Escaping Lenin's library: Library and Information Science education in independent Ukraine

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Summary   This article examines historical developments and current trends in Ukrainian library education. It gives a synthetic overview and comparison with US library education, based on a review of the Ukrainian literature, a survey of Library and Information Service (LIS) curricula and interviews with senior figures in Ukrainian LIS education. Ukraine became an independent state only in 1991 after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Previous to independence, Ukraine's LIS education was integrated within the Soviet system. After independence the system evolved slowly, but with the recent Orange Revolution, reform efforts have increased pace. Ukrainian LIS education remains more vocational than in the US, with a two-year non-degree certificate as the most common training, and a four-year bachelor's degree offered by elite institutions. One emerging trend in LIS education stresses the new opportunities for librarians and information professionals opened by Internet technologies. Another is part of a more general shift, inspired by a new Ukrainian higher education law, stressing the country's independent culture and formalizing standards for different degrees. LIS education has now reached a turning point, as reformers grapple with the limited resources, power of inertia, and remnants of Soviet culture in their efforts to meet current challenges and prepare a new generation of information professionals.
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Introduction

David Remnick's captivating book *Lenin's Tomb* describes a crucial period in the history of the Soviet Union history immediately before, after, and during its collapse. The book's title refers not just to Lenin's physical mausoleum, through which pilgrims still shuffled to view his embalmed corpse, but also to the entire Soviet Union, which Remnick believed was trapped in a state of half-life by its refusal to acknowledge its own true history. Since then, the various republics of the former union have gone their own ways, each dealing separately with the wreckage of their shared history and either renovating, reshaping, or demolishing their metaphorical mausoleums.

In libraries, as in the other institutions of Ukrainian society, attempts at bold reform and a

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decisive break with the Soviet past have struggled against the prevalent culture of passivity and corruption inherited from the Brezhnev era. Ukraine was one of the 15 Soviet republics and was fully integrated within the USSR, until its collapse. Today, Ukraine struggles quite publicly with the legacy of its seven decades under Lenin's spell. Although the Soviet Union contained one of the world's best-developed library networks, its libraries were charged with a very different task from their counterparts in liberal democracies. Because the ideologies of Marxism–Leninism were woven into every state institution, libraries played an important part in shoring up Lenin's legacy, and librarians were educated to ensure that reading and research was conducted according to socialist principles (Kimmage, 1992). Very often libraries were part of the communist-led cultural and entertainment "clubs" provided by the Ministry of the Interior for the use of members of different occupational groups.

Ukraine's history and geography present some particular challenges to librarians. The country has a culturally and historically diverse population, with several languages and national traditions. Today Ukraine has a population of 48 million, and territorially is the second biggest country in Europe. Ukraine borders Poland, Romania, and Moldova in the west, Belarus in the north, and Russia in the east. Until the borders of Europe were redrawn by the 1939 Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact (in which Poland was partitioned between Hitler and Stalin), most of present-day western Ukraine was Poland. In this region, Ukrainian (linguistically similar to Polish) is widely spoken, and most citizens look toward the European Union for their political future. Eastern Ukraine was the traditional heartland of Ukrainian nationalism and Cossack traditions, but Stalin crushed most resistance through artificial famines, deportation, and the resettlement of ethnic Russians, and so today most in the region speak Russian and look toward ever closer ties with Moscow. The Crimean peninsula, in the south of the country, was only merged into Ukraine in a 1954 internal shifting of borders within the Soviet Union. Since independence, the Ukrainian language has become a highly politicized issue dividing pro-Western politicians from the pro-Russian counterparts. Currently, Ukrainian is the nation's only official language, but the vast bulk of existing library materials (and indeed library patrons) rely on Russian. One challenge facing library education is the promotion of Ukrainian language and culture within libraries, a task involving many practical and political difficulties.

Brief overview of Library and Reference education in the Soviet Union

Vladimir I. Lenin, like George W. Bush, married a woman with a keen personal interest in the promotion of libraries. Nadezhda Konstatinovna Krupskaya was credited with the defining foundations of the content and methods of Soviet Library education (Karetzky, 2002). After the 1917 Bolshevik revolution, Krupskaya became the country's director of adult education and propaganda and Deputy Commissar of Education. Krupskaya borrowed (apparently without credit) the German model of multiple tiers in Library and Reference education. This system offered two-year non-degree programs to prepare junior and middle level library specialists and four- and five-year higher degrees to prepare higher level specialists (Raymond, 1979).

Under Krupskaya's guidance, libraries were reborn as a crucial part of the ideological infrastructure of the Soviet society. Krupskaya published a 1920 article in *Pravda* (the major newspaper of the new state) titled "Centralization of Librarianship". In this article she outlined the new place of public libraries in the Soviet Union: "In order to provide everybody with books, we need to increase book publication hundred- or thousand-fold. Currently, given the overall collapse of the economy, this is impossible to achieve. Therefore, we have only one solution: to move from individual book ownership to collective book usage. Collective use of books is possible only with the development of the wide network of libraries" (Krupskaya, 1934). Books, like agricultural land and industrial resources, were to pass into common ownership. Soon after Krupskaya's article appeared, the Bolshevik Commissariat issued a directive to confiscate and nationalize all private book collections with more than 500 books "belonging to the citizens whose professions do not require books as proletariat require their tools" (Verzhbizkiy, 1924). Confiscated books were supposed to be moved to the newly created libraries.

The collectivization of books within library collections also facilitated Communist party control over their contents. From the very beginning Krupskaya stressed that only certain books should be made available to the masses. In 1924 she wrote: "There are books that organize and there are books that disorganize" (Likhtenshtein, 1978). As Lenin's wife, she established the principle of cleaning these "disorganizing" books from library collections (Verzhbizkiy, 1924). Throughout the Soviet period, librarians were responsible for maintaining up-to-date lists of forbidden works

and removing them from public view. As Soviet rule spread to new states, librarians were trained in these techniques and required to move unsuitable books into "special collections" (Abramov, 1974). Later in the Soviet period, some books purged from libraries would resurface illicitly as samizdat (Biriukov, 2000; Daniel, 2005).

By Krupskaya's initiative the first Soviet Library Seminaria was opened in Moscow in 1918, just one year after the revolution and several years before the final victory of Red forces in the ensuing civil war. This was the first sustained attempt to offer library education within the former Russian Empire, despite sporadic earlier initiatives to create textbooks and offer instruction in the subject (Choldin, 1976). Librarians were formerly drawn from a variety of educational backgrounds and were often trained as teachers (Abramov, 1980). Library education became a required subject in the humanities departments of many Russian institutions by the end of the 1920s. At the same time, more than 20 library departments opened in Russian Institutes of Political Education, Pedagogical Institutes, and Academies of Communist Education (Kazanzceva, 1958). From the beginning of the 1930s the Library Education System started to develop in other republics of the Soviet Union. Library departments were transformed into specialist educational institutes. The first library institute in Ukraine opened in 1934, in Kharkiv (Eastern Ukraine). Like other early Soviet library educational institutes it was re-chartered as a library school after previously serving as a political–educational institute to provide specialist ideological education to new Communist party members (Kazanzceva, 1958; Sheyko & Kushnarenko, 2004).

In the post-war years the number of library higher education institutes continued to grow. The network of library institutes spread not only across Soviet republics, but also the countries of the Soviet bloc. In 1964, Soviet library institutes went through another transition and were reborn as Institutes of Culture, positioning library education along-side theatre, dance, circus, and cinema education. This reflected the shared role of these professions in providing propaganda mixed with culture and entertainment. By 1970, the Soviet network of library higher education institutions consisted of 10 Institutes of Culture and more than 20 library faculties (departments) within universities (Grigoryev, 1975).

The Soviet Union followed the German system, in which graduate study and the completion of a dissertation led to the Candidate of Sciences qualification ("Kandidat Nayk"—the equivalent of the American Ph.D.). Studies for the Candidate of Sciences degree occurred in the consortiums of universities, which belonged to the Academy of Sciences: students took courses in a number of institutions. Studies for the Candidate of Sciences degree in the humanities required courses in four areas: History, Philosophy, Foreign Language, and Profession. Librarianship was offered as a specialized series of courses within the "profession" component of this broader educational program. People who studied Librarianship as a professional specialization would get the Candidate of Sciences degree either in History or Philosophy, or Pedagogy. From 1948 to 1956, Aspirantura (post-graduate study for Candidate of Science) took place in Ukraine at the Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine, the main information center of Ukraine. Studies ceased in 1956, after Soviet authorities accused the library of fostering nationalistic sentiment. After 1956, only the Moscow and Leningrad Institutes of Culture offered graduate research degrees with a librarianship component.

Subsequent completion of a second, larger and more innovative dissertation (equivalent to the German *Habilitationsschrift*) would grant the status of "Doctor." "Doctorants" required strong national and international reputations, and usually headed departments or institutions. "Doctorants" did not have advisors or take additional courses or examinations, since they themselves often served as advisors to the students studying for "Candidate of Sciences" degrees.

These specialist library schools offering higher degrees were merely the top tier of a much larger system of library education. This concept, too, can be traced back to Krupskaya. The tiered hierarchical system was adopted from the German model, even though the content was changed. Within larger libraries, jobs were rigidly stratified according to the level of library education received. Vocational library education initially took place within political–educational departments of sov-part-shkola (abbreviation of "Soviet Party School"). Later, fully fledged library education departments opened within the political education faculties of vocational colleges (two-year schools granting diplomas) (Oleneva, 1961). From the beginning of 1929, separate vocational library education schools started to appear. By 1970 the Soviet Union reported a network of vocational library education institutions, which consisted of 12 separate vocational library education schools and more than 100 departments in vocational colleges. At that time, the total body of vocational library education students studying librarianship was said to be approximately 30 000 (Grigoryev, 1975).

These vocational schools were educating far more librarians than their degree-granting counterparts. Soviet statistics reported that in the 1968/69 academic year 4000 librarians graduated with university degrees, and 11 000 graduated with diplomas from vocational schools (Grigoryev, 1975).

As one might expect given the ideological weight accorded to libraries within the USSR the curricula developed for library students stressed the role of the library in the long march toward the eventual realization of a utopian communist society. Librarians were being educated to play an active part in the dissemination of ideological propaganda. All courses had some Soviet ideological components with more than a third of them devoted exclusively to what the State called the "Marxist–Leninist ideological preparedness strategy."

Curricula of Soviet library education included the following core components for librarians educated in the institutes of culture and universities:

History of the Communist Party of the USSR
Marxist–Leninist philosophy
Political economy
Foundations of scientific communism
Foundations of Marxist–Leninist ethics and aesthetics
Foundations of scientific atheism
Foundations of Marxist–Leninist theory of culture
Pedagogy
Psychology
History of the USSR
History of foreign countries
Russian literature and literature of the Soviet Republics
Foreign literature
Foundations of library science
History of library science
Foundations of librarianship and reference
Collection management
Cataloguing
Working with readers
Soviet library organization
History of books
Reference librarianship
Special library reference
General foreign reference

Elite librarians being trained to work within special libraries received additional courses. These included: history of the Soviet economy, history of technology, fundamentals of modern natural sciences, fundamentals of modern industrial production, and "technical propaganda and information" (Grigoryev, 1975).

Library and Reference education in independent Ukraine

Opportunities to create national schools in library science presented themselves only with Ukraine's independence. Democratization of Ukraine became one of the driving forces in changes of library science education. The new Ukrainian Constitution guarantees overall democratic principles of intellectual freedom and free and equal access for all to information. The new constitution had a positive influence on library democratization, expansion of professional contacts, and collaboration between librarians (Konyukova, 2002a, 2002b). In 2002, a new law about new standards of higher education came into effect. This law established standard requirements for bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees. These replaced the old standards defined by the centralized system of the USSR.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the required courses in Marxist ideology rapidly vanished. However, the creation of a modern and democratically inclined library culture required more than simply jettisoning much of the core curriculum. Resources for this transformation were sorely lacking. During the chaos of the early 1990s, universities struggled simply to pay instructors and keep the lights on. "The economic crisis in Ukraine led to a sharp decline in library networks, student enrollment and graduation of new specialists" (Khlynova, 2001). The ideological mission given to libraries during the Soviet era had cost them much respect in the eyes of library users and in the eyes of librarians themselves. Because library schools were located within Institutes of Culture, responsible for the creation of propagandistic entertainment, they enjoyed a lower status than other professional or academic disciplines. This mitigated against the emergence of a strong culture of research or scientific enquiry in the field (Mozyrko, 2000). Library education was allied more with the performing arts than, as in the US, with new ideas such as information retrieval or information theory. The development of modern library education in Ukraine remains very much a work in progress. But a new connection between libraries and information science is an example of the progressive thinking that is gradually spreading across Ukrainian colleges and universities.

Soviet centralization left newly independent Ukraine without a single graduate library school (Mozyrko, 2000). This lack of Ph.D. holders has been a particular challenge to the expansion of graduate education in the field. Before 1992, Ukraine had no periodicals in the field of library and reference work (Mozyrko, 2002). However,

Ukraine inherited a reasonable complement of vocational and undergraduate programs. The main structural difference with the American system remains the multi-tiered hierarchical system of education in Ukraine, in contrast with the American model in which the graduate MLIS degree is the main specialist professional credential in the field.

Library and Reference education in Ukraine still follows the German–Soviet model and consists of two tiers. The first tier prepares junior level library workers in vocational two-year schools. There are two levels of vocational schools. Vocational schools at the lower level (level I of accreditation) accept applicants at the age of 14–15. At graduation students receive a professional certificate and an equivalent of a high-school diploma. Vocational schools at the second level (level II of accreditation) accept applicants at the age of 17–18, at the end of two years of studies, graduates receive a professional certificate for the middle level library worker (Golovko, 2003). There are many vocational schools around Ukraine to prepare junior and middle level library specialists. Programs are offered in different formats: day-study, evening-study, and correspondence classes (Demchyna, 2003; Golovko, 2003).

The second tier of Library and Reference education consists of four- and five-year colleges and universities (levels III and IV of accreditation). Library and Reference departments operate within a University or Institute of Culture or within degree-granting teacher-training colleges ("Pedagogical Institutes"). After independence, many colleges renamed themselves from institutes into universities. After completing these colleges, graduates receive the equivalent of a bachelor degree. Four Ukrainian schools grant bachelors' degrees in Library Science, covering the main geographical areas of the country:

- The Kyiv National University of Culture and Arts prepares library and reference specialists in Central Ukraine.
- The Kharkiv State Academy of Culture prepares library and reference specialists in Eastern Ukraine.
- The Rivne State University of Culture prepares specialists in Western Ukraine.
- The Mykolaiv branch of the Kyiv National University of Culture and Arts prepares specialists in Southern Ukraine.

Although explicitly ideological courses have been removed, the curriculum is still skewed toward giving students a grounding in the content of different subject fields (such as history, literature, and foreign languages) rather than dealing in-depth with the specialist knowledge and skills of the library profession on the model of the American MLIS. Because the MLIS is a graduate degree, the American system assumes that students have already satisfied general education requirements and mastered at least one specialist area.

Ukraine has retained its dual level German-inspired system, separating Candidate of Sciences from Doctor. Since independence, several Ukrainian universities and institutions opened post-graduate studies for Candidate of Sciences and Doctor degrees. As in Soviet times, graduate studies in librarianship exist as a specialized component within more general degrees. Since 1998, more than 70 students have received the Candidate of Sciences degree with specializations in librarianship. For instance, the Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine reopened its Aspirantura in 1993. It offers such specialized librarianship courses within two tracks: (1) Book, Librarianship, and Reference and (2) Automated Control Systems and Progressive Information Technologies. The first is usually taken within graduate degrees in History or Pedagogy. The second is offered within the graduate degree in Technical Sciences. Kharkiv State Academy of Culture started offering a Candidate of Sciences degree program with a subject in Librarianship and Bibliography in 1994 and a Doctor degree program in 1996 (Sheyko & Kushnarenko, 2004). In addition, at the universities granting the bachelor's degree, a master's degree in Librarianship was introduced as an option for graduate studies. The master's degree consists of additional one year of study after the four years of study for the bachelor's degree.

The current library education system in Ukraine

Ukraine's librarians are not all well prepared for current and future demands. Most currently practicing librarians at all levels, and particularly at senior levels, were trained under the Soviet system. Library work is not well-paid, and the profession does not have a high profile among young people. Even those being educated today are largely studying under an educational system shaped by the Soviet experience. Most of the existing libraries are specialized, while library education in the higher degree institutes are geared toward general public libraries. This has created a mismatch between existing demands of the job market and preparedness of the workforce. The training and experience of a graduated

librarian does not correspond to the demands of the job. Library managers complain that recent graduates need a lengthy training period to prepare fully for their job responsibilities (Mozyrko, 2002).

To address these problems library schools of all tiers started changing their curricula. Today several universities offer a specialization in "Bibliography, Librarianship, and Reference" intended to prepare graduates for the following professions: "bibliographer, manager of information systems and technologies, international information manager, information manager, abstracting and indexing analyst, records management specialist, abstracting and indexing specialist of subject-based information services systems" (Kushnarenko & Solianyk, 2001; Zhuk, 2004). Kyiv National University of Culture made its first steps in curricula changes during the 1991–1992 academic year when an archives specialty was added to the library degree. In 1993 this university added a course on Foundations of Bibliographic Control, and in 1994 a new specialization in Documents and Information Services appeared (Konyukova, 2002a).

Kharkiv State Academy of Culture provides another example of the conceptual restructuring of Library and Information education. In 1994, Library Faculty in Kharkiv State Academy of Culture was renamed to the Faculty of Librarianship and Informatics. The faculty was reorganized to include new departments: Department of Librarianship, Department of Bibliography, Department of Document Management, and Department of Informatics, Information Systems, and Processes. In 1995, Kharkiv School became the first in Ukraine to offer a new specialization "Record Management and Information Services" (Sheyko & Kushnarenko, 2004).

This attempt to link library education to management and information work outside traditional libraries is quite new for Ukraine, and it follows the model of Western education in information science.

Meanwhile, the ideological Marxist courses in the curriculum have been replaced with a new focus on Ukraine, including such disciplines as Ukrainian history, Ukrainian literature, and "Culture of the Ukrainian language." Under the Soviet system, Ukrainian culture was presented as a lesser derivative of the Russian culture, and Ukrainian history was taught very selectively. Even the grammar of the Ukrainian language was modified to make it more similar to the Russian language (Bilaniuk, 2005). Ukrainian national sentiment was actively discouraged. Therefore, it is important in the new democratic Ukraine to prepare qualified professionals who respect their profession and are proud of their heritage. "Reforms in the Library education happen when history of Ukraine, culture and literature of Ukraine, culture of Ukrainian language are taught; when previously banned pages of history of Ukrainian librarianship, book, and bibliography are told" (Mozyrko, 2002).

As in the rest of the world, libraries in Ukraine have been shifting their attention to electronic sources, audio recordings, and other media resources. This has been accompanied by a new focus on information technology in library education (Filipova, 2001; Shvakina, 2001). Education in library science was traditionally focused on the humanities (history, literature, Marxist–Leninist philosophy). However, now library science education is gradually acquiring a new focus that reflects the conditions of the new information-oriented society. IT courses have been added to the core curricula at Ukraine's leading centers of library education (Matvienko, 2000).

Another important driving force is the inclusion of new technologies (computer and telecommunication) in the processing of documents, document preservation, information search and information exchange by using new technologies. "Due to the new technologies the library transforms itself from a book storage into a social institution that ensures accumulation and preservation of knowledge to be widely used" (Khlynova, 2001).

These shifts have been accompanied by a more general shift in the role of the library. Whereas in Soviet times libraries were required to restrict and filter the flow of information, their mission is now to facilitate and expand information usage (Apshay, 2004). Librarians are beginning to see themselves as part of the cycle of information distribution from author to publisher to libraries and information centers, and, finally, to users (Kostenko & Soroka, 2002). This fundamental shift in the culture of librarianship is taking place slowly in practice: "The Ukrainian Library System is a part of the world's information resources and cultural heritage.... Libraries must take responsibilities of collecting, organizing, and storing electronic information resources accessible to everyone.... Libraries must take it upon themselves to implement the digitization of the whole book heritage of the Ukrainian people. Providing access to these Ukrainian resources to all users, without restrictions on time or location, will ensure preservation and active use of these resources to solve scientific, educational, and cultural problems" (Kostenko & Soroka, 2002).

Conclusion

These attempts to restructure Ukrainian library education remain at the experimental stage, with

different approaches coexisting among the country's institutions of library education. Although new approaches appear to hold promise, they have yet to be proven through the creation of a new generation of information professionals. Ukrainian library educators face many of the same challenges and opportunities as their American counterparts, but they must guard against the assumption that the imposition of an American-style reliance on graduate MLIS education is the only way forward. In the longer term, appropriate education for Ukraine's librarians will depend on the young nation's conception of what a library is for. That, in turn, must both reflect and shape the efforts of its people to forge a consensus as to what Ukraine will finally be: a liberal European democracy, a loyal satellite, province of an increasingly authoritarian and resurgent Russia, or something different and perhaps unique.

Acknowledgments

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