Bulgarian Libraries: The State of Affairs
by Sophia K. Jordan

Mankind is embarking upon the age of the information society. Information has become a strategic resource and an object of state policy. It underlies progress in science, education, culture and economic life. World experience has shown that, when different countries seek ways out of crises, they devote extreme attention to the development of libraries and to the implementation of new information technologies. Bulgaria is facing such issues today. -- Ministry of Culture Open Society Fund, Sofia, Bulgaria. Preface to Building and Development of a National Library Information Network (NALIN) 1993 Draft.

For the last three years, the Commission on Preservation and Access has been engaged in various initiatives to increase awareness and concern among European scholars about the problem of decaying library collections. The major objective in the Commission's international effort is to encourage and coordinate cooperative preservation programs in countries with minimal or no preservation activities as a way of enriching American scholarship. In March 1994 I had the opportunity to travel to Bulgaria to assess preservation activities in Bulgarian libraries and to report my findings to the Commission. During that month, I learned not only about the state of preservation, but also about political and economic realities, the historical development of libraries and the nature of scholarly resources and communication. I would like to share some of the more interesting observations of Bulgaria's library history.

Politics and economics play a role in a country's institutional evolution. In this regard, the past and future are no different. Bulgaria's political history has been punctuated by a series of foreign occupations, each of them with an effect on some aspect of libraries, intellectual history, access to information, and subsequently, scholarly communication.

Prior to the Ottoman occupation, Bulgaria was a gateway for the transmission of culture and learning from Byzantium to the West. Monastic libraries became centers for learning and culture by the ninth century; and by the tenth, a system for transmitting manuscripts, much like an interlibrary loan operation, had developed. In the jargon of today, texts were made available and accessible to the West.

Aspirations on their Way to Reality
by Robert C. Miller

A great library is founded on a vision and the aspirations which flow from that vision. In its more than 150 years, Notre Dame has formally expressed these aspirations a number of times. In some instances, these have amounted to rhetoric and not much more. Perhaps the most successful was the vision expressed in the "Summa" campaign in 1960 for the new library building and realized in the Memorial (now Theodore M. Hesburgh) Library which opened in 1963. Subsequent capital campaigns, developed largely without library involvement, have been less successful in library terms, despite the best efforts of many dedicated individuals.

The first formal, comprehensive Library Development Plan, issued in 1980, called for major funding increases without regard to source of income. In the following years, the Libraries' endowment did grow significantly, although almost exclusively for acquisitions. In addition, the plan did trigger the funding for the Libraries' automation efforts through the benefaction of Trustee John T. Ryan, Jr. Unfortunately, however, the impact of the plan on the regular University funding base of the Libraries was minimal.

The latest expression of library aspirations was initiated by the Final Report of the Colloquy for the Year 2000 and the earlier report of its Committee on Academic Life. These focused major attention on the Libraries continued on page 2
Bulgarian continued from page 1

This network of scholarly movement all but ended during the Ottoman occupation of Bulgaria. During this period, many monasteries were destroyed or closed, and scribes fled to the neighboring countries of Serbia, Moldavia and Ukraine. Four centuries of Ottoman occupation had other more subtle effects on libraries and scholarly communication. The most significant among these was that it delayed the development of both a national literature and a print culture. It would not be until the 17th and 18th century that a national literature was allowed to form inside the country. More interestingly, while movable type and the development of printing and publishing were well established in the West by the 1500s, neither would come to Bulgaria until 1876, and then only after American and British intellectuals had influenced Bulgaria’s educational and library systems. The interconnectedness of political regimes, intellectual culture and technological change is no less evident in the life of libraries. Indeed, it was this coincidence of facts which helped explain why the Bulgarian literary and scholarly corpus lasted as a manuscript tradition well into the 19th century.

After 1,000 years of foreign occupation, Bulgaria won its independence from the Ottoman Turks in 1878. In 1879 the country was divided between North Bulgaria, with its capital in Sofia, and Eastern Rumelia, remaining a Turkish province, with its capital in Plovdiv. Each was to receive its first national library. In 1885, after Eastern Rumelia was reunited with the Bulgarian Principality, the Ivan Vazov National Library in Plovdiv was converted to a public universal library. This made the Cyril and Methodius Library in Sofia the only national library for Bulgaria.

At the same time that a national library was established, the first university was founded. Of the 30 universities in Bulgaria, all but one have been established since 1960. The oldest and largest university library is that at the University of Sofia. Founded in 1888, it is one of six research libraries in Bulgaria. Because research libraries and universities developed late and independently in Bulgaria, a very different relationship evolved. The great research collections are not housed in university libraries, but in the National Library. This relationship continues today, however, under a very different political climate.

The time between liberation from Ottoman occupation and the creation of a Soviet State in Bulgaria was short. Administered by the Ministry of Culture, libraries were unified philosophically and methodologically and developed into a highly centralized library system. The National Library in Sofia was charged not only with articulating a policy governing the organization, structure and mission for all libraries, but also with coordinating every core function of a library: how to classify, organize and shelve collections; how to construct bibliographic descriptions; what items to collect and to weed. While standardizing and coordinating activities were desirable for the mass of unconnected Bulgarian libraries, the new political order contrived to control all aspects of a library’s operation and in so doing affected libraries, learning and scholarship. The most obvious example of how a library affects scholarly communication is through its acquisition and collection development policies. Such policies not only had a negative effect on intellectual access, but also on the development of librarianship as a discipline. On the one hand, such control prevented librarians from developing a theory of collection development, a concept with which Bulgarian library science education is currently struggling. On the practical side, it affected the evolution of certain core library functions and/or operations. Some library functions have an effect, albeit a more subtle one, on the history of learning and scholarly communication. Let me point to a few that surfaced as a result of the evolution of Bulgarian libraries.

Libraries in Bulgaria are still paper-based manual operations, with the card catalog the only point of access to closed but circulating collections. Since there is no standardization for transliteration, separate card catalogs are maintained for each of the different alphabets. Often there are at least four such catalogs, one for Bulgarian Cyrillic, one for Russian Cyrillic, one for other Cyrillic and one for Roman. Only the Bulgarian Cyrillic catalog is divided by author, title and subject. Bulgarian bibliographic descriptions are unified on the basis of several standards known as the "Bulgarian State Standards." Shelf location is indicated on the catalog card by a system of roman numerals and accession numbers. In order to locate a title, the patron must copy the shelf location (accession number) and reference from the particular alphabetical card catalog. In addition to being shelved in accession order, the collection is further divided on the shelf by size in order to make the best use of limited space. The bottom two shelves are for oversized materials, the four middle shelves for middle quarto and octavo and the top two shelves for smaller volumes. Shelves are read from left to right beginning with the bottom shelf and continuing to the next shelf up from the left.

Such practical decisions, however, are not without implications both for the development of other core library functions and for the type of learning that takes place when information is organized around subjects and browsing takes place. Specifically, it explains why subject headings and authority control have not developed in Bulgarian librarianship. Concomitantly, the development of subject headings and subject classification in conjunction with shelf position would suggest an organization of knowledge. Whether intentional or accidental, this would mean a hierarchy of knowledge. Clearly, any such suggestion would be in opposition to a Marxist philosophy as interpreted and implemented in the "Methodological Plan" for libraries. For the American library experience, physical proximity and intellectual proximity are not mutually exclusive. Some would argue, myself included, that for an academic library which professes to educate, the relationship should not be considered accidental.

When the Soviet State collapsed in 1989, not only the country, but also libraries were asked to define their
mission for the first time. Of the approximately 8,854 libraries in Bulgaria, 626 are research libraries consisting of a national library, 28 libraries at higher educational institutions, 570 special libraries and 27 regional libraries. The remaining 8,228 are public libraries. In addition to these officially recognized libraries, over 200 monastic libraries exist independently of any library department within the government.

While the collapse of the Soviet State provides for a rare opportunity, it has also produced innumerable special interest groups. Due to this and the absence of a tradition of cooperation and social programs, no political consensus, administrative strategy or set of priorities has evolved from the new regime. The members of Parliament do not support the cabinet. The legislature is not unified. Even if it could ratify laws there is no mechanism to enforce them. It is not clear what the legal status is for libraries and which body is exactly responsible for their administration. The Bulgarian political structure is unable to make libraries a priority in their political and social restructuring. Many libraries have closed since 1989 and more face the threat of closing.

This political situation has fractured the administration, organization and coordination of the library structure in Bulgaria. In order to build a more cohesive library system, a Council of Directors was formed in 1993. While no right of administrative decisions exists, the Council works cooperatively to influence library issues. Just as in the past, the future will be shaped not only by political and economic change, but by technological developments as well. But to talk about these is to write another article.

Assistant Director for Library Systems Appointed
by Robert C. Miller

In light of the rapidly changing fiscal and technological environment of the University Libraries, on July 20 I announced a reorganization of the Libraries' administrative structure, reconfiguring the previous assistant director for systems and administrative services position into two assistant director positions, one for administrative services, planning and budget and the other for library systems. Bob Wittorf, well known in the Libraries, will be continuing as assistant director for administrative services, planning and budget. Less well known is the new Assistant Director for Library Systems James (Jim) Wruck. Jim, a "double Domer" with B.S. and M.S. degrees in electrical engineering, has served in a variety of capacities in computing in the University since 1970, including a stint as director of computing between 1982 and 1988. Most recently he has been director of systems and operations in the Office of University Computing. In his various positions Jim has, in addition to his other accomplishments, worked closely and effectively with the Libraries in bringing up and maintaining our current NOTIS system. For several years he has served as a formal member of NIPCOM (NOTIS Implementation and Planning Committee) in the Libraries.

Professionally, Jim has served in various official positions at the national level with the Association of Computing Machinery, especially in its Special Interest Group on University and College Computing Services; for a number of years he organized its annual Computer Center Management Symposium. In addition, he served with EDUCOM (the Interuniversity Communications Council), the National Telecommunications Task Force and the Snowmass Coordinating Board. Locally, he has held offices with the Knute Rockne Kiwanis, St. Anthony's Parish and St. Joseph's High School, where he has two daughters in attendance.

Jim thus brings to his new position a broad range of technical and organizational skills. There are many challenges confronting the Libraries as we deal with the implications of a rapidly evolving technology and the distinct likelihood of a migration to a new overall system in the coming years. I am sure I speak for all in welcoming Jim to the Libraries as we look forward to working with him in using technology to support continuous improvements in the information services we provide to the Notre Dame community.
"Done died an' woke up in Heaven,"

thought King Solomon Gillis, the protagonist in "City of Refuge," by Rudolph Fisher, as this black fugitive from the South emerged from the subway and viewed Harlem for the first time. The Harlem Renaissance got its final name -- first called the Negro Renaissance, or the time of the New Negro -- because it signified the cultural and spiritual place of blacks who were producing art and music and literature during the 1920s and 1930s. "It was the informing spirit," Arna Bontemps, a participant, said to me when I interviewed him many years ago; and it was in Harlem where a myriad of events developed to help define the period: from 1910 to 1920 the black population in New York City increased by 60 percent; returning soldiers from "The Great War" were no longer content to be dismissed as second-class citizens and a sense of racial pride was building among blacks; businesses flourished, especially real estate, for a period in the 1920s; there was a healthy black press with newspapers and magazines; Marcus Garvey enthralled the people with his "Back to Africa" movement; "Shuffle Along," the all-black produced and performed musical, was a hit; and the race riots of 1919 propelled people to protest the mistreatment of blacks. A movement was afoot, for the artists proclaimed their African heritage, and the wider world became aware of writers who made up the Harlem Renaissance: Claude McKay, Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, Nella Larsen, Jean Toomer (a man), Jessie Redmon Fauset, Walter White, Rudolph Fisher, Wallace Thurman and Countee Cullen, to name only a portion of the literary artists who wrote an array of novels, poems, plays and short stories.

The Harlem Renaissance as a movement was protest, part-assimilationist; for, like many artistic happenings, the people who were a part of it were primarily middle-class, and the older members, the encouragers of the young, like Alain Locke, who edited The New Negro, first for Survey Graphic (1 March 1925), and James Weldon Johnson, expressed the notion of blacks contributing to the current mainstream culture in a special and contrasting yet easily integrated literature. That is why a white man, like Carl Van Vechten, writer, photographer, _bon vivant_, was able to make Harlem a part of his life and celebrate the writers, musicians and artists who frequented his luxurious apartment on Central Park South.

Langston Hughes, in a famous essay, "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain" (Nation, 23 June 1926:692-94) wrote, "We younger Negro artists who create now intend to express our individual dark-skinned selves without fear or shame. If white people are pleased we are glad. If they are not, it doesn't matter ... If colored people are pleased we are glad. If they are not, it doesn't matter either." Yet, he, like Zora Neale Hurston, accepted money for years from a white patron, so the movement was not a pure black one; or, one might say, sometimes the artists played a role to aid in the practicalities of daily living. To try defining a particular period can be a dangerous thing!

My own interests in female writers has led me to explore what some call "minor" writers of the period, excepting Hurston, because so many of these writers produced poetry that appeared only in periodicals. Anne Spencer has had her poetry gathered under one cover, along with a sketch of her life, and this is a fine contribution for the modern reader. Some of the other writers will be found in anthologies and in the periodicals of their time of writing: Helene Johnson; Angelina Weld Grimké; Gwendolyn Bennett; and Dorothy West, writer of short stories, a novel (published in 1948), and currently alive, still charming scholars with her halting tales of nearly everyone who participated in the Harlem Renaissance.

For a people wishing to correct the sight of themselves through undistorted lenses, the writers of the Harlem Renaissance produced a variety of material that caused the reading public to stand back and agree that there was richness and complexity to be found in black America. Harold Cruse, in his highly touted (deservedly so) book, _The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual_ (1967), called the Harlem Renaissance unfocused, a time of "inspired aimlessness." For the most part, people create a period _after_ it has happened, and I tend to agree more with the first chronicler of the Harlem Renaissance, Nathan I. Huggins: "Whatever else, the era produced a phenomenal race consciousness and race assertion, as well as an unprecedented number of poems, stories, and works of art by black people." It was, as many of the writers tried to express, a time to give the public readings that reflected the informing spirit of blackness, the cultural _temenos_ that sustained the uniqueness of black life, as it drew its lifelines from Africa, across the terrible seas of the "middle passage," to the agrarian life of the slave on to the cities that invigorated but also sapped the spirit: it was all there and the black writers knew they had to be the interpreters of their own lives, for better, for worse but in their own words, their own sounds and tonalities.

_Margaret Perry_
Professor Emerita, Valparaiso University
Libraries' Staff Member Honored with Special Presidential Award

On May 16 Notre Dame President Edward A. Malloy, C.S.C., presented Charlene Billups, a member of the Acquisitions Department of the University Libraries, with a 1994 Special Presidential Award at the annual dinner which honors the University’s staff. Recognizing many years of dedicated service to the University Libraries, the citation reads as follows:

For more than twenty years she has been exemplary in representing University values. She is bright, hard working, self-sufficient and can always be relied upon to give the little extra to get the job done right. She played a major role in planning and implementing the NOTIS Acquisitions System in the University Libraries. She helped analyze and evaluate the capabilities of the new system, wrote procedures, designed work flows, developed training manuals and provided the Library with training. For her commitment to excellence and service to Notre Dame we recognize Charlene Billups.

Latin American Specialist Receives 1994 Foik Award

Rafael E. Tarrago, subject librarian for Latin American studies, was honored with this year’s Rev. Paul J. Foik, C.S.C., Award at the Presidential Dinner on May 17. The award recognizes significant contributions by a library faculty member to library service, to the Notre Dame community or to the library profession through personal scholarship or involvement in professional associations. The citation reads:

At Notre Dame only eight years, this lively librarian has had tangible impact on the level of service in the Hesburgh Library. Researcher as well as bibliographer, he knows from personal experience the needs of his faculty colleagues and pursues them assiduously. International in background and wideranging in scope, he has used his skill not only to build a better Latin American collection, but also to find resources for its support.
Aspirations continued from page 1

and heightened general campus awareness of their needs. Subsequently, in September 1993 the President established the Ad Hoc Committee on University Libraries, under the chairmanship of Vice President and Associate Provost Roger Schmitz. The 18 members, including faculty, staff and students, examined in great detail the current situation of the Libraries in terms of peer comparisons, personnel, collections, equipment and technology. Its Final Report, presented to the Academic Council on May 6, 1994, has been published in Notre Dame Report, Number 2, dated September 16. In addition to providing a wealth of information, it presents 14 specific recommendations to bring the Libraries to the level necessary for the achievement of the University's mission and vision. It calls for major increases, in particular with respect to personnel, technology and resources. All faculty should give the report careful attention.

In the coming year the Academic Council and the Provost's Advisory Committee will be reviewing the Report and its recommendations within the context of the overall priorities identified in the Colloquy 2000 process. While it is clear that there are many critical areas that must be addressed, library needs must receive priority consideration. A multi-year concrete funding program to address the issues raised in the report must be put in place. All the recommendations require prompt attention. Particularly critical is the matter of space in the Hesburgh Library; without relief soon, the Libraries will not be able to handle the increases in staffing and collections that are at the core of the Committee's recommendations. Indeed, it is projected that within three years even the current rate of growth will require sacrificing a significant portion of net seating capacity, a step that has been avoided up to now.

The concern and understanding revealed by the Report of the Ad Hoc Committee has been heartening to the Libraries. But for the aspirations it entailed to become reality, for the report to be meaningful to the faculty and students of Notre Dame, it must be acted upon, and soon. It is a critical factor in the academic success of Notre Dame.

Access: news from the University Libraries of Notre Dame (ISSN 0743-2151) is published quarterly and is distributed to the University community. It is available by subscription upon written request.

Editor: Mary C. English

Access Editorial Committee:
J. Douglas Archer
Katharina Blackstead, chair
Melodie Eiteljorge (ex officio)
Mary C. English

Access (ISSN 0743-2151)
University Libraries
University of Notre Dame
Room 221
Theodore M. Hesburgh Library
Notre Dame, Indiana 46556-5629
(219) 631-5252

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Notre Dame, IN
Permit No. 10

To: