



Πανεπιστήμιο Κύπρου  
University of Cyprus

# Libraries as Repositories of Knowledge: Present and Future

Papers from the 3rd International Conference on the Greek World in Travel Accounts and Maps,  
'Knowledge is Power', Meet the Experts Session, 2-4 November 2016, University of Cyprus, Nicosia

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# Introduction: Libraries as Repositories of Knowledge: Present and Future

Filippos Tsimpoglou

The International Scientific Conference ‘Knowledge is Power’ was held in Nicosia at the University of Cyprus on 2-4 November 2016, organised by the Sylvia Ioannou Foundation and the University of Cyprus. When asked by the organisers for an appropriate theme for the Meet the Experts Session of the Conference, I suggested a kind of dialogue about the future of libraries among experts from representative, different library models. The central issue would be an investigation of the way these libraries evaluate their own attitudes towards other kinds of libraries and how each category foresees its coexistence with the other models in the new and evolving internet and digital environment. In order to cover five main library models, we invited one expert from a university library, one from an art and museum library, one from an international digital ‘library’, one from a public library and one from a national library.

Libraries of all categories in our age have been called hybrid, as they combine both print collections and digital ones. We can safely speculate that this hybrid environment will last for many years into the future. Even with different degrees of penetration for each library category, digital and internet material has been embedded in all libraries, in parallel with the traditional printed matter that endures. However, the future library cannot be understood as an isolated institution outside of the environment of other libraries. Every future library should be understood as an active constituent of a world grid of information sources. Thus, the interconnected, interoperating libraries of the future should continue to offer their services. This grid-like operation is a consequence of the advancement of information and communication technologies and the exploitation of them by libraries. It is a product of an inter-thematic and inter-sectoral approach of collaboration among libraries and people, transcending geographical and other material or mind frontiers. Libraries are moving towards a cooperative globalisation in which each one offers its own ‘locality’ in terms of unique or particular assets and features to the global society, each one acting locally but thinking and influencing globally.

Aside from the issue of selecting representative library models, the challenge was to turn five potential monologues, each presented by the representative of each category, into an organised dialogue, so we prepared each speaker before the Conference by asking them to read, compare and comment in advance on the papers written by the other speakers. We invited the participants to consider how different kinds of libraries can cooperate in a globally networked environment and which new roles and activities should be undertaken to complement the current ones. This arrangement helped in stimulating questions and answers that otherwise would not have been unveiled. Thus, five draft papers were written and then sent to all the experts, first to be aware of the issues that were raised by their co-speakers and second to comment on all of them with their own points. This idea was born from the reading of a very special book, *The Study of Information: Interdisciplinary Messages*: ‘Nine lead papers [each one in a different scientific field] and three to five discussion papers for each of

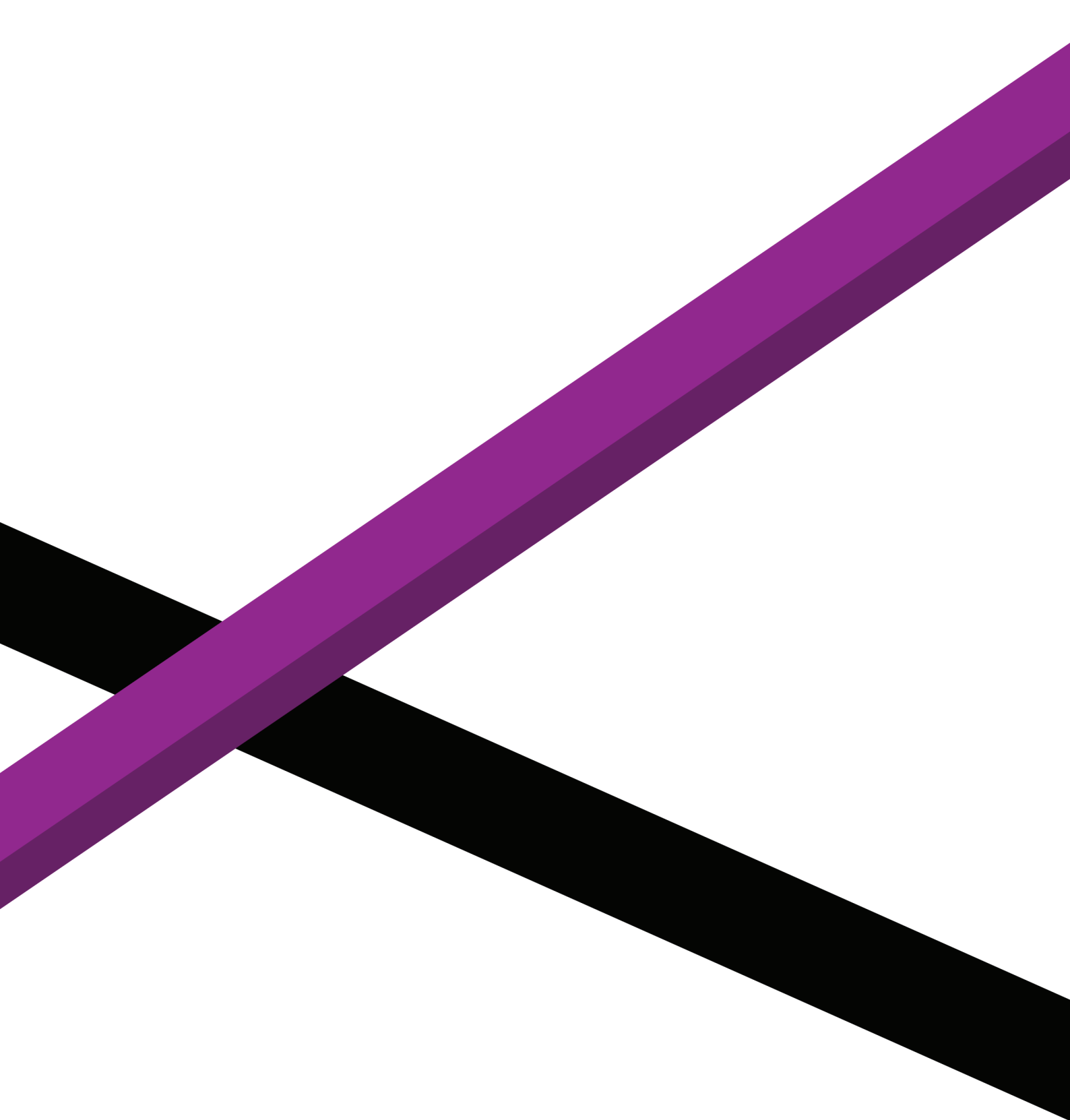
the nine were commissioned. The subsidiary papers were asked to offer critical comments, elaboration, or supplementary observations on the subject of the lead papers. The author of the lead paper would then come back with a rejoinder.’<sup>1</sup>

The conference was divided into two main parts, just as these proceedings are arranged. Part I consisted of the presentation of each representative’s library, its mission, target groups, figures and trends or shifts noticed in the particular library, as well as the concept, strategies, approaches, methods, tools and practices followed. The second part consisted of the comments on the papers of the other participants. These raised such subjects as the relations or interconnections of each library with libraries of other categories on such issues as local discoveries of world treasures, digitisation versus digital curation, oral history, information literacy, dissemination of formats, linked open data, fields of collaboration, complementary activities and synergies, as well as thoughts on the threats and challenges to the future of the libraries in each category. There followed questions from the audience, answered by the speakers.

An important matter is that this dialogue should carry on and widen, as not all the issues could be addressed within the duration of a conference; it needs to expand so that further contributions can be made by other actors and stakeholders. Here we identified the limits of the printed form of information and, having in mind that this continuation could be offered by exploiting the features of digital information, we all (organisers, speakers, editors) decided to publish the proceedings in an electronic format, openly accessed online and in a forum where further contributions to the dialogue that started at the Conference could be added by further library categories and stakeholders. Please consult p. 78 for details of how to join in.

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1. F. Machlup and U. Mansfield (eds), *The Study of Information: Interdisciplinary Messages*, New York: Wiley-Interscience, 1983, p. xiv.



**Part I:**  
**Case Studies of  
Five Library Models**

# OpenAIRE: A European e-Infrastructure for Open Science

Yannis Ioannidis

Video link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tv9sX\\_iFIAM&t=42m58s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tv9sX_iFIAM&t=42m58s)

## Main Mission

Open Science needs pragmatic, participatory infrastructures to work. The diverse and culturally varied research communities of Europe will accept no ‘one-size-fits-all’ solutions. While some see variety and diversity as insurmountable barriers, for OpenAIRE they are the foundation stones upon which we build. Embedded in a global network of regional repository networks, OpenAIRE is an exemplar for other regions in the world, placing Europe at the forefront of Open Science developments.

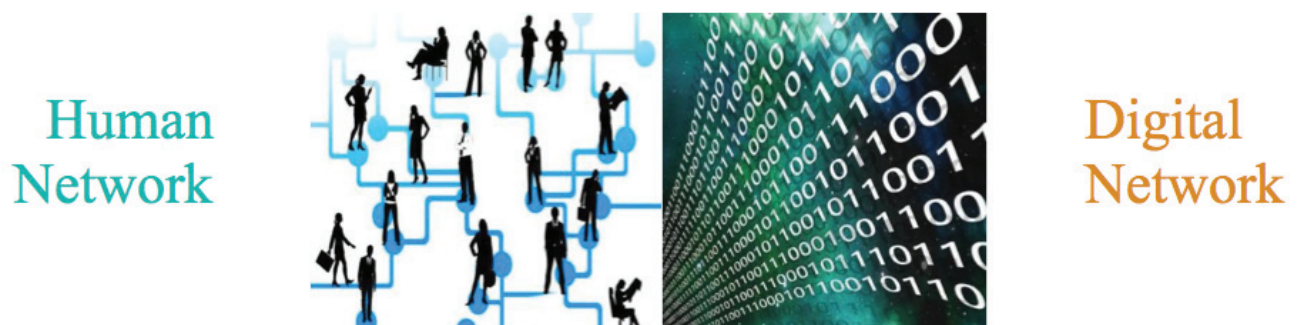


Fig. 1. OpenAIRE fosters the social and technical links that enable Open Science in Europe and beyond.

OpenAIRE is an infrastructure that implements the policies of the European Commission regarding its Open Access [OA] policies. It has been funded through a series of European projects (OpenAIRE, OpenAIREplus, OpenAIRE2020), with approximately fifty partners from all over the European Union and beyond, including data centres, universities, libraries and repositories (fig. 1). OpenAIRE is scheduled to become a legal entity in 2018. It has been operational on a 24/7 basis since December 2010 and is considered as one of the five or six key electronic infrastructures of the EU.

Above all, OpenAIRE is a socio-technical network that supports the *implementation* and *monitoring* of Open Science policies, including Open Access to publications and research data:

- **Implementation** is enabled by a pan-European network of Open Access / Open Science experts – the National Open Access Desks [NOADs], organised and present in every EU country and beyond, and partitioned geographically into four European regions, as in figure 2. The NOADs



work together to align national policies and to define shared solutions and best practices, and coordinate outreach and advocacy activities through a range of targeted training events and support materials.

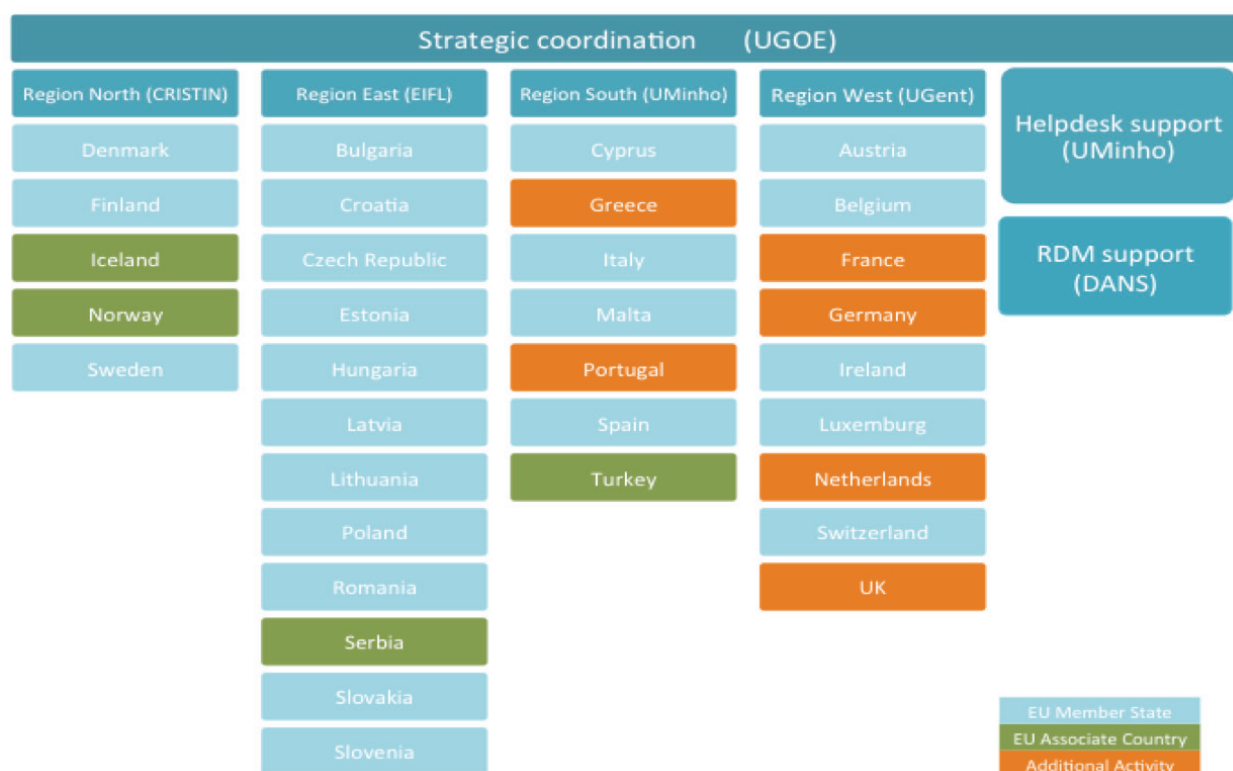


Fig. 2. National Open Access Desks.

- **Monitoring** is achieved by means of an advanced data infrastructure (see fig. 3) consisting of a decentralised network of data sources, namely publication repositories, data repositories and current research information systems, established by research institutions, individual scientific communities and publishers. By harnessing the contents of 'compatible' publications, data, software and method repositories (both institutional and disciplinary), linking them to other research entities (researchers, institutions, projects) and building a broad spectrum of services on top of the resulting 'research information' graph, OpenAIRE produces a 360° picture of the impact of European research funding.

# Citizens as Repositories of Knowledge: The Case of Copenhagen Public Libraries

Jakob Heide Petersen

Video link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tv9sX\\_iFIAM&t=1h05m10s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tv9sX_iFIAM&t=1h05m10s)

## The Main Mission of Copenhagen Public Libraries

According to the Danish Act Regarding Library Services, the purpose of the public libraries is to 'promote information, education and cultural activity by making available books, periodicals, talking books and other suitable materials'.<sup>1</sup> When the legislation was passed in 2000, it was already becoming apparent at the time that there is an imbalance between the ends (promoting information, education and cultural activity) and the means (making available a collection of materials). The means are not sufficient to achieve the ends.

- Library collection of 1 million materials
- 330 library staff
- 580,000 inhabitants, 200,000 cardholders
- 4.6 million visits, 3.1 million loans
- 5.4 million web visits
- 20 locations
- Libraries merged with 'cultural houses', school libraries or citizen service centres
- 15 Libraries open from 8-22



Fig. 1. Copenhagen Public Libraries.

Danish public libraries therefore have a long tradition of relying on a broad variety of activities in addition to the collection in order to achieve the ends stated in the legislation. Since the introduction of the internet in Danish public libraries in 1995 and the subsequent media development, the availability of a library collection has become increasingly peripheral to many library users.

1. Danish Act Regarding Library Services:

[http://slks.dk/fileadmin/publikationer/publikationer\\_engelske/andre/Act\\_regarding\\_library\\_services.pdf](http://slks.dk/fileadmin/publikationer/publikationer_engelske/andre/Act_regarding_library_services.pdf)

The shift is reflected in the library strategy of Copenhagen Public Libraries (see fig. 1), where the traditional slogan of ‘Everything imaginable’ has been supplemented by the new one, ‘We get smarter together’.<sup>2</sup> The internet has challenged the older slogan, and the new slogan is meant to signal an invitation to citizens to collaborate with library staff as equals and to suggest that learning is increasingly a social activity. In that way the slogan echoes David Lankes’ concept of libraries as places of knowledge creation and John Seeley Brown’s ideas of learning as a social activity.<sup>3</sup> The new slogan also suggests that the mission of Copenhagen Public Libraries is still to ‘promote information, education and cultural activities’, but that this is achieved primarily by engaging citizens rather than making a collection available.

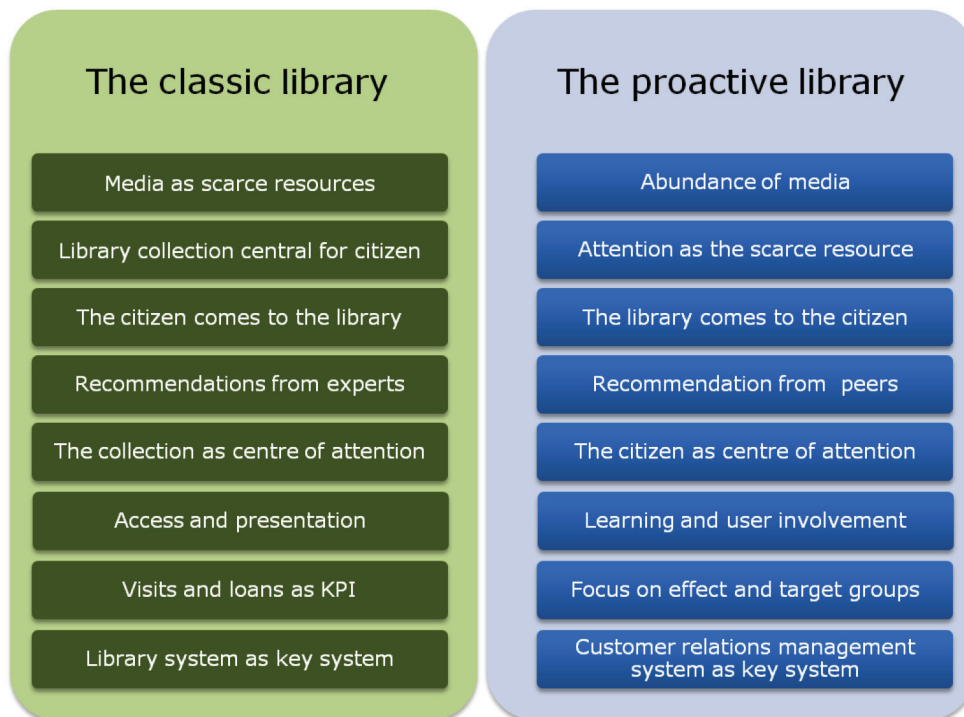


Fig. 2. The classical library versus the proactive library.

The thinking behind the strategy for Copenhagen Public Libraries is presented in figure 2 as a move from the more classical public library to a more proactive library.

### The Target Users of Copenhagen Public Libraries

The target users of the Danish public libraries are the citizens of the municipality. The legislation put a special emphasis on children and on the library’s obligation to be open to all citizens free of charge. The number of visitors to the Danish public libraries is relatively stable, but there are an increasing number of non-users. The citizens of Copenhagen can be divided into three groups: one third frequent library users (several times a month), one third occasional library users (several times a year) and one third non-users.

2. Copenhagen Libraries Strategy: <https://bibliotek.kk.dk/About>

3. An example of the thinking of David Lankes can be found at: <http://quartz.syr.edu/blog/?p=1721> and of John Seeley Brown at: <http://www.newcultureoflearning.com/internetlibrarian.pdf>



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