

CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS OF ODESA NATIONAL SCIENTIFIC LIBRARY AS WAYS OF PROMOTION LITERATURE, BOOKS AND READING IN MODERN SOCIETY

Iryna Biriukova

General Director of Odesa National Scientific Library, Master of History, Postgraduate Student, Odesa I. I. Mechnikov National University, Ukraine
e-mail: bibliowave@gmail.com, orcid.org/0000-0001-5026-6948

Summary

Libraries play an important role in the system of public institutions that ensure the right of citizens to information, knowledge, education, use of cultural achievements and public access to information resources, popularization of books and reading as a way of learning about the world, education of educated and comprehensively developed individuals with critical, panoramic thinking. The introduction of systematic measures to promote books and reading in modern society remains an extremely important mechanism of cultural, professional and intellectual enrichment, and in general – the development of human capital, its sustainable economic and social progress, increasing the competitiveness of the state in global political, economic, cultural and information space. The work of libraries, which are constantly looking for innovative forms of their activity, is inextricably linked with the process of raising the level of education and culture. The aim of this work is to examine the innovative experience of cultural and educational projects of Odesa National Scientific Library, which made the library an important center for the promotion of literature, reading and books. Currently, there is no single study that would reveal the experience of unique cultural projects of Odesa National Scientific Library. Thus, the systematization and analysis of information about these innovative projects implemented by the library is incredibly relevant.

Keywords: library, culture, popularization of reading, book promotion, innovative forms of library activities, Odesa National Scientific Library.

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1. Introduction

The intellectual development of society depends on many objective and subjective factors, the most important of which are the development of book publishing, book distribution, book promotion and reading. The introduction of systematic measures to promote books and reading in modern society remains an extremely important mechanism of cultural, professional and intellectual enrichment, and in general – the development of human capital, its sustainable economic and social progress, increasing the competitiveness of the state in global political, economic, cultural and information space.

The Law of Ukraine «On Libraries and Librarianship» defines a library as an information, cultural, educational institution (establishment, organization) or structural unit that has an organized storage of documents, access to other sources of information, the main task of which is to provide information, research, educational, cultural and other needs of library users (*Pro biblioteky...*, 1995). In accordance with Library Development Strategy for the period up to 2025, approved by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 219-p from

March 23, 2016, libraries are «... a basic element of cultural, scientific, educational, information infrastructure of the state. They are important for the development of information and language culture of society, patriotic, legal and environmental education, the formation of lasting interest in the study and understanding of national history and culture. Libraries contribute to the development of reading, thinking and educated nation, able to practically implement the acquired knowledge and experience in the development of independent Ukraine» (*Stratehiia rozvytku ...*, 2019).

Libraries' activities, which are constantly looking for innovations, are inextricably linked with the process of raising the level of education and culture. Thus, for Ukrainian libraries the most urgent task is and remains the promotion of citizens' rights to knowledge, education, use of cultural achievements and free-for-all access to information resources, popularization of reading as a way of world cognition, raising of educated and versatile individuals capable to apply the acquired knowledge and experience for the development of independent Ukraine.

Priorities, directions and content of cultural and educational activities of Odesa National Scientific Library, which is a leading cultural, educational, research and information institution, that performs the functions of research, methodological and coordination center on library science, bibliography, document science, are determined and implemented in accordance with the Library Statute [*Statut ...*, 2020].

Annually, Odesa National Scientific Library (ONSL) implements about 300 socio-cultural projects at the international, national and regional levels, aimed at promoting library resources and services, advocacy of library institutions, attracting new readers, expanding the range of cognitive reading interests, meeting and developing information needs and requests of the population, the formation of meaningful leisure.

Given the challenges of today, Odesa National Scientific Library uses both successful traditional and innovative forms of activities, which, thanks to relevant content, creativity, involvement of a wide range of partners, draw public attention to books and reading, and attract new visitors to the library. Experience of cultural-educational projects of Odesa National Scientific Library have made the library an important center for the promotion of literature, reading and books.

2. Digital socio-cultural projects of ONSL

Odesa National Scientific Library is actively introducing innovative cultural and educational projects, which are implemented by use of information and computer technologies. In 2018-2019, major innovative projects were implemented, which gained worldwide recognition.

In 2018, as a part of the project «The Old Engraving – Cultural Heritage of Ukraine», implemented under the egis of the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine with the support of the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation, Odesa National Scientific Library not only digitized more than 600 engravings of XVI–XIX centuries, but also developed a modern web resource that will provide free online access to digital heritage – native and foreign engravings, which are stored in the collection of Odesa National Scientific Library (*The Old Engraving ...*, 2021). For the first time presented the results of many years of hard work of librarians on scientific collection of unique engravings by masters from England, Italy and the Netherlands, Germany, Ukraine, France of XVI–XIX centuries, which are stored in ONSL collection of rarities (*Biriukova*, 2019).

The history of formation, composition and content of this collection deserves careful study and popularization, because the attractiveness of engraving as an art form is that each of

the prints is an independent original work of art. The web portal will provide free access to the mentioned resource to art lovers, researchers of Ukrainian and world culture, art critics, historians, museum workers, restorers, librarians around the world.

As part of the project presentation, an exhibition of original engravings was presented to visitors, the catalog of which was sent to native and foreign partners of Odesa National Scientific Library, and the most interesting 20 showpieces can be presented as a mobile exhibition in Ukraine and abroad (*Starovynna hraviura...*, 2018).

Since 2019, the project «Treasures of Ukraine: Digital Collection of Book Rarities in Odesa National Scientific Library» provides remote access to the most valuable rare books from ONSL collection, which are of exceptional historical and cultural value and subject to inclusion in the State Register of National cultural heritage (*Biriukova*, 2020).

The project «Treasures of Ukraine: Digital Collection of Book Rarities in Odesa National Scientific Library» will serve to create an insurance stock of book rarities, which are subject to entry in the State Register of National Cultural Heritage; providing free remote access to documents from the library; fulfilling the cultural, educational, informational, research and other needs of users; spreading of information about the cultural heritage of Ukraine, the introduction of modern information technologies in the activity of the library. The online resource, which presents a digital library of book rarities in Odesa National Scientific Library, will be available 24/7 (*Treasures of Ukraine...*, 2021). The first stage of the project implementation is to digitize documents of 1801–1922 in Ukrainian, regardless of the territory of their publication, and in any other languages published in modern Ukraine during 1801–1860. After processing the documents according to these criteria, the digital library will be replenished with documents defined by the «Procedure for selection of manuscripts, rare and valuable publications to the State Register of National Cultural Heritage», approved by the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine № 437 from 14.06.2016 (*Pro zatverdzhennia...*, 2016).

These projects effectively promote the development of national culture and art in the state, provide favorable conditions for the development of intellectual and spiritual potential of the individual and society, provide broad access to national cultural heritage, as well as support cultural diversity and integration of Ukrainian culture into the world cultural space.

3. All-Ukrainian Exhibition-forum «Ukrainian Book in Odesa Region»

Since 2019, the Intellect Forum project has been implemented at a high professional level, it combines two powerful streams of events of the All-Ukrainian Exhibition-forum «Ukrainian Book in Odesa Region» (*Vseukrainska vystavka-forum...*, 2021) and OdesaBiblio-Summit (*OdesaBiblioSammit*, 2021) – a program of professional communication for librarians in Ukraine and abroad.

In our opinion, the most significant in terms of the sustainable impact on the development and maintenance of reader demand for new book editions is the nationwide cultural and promotional project of the All-Ukrainian Exhibition-Forum «Ukrainian Book in Odesa Region», which was founded in 1999 and for 22 years in a row provides comprehensive presentation of publishing projects, reading and promotion of book publishing in Ukraine, as well as represents Ukrainian books in the world.

The founder and main organizer of this most important cultural festival of the South of Ukraine is Odesa National Scientific Library (initiator) under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine, with the partnership support of public authorities and local governments, the professional community and civil society institutions (Odesa

Regional State Administration, Odesa Regional Council, Odesa City Council, Book Chamber of Ukraine, Ukrainian Association of Publishers and Booksellers, Ukrainian Book Institute, Ukrainian Library Association, Odesa Regional Writers' Association of Ukraine, National, state, regional, city libraries, etc.).

The main purpose of the exhibition-forum is to preserve and increase the spiritual and cultural heritage of Ukrainian people, to create favorable conditions for the publication and popularization of Ukrainian books, to replenish the libraries of the Southern region with new publications, distribution of books among readers, nurture reading culture and love for books on the best examples of domestic and world literature, support of young writers, poets and artists, guiding of youth. (*Vasylevska, 2019*).

The participants of the exhibition-forum are publishing houses, cultural institutions, literary agencies, public organizations, unions, educational institutions, creative and professional associations, authors, and illustrators of books, etc.

Every year the program of the All-Ukrainian Exhibition-forum «Ukrainian Book in Odesa Region» provides a complex of more than 50 professional and literary events, including a book exhibition-fair in the main reading hall of the library. Presentations of books and publishing projects, personal meetings with writers and historians; literary, poetic and musical evenings, master classes with demonstration of books of the corresponding profile, intellectual games, chess tournaments, autograph sessions, discussions, author's readings, press conferences, various performances which attract attention of the general public, local authorities, mass media, creative circles of Ukraine.

The importance of the forum for Odesa region and the South of Ukraine is evident: within mere 22 years, more than a thousand different events have been held to promote reading; about 300 participants – leading publishing houses of Ukraine presented their newest publications and publishing projects; the events of the exhibition-forum were attended by about 120 thousand people.

The exhibition-forum «Ukrainian Book in Odesa Region» became one of those resonant and cultural events, due to which Odesa in 2019 received the status of «City of Literature of UNESCO», joining the network of creative cities of the world.

Traditionally, the most famous Ukrainian writers take part in the events of the exhibition-form, meetings with famous cultural and scientific persons from Ukraine and other countries of the world take place. Famous and celebrity guests always attract the readers, contribute to improvement of reading culture and love for the printed word on the best examples of Ukrainian literature. It is worth mentioning the high motivation of the authors in meeting with their readers. Personal meetings of authors with their readers is an incredibly special communication, when the author has the opportunity to receive critical comments or positive feedback on their own literary work. Not to mention the aesthetic pleasure of young readers from communicating with the author. Such mutual interest makes the event extremely bright, interesting, and effective in promoting books and reading.

For example, in different years there were: a meeting with Taras Fedyuk, poet, vice-president of the Association of Ukrainian Writers, winner of Taras Shevchenko National Prize, one of the leaders of the contest "Coronation of the Word" (2007, 2012); with well-known journalist Zoya Kazanzhy (2014); meeting with children's writer and screenwriter Irene Rozdobudko (2016, 2020, 2021); a special guest of the exhibition in 2017 was the writer Myroslav Dochynets, winner of the Taras Shevchenko National Prize of Ukraine and the President of Ukraine Prize «Ukrainian Book of the Year»; in 2018 the exhibition was visited by Yevhen

Polozhiy, Ukrainian writer and journalist, editor-in-chief of the newspaper «Panorama» (Sumy) and many other famous people from literary circles, in 2019, 2020 and 2021 a meeting was held with fiction writer Andriy Kokotyukha, winner of the Golden Writer of Ukraine .

In 2019, our international partners joined the forum. National Parliamentary Library of Georgia Director, poet, writer, TV anchor Georgy Kekelidze presented his work in 2018).

Traditionally, a number of events are held to promote children's books, including author's readings and meetings with Volodymyr Rutkivsky, poet and novelist, well-known Ukrainian children's writer, winner of Taras Shevchenko National Prize of Ukraine, Inna Ishchuk, children's writer, winner of the 5th International Competition for the best work for children (*Korniychuk Prize, 2017*) in the category «Poetry for Children» and other contemporary children's writers. Meetings with Serhiy Dmytriyev, Head of Odesa Regional Organization of the National Union of Writers of Ukraine, head of the literary studio for novice writers of the Odesa Region «School of the Young Author», Associate Professor of the Department of General and Slavic Linguistics of Odesa National Mechnikov University. Mykola Senchenko, Director of the Book Chamber of Ukraine, Doctor of Technical Sciences, Professor, Honored Worker of Science and Technology of Ukraine, supports the project with his active participation, speeches, and presentation of newly published books. Soirees, presentations of books, author's readings by Oleksandr Afonin, Honored Worker of Culture of Ukraine, prose writer, poet, President of the Ukrainian Association of Publishers, and Book Distributors are of great interest.

Traditionally, the exhibition is visited by leading specialists in library science, librarians, representatives of central and local authorities, prominent public and religious figures, leaders of public opinion.

The forum takes place in Odesa National Scientific Library, branch libraries, museums, theaters of the city, as well as in the District centers of Odesa Region, which contributes to the development of cultural life in the region.

The obligatory bright component of the forum is the book festival trip to the remote district cities of Odesa region. During the outing of the Book Festival the district centers life is flourishing, a special atmosphere of the holiday is created – the Book Festival and this cultural event becomes one of the most important events in the cultural and book life of the town. «Culture promoting invasion» consisting of librarians, writers, publishers, scientists, artists organizes a book fair, presentations, meetings, autograph sessions, workshops, which allow local citizens to get as close as possible to information, create conditions for receiving new books in remote cities, replenish the collections of district centralized library systems, rural, school libraries, orphanage libraries. About 45,000 books were donated to social institutions during those field trips. And books with autographs and personalized inscriptions of authors during autograph sessions are stored in family libraries as valuable items.

An important point of the project is to determine the winners of the competition «The Best Book of the Exhibition-Forum».

The competition of readers' reviews «Utter a Word about the Book», launched by ONSL in 2011, helps to support the reading activity of young people, attract new readers, promote reading, and capture attention to new books. For the past two years, the competition has been supported by the local branch of the Rotary Club, which has provided cash prizes for the best work. During the competition, participants are invited to write a review of books from the list of publications that have received awards from various domestic book competitions. Library specialists form a relevant book exhibition in the main reading room of the library, drawing readers' attention to new books. The best reviews are published in the catalog of the exhibition-forum «Ukrainian Book in Odesa Region», and from 2019 – on the website of ONSL.

The exhibition-forum also includes conferences, round tables, discussions of experts on ways how to cooperate and coordinate the efforts of libraries and publishers to promote Ukrainian books and reading among young people. The growing relevance of this series of events led to the launch in 2019 of OdesaBiblioSummit project as a program of professional communication for professionals and library partners, which aims to create, develop and implement innovative practices in libraries, popularize books and reading, optimize customer service, discuss current problems of professional activity and exchange of work experience.

According to library experts, promotion of reading should not only be considered as a priority in the cultural and educational policy of the state, which is important for the future of the country, but also to take comprehensive measures, including developing interagency partnerships to promote reading in all institutions related to books by initiating coordinated projects and campaigns in the Ukrainian communication space, such as book festivals, fairs, reading competitions, etc. (*Vylehzhaniina, 2020*). The long-term practice of holding the exhibition-forum «Ukrainian Book in Odesa Region» proved the effectiveness of events that productively contribute to the development of Ukrainian cultural and artistic environment, popularization of books as an intellectual product and attribute of modern lifestyle, reading among various segments and improving the art of book publishing.

4. Project «Night in the Library»

A new initiative that has become a trademark of the library and found a passionate response from the book lovers' community – culture promotional project «Night in the Library. Poetics of Love» (*Velyka Odeska bibliionich..., 2021*). This is a broad-ranging cultural event, which is held for two years in a row on International Book Donation Day and St. Valentine's Day.

The project is aimed primarily at attracting young people to read and intends not only to draw attention to books and reading, but also to demonstrate the capabilities of libraries and prove that visiting the library can be not only for research or educational needs but also the desire to fulfill creativity or just spend quality leisure time.

2019, in total, the events of the project «Great Odesa Library Night» were attended by more than 1.5 thousand guests. During such an action in all corners of the library different activities occur, which are characterized by elements of theatre and game, which always causes activity of participants, whether a book exhibition, literary work, book illustration, book installation, theatrical performance, literary and musical performance, poetry readings, classes from masters of folk art, and the festive atmosphere is created by musical performances by professional musicians and singers. Thus, the increased interest of visitors was caused by originally decorated book exhibition «Book Symphony of Love», an intellectual game «What? Where? When?», an unusual for the library display of hats from the Fashion Houses of Chante and the «RoyalFamilyModels», which was accompanied by a retrospective discourse on the role of the headdress in a woman's life with a thematic exhibition of books and rare fashion magazines about the art of hat design.

People of all ages gladly participated in selfie quests, which gathered about a hundred participants each year. The route of the quest was laid out on the most interesting places of the exquisite library building. A book was hidden in each location, which the quest participant must find and take a photo with. For the results of the quest, all participants received prizes. And for the little ones they arranged a children's space – «KinderLand», where young visitors, future readers of the Library, had fun, interesting and useful time.

The organizers of the project during the preparation of events try to consider the preferences of all segments of the population and different age groups. In 2020, the event was positioned in the media as the Great Odesa Library Night thanks to the involvement of partners from the libraries of the city and region, cultural and artistic centers of Odesa and more. «Night in the Library» brings together patrons with different interests, backgrounds, and levels of activity. Practice has shown that the events were interesting for both young people who seek active action, and older people who enjoyed spending the evening in the intellectual, cultural environment.

In February 2021, despite the challenges and restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Great Odesa Library Night was a success. Taking into the account quarantine restrictions on the number of visitors who were allowed to stay inside the premises, the number of events had to be reduced. At the same time, we managed to attract 21 partner institutions, thanks to which a broad program of the holiday was created. As part of «Great Odesa Library Night-III» there was a poetic teleconference, which brought together Odesa poets from around the world. The event took place thanks to the creative union of the office «Odessa City of literature UNESCO» and the public organization «Bibliopolis». 21 Odesa poets (19 of them - representatives of the Poets of Odesa City of Literature UNESCO) performed live in the library, and online event was attended by the poet, Professor of Ghent University O. Yudin (Belgium). There was also a literary and musical marathon in the languages of the world «Poetics of Love». Long-term partners and friends of the library presented their native culture: Charitable Foundation «Bavarian House, Odesa», Alliance Française Odesa, a branch of the Greek Cultural Foundation in Odesa, public organization «Odesa A. Mickiewicz branch of the Union of Poles in Ukraine», Odesa regional public organization Georgian Cultural and Educational Center «Iveria», All-Ukrainian Center of Bulgarian Culture, Regional Center of Gagauz Culture, public organizations «Bakhtale-Tavrichane», «United Youth» and others. The marathon program organically included not only poetry, musical compositions, but also fragments from performances. The literary and musical marathon was attended by students of Odesa K. F. Dankevych Professional College of Arts, National University «Odesa Law Academy» and Odesa National Maritime University. The masterful musical greeting was played by the winner of international and national competitions, saxophonist Heorhiy Stremyadin. During the evening, you could immerse yourself in the world of fashion from the international modeling agency «Royal Family Models» to the music of Yevhen Lukashov, Honored Worker of Culture of Ukraine. A tree of friendship was installed in the festive hall, which symbolized the multinational Odesa region. After the performance, the representatives of cultural and artistic institutions and national-cultural societies of Odesa decorated the tree of friendship with colorful ribbons, symbolizing flag colors of the peoples of the world.

The guests of Biblionight willingly visited the salon of the poetic bouts-rimés «My love story» and wrote poems about love with inspiration. An ancient literary game that was very fashionable in France and Italy in the XVII-XVIII centuries is gaining popularity today. During the game, each participant showed his style of writing: both funny quatrains and serious philosophical poetry were composed.

A new poetry collections were exhibited during the game. Participants got acquainted with the publications, read their favorite poetry, looked for inspiration, quoted lines from Ukrainian and world literature. Poetic bouts-rimés encouraged creativity, intellectual communication and left an unforgettable emotional impression and great mood!

The decoration of the event was the presentation of the romantic photo exhibition «Love in my city» by photographer, member of the National Union of Photo Artists of Ukraine Angelina Tarasenko.

The participants of the holiday had a wonderful opportunity to take part in the master class «The Wonderful World of Vytynanka» of Marianna Panasyuk, a folk master of this kind of art, an employee of Odesa Regional Center of Ukrainian Culture. The master class was interesting for both children and adults, they made themselves the «book angel» as a keepsake. Children were able to show their creative potential, develop imagination and figurative thinking. Adults had the opportunity to distract themselves from everyday life, learn the meditative power of creativity and, perhaps, get a new exciting hobby.

All events are broadly announced and promoted in local and regional media, online publications, information portals, social networks, etc. Press conferences are held, TV stories are prepared, etc. In 2019-2021, there were over 400 mentions in the media, which, of course, also contributes to maintaining a positive image of the library as a place of meaningful leisure for the whole family, promotes both libraries and reading culture.

Attending events were free, on the terms of free donation in support of the social project «Litera» – project of equipping the open summer reading area «Litera» in the courtyard of the library as an open public space for residents and guests of the city, where you can read a book and relax in a cozy atmosphere in the fresh air, became an unconditional professional challenge and pleasure for ONSL staff (*Litera...*, 2021). It stimulated the further introduction of innovative forms of popularization of books and reading, attracting the attention of the locals, raising funds for project development through crowdfunding mechanisms.

A charity fair «From Heart to Heart» was also organized, where visitors to the Library had the opportunity to buy a souvenir, book or decoration from the librarians who donated their personal belongings: bakery, sweets, handmade jewelry for every taste, various souvenirs, collectible dolls, all sorts of things for the kitchen, utensils, piggy banks, figurines, woolen socks, a bouquet of dried lavender, beautiful books and coffee set for a cozy winter reading-with-coffee (*Blahodiinyi yarmarok...*, 2020). At the same time in the courtyard of the library was a dancing party, disco under the stars.

To underline a positive effect on the image of the library aesthetically designed advertising and information printed materials are presented: brand walls, billboards, posters, flyers, booklets, bookmarks, postcards, pocket calendars and more, it adds to recognizable identity of the organization, determines the mission of the institution, attracts visitors.

5. Immersive performance-promenade «DIALOGY»

The unusual theatrical project, in the implementation of which ONSL acted as a partner, deserves special attention. In 2018, the Ukrainian company «U!Zahvati» presented the first in the history of the country collaboration of theater and library – an immersive performance-promenade «DIALOGY» (*Premiera spektaklia...*, 2018). Thanks to the support of the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation, a theatrical performance took place in two national libraries (Odesa and Kyiv), thanks to which the audience had the opportunity to gain a new theatrical experience. Being placed into the narrative, everyone could become a co-author of the performance, get acquainted with the immersive form, feel the dialogue with the action and with himself. The idea, drama, script was written specifically for the library space. After the library closing time in the evening, a group of 20 spectators had come to its premises, exchanging their phones for headphones to fully immersed themselves in the plot. Each spectator had his own personal dialogue with the storyline, which was written just for the library by the famous Ukrainian writer Tamriko Sholi.

6. Conclusion

Thus, the creation of interesting, meaningful, unusual events, innovative projects that increase the number of library visitors and attract media attention, is one of the most effective elements of encouraging reading among different age groups and segments of the population.

Through the implementation of cultural advancement projects, the library effectively reveals its powerful informational, resource, service, historical and cultural potential, is constantly evolving, overcoming the challenges of time, and moving forward.

New initiatives, cultural promoting projects and socio-cultural programs position the library as a leading information center, and, at the same time, form a positive image of the library, achieve a balanced relationship between the library and the public. In addition, such popular and resonant events attract the attention of sponsors and patrons, which helps to develop partnerships, expand the circle of «friends of the library», to attract additional funding, which is a necessary component in the activities of the library.

A positive feature of the projects is that they do not only promote library collections, meet the interests of readers, but also reveal the creative potential and abilities of users and patrons, shape their aesthetic tastes, readers' preferences and more. In modern society, the library acts as a distinctive communication cultural platform, intellectual space – a place of self-education and career guidance, a center of historical and national-cultural heritage, educational and scientific center, filled with various means of information interaction.

Thus, the introduction of innovative cultural and educational projects of Odesa National Scientific Library not only provides modernization of forms and methods of socio-cultural activity of Odesa National Scientific Library, which include informational, cognitive, cultural, educational, communicative, organizational, practical, entertaining, aesthetic, creative, relaxing, etc., but also effectively promotes the realization of citizens' rights to knowledge, education, use of cultural achievements and universal access to information resources, development of national and world science and culture.

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