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CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC ASPECT WITHIN THE UNIVERSAL DECIMAL CLASSIFICATION OF KNOWLEDGE

Summary

By inviting us to move within the traditional boundaries in order to discover a new angle of view, the local community of Salt Lake City in Utah developed the project of building a new cultural-scientific-economic center, called Leonardo. Following the example of the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, along with the Planetarium, City Library and the Museum of Fine Arts, and believing that we now live in a time in which culture, science and economy can no longer be separated, they are creating, as they say, a “real world laboratory” in which research efforts and creativity will be supported in an atmosphere that develops dialogue and mutual respect. Recalling the words of Leonardo da Vinci that all our knowledge has its origins in our perception, they want to expand the horizons of libraries by combining classical and modern methods and techniques. As much as we augment the horizons of libraries, we still keep limiting them by the need to establish an appropriate classification of our knowledge aimed at its better systematization as well as easier and wider distribution. Hence, the Universal Decimal Classification, which is intended to present all human, natural and spiritual existence and understanding throughout the decimal hierarchical system, is also the result of our perception.

Key words: Universal Decimal Classification, science, culture.

Starting from the postulate that the scientific and professional work nowadays has a far better starting point than was the case before, since: digital recording makes cultural goods available, which can be used only under special circumstances; bibliographic and all sorts of information are

overcoming temporal, spatial, political and economic barriers; and the user can read the instructions on the methods that can be applied in the process of scientific and technical research as well as on the techniques of bibliographic citation at the website of any prestigious academic institution, still every scientific discipline has its limits which it transcends in accordance with practical and intellectual adventurism of its members.

On the one hand, the classification method, along with the bibliographic one, is the original scientific method that confirms library science as a scientific discipline, while on the other, it represents the implication of the order and standards on which this profession is based upon, whether it is expressed “with the help of lines and cuts” or through “mutual” and “virtual” reality, initiating critical reflections on the role and consequences of the application of the most widespread Universal Decimal Classification.

Knowledge about the development of the Universal Decimal Classification and variations of this classification system, the analysis of UDC’s structure (main, auxiliary and special tables), the system of symbols and categorization of auxiliary numbers all raise questions about the relationship between philological and national criteria, in the field of classification of literature in particular. Simultaneously, the idea of the importance of the UDC is getting stronger, as a segment that serves us to achieve the application of Universal bibliographic control, Universal availability of publications, general digital identification and searchability, but also the acknowledgement of the UDC’s deficiencies: hierarchical relationship, excessive development of particular groups, insufficient development of certain new, multimedia sciences, number bulkiness, librarian larpourlartism. By following the development of the science about science, as well as the issues that have resulted from contemporary political, economic, national, linguistic, technological and legal conditionalities, it was found that there are no satisfactory answers to a great number of questions, considering that the systematic nature and clear legislation, which is in compliance with the requirements of multinationality, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinarity of scientific papers, is lacking in the process of creation and profiling of thus structured contents.

As much as it seems to be well established and elaborated, the Universal Decimal Classification at the same time constantly leaves room for doubt to the researcher.

This, one might say, otherwise nobly conceived grouping system of human knowledge implies itemization through using artificial numerical language, which is demanding, diverse and extensive, and therefore, quite understandably, susceptible to errors. The question of democracy and fairness of this classification system is also raised, due to the subordination of small nations in comparison to the large ones. This includes the process of layering of formerly unique literatures in accordance with the new language policies, which are subsequently drawing their own historical vertical. For example, the works of all Serbo-Croatian writers who died until 1993 are classified to this day as Serbo-Croatian literature, even when they explicitly declared themselves as Serbian authors. However, we are not consistent in this regard, not even in the work of the National Library of Serbia, which acts as the national bibliographic centre. It is admittedly difficult to reclassify a comprehensive cultural heritage, but we will feel the long-term consequences if we leave it voluntarily to those whom it does not belong and it is the wrongdoing towards the authors who have experienced injustice during their lives due to their national self-determination. We will give one illustrative example, and there are thousands of them, by citing the quote from a letter that the poet and essayist Husein Tahmišćić has addressed to Miodrag Maksimović, the then editor of *Politika*, written on December 11, 1970: "My current situation is not easy at all, much less enviable. I am subjected to the militant assaults of awakened Muslim nationalism for seven months now. (...) They reproach me for something quite simple and malicious. The problem is the dialect I use in speaking and writing. The fact that I belong to the Serbian literature is an issue. (...) I am the so-so writer, but I am nobody's transmission, not even of ethnic stupidity that my Hashemite name implies."¹ According to our cataloguers and bibliographers, Husein Tahmišćić is a Serbo-Croatian writer. Whose writers are the authors of Serbian origin who publish their works in foreign languages, in original as well as in translation? What exactly defines the affiliation of a certain writer to a particular literature: his origin, place of birth or the place in which he lived and wrote about, the language in which he created? Whichever of these elements identifies him as such; his affiliation to a particular national literature gives him the implacable numerical designation and directs the reader's awareness.

1 Књижевни лист. - 1 (July 1, 2002), p. 24

Throughout the entire 18th and 19th century, the national affiliation has determined the inclusion of an author into the national bibliography of spiritual creativity. The second half of the 20th century, and even more the beginning of the 21st century, although maintaining the division of authors according to the national criteria in real life, have encouraged language dominants to prevail in bibliography, which resulted in the error, the equalization of the literary nationality with the civic one. The authors who do not belong to a nation that speaks one language are related only to the language in which they create rather than being placed in a variety of multi-national bibliographies. The works written in English by Vladimir Vladimirovich Nabokov, a Russian immigrant to the United States since 1940, belong, in bibliographic terms, to the US, rather to the Russian literature, regardless of his ethnic origin. Same is the case, for example, with the works of the American authors, a Polish Jew Isaac Bashevis Zinger and a Lebanese poet and prose writer Gibran Khalil Gibran. Multinational literatures, such as Latin American or Arab, were written in the common literary language. Literary nationality often differs from civic and linguistic nationality. If and when different versions of languages (such as English and American versions of English, Swiss version of German, Portuguese and Brazilian versions of Portuguese, Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian, Montenegrin versions of the parent Serbo-Croatian language) are not sufficiently delineated in the very classification within the name of language, they are determined by territory, the name of the city, region or country, but not even then the same level of accuracy which is acquired through ethnic affiliation is achieved. Over a period of fifty years, a special literary-linguistic expression of former Yugoslav republics' members was shielded by the definition of Yugoslav literature, due to which the present subsequent determination of writers' ethnicity is unreliable, multiply conditioned, perhaps unnecessary from the personal perspective of the authors who opted for Yugoslavhood as their original orientation. Individual bilingualism of writers, simultaneous or at different stages of life, is a source of numerous bibliographical and classification dilemmas. Vasko Popa wrote his early poems in Romanian language; Miloš Crnjanski started writing *A Novel about London* in English, but continued to write it in Serbian language; Silvija Monros Stojaković wrote and published her work *The Best of All Towns* in both Serbian and Spanish versions within the same book.

This type of reasoning raises a special question of translating and publishing works from a language other than original, and therefore the wrong national affiliation. The erroneous initial setting leads towards the erroneous final answer, to which the implementation of the Universal Decimal Classification may also contribute.

For each classification group, there are good and consistent solutions, as well as those that are subject to criticism, and therefore intended to be changed. Based on clear scientific foundations and cultural specificities, maintained for decades, applied, elaborated and still expanding, the Universal Decimal Classification is the largest “world laboratory”, hampered by misconceptions arising from scientific and cultural truths.

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КУЛТУРНИ И НАУЧНИ АСПЕКТ У УНИВЕРЗАЛНОЈ ДЕЦИМАЛНОЈ КЛАСИФИКАЦИЈИ ЗНАЊА

Сажетак

Позивајући нас на кретање у традиционалним границама како би се открио нови угао гледања, локална заједница Солт Лејк Ситија у Утахи осмислила је пројекат изградње новог културно-научно-привредног центра, названог Леонардо. Пратећи, уз Планетаријум, Градску библиотеку и Музеј лепих уметности, линију Смитсониан музеја у Вашингтону, сматрајући да живимо у времену у коме се култура, наука и привреда више не могу раздвајати, они стварају, како сами кажу, «стварну светску лабораторију» у којој ће се подржавати истраживачки напори и креативност у атмосфери која развија дијалог и међусобно поштовање. Позивајући се на речи Леонарда да Винчија да сво наше знање има своје порекло у нашој перцепцији, они желе да прошире хоризонте библиотеке, комбинујући класичне и савремене методе и технике. Коликогод хоризонте библиотека проширивали, ми их увек и спутавамо потребом да успоставимо одговарајућу класификацију нашег знања у циљу његове боље систематизације и лакше и шире дистрибуције. Тако је резултат наше перцепције и Универзална децимална класификација, чија је намера да целокупно људско, природно и духовно егзистирање и поимање презентује кроз децимални хијерархијски систем. Заснована на јасним научним поставкама и културним спецификумима, мада деценијама одржавана, примењивана, разрађивана, и и даље у експанзији, Универзална децимална класификација највећа је «светска лабораторија», спутана заблудама проистеклим из научних и културних истина.

Кључне речи: Универзална децимална класификација, наука, култура.