **Figure 4**.

As it is apparent, the most frequent subject is *Information and documentation*, offering a number of 86 titles as 22.45% of the entire documentary corpus examined. The second place is taken by *Public libraries*, with 40 volumes, that is, 10.44%, followed by *Librarianship*, with 36 volumes, that is 9.40%. *New information technologies*, a subject of an increasing interest for professionals, is found on place 4, with 24 titles, that is, 6.27%, followed by *University libraries*, with 21 volumes, that is, 5.48%, *The history of books and printing* with 20 volumes, that is, 5.22%, and *Bibliology*, with 18 volumes, that is, 4.70%. Places 8 and 9 are taken by *Cataloguing. Catalogues*, with 15 volumes – 3.91% – and *Classification. Indexation* with 11 volumes – 2.87%. Place 10 is occupied by *Reading*, a subject of high value for the profession of librarian as well, with 10 volumes as 2.61% of all the publications.

In order to have a clear image over the dynamics in time of the subjects, I grouped the first 10 subjects in a decreasing order, in groups of 5.



**Fig. 5** The dynamics of editorial production for decades from the perspective of subjects – first 5 positions

The great number of volumes in the thematic field of *Information and documentation* is explained by the supported activity, especially in the 1970s, of the *National Institute of Information and Documentation* (INID), already mentioned before. Founded in 1949 as the *Institute of Documentation, Bibliography, and Technical Publishing* (IDBET or IDT), it became in 1953, separated from the Technical Publishing House, the *Central Institute of Technical Documentation* (ICDT), and finally, in 1974, the INID. It was the first Romanian state institution with national attributions in the field of scientific and technical information, and it functioned all throughout the period of our concern. Among its manifold tasks, it coordinated all the other information and documentation centers in the country, and secured the process of training in the field of documentation. In this context, having also the necessary resources until the mid-1970s, the editorial activity within the INID was indeed remarkable. Unfortunately, as a consequence of Governmental Decree (HCM) no. 1598/1974, the state resources were seriously cut down, the personnel was drastically restructured, and these circumstances resulted in a very limited editorial production. The decrease of the number of volumes published during the following decades fully illustrates this situation, and it is also apparent in the abrupt descending line on the diagram in Fig. 5.

As regards *Public libraries* and *Bibliology*, it is interesting to notice that during the whole period of the investigation these have the

most constant evolution starting with the 1950s (when the greatest number of volumes were printed, as compared to the other subjects, as a result of the first measures of the communist regime to found a great number of “mass libraries”) and all throughout the years 2000, except for the 1980s, when the editorial production in all thematic fields was minimal.

The thematic field *New information technologies* shows a constant evolution, proving even today a strong tendency of increase. Beginning with the first studies in the 1960s, in a new field which already proved to have a viable future, and all the way through the years 2000-2003 when the greatest number of volumes (12) are published compared to the other 9 thematic fields, the concerns about the “new ways” of treating information and access to it are constantly rising. The interest in library automation, reflected in the works published on this topic, also has an impact upon the various transformations determined by it: institutional and administrative, material and of management, relational and communication, and last but not least, mental and of introspection.

Regarding *University libraries*, a drastic decrease can be found in the 1980s and 1990s, after which it stabilizes at a minimum level until 2003. This is a surprising and at the same time alarming situation, having in mind the importance of these institutions in academic pursuits and the fact that the entire university system of which libraries are an organic part has been found in a process of profound reorganization in order to meet the new context of information and communication.

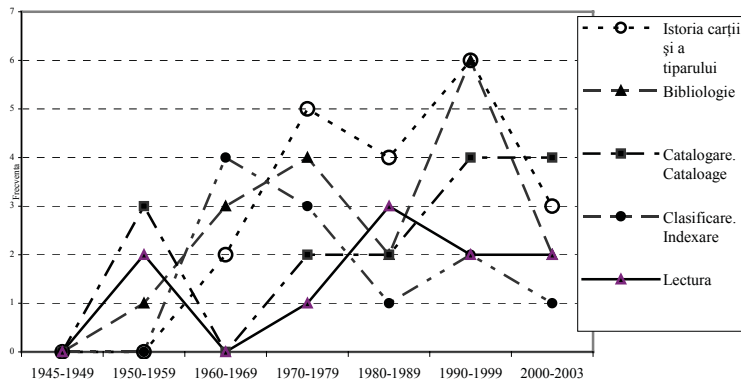


Fig. 6. The dynamics of editorial production for decades from the perspective of subjects – last 5 positions



At a first sight, the dynamics of the following 5 thematic fields seems characterized by an extremely irregular, almost chaotic situation as compared to the situation of the other 5 fields. In connection to the chart in Figure 6, it must be mentioned that the axis of ordinate is not presented at the same scale as in Figure 5, because of the very low values of representation. At the scale used in the previous chart, these values would have caused very small leaps, which would have made the lines very hard to follow.

In this second succession of thematic fields, it is interesting to follow the evolution of editorial production for the field *Cataloguing. Catalogues*, which is present during the entire time period, increasing in the 1990s, and maintaining a linear upper limit also in the period of 2000-2003. The use of electronic means in cataloguing, the creation of online catalogues besides traditional card catalogues with the perspective of their complete replacement, the need of unitary norms in the description of documents done with different kinds of softwares, and the practice of national and international bibliographic control – all these explain the constant interest in this field. Unfortunately still, this interest failed to produce a large amount of editorial works comparable to the importance of these pursuits, tasks, objectives, and requirements.

The same kind of statements can be made about the next field, namely *Classification. Indexation*. As the thematic processing of documents is made more and more frequently by indexation, it is surprising that this field is so poorly represented, even more so as the information market offers an impressive number of indexed databases. I remind that now I am speaking about the last five thematic groups in the order of their weight in bibliologic literature [cred ca nu e nevoie de aceasta propozitie, fiindca este destul de clar oricum ca se vorbeste despre aceste grupe].

The routes followed by the fields *The history of books and printing* and *Bibliology* are strongly increasing until the 1970s, and, after an obvious fall in the 1980s, they reach their peak in the 1990s. These two fields are less visited by authors in the period of 2000 to 2003, as a result of the raising interest in aspects of modernization and automation of the access to information.

Occupying position no. 10, *Reading* is also limited, I believe, by the same reasons. Its route in time is equally irregular, with a slight increase in the 1950s, followed by a considerable decrease in the 1960s, and again a rise in the 1980s, when it reaches the peak of its entire course. After a new decrease in the 1990s, it is stabilized at a low, but constant

value until the end of the period of our concern. This fact is surprising, because essentially the very reason of being of the libraries – and for that matter for all kinds of document collections – is exactly education, instruction and fulfillment through reading.

Consulting again the table of the best represented thematic fields in library science literature, one cannot help but notice the absence of major subjects in the recent and future evolution of libraries. I mean here the works on library management (management of institutions, finances, human resources, evaluation of staff and performance indicators, etc), which do not rise as high as the first ten positions even in the period of 1990-2003. Nevertheless, it can be felt that the need for sources of information in library management is becoming more urgent, the best proof for it being the five titles from this field (of the total number of 9 titles for this thematic descriptor) translated and published in Romanian after 1990.

### 3. *The dynamics of editorial production from the perspective of genres*

Once the main topics discussed in the Romanian specialized literature of library science have been established, it is time to extend the analysis over the scholarly quality of this literature, its epistemological value: in other words, the level, seriousness, and complexity with which these subjects were approached. At this stage, I have made a statistical analysis of the data obtained from genre descriptors, strictly matching the explanations given at the beginning of this study. The annexed **Figure 7** contains the table with the distribution of genres over decades, in the decreasing order of their percentage.

It is obvious, on the basis of the data in the table, that the most frequently used genre in the literature of the field is *Reference works*, which sums up a number of 90 volumes of the 383 analyzed works, representing 23.50%. At an almost insignificant distance there is the *Manual* genre with 89 titles, representing 23.24%, followed by *Documentary synthesis* with 74 volumes or 19.32%. Position no. 4 is taken by *Collective volume*, with 62 titles representing 16.19%, then *Monograph* with 58 titles (15.14%), *Essay* with 9 titles (2.35%) and *Treatise* with 1 title (0.26%).

The first conclusion deriving from the configuration of the above data is that library science literature is best represented at an instrumental level of mediation of information retrieval, fast orientation in the material, or legislative and administrative information. This means that, although the information offered by this kind of material is very

precise, it is also very concise, thus the theoretical and conceptual level of this material is quite low. Although the utility of these kinds of documents is by no means minimal – let us only think of lexicons of bibliography or dictionaries of librarianship and information science, very useful in adapting a still variable and problematic terminology – it should be stated nonetheless that their great majority in the literature of the field makes it lack a kind of seriousness, approaching basic problems in a rather schematic manner.

The second position is taken by *Manuals*, the importance of which in the formation of librarians on the one hand, and their great number during the whole period of this study on the other, require a further, more detailed analysis for a deeper estimation of their levels of approach. Using the division of manuals into sub-categories according to the complexity and seriousness of the discourse – mentioned already in the introduction to this paper – I wished to see the weight of each within the entire category of manuals. Thus, of the 89 works of didactic character, 19 are *university manuals* (21.35%), 1 *school Manual* (1.12%), 32 *manuals of professional formation* (35.95%), and 37 *methodological materials* (41.58%). As for the time period they were published, 58, that is 65.16% appeared before 1989, and 31, that is 34.84%, between 1990 and 2003.

The direct research of most didactic works led to the conclusion that their conceptual level and the amount of theoretical knowledge they contain are at a relatively low level; the predominant information is of a practical kind, focusing on creating the *handiness* required by the daily activities and routine of a librarian. The best example for this is the category *Manuals of professional formation* continuously published throughout the period in question. In the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s several of such manuals were published, most of them translated from Russian, materials which represented a minimum of theoretical and practical knowledge for librarians.<sup>1</sup> Beginning with the 1970s, the manuals of professional initiation, formation and improvement gain in complexity, aided by the role of the National Library, the INID, and library associations such as the ABIR and the ABBPR.

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<sup>1</sup> Some titles from this category: *Călăuza bibliotecarului* (The librarian's guide, 1948), *Minimum de tehnică de bibliotecă* (Minimum of library technique, 1953, republished in 1958) and *Consultații de biblioteconomie* (Consulting in library science, 1969), manuals which grounded the formation of several generations of librarians.

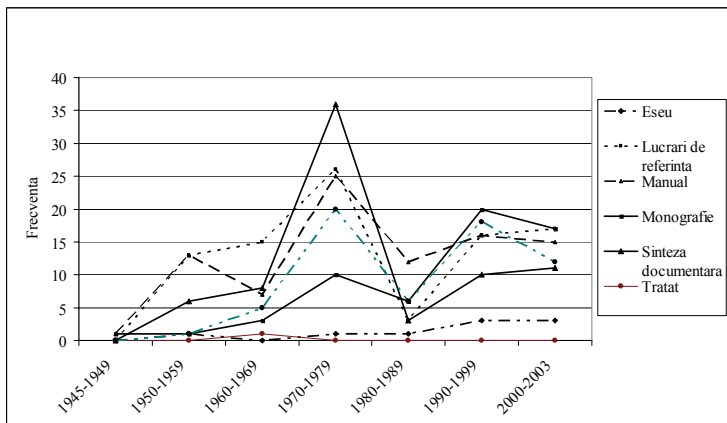
The most frequent sub-category of the category of manuals is the *Methodological manual*, especially because of the guides published by the INID on a large scale until the 1970s. The level of approach to the problems discussed is medium, suggested also by syntagms such as *User's guide...*, *Practical guide...*, *Methodological recommendation*, or *Unitary rules for...* used in titles.

As for university manuals, most of them were published after 1990, with some valuable exceptions. As a result of the fact that following the 1989 revolution the contacts with the academic environment abroad have been intensified by several uni- or bi-lateral programs and the access to sources of information has increased considerably, the quality of the works published, including those of university manuals, has largely evolved. Still, it can be observed that many of these are in fact *methodical guides for the use of students*, *course supports*, or *practical seminar guides*, indeed very useful in a didactic process, but incapable of insuring a global, integral, and serious study of the subjects included into the curriculum.

Before continuing the discussion about the other genres, one must notice that the last sub-category of the genre of manuals, the *School manual* is represented by one single volume. The situation is not really surprising as library science was part of the curriculum of high-schools only for a very short period of time, and only in high-schools with philology and history profile.

Coming back to the analysis of the distribution of genres over decades presented in Figure 7, there is also only one title under the genre *Treatise*, which presupposes the highest and most rigorous scholarly level of the whole range of possible approaches to a subject. The presence of one single treatise in the whole of library science literature seems to me as symptomatic for the scientific level of the Romanian literature of the field, considering the fact that this genre marks the stage of scientific maturity of any discipline. As for the *Essays*, a genre of great intellectual subtlety and original manner of treatment of the subject, it is a less frequent genre especially prior to 1989, all its representatives having been published between 1990 and 2003. I consider that this preference for the essay is a positive sign for Romanian library science literature, within which this approach to problems, requiring an intense personal implication, individual and original initiative, opinion, and perspective, is rather unusual.

The evolution in time of *Documentary syntheses*, *Collective volumes* and *Monographs* can be easily followed on the chart below, which represents the dynamics over decades of all genres.



**Fig. 8.** Dynamics of genres over decades

It is the *Documentary synthesis* which attracts attention in the first place by its line strongly detached from the evolution of the other genres. The highest point of the line, during the 1970s, is determined once again by the editorial activity of the INID which massively published this type of materials. In the next decade, it reached the lowest point of all its evolution – as all the other genres, for that matter – settling finally at a medium value beginning with the 1990s.

*Collective volumes* have a somewhat similar evolution, being also relatively well represented, reaching their highest level also in the 1970s. The predominant material of collective volumes throughout the entire period are the scientific works of various professional meetings of librarians. Besides the serial publications in the field, these various professional encounters were the preferred framework of authors who sought to publicly express and publish their points of view. Many of the studies presented in this context are truly valuable, and represent an important achievement of scientific research in library science, as much as such research has indeed happened.

As far as the *Monographs* are concerned, their route throughout the period of the research indicates a lower degree of representation during the period when the other genres were best represented, and they reach their highest point only in the 1990s. Otherwise, as **Figure 9**

shows, after 1990 the distribution of genres has changed. Monographs outrun all other genres, collective volumes are better represented than documentary syntheses, and the treatise disappears altogether.

Genre	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	Total
Monographs	–	–	–	–	1	2	4	2	7	4	3	3	8	3	37
Reference works	1	–	2	3	–	2	3	1	1	3	3	5	5	4	33
Manuals	1	–	–	4	1	–	2	3	3	2	2	–	7	6	31
Collective volumes	1	1	1	1	–	4	3	2	3	2	1	4	3	4	30
Documentary syntheses	–	–	–	–	1	–	1	2	4	2	5	5	–	1	21
Essay	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	–	–	1	1	1	–	6
Total	3	1	3	8	3	8	13	13	18	13	15	18	24	18	158

Fig. 9. Distribution of genres in the period between 1990-2003

As I have said before, after 1990 *monographs* have taken the first place with 37 publications (of the 58 volumes which appeared during the whole period), followed by *reference works* with 33 volumes (most of them being various guides to libraries, dictionaries, and specialized bibliographies). The third position, closely following the first two, is taken by *manuals*, with 31 titles, followed, successively, by *collective volumes* with 30 titles, *documentary syntheses* with 21 titles, and finally *essays* with 6 titles.

#### 4. The distribution of the first 10 positions according to genre descriptors

Coming back to the level of thematic representation analyzed before, I have calculated a new relation to see the kinds of materials which were published at the first 10 categories of subjects. In other words, I wished to see the level of complexity that the 10 most frequent topics were discussed by the authors. I will focus the commentary on the table in the annexed **Figure 10**, which details the connections between the thematic fields and the genres.

As a first analysis of the data from the table reveals, the order of the genres of specialized literature as related to *only* the first 10 subjects is changed as compared to the whole range of subjects. This time the *manuals*, *documentary syntheses* and *reference works* are placed on positions 1 to 3.

*Information and documentation* appears primarily as *documentary synthesis* – 39 titles, that is 45.3% of the 86 volumes published under this subject. In fact this is the subject with the greatest number of documentary synthesis of the whole range of thematic fields in the literature. It can also be seen that it is the only thematic field discussed at treatise level, with 1 title representing 1.2% of the 86 volumes.

Analyzing the data from the table referring to documentary synthesis, one can notice that the distance to the next position, *New information technologies* (with only 9 syntheses) is very great; this is a problematic situation, considering the importance of these sources of information for a complex and up-to-date documentation. Even if this can be explained for the period prior to 1989 (characterized by complete isolation from the spectacular progress of info-documentary professions all over the world, the acute lack of information material, especially periodicals, lack of funding, etc), the low number of documentary syntheses during the last 14 years raises a serious question mark.

Coming back to the subject category *Information and documentation*, it can be seen that *manuals* are also well represented in this field – 25 titles, that is, 29.1% of all the publications on this topic, among which the majority are methodological materials and manuals of professional formation.

At this genre category *Librarianship* is on the second position with 19 titles, representing 52.8% of the 36 volumes published on librarianship. Although the number of these manuals is not low, from the point of view of their value the situation is completely disappointing. As it has been mentioned before, at the discussion of the distribution of genres over decades, almost all the manuals of librarianship coming from the 1950s and 1960s are translations from Russian, impregnated with prolet-cult and ideological propaganda, and of a minimal scientific level. As for the librarianship manuals published in the last decades, these are relatively inconsistent from a theoretical and conceptual point of view, and do not raise much above the level of practical guides for librarians.

The coverage with manuals of the field *Cataloguing, Catalogues* and *Classification. Indexation* comes on the third and fourth place, with

12 titles (85.7% of the whole of 14 works on cataloguing), and 8 titles (66.6% of the 12 titles on classification), respectively. The massive presence of manuals within these thematic fields is justified by the need of precision and uniformity imposed by the technical library activities, especially the use of the new digital techniques of bibliographic and document processing. It should be emphasized that the majority of the manuals in these two categories were published after 1989.

*Public libraries* are present most often in the form of *reference works* (mostly presentation guides to libraries and administrative and legal materials), with 14 titles, that is 35% of the 40 volumes published in this field. In the case of *monographs*, *public libraries* come on position 2, with 11 published titles (27.5%), following the *history of books and printing* as the subject with the highest representation at this genre (13 titles, as 65% of 20 volumes published). By comparison, the strictly specialized subjects of librarianship or library technique (cataloguing, classification, and indexation) have *one single* monograph each.

The fact that ample and thorough, monograph-type studies are mostly focused on subjects connected to traditional aspects of library science seen from a historical and cultural perspective, which exceeds the limits of the perspective of librarianship, suggests again that the initiative belongs to authors coming from other fields that librarianship (graduates of history or other fields of the humanities or social sciences).

For the period preceding 1990, this situation can be explained: the absence of over 3 decades of any institutional form of higher education in librarianship which would have trained specialists in the field determined the employment of graduates of primarily the humanities, usually those who, failing to establish themselves in their basic professions, turned toward libraries as a “second option”. Let us not dwell on the causes which brought about this “deviation” from one’s initial profession to libraries, often perceived as a “failure” or professional “limitation”; however, I believe that the majority of the valuable scientific works in library science and librarianship come from this area.

Following 1990, however, it is impossible not to remark the absence of the graduates of colleges and faculties of *librarianship* which function in several university centers across the country, who should have already made their presence felt in the scholarly and publishing life of the profession. (Naturally, I do not refer here to contributions published in various periodicals, but to the type of works included into this research). Their evolution as *specialists in librarianship and library science* with a

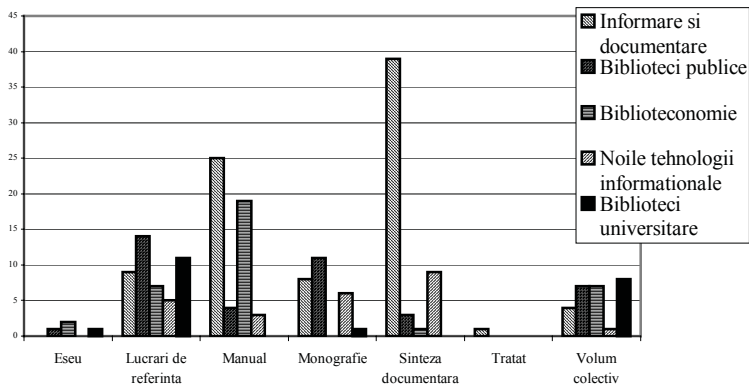


specialized higher training is still shy and uncertain, a condition which seriously raises the problem of the academic level of higher education in librarianship, or the quality and efficiency of the curriculum. This is a problem of the highest importance, which deserves a separate and much deeper analysis.

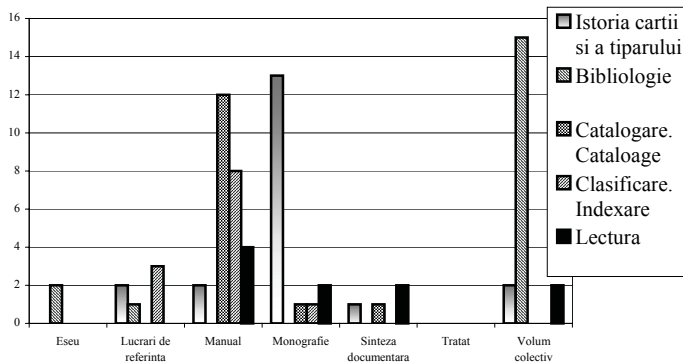
Continuing the analysis of the subject-genre relation of the Romanian literature of library science, the next stop will be the genre *collective volume*, with 15 titles for the subject *bibliology*, that is 83.4% of the 18 volumes published in bibliology (meaning the highest representation of the genre). As it can be observed, the proportion of the genres for this subject is neatly favorable for collective volumes, mostly the scholarly productions of various symposiums, conferences, and workshops over the years, on subjects which relate library science and librarianship, but also on the more extended fields of cultural history, literature, sociology, the psychology of reading, etc.

The second place for collective volumes is taken by *university libraries* with 8 titles – most of them anniversary volumes or scientific works of various professional meetings – that is, 38.1% of the 21 volumes published in this subject. This subject is better represented in the form of *reference works* – 11 volumes (52.4%), representing, together with *public libraries*, the most frequent themes discussed in this generic form. While the reference works published in these two categories are relatively similar in number, it is impossible to disregard the disproportion in the case of the *monograph*. It was surprising to find that public libraries were treated in monograph-form on 11 occasions, while there is only one monograph about university libraries. Naturally, I have found other materials as well for this latter subject, but these were mostly anniversary volumes or presentation guides, and not works which would fulfill the requirements of a monograph.

In the followings, I will present two charts with the distribution of the first 10 subject categories in relation with genre descriptors, as a visual representation of the relations discussed above. It should be mentioned that the scale of values is again different for the second chart, in order to make the data easier to follow:



**Fig. 11.** The distribution of the first 5 subjects according to genre descriptors



**Fig. 12.** The distribution of the last 5 subjects according to genre descriptors

#### IV. Conclusions

The starting point of the research was the awareness of the fact that the importance of *scientific research* and *original creation* in bibliological professions is fundamental and decisive, now perhaps more than ever. The science of the organization of information transmission has become a meta-discipline which must be reconsidered by professionals by the study, discussion, and conceptualization of the place

of information within contemporary society. This is primarily achieved by the production of a scientifically valuable documentary corpus which would cover both the multiple transformations which make the info-documentary professions and librarianship more and more specific, and the more “traditional” aspects connected to the profession of a librarian, its origin and evolution in time, the formation of a specialized personnel, its collaboration and association, etc.

At this time, specialized literature *tends* to respond to these requirements, a proof of it being the dynamics of the years 2000-2003, the most ascending period, calculated on a yearly basis, of the whole period of the research. The average of 19 volumes published yearly much exceeds the average of 12 volumes published in the 1970s – a period taken as a term of reference due to its highest publishing activity during the whole period (118 volumes).

The fact that the period between 1990 and 2003 is represented by the monograph as a priority genre, is also encouraging as an indication of the scientific level of today’s specialized literature. Still, the distribution of subjects treated in monographic form is very unequal, most of them focusing on subjects connected to new information technologies, and one cannot help but notice that very important fields of librarianship and library and information science are left without any monographic treatment.

Documentary syntheses are also poorly represented in Romanian specialized literature during this last period, and this directly affects the production of manuals as well (university, professional formation, school manuals, etc.), because obviously it is impossible to write high-level manuals in the lack of information sources like monographs or documentary syntheses. True, these sources can be easily acquired from foreign scholarship, but in the end it is their presence in, or absence from, Romanian specialized literature which indicates its real scientific value and consistency. In effect, what is at stake here is the assertion of the profession’s self-consciousness, its social recognition, and, in the long run, the transgression of its status of “second-hand *science*”, as it is still, unfortunately, considered to be.

Nr. Crt.	SUBJECT	1945-1949		1950-1959		1960-1969		1970-1979		1980-1989		1990-1999		2000-2003		Subject, total	
			%		%		%		%		%		%		%		%
1	Information and documentation	1	0.26	1	0.26	10	2.61	50	13.05	11	2.87	8	2.09	5	1.31	86	22.45
2	Public libraries	0	0.00	6	1.57	3	0.78	12	3.13	1	0.26	10	2.61	8	2.09	40	10.44
3	Librarianship	1	0.26	9	2.35	2	0.52	3	0.78	1	0.26	11	2.87	9	2.35	36	9.40
4	New information technologies	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	7	1.83	0	0.00	5	1.31	12	3.13	24	6.27
5	University libraries	0	0.00	0	0.00	3	0.78	10	2.61	4	1.04	2	0.52	2	0.52	21	5.48
6	History of books and printing	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	0.52	5	1.31	4	1.04	6	1.57	3	0.78	20	5.22
7	Bibliology	0	0.00	1	0.26	3	0.78	4	1.04	2	0.52	6	1.57	2	0.52	18	4.70
8	Cataloguing. Catalogues	0	0.00	3	0.78	0	0.00	2	0.52	2	0.52	3	0.78	4	1.04	14	3.66
9	Classification. Indexation	0	0.00	0	0.00	4	1.04	3	0.78	1	0.26	3	0.78	1	0.26	12	3.14
10	Reading	0	0.00	2	0.52	0	0.00	1	0.26	3	0.78	2	0.52	2	0.52	10	2.61
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.52</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>5.74</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>7.05</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>25.33</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>7.57</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>14.62</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>12.53</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>73.37</b>

Fig. 4 Proportion of the first 10 thematic fields over decades

GENRE	1945-1949	1950-1959	1960-1969	1970-1979	1980-1989	1990-1999	2000-2003	Genre, Total	%							
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%									
Reference works	0	0.00	13	3.4	15	3.92	26	6.69	3	0.78	16	4.18	17	4.44	90	23.50
Manuals	1	0.26	13	3.4	7	1.83	25	6.53	12	3.13	16	4.18	15	3.92	89	23.24
Documentary synthesis	0	0.00	6	1.6	8	2.09	36	9.40	3	0.78	10	2.61	11	2.87	74	19.32
Collective volume	0	0.00	1	0.3	5	1.31	20	5.22	6	1.57	18	4.70	12	3.13	62	16.19
Monograph	1	0.26	1	0.3	3	0.78	10	2.61	6	1.57	20	5.22	17	4.44	58	15.14
Essay	0	0.00	1	0.3	0	0.00	1	0.26	1	0.26	3	0.78	3	0.78	9	2.35
Treatise	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.26	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.26
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.52</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>9.14</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>10.18</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>30.81</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>8.09</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>21.67</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>19.58</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Fig. 7. The distribution of genre categories over decades

Nr.c rt.	SUBJECT	Reference work		Manual		Documentary		Treatise		Collective volume	Total
		Essay	work	Manual	graph	synthesis	Treatise	volume			
1	Information and documentation	-	9	25	8	39	1	4	<b>86</b>		
2	Public libraries	1	14	4	11	3	-	7	<b>40</b>		
3	Librarianship	2	7	19	-	1	-	7	<b>36</b>		
4	New information technologies	-	5	3	6	9	-	1	<b>24</b>		
5	University libraries	1	11	-	1	-	-	8	<b>21</b>		
6	History of books and printing	-	2	2	13	1	-	2	<b>20</b>		
7	Bibliology	2	1	-	-	-	-	15	<b>18</b>		
8	Cataloguing. Catalogues	-	-	12	1	1	-	-	<b>14</b>		
9	Classification. Indexation	-	3	8	1	-	-	-	<b>12</b>		
10	Reading	-	-	4	2	2	-	2	<b>10</b>		
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>281</b>		

Fig. 10. The distribution of thematic fields in relation to genre categories