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This general overview of the state of libraries and their resources in Croatia is based on personal professional experience. Having recently become an independent sovereign state, devastated by a war which has not come yet to an end, Croatia is faced with many challenges. Among them remains the vital question of the management of information and information systems. As custodian of a good portion of the national cultural heritage, Croatian librarianship in the approaching century of global interdependence must be more clearly defined and become more focused in order to provide guidelines for addressing the current and future needs of information sharing, resource sharing, and accessibility to Croatian National Collections. The National and University Library (NUL) has taken a leadership role in this area. The implementation of an integrated automated library system is in progress, but the infrastructure is still weak and this presents the biggest problem for searching the various bibliographic databases and making the national heritage accessible to the rest of the world.

#### **Introduction:**

In March 1992 I traveled to Zagreb, Croatia, on a grant from Washington State University. My plan was to meet with colleagues at the National and University Library (NUL), to survey their resources and their state of preservation, and to survey the bibliographic organization and control of library material, library automation, etc. The region's military and political unrest postponed my trip more than once before I was finally able to travel to Croatia. In the meantime I applied for a Fulbright Award and was selected. Thus, at the end of September 1992 I returned to Croatia to lecture in library science at the NUL.

The devastation wrought by the war in Croatia was everywhere. Libraries and their collections

had not been spared. Wheels had topped turning in most institutions. Remarkably, the NUL in Zagreb had closed only for one day since the beginning of the war in July 1991.

It is a mark of the new state's commitment the preservation of its cultural heritage that, in the midst of all this turmoil, construction on the new library building has continued as originally planned. In addition, work on the implementation of an integrated system, CROLIST, has been in full swing at the NUL. At the outbreak of the war the most precious NUL holdings--old material important for the national cultural heritage, e.g. early medieval and renaissance manuscripts and codices, incunabula, and the rich collection of old Croatian editions--were immediately stored and removed to a safe, remote location. Some of the valuable and notable manuscripts and books (dating from the 16th century to the first half of the 19th century) still remaining at the NUL have been put in special water- and fire-resistant metal trunks, purchased from Germany. Despite the backdrop of the war, everyday work appeared to proceed as usual, and librarians carried on their normal duties, all the time fearing the worst, preparing for the worst, but hoping for the best.

Librarians have traditionally guarded and preserved the written word. Now they watched helplessly as vast portions of the Croatian literary heritage were destroyed by the war. Dishearteningly, in many cases the only thing left to do was to record and collect data on the war's destruction; an enormous amount of energy has been and continues to be devoted to disseminating data and information gathered on the destruction and damage inflicted by the war. At least in this respect, 1992 was extremely productive in publishing activities as the NUL produced many valuable sources which document the war, its damage, and its horror.

As the emerging Eastern European nations are largely defined and validated by their cultural history, the destruction of their heritage assumes a political and emotional dimension alien to the American experience. It would, for example, be a blow to Americans to have their original copy of the Declaration of Independence destroyed--but such destruction alone could not erase that document from human consciousness. Croatian culture, however, is not widely disseminated or copied---for centuries, Croats have had to live and work under the control of peoples indifferent or actively hostile to their culture, and have therefore had to straggle to acquire the very means of cultural preservation and transmission that peoples with a long history of independence take for granted.

Much has already been lost through wars and other accidents of history. Now, at a time when civilization possesses unparalleled means of reproduction, transmission, and storage and the will to use them, it is bitterly ironic that in so many cases all we can do at present is bear witness to the destruction of so many priceless documents. It is no accident that, from the very start of the war, heavy weapons have been trained on Croatian libraries.

#### **Croatian Libraries on Target:**

If there was ever any doubt that Croatian libraries have been actively targeted, the data so painfully obtained should suffice to dispel it. Pub-fished guides are testimonies of intentional and barbaric destruction of Croatian literary heritage. Wisely, many precious and old rare books and manuscripts were stored elsewhere at the outbreak of the war in 1991. Art treasures were hidden and many successfully taken across the Adriatic Sea to Italy. But there was still great loss, as many libraries suffered complete damage or destruction. Some art was simply stolen by Serbs (e.g., The Bauer Art Collection from Vukovar).

The collected data chronicles the destruction of 210 libraries, including 10 research, 19 memorial, one monastery, 10 parish, 13 special, 33 public, 29 secondary school, and 93 primary school libraries. Some library holdings have been completely ruined, including the collection of the public library in Vinkovci and the collection of the Interuniversity Center in Dubrovnik. The buildings in which these

libraries were situated were burnt down. In addition, a number of school libraries and the library of the monastery in Cuntic suffered damage to their collections. The extent of the destruction of libraries and their holdings cannot yet be fully documented because many are located in areas which are still occupied?

As destruction raged through the country, librarians at the NUL vied to form logical, or at least attainable, priorities and to act on them. At the end of 1991 they had a well-defined goal but no adequate funding to achieve it.

#### **The Goal is Known, How Can it be Attained?:**

This is a historical moment for Croatia, a newly independent country with a young, emerging democracy. It is also a historical moment for librarianship in Croatia, a perfect time for the NUL to take a leadership role. Centralism, although it is not looked upon favorably by the Croats due to its roots with Communism, is required for the libraries in Croatia to avoid total chaos. Uniformity and standards are essential for information and resource sharing, not only within Croatia but across international borders. The NUL has started to develop the necessary standards, (subject headings, a manual for rare book cataloging, various thesauri, etc.), and to follow most of the international standards, codes, and rules (all of the International Standard for Book Description (ISBD) codes, Universal Machine Readable Cataloging format (UNIMARC), Universal Decimal Classification (UDC), US MARC codes for relator terms, country codes, language codes, geographic codes, etc.). Its main role is now to come forward, enforce them and communicate them to the rest of the libraries throughout Croatia. Another major task facing the NUL is to establish a library network with the remaining libraries in Croatia. A national on-line catalog was never produced--for better or worse---in the former Yugoslavia, so the NUL has to start practically from scratch.

The NUL's main goal is to make Croatia's rich literary heritage immediately accessible to researchers and scholars across international borders. And in the long run, modern technology offers many powerful and cost-effective means of overcoming many of Croatia's basic library problems. The applications that are being developed in ORACLE can be used by other libraries provided they have the necessary

technology and telecommunications. This is the first precondition for computerized library network in Croatia. But the nation's library infrastructure, which as never been strong, has suffered greatly from the war. Without some outside funding, le NUL will not be able to achieve its goals.

Another obstacle to the NUL's goals is the abrupt change in priorities for the some 210 libraries either partially damaged or totally destroyed during the war. They are faced with different challenges: to find new buildings and equipment for their operations and collections, repair the damage, clean and restore what they can of their materials, shelve them, assess the damage, seek donations, etc. For such libraries, automation has been pushed to a very low position on the list of priorities. And the ranks of such libraries is likely to grow, because the destruction is still taking place. Still, for the librarians of the NUL, bringing Croatia's whole system of libraries into the modern world remains the highest priority, and they hope to find the means to achieve it.

#### **The National and University Library:**

The National and University Library (NUL) is the central library of the Republic of Croatia. It has been functioning and expanding for nearly four centuries under various names. The NUL has occupied its present building since 1913. This monumental structure with its stylized elongated division of windows through the entire facade of the building is a masterpiece of a famous Croatian architect Rudolf Lubinsky (1912). Its elongated forms characteristic of secessionist design are used here to link the window openings, resulting in a monumentality akin to that of expressionist architecture. Its immense copper dome and impressive simplicity form a perfect link between secessionist and expressionist architecture.

Elegant yet simple carvings enhance the exterior. The "Allegories of Sciences" frieze, quite appropriate for a library, is placed high up on the back of the building. It is the work of a famous Croatian sculptor, Franges Mihanovic, who was trained in Vienna under Rodin (1901). The interior is as grand as the exterior. Well-known painters from the period contributed their works. An original fresco, "The Development of Croatian Culture," by the well-known painter Vlaho Bukovac, decorates the main reading room.

The NUL houses numerous fundamental works from all the fields of sciences and arts, many in languages other than Croatian. All of its holdings are public. Prominent among its 2,500,000 items are manuscripts, codices, old and rare books, not only Croatian but also those from other South-Slav nations. It is well known for its fine and unique special collections:

Rare Books and Manuscripts;  
Metropolitana (a remarkable collection of 60,000 titles owned by the Bishop Diocese of Zagreb which includes 150 codices, 242 incunabula, 1,470 titles  
from the 16th century, 3,000 from the 17th century, etc. Some manuscripts beautifully illuminated with scenes from the clerk's life and work, intended for law  
students in Bologna, are in the possession of the Zagreb Metropolitana Library.)  
Prints and Drawings Collection;  
Music Collection; and Collection of Official Publications (from foreign countries and international organizations).

The degree of professionalism among librarians at the NUL is very high. They all try to stay abreast of the latest developments in library science and are active in scholarly research and contribute to Croatian librarianship through publishing and presenting papers at national and international conferences. They are especially active in International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) related activities.

#### **The NUL's Mission:**

As the national library of Croatia, the NUL is the center of the Library and Information System of Croatia and the leader for the development of all library activities in Croatia. Processing of library materials has been automated, and the implementation of an integrated automated system, CROLIST, is in process. In addition, the NUL issues both the current and the retrospective national bibliography, and must pay special attention to preservation of library materials. As a national library---due to a depository law--the NUL is responsible for collecting and preserving:

All printed material published in Croatia;

Manuscripts and papers of prominent individuals in Croatia;  
 Manuscript material that relates to Croatia;  
 Works by Croatian authors published in other countries; and  
 Foreign works that relate to Croatia?

#### **Processing of the Library's Resources:**

The NUL wants to have an integrated automated system for all of its library functions in place and implemented by the end of 1994, when it plans to move into a new building. Both spatially and technologically, it is planned as a modern library with dual functions--a national and a university library. Toward this goal, library automation in the NUL has exhibited some dynamic developments in the last few years. These improvements have resulted in the reorganization of library material processing. By February 1991 the Authority Control department was established as a separate unit. Subsequently, other departments--Accession, Cataloging of Monographs, Bibliographies of Monographs and Journal Articles, and Classification--followed.

The NUL develops library applications in ORACLE, which is based on the relational database language, Structured Query Language or SQL, an ANSI standard 4th generation language. These applications are created by other libraries in Croatia as a precondition for a computerized library network of Croatia.

Cataloging rules are based on a manual prepared by Dr. Eva Verona, National Rules for Creation of Library Catalogues (equivalent to AACR2). ISBD rules for description and punctuation are also applied. Prussian rules were applied until 1975 for books and until 1978 for serials. For entering and creating bibliographic records in ORACLE, NIMARC (machine readable cataloging format developed and adopted by IFLA) is used. This is equivalent to USMARC.

For printed material, the Universal Decimal Classification (UDC) is applied. Since the book stacks are off-limits to patrons, the material is not shelved according to UDC numbers but rather by the so-called signature. The "signature" is a number given according to specific existing rules which are based on the format, i.e. size of an item, and which are assigned in a consecutive order (numerous currents) from a group of numbers. Books and journals are then shelved

according to the "signature." This means that the books are shelved and grouped together by their size, i.e. 16 to 20 cm, 20 to 25 cm, etc.

The only exception to this order is the reference collection, which is shelved in the open public area and available for browsing. Accordingly, the reference collection shelved by the UDC numbers. The use of BD, UDC, UNIMARC, and Verona's cataloging facilitates resource sharing. By following the universal standards and cataloging rules, Croatian library holdings will become accessible.

Bibliographic processing takes place in three major departments: Cataloging, Current National Bibliography, and Retrospective National Bibliography, which also includes manuscripts. In the National Bibliography, or the Croatia, separate volumes of monographs and journal articles. Since 1984, Cataloging in Publication (CIP) records have been provided for every item published in Croatia. The National Bibliography of Journal Articles includes individual detailed entries for every article, listed in alphabetical order by entry and arranged by main entry. In addition, they are arranged by broad subject categories to facilitate access, and also have subject and author indices. The bibliographies are published several times a year as needed; at present they exist only in printed format.

The NUL does not yet have acceptable subject headings for subject cataloging. Thus, subject headings are not yet being assigned to bibliographic records. However, authorized subject headings are being created and developed. When completed, the subject headings manual will follow an hierarchical order, with the corresponding subject headings, subdivisions, cross references, etc., and the subject authority file will be automated under the responsibility of the Authority Control Department. Subject headings will be added retroactively to the existing bibliographic records. It was a pleasant surprise to see that the Medical Library of the Medical School has simply adopted the Medical Subject Headings (MESH) published by the National Medical Library in Bethesda, MD. Presently, an application for serials control is being developed in CROLIST. A kardex--a manual catalog of serial holdings including decisions--has been used for serials control in the past.

#### **My Fulbright Project:**

The timing for my Fulbright Award was perfect. Upon my return in Fall 1992, the NUL's director asked me to direct and consult on the project of creating and entering bibliographic records for the rare printed material in CROLIST. This material represents the Croatian National Collection.

Preparations for creating bibliographic electronic records for this group of material started in the 1980s. Even then, the NUL's librarians were well aware that only by following internationally accepted standards could the rare printed material be cataloged and made accessible not only in Croatia but also throughout the international library community. Therefore, they accepted and followed the International Standard for the Bibliographic Description (ISBD) codes, in this case the International Standard for the Bibliographic Description of Antiquarian Book Material --ISBD(A).

Automation of the rare book collection was delayed until the beginning of 1990. Its start coincided with the publication of the second revised edition of ISBD(A). Fortunately, this also coincided with the implementation of the new integrated automated system CROLIST at the NUL. The bibliographic file in CROLIST had the features necessary to incorporate and index fields for rare book cataloging. However, these demands required modifications to the UNIMARC format. Therefore, the NUL suggested the addition of special genre terms codes for the old material to IFLA.

In Spring 1992, the original cataloging for rare books began in CROLIST. This also coincided with my return in the fall. The following months were filled with lecturing and consulting on descriptive cataloging and access points with strong emphasis on special files, working closely with the rare books and special collections librarian, and acting in the capacity of a consultant for the NUL's automated system and providing much needed professional assistance and experience.

The grant ended with a two-day seminar on "Standardization of Bibliographic Organization and Control for Rare and Old Printed Material" which was open to all rare books and special collections librarians in Croatia. Most were able to participate in spite of the fact that one third of Croatian territories were still occupied by

Serbian paramilitary forces. My seminar paper focused on the development of American rules, standards, and manuals for bibliographic organization and control of rare and old printed material. So that all the librarians can benefit from this seminar, the papers will be published by the NUL.

### **International Permanent Exhibition of Publications:**

During my sojourn in Zagreb, I was able to visit some other libraries and institutes in the city. While visiting the Information and Sciences Institute I learned about the International Permanent Exhibition of Publications (ISIP). The ISIP is unique among the exhibiting institutions of the world in that it is aimed at presenting and promoting world literature from all spheres of human knowledge and activities. Since its establishment in 1951, ISIP has obtained, processed, and exhibited more than 220,000 books and 10,000 periodical titles. In this way, ISIP has become an unequaled exhibiting collection of foreign publications, providing permanent access to sources of relevant information for scientists, professionals, and students.

The exhibiting collection of ISIP is furnished by more than 1,000 publishers from some 30 countries on five continents. Publishers are expected to send their publications free of charge. In return, ISIP bears all the expenses regarding processing and exhibiting of publications?

### **Conclusion:**

The groundwork has been laid for a National Bibliographic Database and planning is in its final stages. However, many obstacles remain. Croatia has yet to emerge completely free from the war. One third of its territory is still occupied and is inaccessible. While the NUL is progressing with the implementation of its integrated automated library system CROLIST, many libraries are still coping with the challenges of damage and destruction inflicted on their buildings and holdings. These libraries also experienced heavy losses of expensive and scarce equipment. They are in desperate need of new quarters, rifles, and equipment. The possibility of realizing a high degree of automation, which had seemed very real in Spring 1991, now appears at best to be a decade



away, as the realities of wartime resource allocation have left most libraries lacking even the most basic elements, such as personal computers.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Sciences has become quite aware, perhaps even more so during this war, of the need for information systems and the management of information. Global interdependence has become a fact of life. As a result, CARNet was developed. CARNet, the Croatian Academic and Research Network, is a project initiated and financed by the Ministry of Sciences whose aim is to build the communication, computer, and information infrastructure necessary for academic and research needs. CARNet uses the TCP/IP (Transmission Control Protocol/ Internet Protocol) which was chosen because it provides three main network services: electronic mail, remote login, and remote file transfer. The network has four main nodes in four university cities (Rijeka, Split, Osijek, and Zagreb).

The first development phase is finished. The next step is to ensure more government funding as well as some foreign investment. But construction of an infrastructure is not the only aim of the endeavor. The real job is still ahead. CARNet is envisioned as a basis for the creation of information systems and joint collaboration among specialists from various fields. It will provide access to a vast quantity of world information for people in Croatia. At the same time, it will enable them to share resources among themselves and with the rest of the world. CARNet has obtained the right to use the intercontinental line which connects Europe and the United States. The ultimate goal is to make CARNet available to everyone who needs it.

For the NUL, the main aim remains to make its hidden treasures accessible across international borders. Due to valid reasons--enumerated throughout this article---public access to CROLIST has not yet been made available via CARNet, but much energy is being focused in this direction.

Laila Miletic-Vejzovic traveled to Zagreb, Croatia in March of 1992, to spend four weeks at the National and University Library. The travel was funded by the International Program Development Office (IPDO) grant, awarded by Washington State University. During the same year, at the end of September 1992, she traveled

again to Zagreb, Croatia, as a Fulbright Scholar to lecture in library science at the National and University Library.