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KOLESNYKOVA T. O.

Editor-in-Chief,

PhD Social Sciences, Communication,

Senior researcher,

Director of the Scientific Library,

Ukrainian State University of Science and Technologies (Dnipro, Ukraine),

e-mail: t.o.kolesnykova@ust.edu.ua, ORCID 0000-0002-4603-4375

The New Evolutionary Trajectory of University Libraries: The Editor-in-Chief's View

The paper provides a brief overview of the events/issues that the authors of the 7(2022) issue of the UniLibNSD journal cover in their articles. The authors' many issues are highlighted through evidence of the nature of these challenges, as well as theoretical and concrete examples of how to address them. At a time of tectonic shifts in global geopolitics, climate change, digital development, the fight against the COVID 2019 pandemic, social transformations, librarians have witnessed russia's full-scale aggression against Ukraine and against world democracy, including the terrible destruction of Ukrainian libraries and archives by russian terrorists who continue their fierce offensive against the world's documentary heritage. That is why most of the authors challenge traditional concepts of librarianship, argue that libraries are not neutral, and call on the world's librarians to take active measures to prevent genocide, anti-racist and anti-oppressive practices for the benefit of both users and the profession itself.

Keywords: university libraries; journal "UniLibNSD"; modern challenges for librarians; evolutionary trajectory of university libraries; Ukraine

Dear readers, authors, and colleagues,

We were looking forward to the new (VII) issue of the journal "University Library at a New Stage of Social Communications Development. Conference Proceedings". Full-format papers were selected, reviewed and recommended by the members of the international editorial board of the similarly-named conference (UniLibNSD-2022). The issue is extremely relevant and somewhat unusually rich in the authors' own reflections on the tragic events in Ukraine caused by the Russian military aggression and genocide of the Ukrainian people.

The international conference was held October 6–7, 2022 at the Ukrainian State University of Science and Technologies (Dnipro, Ukraine) in a hybrid format.

The theme of the conference 2022 – "The era of library transformations and the new ecology of life", planned in mid-2021, turned out to be extremely relevant for both Ukraine and the whole world. The International Organizing Committee dreamed that the participants would highlight current issues and hear inspiring answers from theorists and practitioners of the library and information science in the context of the challenges of the COVID 2019 pandemic.

But russia's cruel and insidious war against Ukraine with the intention of seizing its territories, destroying the Ukrainian people as a nation, destroying its culture, language, education, science has brought an additional urgent focus – what is or can be library policy and library measures to prevent genocide in any country in the world, anti-racist and anti-oppressive practices for the benefit of users and the profession itself.

Ukraine is a country located in the centre of Europe. Dnipro, the space capital of Ukraine and a city of one million people, is now a frontline city, which since February 24, 2022 has been living and working hard under air raid sirens, missile attacks, constant threats to human life, destruction of buildings and critical infrastructure, frequent lack of light, heat, communication...

That is why the organizers were not sure whether they would have enough strength and capacity to hold a high-quality event and whether it would be postponed to the post-war period. But it was decided to work, because these are the lessons we will learn and which will contribute to the development of the world library and information business, world democracy.

And we did it together!!! And, of course, it is impossible not to thank the heroic Armed Forces of Ukraine for this!

The main organizer of the conference is the scientific library of the Ukrainian State University of Science and Technologies (until 2022 Dnipro National University of Railway Transport named after Academician V. Lazaryan). Co-organizers and partners of the conference: the Nazarbayev University Library (the Republic of Kazakhstan), European Network of Open Education Librarians (SPARC Europe), Ukrainian Library Association (Ukraine).

The UniLibNSD 2022 conference, as in the last two years, was held in a hybrid format. Of course, most of the participants (almost 70%) were present online, and they were pleased to note the quality of communication, professional English-Ukrainian and Ukrainian-English translations, friendly, optimistic and relaxed atmosphere of the event. Participants from 17 countries made a creative contribution with reports, discussions and questions: Belgium, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Canada, the Netherlands, Germany, Poland, the Republic of Kazakhstan, Slovenia, the United States of America, Hungary, Ukraine, the Philippines, France, the Czech Republic.

In the reports, discussions and articles, the participants focused on the bright surge of changes in the activities of university libraries, related organizations and communities of different countries as a response to the COVID 2019 pandemic and Russia's attempts to terrorize the Ukrainian people and the whole world with the threat of destruction of people, nature, tangible and intangible objects...

Undoubtedly, most of the articles in the UniLibNSD-2022 yearbook are a reflection on the war and a presentation of the unique experience of librarians of higher education institutions of Ukraine, which was and is being obtained at a terrible price.

But the global background against which the transformational activities of university libraries in different countries are unfolding today confirms that they are very responsive and receptive to rapidly changing trends in technological development, social challenges, as well as to emerging paradigms of teaching, learning and research. And this library activity depends not only on the preservation and transmission of fixed knowledge, but also on the co-creation of new knowledge.

The evolutionary trajectory of the university library in the historical context in recent years demonstrates a bright surge of changes caused by digitalization. The effects of digital transformation and communication related to social spheres, including education and serious threats to human life and public health, are changing the thinking and roles of libraries.

We realize that the ecosystems in which we work, study, research and spend our personal time are connected to other ecosystems. And the new ecology of ecosystems guides us not only to introduce innovations in library and information activities, but also to extend the life of those resources that we already possess, to be creative in how we give a "second life" to valuable information from library collections, to repurpose and reorient our spaces, to rethink and transform library services in the context of eco-conscious life.

In times of great upheaval and change, librarians stand for an ecosystem of products and services for the benefit of everyone, their communities and nature!

And this thesis was present in each of the 64 keynote speeches and poster presentations. It was from them that the editorial board selected, reviewed and recommended 23 full-length papers for "University Library at a New Stage of Social Communications Developments. Conference Proceedings".

This report attempts to provide a snapshot of the developments/challenges that the authors of the UniLibNSD journal have highlighted in their articles:

- Ethical Component of Library Competences Design;
- Safety is One of the Most Important Component Systems of Digital Competencies in Wartime Conditions
- Reorientation of library space and library services and formation of eco-environment under martial law in Ukraine;
- While librarians generally report favourable beliefs about Open Access (OA), most institutions lack OA policies, resulting in a fragmented approach to open content of all types and less than coherent institutional strategies;
- Improved understanding of university communities (faculty, students, librarians) about the development of distance learning, open educational resources and the new role of university libraries in these processes;
- Determination of the level of satisfaction of library users with its virtual services, taking into account (as a consequence of digital transformation) the increase in user outreach and decrease in the distance of communication with them (if there is access to documents, especially open access);
- Artificial intelligence (AI) is being increasingly embedded in academic libraries tools and services. For example, the introduction of AI in virtual reference services provides a new online model for libraries with the help of chatbots;
- Virtual communication, social media contribute to the development of library cooperation at the university, national, and international levels, including research on digital civic engagement and overcoming language barriers in open educational resources;
- Leadership communication, a new type of leadership with new sets of skills and orientations;
- Restoring the emotional balance of Ukrainian librarians during the full-scale war between russia and Ukraine;
- Reflections on returning to the physical office after a long period of virtual work.

The authors' thoughts on these and many other issues are highlighted through evidence of the nature of these challenges, as well as theoretical and concrete examples of how to address them. We hope that you will find useful ideas and tools that you can apply in your libraries.

At a time of tectonic shifts in global geopolitics, climate change, digital development, the fight against the COVID 2019 pandemic, social transformations, librarians have witnessed russia's full-scale aggression against Ukraine and against world democracy, including the terrible destruction of Ukrainian libraries and archives by russian terrorists who continue their fierce offensive against the world's documentary heritage.

That is why today critical librarianship, which challenges traditional concepts of librarianship, actively tries to assert that libraries are not neutral, and calls on librarians to take active measures to prevent genocide, anti-racist and anti-oppressive practices for the benefit of both users and the profession itself.

Thus, most of the authors of UniLibNSD emphasize that the library and information community shall protect the rights to the highest human values throughout the world, democratic rights, value the diversity of cultures, support national education and science.

Dear readers and authors, members of the international editorial board hope that the new (VII) issue of the journal "University Library at a New Stage of Social Communications Development. Conference Proceedings" will focus your attention on the most important lessons,

practices, services, competencies, opportunities that we have acquired recently and that we will take with us in the post-coronavirus and post-Russian-Ukrainian war period. This is a new evolutionary trajectory of university libraries in the world.

The international editorial board highly appreciates the contribution of each author. We sincerely thank our readers for their interest in UniLibNSD, our reviewers for their competence, delicacy and goodwill.

We sincerely wish our partners and readers success and confidence in the future! We invite you to cooperation.

КОЛЕСНИКОВА Т. О.

Головна редакторка,

канд. наук із соціальних комунікацій, с.н.с.,

директорка Наукової бібліотеки,

Український державний університет науки і технологій (Дніпро, Україна),

e-mail: t.o.kolesnykova@ust.edu.ua, ORCID 0000-0002-4603-4375

Нова еволюційна траєкторія університетських бібліотек : погляд головного редактора

У роботі подано короткий огляд подій/проблем, які висвітлюють у своїх статтях автори 7(2022) випуску журналу "UniLibNSD". Численні проблеми авторів висвітлюються через докази сутності цих викликів, а також теоретичні та конкретні приклади їх вирішення. У час тектонічних зрушень у світовій геополітиці, зміни клімату, цифрового розвитку, боротьби з пандемією COVID 2019, соціальних трансформацій бібліотекарі стали свідками повномасштабної агресії Росії проти України та світової демократії, зокрема жакливого знищення українських бібліотек та архівів російськими терористами, які продовжують свій запеклий наступ на світову документальну спадщину. Саме тому більшість авторів кидають виклик традиційним концепціям бібліотечної справи, стверджують, що бібліотеки не є нейтральними, і закликають бібліотекарів світу до активних дій щодо запобігання геноциду, антирасистських та антирепресивних практик на благо як користувачів, так і самої професії.

Ключові слова: університетські бібліотеки; журнал "UniLibNSD"; сучасні виклики для бібліотекарів; еволюційна траєкторія університетських бібліотек; Україна

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