

**THE BOOK OF THE FIRST DECADES OF THE ALBANIAN STATE:
PHENOMENA AND LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE PROBLEMS
ACCORDING TO THE RETROSPECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY NATIONAL
LIBRARY OF ALBANIA**

Dr. Ermelinda Kashah

"E'qrem Çabej" University, Gjirokastra, Albania

Abstract: The library and information science defines the National Bibliography as the only witness of the book part of the national memory, which aims to bring relative information about the contents of the collections. In this joint connection, the national memory is based on two important moments: the existence of the complete national collection, which also means the entire process for securing and preserving it and the methodical and professional bibliographic description for public use in the present day and in the future. The national bibliography prepares the inventory without prejudging the values of the document because this process will then serve to determine what will be included/called national heritage and property. The bibliography simultaneously stores the necessary resources for the library activity, but also the historical resources for future knowledge. The objectives of bibliography are: finding and grouping. The bibliography not only completes the national memory in the field of publications, but it also paves the way for the recognition and multifaceted study of this heritage in the field of their content, the set of themes of publications, influence and reception, geography of works and publications, socio-political, cultural consequences, statistical studies and many, many others, which certainly have the right effect when the library criteria and standards are correctly applied.

I will try to bring the arguments from the National Bibliography of the Retrospective Book, the period 1913 - 1944, that is, after the construction of the Albanian administrative state began and progressed forward.

Key words: library, importance, bibliography

If we were to draw a very modest picture of this period, we would have to emphasize that since independence was proclaimed in a time of crisis, the political structure that was given to the state did not come as a result of either a preparation or a careful implementation that could had given it greater opportunities. This hasty state construction seems to have been a product of political, economic and social instability. The entire follow-up period is characterized by a mixture of systems, views, ancestral native cultures with those borrowed or not borrowed from outside, with efforts for innovation, stability, and, not infrequently, also for authenticity.

Even if you notice the subject matter and nature of the publications of about three decades, the dilemma is clearly visible. Albanian society seeks its geographical and cultural position, seeks its maturity, and seeks to break away from the East without separating from it, to get closer to the West without joining it. In the cultural and media world of those decades, the determination to keep an eye on the current developments in the non-Albanian world, the strength to identify problems and needs, the skill and the ability to distinguish priorities stand out. Laying professional foundations in many areas of life and knowledge through publications means this. There is now a thematic expansion, along with a more advanced substance and content. In the

conditions of the existence of the Albanian state, of an independent state life, of distinct cultural, educational, economic, legal changes, a more diverse range of publications in thematic and form is distinguished.

The collections of this period do not in themselves constitute an archive and that's it. They are an expression of the further development of the publications, where their progressive growth, the expansion of the subject matter, the attempt to cover all areas of social and mental life, in the conditions of the existence of the Albanian state, to some extent also with a tendency to a publishing policy (especially where it can organize and influence more visibly such as administrative life, jurisprudence, politics, education, the military, etc.); censorship, yes, for certain.

To illustrate the set of themes that the bibliography of the period 1913 - 1944 reflects, I am giving quite a few statistics. The chapter on state and law, which includes legislation, organization of central and local administration, contains about 550 published titles. There are about 120 bibliographic entries on folklore. 150 titles on the organization of education and the educational system, school regulations, lesson plans and programs, not to mention hundreds of textbooks that for bibliographic effect are thematically distributed throughout the volume. Over 250 publications summarize works on linguistics and philology; here we also include primer texts, grammars, etc. Mathematics is represented by 50 items / publications. About 1000 titles include Albanian and foreign literature, as well as studies on them. I am not mentioning here those creations and publications that remain and will remain the pinnacle of Albanian literature with representatives such as Fishta and Harapi, Noli and Konica, great Frashëri brothers, Koliqi and Migjeni, Kuteli present among us; or a corpus of priceless wealth such as 'Visaret e Kombit' (The treasures of the nation).¹

The quantitative and qualitative progress of private, religious and social institution publishing houses and entities is noticeable. Even in the publications, the two main goals of the Albanian society and the state can be observed: the protection and strengthening of the state, the public and state administration and its organizations, at the same time the efforts for civilization with one direction towards democracy, often not without internal contradictions or introduced by domestic and foreign situations.

Opinion was more, even much more, created and animated by the press, while the social and alternative book was created very slowly, even with a lot of emptiness. Perhaps this is also one of the reasons that today quite a few summary volumes are being published with the most representative creativity of the journalism of the time. The present day's reader instinctively feels that until today he lacked organized knowledge of the "public opinion" of that period. This, too, remains an expression of past - present - even future preservation and connection between the publications, the bibliography that has been used and the national memory.

In this short panorama which does not even claim to be complete, we briefly examine what we can call the "situation of publications" through the bibliography I am relying on.

As I mentioned above, the right relationship between national bibliography and national memory is realized through finding and securing collections and describing them with the aim of preserving and using them as part of this memory. Let's not forget that today we work with

¹ Nga webi.....

precise goals and criteria for the preservation and possession of the national memory. Today will be tomorrow's legacy. We take from generations and give to posterity.

In few words: this bibliography is part of the corpus "National Retrospective Bibliography of the Albanian Book 1555 - 1958" that is being prepared by the National Library. It includes all the books, brochures and maps published in Albanian language, inside and outside the borders of Albania, in the Albanian lands, in the Albanian Diaspora, as well as special Albanian publications around the world, foreign language publications made in Albania, in the same period. Evidencing the entire publishing heritage, this bibliography will constitute an extremely important corpus of work and reference for any Albanian or foreign researcher of our cultural heritage.

With 85 years of work, carried out by several generations in the National Library, this important contingent of books has been secured and preserved, as well as subjected to library and information science elaboration, i.e. bibliographic processing, registered and put to use for scientific, educational research, etc. But, in the meantime, a part, certainly small, has remained unknown to the people until today and is waiting to be collected. In one aspect, a part of it can also be in our funds, that for certain circumstances, that start from human mistakes and continue to be in some cases a consequence of the relatively dense network of files, that although they provide detailed information and reveal some research methods happen to fragment the information, which does not escape any carelessness resulting in the "temporary loss" of any unrecorded document as a "native" part of the national memory. When these cases were found, they were corrected, but the suspicion that there may be other cases is not without basis. Organized in several funds, the documents are catalogued and easily identified and found. But I am echoing the problems because I think that the necessary corrections are pushed forward and the work in the service of the preservation and positive use of the national heritage and memory takes more priority and meaning.

Discoveries, I mean in the sense of enriching the library, and therefore also the bibliographic information, are often due to luck, but they are also the fruit of systematic research that should not be stopped even after the publication of this bibliography. Even the publication of the bibliography itself will serve as a source of information for further enrichment. Of course, we also take into account the technological advancement of information design, its distribution and the ease of searching according to many indicators.

Many additions and improvements have been made by consulting the "off-the-book" part, i.e. with reference sources such as the press of the time, studies on the period and its publications, tracings in other libraries, catalogues that are not missing (only in this bibliography are filed over 15 catalogues and bibliographies published in the 30s-40s) etc. We direct attention especially to authors and serious publications from the field of literature, philology, history, etc., which contain data on the publications of the time. Excellent references are the bibliographic works of Jokli, Skiroi, Kersopoulos, Petrotta, Tagliavini, etc.,

- models of information and important sources on the chronology of publications, original works, with imagination and supported in the in-depth study of the Albanian book. Their ideas and findings are documented, organized and of particular cognitive value; cover many publications in many disciplines. All this in function of the implementation of the primary

principle of national memory, the maximum provision of publications and the realization of bibliographic information in accordance with that quantitative situation.²

Being provided to its user in a methodically organized manner, with carefully classified content, with several references and with an extensive auxiliary apparatus, complete with indicators (indices) of authors, preparers, editors, publishers, persons for whom the contents of books is made, geographical indicators, those of publishing houses and book titles, etc., are drawn up, not only the use of ³bibliographies is greatly facilitated, but also that constellation of creators and publishers, who gave a valuable and solid contribution to old and new culture, is presented in unity.⁴

The book, being at the same time a working tool and a friend of the author or the reader, and even an element of cultural, spiritual and physical communication of the users, in itself becomes the carrier of many intimacies, which the long time turns into relics, which as such, apart from what makes us respect the generations, are important elements of the study or recognition of special phenomena or destinies of persons and institutions. Based on this, all the seals and autographs that have been possible to decipher have been identified.

The bibliographic description is the "presentation" of the book and not the book itself. Consequently, the accuracy of the description, the compliance with the recognized standards for the identification of publications and the value for each publication, create the possibility of wide access of users to the information. The association of the preparation of the bibliography of the book with the use of the bibliography of the retrospective press and the press itself that provides valuable information with the echo and anticipation of the publications of the time has really influenced the design of this bibliography. Maybe my opinion can be controversial, but the fact that within one sector, by the same bibliographers (that the possibilities are limited) has been worked both for the compilation of current and retrospective bibliographies of the Albanian book and press. The parallel activity - drawing up the bibliography of the book - examining the press of the time (newspapers and books) and, where it is felt necessary, today's publications and studies, helps the historical memory by dealing with two receptive horizons: the contemporary one created at the time of publication with the second horizon, retrospective examination through critical reception. As a result, the bibliography is helped with findings and clarifications, suggestions and thematic comparisons for the classification etcetera. This has brought not only the continuous increase of information, therefore also of the cultural-professional level, but it has also sharpened and maintained the care to complete the information about the publications of the time in question, the interpretation and reception of the publications at the time of their publication, but also the retrospective view by present day's researchers, affecting the accuracy of the bibliographic description and classification, the identification of authors, translators, publishers, places and years of publication, etc. However, the organization of a more systematic work is imposed

⁴ Bibliothecae 4, organ of the National Library of Albania, 2003,fq15.

through which these "stones" that form the intellectual edifice of time and national memory come to light.

The retrospective bibliography of Albanian books 1945-1958 follows of the first two volumes of the retrospective bibliographies of the Albanian book, namely: Volume I, which includes the Albanian book published over the years 1555-1912 and Volume II, which includes the Albanian book published over the years 1913-1944.

The drafting of the current National Bibliography of the Albanian book began in 1959 and was published periodically every three months and not before this year we had complete information on the publication of the Albanian book. This brought the need to draw up retrospective bibliographies by completing and complete the information on the Albanian book, but also enabling access to this information through its bibliographic organization.

This bibliography is now attached to the first two bibliographies in the online version.⁵ Retrospective bibliography of the Albanian book 1945-1958 states in organized way the content of the publications present in this period and is divided into: rubrics, sub-rubrics, references, indicators

Classification of book content is an integral part of bibliographic description. Through it it becomes possible not only the division according to the topics covered in each book, but also the drafting of bibliographic sections, which make it easily usable and accessible bibliography. The description scheme with XXX (30) branches, relying on the bibliographic classification criteria and taking into account the political, economic, social developments, historical, scientific, linguistic, literary and artistic of Albania in the years 1945-1958, but also respecting the classification scheme bibliography of 1959 to ensure a continuation of the organization of the content of the publications of this period

Literature:

Bibliothecae 3. (Organ of the National Library of Albania), 2002, no. 3, Mësonjëtorja printing house

Bibliographic description of library materials. National Library, 2001, Corfu-Tirana, prepared by Farfuri Xhaja.

Dictionary of library and bibliography terms (Albanian-French-Russian) Academy of Sciences of RPS of Albania, Tirana 1982

Gathryn Gallacher. Change management in library and information services, Corfu 2001

Bibliothecae 4, organ of the National Library of Albania, 2003

Bulletin of libraries. No. 2, 1992, year XXX of publication, Tirana.

⁵ BRUNILDA TAHIRI -FATMIRA SHALARI. " RETROSPECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE ALBANIAN BOOK" (1945-1958),fq.29