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LIBRARY SCIENCE VERSUS BIBLIOLOGY: A CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF POLITICS AND IDEOLOGY ON THE CREATION OF NAMES FOR BOOK INSTITUTIONS IN POST-WAR POLAND — THE CASE OF WROCŁAW

Factors influencing the name of the discipline. Discussions and disputes about the two names: bibliology and library science. The Commission for Bibliography and Library Science of the Wrocław Scientific Society. The Department of Library Science for the Employed / The Chair of Library Science at the Faculty of Letters of the University of Wrocław.

KEY WORDS: nomenclature of scientific institutions, Poland, library science, bibliology, The Commission for Bibliography and Library Science of the Wrocław Scientific Society, The Department of Library Science for the Employed of the Bolesław Bierut University in Wrocław, The Chair of Library Science of the Bolesław Bierut University in Wrocław

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE NAME OF THE DISCIPLINE

In Polish science, devising the name (and, in the case considered here, multiple names) of the discipline within which books, libraries and related issues are discussed has been ongoing for at least two centuries, continuously causing controversies and arguments among the researchers in this field. This debate has been influenced by several factors: (1) as young academic disciplines, to which both bibliology and library science belong, develop their theories, methodologies and conceptual apparatus, they strive for their own place in the system of sciences; (2) nomenclature tradition in this area of research in European science is different in the Romance, German, English and Russian languages; (3) native, Polished

terms have been proposed, which stimulated discussions; (4) there were periods in history during which political authorities interfered with the creation of study courses and the centres running them, which was evident especially in the first decade after World War II and in the era of the People's Republic of Poland (PRL). In principle, the dispute over the nomenclature of the discipline dealing with books and libraries and related processes in Poland has always caused unresolvable difficulties, which, in 2018, and with the new division of scientific disciplines introduced by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, impacted upon the inclusion of bibliology and information science into communication and media studies, within which library science issues are also discussed.

The official functioning of a given name, in this case Polish *bibliologia* (henceforth in this paper referred to as bibliology) or *bibliotekoznawstwo* (library science), was determined by various arguments, not always of a substantive nature, which will be discussed later in this article. It should be noted that the usage of both terms in academic literature had already been customary in European science. The term 'bibliology' was adopted into Polish from French and 'library science' from German and, not coincidentally, both names were also used in our country in the nomenclature of the discussed area of research. Both became popular in the 19th century and are still in use today. Their history and use in various countries have been described extensively in academic literature, both domestic and foreign, hence there is no need to recount these matters again. It should be emphasized that after World War II terminology adopted from the Russian language began to play a significant role in Polish science, yet the Russian equivalent *bibliotekawiedienije* was not widely accepted, rather the term *knigawiedienije* was used, which was translated into Polish as *księgoznawstwo* (book studies).

The main criteria influencing the name of the discipline — as aptly noted by Krzysztof Migoń (1993, p. 110) — should be that 'the institutionalisation of science requires more precise nomenclature, reflecting as accurately as possible the substantive scope of individual disciplines, specialties, and research areas. Also, the names should be concise and sufficiently capacious to encompass the entire, often varied, subject matter. In the range of academic titles, in the names of journals, study courses and scientific societies, it is necessary to use short names, generally comprehensible, respecting tradition [...], including new paradigms and, at the same time, open.' Such a scholarly approach presented by Migoń, a contemporary book researcher, has not always been taken into account or considered the deciding factor in choosing the name of the discipline. Non-scientific factors also turned out to be important, as was the case in the past, especially in the period following World War II. At that time, this area of research was institutionalised in Poland at the level of higher education, which resulted in the creation of a university study course educating librarians. This meant that an unambiguous name of the discipline

was needed and, hence, the term ‘library science’ was used in the first Chair of Library Science (Katedra Bibliotekoznawstwa) in Łódź established in 1945 and headed by professor Jan Muszkowski. The next chair, with the same name, headed by professor Aleksander Birkenmajer, was founded at the University of Warsaw in 1951. However, no justification for the choice of this name can be found in research articles (cf. Dworak-Kołodziejska, 1953). The third chair of this kind, established at the Bolesław Bierut University in Wrocław in 1956 and led by professor Antoni Knot, functioned at first as the Department of Library Science for the Employed (Studium Bibliotekoznawstwa dla Pracujących) and, since 1957, as the Chair of Library Science, which, headed by Karol Głombowski, offered a full-time study course. At the beginning of the 1950s, and despite the fact that the term ‘library science’ was already used in the names of chairs, in the environs of book and library researchers from Wrocław the issue of terminology became the subject of substantive discussions, mainly between professors Knot and Głombowski. At that time, the most important theoretical proposals, regarding both the research area itself and the scope of the study programme, were conceived, and the Wrocław centre — later referred to as Wrocław/Polish bibliological school — was the leader in this respect. The objective of this article is to describe the discussions conducted in this environment, the aim of which was to choose a name for the institution and the discipline, called *bibliografia* (bibliography) or *księgoznawstwo* (book studies) in the interwar period. In the following years, those terms were replaced by the term ‘library science’ and then, at the beginning of the 1970s, by the term ‘bibliology.’ It turns out that political arguments were also important and that academic disputes often developed into ideological discussions.

This article concentrates on two institutions established in Wrocław in the 1950s:

1. The Commission for Bibliography and Library Science of the Wrocław Scientific Society (Komisja Bibliografii i Bibliotekoznawstwa Wrocławskiego Towarzystwa Naukowego), established in 1953;

2. The Chair of Library Science (Katedra Bibliotekoznawstwa), 1957 (The Department of Library Science for the Employed — Studium Bibliotekoznawstwa dla Pracujących, 1956).

DISPUTES AND DISCUSSIONS CONCERNING BOTH NAMES: BIBLIOLOGY OR LIBRARY SCIENCE

After World War II, book institutions and libraries grew in Poland, which was influenced by a few factors. First of all, huge losses suffered by libraries required quick intervention to protect the surviving collections. The potential role of

libraries in eliminating illiteracy and raising the general level of education in Poland was also recognized. In research libraries, there worked scholars who began their careers before the war. They continued to refer to the achievements and changes that took place in Polish librarianship in the interwar period. However, the persons employed in public, educational and school libraries usually had low qualifications to undertake this kind of work. In their case, involvement in educational work was more important than knowledge (cf. Majkowska-Aleksiewicz, 1982; Fluda-Krokos, 2016). In the first post-war years low qualifications were acceptable, but as early as the 1950s an additional requirement was introduced: employees of these institutions should show the right ideological attitude. The introduction of this requirement was related to the creation of Soviet-style library structures. It was no longer enough to just display willingness to work with books and readers, but the party affiliation of candidates for the librarian profession and their commitment to promoting socialism among citizens began to play an important role. Also in decision-making bodies, at the level of ministries to which various types of libraries were subordinated, the issue of relating professional education to practice was raised more and more frequently. The system of educating librarians, especially at the higher level, turned out to be a problem at this point (Więckowska, 1979; Bieńkowska, 1991; Jarowiecki, 1981).

In the post-war period, library science — understood in a different way than in the 19th-century German prototype from which it originated — was treated mainly as socially useful librarianship and focused on practical tasks serving education and culture, whereas theoretical research on books was considered to be of marginal importance. Not unrelated, and at the beginning of the 1950s, in Polish journals publishing articles on book-related issues there were heated disputes about the existence of such a discipline as book studies, the scope of which also included issues of librarianship. Statements of a very critical nature usually diminished its status as an academic discipline, which was a result of the influence of Soviet science, where research into books and libraries was considered bourgeois and of little use in the communist state. In 1953, two men became famous nationally for their speeches: Władysław Bieńkowski, then head of the National Library of Poland, with his work under the unambiguous title *O pseudo-nauce bibliologii i najpilniejszych potrzebach bibliografii* [*On Pseudo-science Bibliology and the Most Pressing Needs of Bibliography*] (Sadowska, 2010, pp. 335, 346), and Tadeusz Margul, with his similarly titled publication ‘Z obłoków bibliologii na ziemię bibliotekoznawstwa’ [‘From the clouds of bibliology to the earth of library science’], to which he added the informative subtitle ‘Artykuł dyskusyjny’ [‘A discussion article’]. In their works, not devoid of political predilections and ideological persuasion, they explicitly questioned bibliology as an academic discipline and their views were uncritically adopted by a part of the library community (Migoń, 1979, pp. 136–137).

The method of choosing the name for the discipline is most fully reflected in the words of Stanisław Sierotwiński, who, in his article published in *Przegląd Biblioteczny* in 1953, noted that ‘[t]here is no consensus whether the book (understood as “[t]he unity of form, expression, and content,” as a “psycho-physical product of culture”) is to be dealt with by a separate science, nor how this science should be called. Nevertheless, disputes about its character and its relation to knowledge as a whole and to other sciences continue. Is it a superior science, which is universal (because the book serves to transfer all knowledge)? Or is it an auxiliary science, and if so, for what sciences? Traditional views persist that it is an auxiliary science for history or for the history of literature. And only for them. Science is one and is to reflect the whole of reality. Knowledge can be divided in various ways, however, the fact is that disciplines will osculate and cross one another, in the same way as fragments of reality osculate and interpenetrate. The division is needed as it facilitates understanding and the linking of the whole, separates scientific and professional specialisations. [...] Book studies has a direct relationship with life, and this is where its dynamism and the obligation to participate in the progressive transformation of life lie.’ (Sierotwiński, 1953).

In this atmosphere of conflict in the scientific and professional communities and with the lack of appreciation of the need for the development of research on books and libraries, two scientific institutions that were to have a large impact nationally were successfully established in Wrocław. They eventually adopted the term ‘library science’ in their names.

THE COMMISSION FOR BIBLIOGRAPHY AND LIBRARY SCIENCE OF THE WROCŁAW SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY

At the beginning of the 1950s, very difficult socio-political conditions in the country had a significant influence on the activities of scientific societies. However, they did not thwart the efforts of the Wrocław community of book institutions and libraries to create an autonomous unit within the Wrocław Scientific Society.

By virtue of the resolution of Faculty I, i.e. the Faculty of Letters, on June 19th, 1953, such a commission of the Wrocław Scientific Society was established, but the matter of its name was not entirely settled. In *Sprawozdania WTN* [*Reports of the Wrocław Scientific Society*], the first ordinary meeting on June 27th, 1953, was recorded as the meeting of The Commission for Bibliography and Librarianship, and this does not seem to be a typographical error (*Sprawozdania WTN*, 1953 [ed. 1956], p. 52). There were no more ordinary meetings that year, but on November 20th–21st, 1953, the First Scientific Conference was held and in the aforementioned *Sprawozdania*, a few paragraphs below, the name of the Commission

for Bibliography and Library Science of the Wrocław Scientific Society was printed. It should be assumed that initially the first name was to be accepted — The Commission for Bibliography and Librarianship. Thanks to it, the newly created unit within the Wrocław Scientific Society, on the one hand, would fit the ideological aspirations and party recommendations, which emphasized combining the scholarly and professional environments, and on the other hand, would not appear scholarly. Initially, it was planned to admit to the Commission not only members of the Wrocław Scientific Society but also librarians. The initiative to have the term ‘librarianship’ in its name and the participation of employees of various types of libraries in its work was met with a buoyant response, as many of them combined librarian activities with researching book collections held in their libraries. In this way, an attempt was made to emphasize the ‘alliance of science and practice, modelled on the alliance of workers and peasants,’ promoted by the communist authorities. However, according to its Statute, the Wrocław Scientific Society accepted as members outstanding individuals with great and important scholarly achievements and with an indisputable position in Polish science (Statut WTN, 1947),¹ hence those who did not meet these requirements were not accepted as its members. Antoni Knot, the main initiator of the Commission, who always motivated librarians to partake in scholarly research, was an ardent supporter and promoter of the name of the Commission of Library Science. It can be assumed with a high degree of certainty that at the meetings of the Faculty of Letters, at which the Commission was established, while discussing the above-mentioned issue, it was decided that active librarians could be included in its work, however, it was clearly emphasized that only such librarians who conducted scholarly research could be included and that even then they could not be granted full membership but they could only become associates of the Commission. Finally, the name — The Commission for Bibliography and Library Science — was adopted.

Moreover, the addition of the term ‘bibliography’ in the name of the Commission was not unintentional, because it further directed its work in accordance with the party’s guidelines, which is attested to by the words of Michał Ambros, a member of the Commission: ‘after World War II, the importance of bibliography increased not only for purely scientific reasons but even more so for political and practical ones’ (Ambros, 1946, p. 41). The new communist authorities insisted that research conducted within the Wrocław Scientific Society confirmed Poland’s rights to the Recovered Territories, while bibliography was to be ‘a useful ideological tool,’ thus, the full, two-part name of the Commission perfectly took account of these two requirements.

¹ This provision was slightly changed in 2020 (Statut WTN: Rozdział III. Członkowie, ich prawa i obowiązki).

In these difficult political and ideological circumstances, the Commission organised two conferences — the first, a local one, in 1953, and the second, a national one, in 1954. In his speech delivered at the opening of the second conference Knot said: ‘From the fusion of active librarian forces [...] our Commission was formed, which within the Wrocław Scientific Society organised all of the people practicing the broadest possible book studies’ (Knot, 1957, p. 8). By saying it, he referred to the aforementioned national discussion taking place in academic and professional book and library journals about the name of the discipline practiced within the chairs educating librarians at the higher level. His speech led to a robust exchange of views on this subject in professional and academic communities. It is interesting that on this occasion Knot used the term ‘book studies’ (*nauka o książce*), and not ‘library science.’ Although he himself supported the latter term, he did not altogether reject the first one. In this respect, he differed from Karol Głombiowski, who strongly promoted the term ‘book studies,’ avoiding the term ‘bibliology’ and rarely, if ever, used it in his academic publications.

THE DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARY SCIENCE FOR THE EMPLOYED / THE CHAIR OF LIBRARY SCIENCE AT THE FACULTY OF LETTERS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WROCLAW

Educating librarians at the higher level began in Wrocław with the establishment of the Department of Library Science for the Employed at the Faculty of Letters of the Bolesław Bierut University in Wrocław, in 1956. As was in the case of the Commission for Bibliography and Library Science of the Wrocław Scientific Society, the initiator and first head of the Department was Antoni Knot, who was appointed professor of the Wrocław University in 1955 and between 1956 and 1960 was the vice-dean of the Faculty of Letters. Consequently, he contributed to the establishment of the Chair of Library Science, whose first head was Karol Głombiowski, who, in 1970, moved to the University of Gdańsk. In the same year, as a result of ministerial changes and organisational reforms in Polish science, Knot became the director of the Institute of Library Science and held this position until 1972. It should be added that since 1945 Knot was an active member of the Democratic Party, which somehow facilitated his organisational work in the field of science. He performed the functions of chairman of University Employees Association (1948–1951) and chairman of the Municipal Committee of the Democratic Party (1952–1954, 1958–1960), he was a member of the Central Committee and a member of the Supreme Council of the Democratic Party (Gruczyński, 1983, p. 188).

The preserved minutes of meetings of the Faculty of Letters Council of the Bolesław Bierut University in Wrocław from 1956 show that the establishment of

the new Chairs was written ‘In Point 1: Matters of the 5-year Plan’.² In this point there was a note regarding the need to organize new courses of studies, especially Indology, **librarianship** (emphasized by the author — *BK*) and neo-Latin studies which was emphasized by docent dr. Ludwik Skurzak, professor dr. Tadeusz Mikulski and professor dr. Stanisław Bąk. It was decided that the proposals of the Faculty, individual Chairs and debaters would be taken into account in the development of the Five-year Plan (Protokoły posiedzeń RWF UW 1951–1960, k. 48, 201, 211).

As a result of the discussion in Point B: The development of study courses and specialties, in subpoint a, it was noted that ‘The Faculty is unanimously in favour of establishing a **department of extramural librarianship** [emphasized by the author — *BK*] as early as next year, for which the university authorities applied to the Ministry of Higher Education. A department of this type would have a sufficient group of qualified teachers, consisting of independent and auxiliary scholars of the university library, who could also give monographic and specialist lectures to independent and auxiliary scholars of the four already offered study courses. — The department will meet urgent library and educational needs of the area and will enable a large number of graduates of the humanities faculties of universities to obtain higher qualifications. The department also has impressive resources (University Library and Ossoliński National Institute).’ (Protokoły posiedzeń RWF UW 1951–1960, k. 211).

The use of the term ‘librarianship’ in the Polish name of an academic-didactic unit was modelled on and adopted from Soviet science. In the Soviet Union higher librarianship studies were offered by librarianship institutes, which were the main centres for educating library staff. These included among others:

1. M. Molotov Moscow State Institute of Librarianship;
2. N. Krupska Leningrad State Institute of Librarianship;
3. Kharkiv State Institute of Librarianship.

Due to Poland’s membership in the block of socialist countries under the auspices of the USSR, the Soviet patterns began to apply in this country, hence the term ‘librarianship’ was initially considered in the names of institutions (Skoczylas, 1953), which had its supporters, especially in the circles of party and state authorities but also in the library environment. According to the aforementioned T. Margul, ‘librarianship is not a philosophy or mental speculation but tedious, unimpressive and stubborn work. And library science — in the international terminology, librarology — is not a theoretical science, encompassing the kingdom of books with an endless look, but a collection of experiences and valuable advice for librarians’ (Margul, 1953).

² Including: discussing the Five-year Plan according to the guidelines of the Ministry of Higher Education: assessment of the scientific, teaching and educational achievements at the Faculty, representatives of individual Chairs and representatives of study courses to be opened at the Faculty of Letters successively represented their drafts of the Five-year Plan.

As a result of the discussions, it was decided that this newly established unit would have in its name the term ‘librarianship,’ which was included in the minutes of the Faculty Council meeting of June 26, 1956: ‘The matter of appointing Dr. Karol Głombiowski as a deputy professor in the **Department of Extramural Studies in Library Science**’ (emphasized by the author — *BK*) as well as in the record: ‘The Faculty Council unanimously approved the programme of the Extramural Studies and the list of lecturers (names not given). The proposal of Vice-dean Łanowski to appoint Professor Knot head of the Department of Extramural Studies in Library Science was accepted unanimously. Dr. Marta Burbianka was unanimously elected as deputy’ (Protokoły posiedzeń RWF UW 1951–1960, k. 271–272).

As a result of a certain compromise, representatives of the Faculty of Letters Council adopted the name ‘library science’ (Protokoły posiedzeń RWF UW 1951–1960, k. 261, 262, 263, 278, 283, 291–292).

The discussion about the Chair educating librarians in Wrocław, established in 1957, continued for several more years. In the preserved minutes of meetings of the Faculty of Letters Council of the Bolesław Bierut University in Wrocław, single statements on this subject by both Głombiowski and Knot can be found. As a member of the Democratic Party, who held various positions at the higher levels of government in subsequent years, Knot argued that, in accordance with ministerial recommendations, the names of newly created units at universities should respond to the demand of the professional environment for which students were to be educated and therefore he promoted the term ‘library science,’ already present in the name of the Commission of the Wrocław Scientific Society. In Knot’s opinion, the name should be closely related to libraries and librarianship to be immediately associated with education in a specific profession, which resulted both from ministerial orders and party programmes.

Karol Głombiowski was of a different opinion. He believed that the name should be determined by the theoretical aspect of the discipline practiced at the higher level and not by its practical applications. Głombiowski emphasized that the academic discipline and its subject should be of primary importance. Hence, he proposed the approval of the name of the Chair of Bibliology or the Chair of Book Studies. Finally, in the case of the Chair in Wrocław, the authorities supported Knot’s opinion and decided that what was important in the socialist economy was the profession that a graduate would pursue. It was decided that future librarians should be educated by the Chair of Library Science (or even Librarianship) and this name eventually became obligatory both at the University of Wrocław and in other institutions in Poland, and remained official until the beginning of the 21st century.

Translated by Anna Cisko

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Abstract

Scientific aspects of devising names of academic institutions and disciplines. The influence of politics and ideology in the post-war period on the choice of names in the case of the Commission for Bibliography and Library Science of the Wrocław Scientific Society, the Department of Library Science for the Employed, and the Chair of Library Science of the Bolesław Bierut University in Wrocław. To analyse this problem, the documentation preserved in the Archives of the University of Wrocław as well as academic papers about the centres educating librarians were used.

KEYWORDS: nomenclature of scientific institutions, Poland, library science, bibliology, The Commission for Bibliography and Library Science of the Wrocław Scientific Society, The Department of Library Science for the Employed of the Bolesław Bierut University in Wrocław, The Chair of Library Science of the Bolesław Bierut University in Wrocław