

## **Foreword by the Mayor of Rijeka the Mayor of Rijeka**

As the Mayor, I always particularly enjoy when we encounter an opportunity to witness a discovery of some new interesting facts on Rijeka, that frequently surprise us with their value and significance, both regarding the past times and the present moment of our city.

The best example of such a value can certainly be found in the old materials safe-kept by the Rijeka University Library that, following the conducted expert researches, came to be exhibited and are presented to the public, not only of Rijeka, but of Croatia and Europe as well. We are talking about an outstanding value and the historical heritage of Rijeka, comprising also three recently found books that come out of the Library archives for the first time and which Rijekans and all the other exhibition visitors will be able to see for the first time. Therefore, to use a theatrical vocabulary, this is a premiere the likes of which we can rarely see.

This exhibition provided a new impetus and a new content to the increasingly intensive development of urban tourism in Rijeka, whose important frameworks actually include history and culture of the city on Rjeina river.

I am glad that, in a course of demanding and comprehensive researches that enabled this exhibition, City of Rijeka was a partner of the University Library. I also thank and congratulate all those who have contributed to reviving a part of Rijeka history and to the discoveries of books previously unknown both to Rijeka citizens and expert public.

Vojko Obersnel, The Mayor of Rijeka

## **Foreword by Corporate Communications Sector Director of INA**

From its very establishing, INA has been continuously instigating projects related to the preservation of Croatian cultural heritage. In accordance, the project of Preserving the European Cultural Heritage through creating the Historical Collection at the University Library in Rijeka has been rated highly by INA, as the project worthy of extraordinary attention.

The very first glimpses into printed editions constituting the Historical Collection have announced dawn of some new insights that will contribute to improved knowledge of numerous significant pages of history in this region. We particularly refer to cultural history of the city whose multidimensional heritage is specific even beyond Croatian frames.

Besides intention to link the name of INA to what defines our milieu as a place of valuable cultural tradition, by engaging in this project INA wishes to at least partially repay a debt to the city it has special connection with. Croatian oil company has its oldest roots in Rijeka. INA is a modern heritor of all the production and other experiences of the Rijeka Oil Refinery, a plant that has played a pioneering role in European oil history, and which has significantly marked a history of the city in which it is located.

We rejoice for a fact that this project has enabled INA to, once again, present itself as a company aware of its social responsibilities, and all that in the very city which ties Croatian culture to its European surrounding, in the ways that are still experientially precious and mutually enriching.

Tomislav Štengl,

Director of INA Corporate Communication

## **Foreword by Director of University Library Rijeka**

The exhibition of the 16th century books from the Historical Collection of the The The University Library of Rijeka is the first of two planned exhibitions through which the newly established collection will be publicly presented. This exhibition also outlines a basic starting point - which lead us while conceiving the collection - and that is a fact of permanent foundation of Rijeka's cultural identity within Europe. Not Europe that is a sum of European states and national cultures, but Europe which, through interfusion of freely expressed cultural peculiarities of its citizens an institutions, peoples and nations, creates the new value, a unique European cultural identity.

A thematic scope, a span of titles, places and printing-houses wherein originated the 16th century books which, in the course of history, Rijekans and Rijeka institutions have preserved in their city, proves rightness of the European starting point within the collection's conception. It is a specimen that enables the insight into a European library heritage. And this further speaks of "the specimen" of individuals who possessed those books, from which they acquired knowledge and worldviews. Along these lines we arrive to Šimun Kožicic Benja of Zadar, also a bishop of Modruš who, in the actual 16th century lived in Rijeka that was a Habsburg dominion at the time. In Rijeka he found a place where, unimpered by Turkish raids, he lived for a short while and founded a Glagolitic printing-house where, aided by Italian printers, from 1530 to 1521 he printed six books, by which he tried to improve a Croatian literary language burdened with the archaic Old-Church-Slavonic expressions.

By creating the Historical Collection we wish to initiate a new life of historical Rijeka libraries. A library lives if its materials are accessible to readers, and they are accessible not only when a reader can get hold of a physical copy or its' computerized text, but when librarians previously describe books and "arrange" description data in such a manner that citizens, students, explorers and everyone else can gain wholesome and thorough information as to which books from the Collection comprise the record of specific knowledge they wish to access.

City of Rijeka and INA, Croatian Oil and Gas Industry, have donated their funds, enabling possibility of reviving the historical libraries of Rijeka. Therefore I express my gratitude. I would like to express appreciation to the University of Rijeka and its academic community for their support and readiness to provide professional and scientific collaboration on the project. I also thank the expert authorities on book history in Rijeka and Zagreb for their advices and whole-hearted support to our endeavours. I thank all the present workers of the University Library for their enthusiasm and creative energy invested into creating the Historical collection. I especially thank all the workers of formerly the Science Library and today the University Library that have received, catalogued, deposited and preserved these holdings, and then conducted researches, without which such a comprehensive project would have no sufficient arguments for a present support .

Senka Tomljanović

Director of University Library Rijeka

## **LIGHT FROM MINERVA'S TEMPLE**

Already in antiquity, the libraries were the consecrated places of Muses, goddesses of creative inspiration and Apollo's companions. The libraries safe-kept the spiritual treasury of the Old World, and were visited by rare and curious lovers of knowledge. A stone from Herculaneum bore a carved epigraph dedicated to some library, which read as: Announce that this grove is dedicated to us, the Muses; to our care are given the rows of parchments, scrolled in the shades of plane-trees: when a true lover arrives here, we shall wreath his figure with ivy.

This epigraph was allocated to a library which stood on a site planted with plane-trees and adorned with the statues of Muses. The plane-tree, stretching its branches upwards and sideways, later on became an image of benefaction, firmness of character, ethical superiority and philanthropy. *Mobilis aestivus platanus diffuderat umbras*, said Petronius in one of his verses: "A quivering plane tree has poured out the summertime shade...." In the shade of this tree, the man of antiquity used to discover much needed equanimity and peace of soul. There he could surrender to daydreaming and reading, reflection and creative intellectual work. To wreath someone with ivy, as mentioned in the epigraph above, meant to make him immortal. Those rare lovers of books, endowed with creative spirit, sometimes gained this beautiful and rare privilege, if the fruits of their inspiration experienced the grace of becoming famous.

Christianity consecrated the book to an even greater extent. It was, like Judaism, a religion of the holy book. Antique libraries, surrounded by scented green alleys and murmuring fountains were replaced by quiet monastery scriptoria. A breakthrough of the new Christian spirituality filled those spaces with a kind of mystical power and deep contemplativeness. During the middle ages, monastic libraries and workshops yielded multiple new fruits of painstaking night work at the desk, fruits born during the long vigils under the shivering light of oil-lamps. In this self-denying task, writers have been followed by illuminators, scribes and archivists. Their operative principle was expressed in a motto *Studio et vigilantia*. Work and vigilance.

*Vigilantia* is one of the virtues demanded both from the crowned heads as from the other high-profiled individuals. Usually, vigilance was allegorically portrayed as a woman having an open book in her right hand, her left hand holding a rod and a lit lamp. A crane stood by her side, as her most favoured attribute. An ancient legend claimed this long-legged wading bird was awake at all times, raising one leg in which it clutched a stone. At the very moment the bird drifts into sleep, it drops the stone and awakes.

The second iconological symbol of Wakefulness was a woman dressed in white, with a chanticleer and a lamp in her hand. The chanticleer's crowing heralds arrival of a new day, marking a moment when Nature's dark powers ceased exerting their influence, while the oil-lamp connoted vigilance. Entire science and literature of the time were eclipsed by a powerful shadow of a wise Minerva's owl, sitting and patiently keeping vigil, on a large heap of aged books.

The significance of reading, as a form of adopting and study, now got equalled by the significance of writing as a form of production and creation. The written book possessed a kind of value we can no more feel nowadays. Each book produced by copying was inwrought with tremendous diligence and artisan skill, with mindfulness, the work that was both careful and full of love. Each new book was a prodigious personal accomplishment and the writers had a very developed sense for the expanding functionality of a written word and for the book's value.

During the era of humanism, the writers and scientists again turned towards spiritual traditions of the Old World. The dawn of new age gave rise to renewed need for grasping into a rich well of antique wisdom, culture and art, in order to instigate the total development of modern man. Thus, discovery of the antiquity enclosed a time circle and also started a new process of the total humanization of world, of men's self-cognizance. Invention of movable type enabled unlimited copying and expansion of human thought. In this manner, the book gradually stepped out from the monastic isolation, ceasing to be a privilege of a dedicated minority and becoming a universal property. In their working cabinets, surrounded by numerous scripts and various books, humanists created the peculiar model of total erudition, integrating it into the foundations of new, mundane culture. In this manner, antiquity again became *lux in tenebris* of once more awakened humankind, inspired by enthusiastic optimism.

Like their medieval monk predecessors, humanists have also kept to the principles of diligent "work and vigilance", enriching libraries with countless new editions, expanding horizons and deepening

scientific thought. These books tried to interpret, down to the end, all *mirabilia mundi*, endeavouring to shed light on all the earlier secrets of human existence, to explain all that was inexplicable.

In such a manner, libraries have preserved that peculiar character of consecrated sites, to these very days. In their essence, they've been and remained the places of special spiritual enjoyment, *locus amoneus* of every explorer and intellectual. In the libraries, man can still sense a quiet of the sacred Greek groves, enjoy a shade of the old plane-trees, listen attentively how a gentle spring breeze brings along the merry and delighted voices of Helicon Muses.

Climbing a penumbra of the University Library in Rijeka, from my earliest youth I have felt a kind of peculiar thrill. Certainly, this emotion stemmed from a fact that at I moved within a space of special spiritual surrounding and significance. The very fact of being surrounded by so many old and valuable books, sorted in endless rows and stacked in numerous shelves, visible and invisible, suffices for one to be unusually excited and taken by a special emotion. If we further add our impatience to, as soon as possible, lay our hands on a desired title, hence satisfying our curiosity and widening our insight, all of the excitement becomes even more intelligible.

Today, I still keep a memory of unusual titles that I've borrowed from the Old Holdings of this Rijeka library: *Liber de morbo gallico*, *Systema cosmicum* by Galileo Galilei, *Czvit svetih* and *Historia Tersattana* by Franjo Glavinic, *Purgstall's Germania Austriaca seu topographia omnium Germaniae provinciarum*. Thumbing through these yellow-brown, dusty pages, whose smell somehow still lingers on, I used to imagine who held them before me, and what would they say if they knew anything of the succeeding generations. The inexorability of transience of all the earthly things reflected on those pages, partially time-worn, eaten by industrious and persistent cellar rodents, sometimes stained by ink or wrapped in worm-eaten cardboard binding, covered in leather. I have tried, striving hard, to fathom the meaning of old Latin, Italian and Croatian sentences, living in conviction that, sooner or later, they would somehow prove useful to me.

*Liber de morbo gallico* spoke of the history and treatment of syphilis. It was published in Venice, i.e. *Impressum Venetiis per Aurelium Pintium Venetum. Anno domini MDXXXIII Mense Octobris*. Subtitle stated that the book brought together insights from then renowned medical authors (in quo diuersi celeberrimi in tali materia scribentes, medicine continentur auctores videlicet): Nicolaus Leonicensis Vicentinus, Ulrichus de Hutten Germanus, Petrus Andreas Matteolo Senensis, Laurentius Phrisius, Joannis Almenar Hispanus and Angelus Bologninus. First of the above mentioned, Nicolaus Leonicensis, born in Vicenza, was a professor of medicine in Ferrara. In 1497 he was the first to write of syphilis, calling it "French disease" (*morbis gallicus*). The second writer from the list was a famous German knight, humanist and poet Ulrich von Hutten, an advocate of strong centralized German Empire, independent of Pope. Browsing through this forgotten medical tractate, I have come across data on ancient similar epidemics, elephantiasis, the first appearance of "French disease" in Europe, its symptomatology, its cure obtained from *lignum vitae* that was brought from America through Spain, and from the mercury that was introduced later on in medical practice.

Coming across Galileo's book *Systema cosmicum/Dialogus de systemate mvndi*, published in 1663 by Thomas Dicus in London, I was delighted by a cover that displays scholars in dignified poses, beautiful geometric depictions and drawings of celestial bodies, distant and unknown spheres, mathematic and astronomic calculations. The front cover is actually depicting Aristotle, Ptolemy and Copernicus in a joint discussion on astronomy. Above them float little winged angels carrying a big canvas with the book's title and an arms of coat of Medici family (the actual work is dedicated to a great Tuscany duke Ferdinand II). One of Galileo's remarks got especially etched in my memory, *impossibilia factu non tentat natura*. Nature is a stranger to "impossible" facts: they exist merely in our minds.

A guardian of Trsat monastery, Franciscan, writer and historian Franjo Glavinic is a story on his own. At first I borrowed his *Historia Tersattana*, printed in Udine in 1648, apresso Nicoló Schiratti. This occurred few years prior to Croatian translation of the same work done by a late Rijeka historian Danilo Klein. After that, I came across Glavinic's book *Czvit Zvetih toyest zivot szvetih od kih Rimska Czrikva çini Spominak i Sslosen na HaruatSki yezik Catholiçanskim obiçajen: O.F. Franciscy Glavinichy istranin Reda S. Francisca Male bratye ObSluSechih DarSae GaruatSke, ApoStolskoga Pripouidavcza Theologa ili BogoSslaua wnogi SspaSSitelyni uzdarSeSse nauki, Ssuakom duhovnom i teleSSnomu, kruto koriSSni, i potribni. V Beneccich, M.D.C.C.II. Po Mikuli Pezzanu ProdauaSe ú Marzarii pod çlamenyu od Lilia s dpoustenim starih*. At the University Library in Rijeka, this edition is classified under a call number R-139. This work delighted me with, amongst other things, Glavinic's marvellous saying: " ... and don't let the talent, small as can be and God-given, remain buried!" Then, at the last page of the same book, I found a Glagolitic inscription by an unknown hand, written in tiny cursive:

Enslaved, a devils' captive,

mournful Judas writes a missive... <![endif]>

From a today's perspective of the so called maturity, I am increasingly assured this was no coincidence. Years that have passed in the meantime actually reinforced my first forebodings and presumptions. Once but a presentiment turned out to be a clearly substantial claim: this temple of Minerva, that I considered consecrated, was hiding some truly unsurmised treasuries.

This is further testified by the books printed in a course of the 16th century, today in the holdings of the University Library in Rijeka, which are currently being presented to our public. To use the words of famous Croatian lexicographer Ivan Belostenec, these books are the source of "all that befits the schools of deep knowledge." These sixty-three titles comprise most diverse subjects and were published in between 1521 and 1600, in various European cities.

The era in which those books, today within the Rijeka's library treasury, came out of the woodwork, was pregnant with significant phenomena, events and turmoil: Luther's reformation, the conquering campaigns by Suleiman the Magnificent, a civil war in Croatia between followers of Ferdinand Habsburg and Ivan Zapolja, the wars fought by Carlo V, the establishment of Jesuit order, Council of Trident, a conflict between Henry VIII and Roman Pope and St. Bartholomew's Day massacre. It was the century of Reuchlin, Erasmus, Mantegna, Botticelli, Bramante, Machiavelli, Ariosto, Leonardo, Raphael, Perugino, Dürer, Grünwald, Correggio, Paracelsus, Calvin, Holbein, Rabelais, Loyola, Michelangelo, Shakespeare, Titian, Rubens, Montaigne, Copernicus, Tasso, Tintoretto and Giordano Bruno.

At the time Rijeka gained its statute, while bishop Šimun Benja Kozičić started a famous Glagolitic print-house in the city. By the end of the same century, the city was ravaged by a big plague. Despite all that, life went on and human curiosity could not be restrained. As always, comfort could be sought in books, that were now available to many. The books were read not only by individuals in the robes of priests or monks, but also by Rijeka merchants, patricians, lawyers, doctors, notaries and magistrates. This is testified by numerous bookplates and parenthetical remarks on the pages of books.

During the 16th century, the books were obtained from the renown European printing centres: Venice, Köln, London, Basel, Paris, Lyon, Wittenberg, Frankfurt, Antwerp and Rome. These were mostly editions in Latin language, which at the time was still a universal language of church and science. Italian, French, German and Greek editions were present to a much lesser degree. Amongst these books' authors we find Xenophont, Galen, Aristotle, Marcus Tullius Cicero , Publius Ovidius Naso, Titus Livius , Gaius Julius Caesar, Marcus Annaeus Lucanus, Quintus Curtius Rufus, Gaius

Plinius Caecilius Secundus, Marcus Antonius Flaminius, Heliodorus, Flavius Josephus, Aurelius Augustinus, Pomponius Mela, Gracian, Pompey the Triumvir, Erasmus Roterodamus, Bartholomew Platina, Ludovico Ariosto, Matteo Bandello, Johann Oldendorp, Cornelis Wouters, Theophil Folengo, Antonio Cornazano, Guillaume Budé, Peter Schade, Virgilio Polidoro, Jean Péliisson, Giulio Landi, Matthaeus Curtius and others, today less known or totally forgotten writers.

However, for one who is truly aspiring to truth and beauty, this is not of a crucial importance, as is not the antiquity of a certain book. With some effort one can find both truth and beauty on the pages of these ancient editions "that hide the ancient learning". Therefore, for those who visit or yet plan to visit the temples of Muses, the old motto *Studio et vigilantia* is still valid. Stack on library shelves, the old books patiently - sometimes even for decades and centuries - await their curious readers and explorers, those rare but ardent lovers of knowledge. Because, they are not the mere silent witnesses of some times past, but also the inexhaustible source of human knowledge. However, wisdom is something which comes about in time, slowly but steadily, and grows to be distinctive when we reach old age. Probably this is why Minerva's owl, this symbol of all the night watchmen, literary workers, inventors and explorers, usually flies up in the twilight.

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Irvin Lukežic, Litt.D.

## **NEW LIFE OF HISTORICAL RIJEKA LIBRARIES OR WHY INDIANA JONES NEVER TAKES OFF HIS HAT**

When, during the 1980s, I realized my childhood dream by becoming a librarian, I discovered a statistical report on various professions' years of service. The highest percentage of full seniority and retirement pension was found amongst archaeologists and librarians. Let us associate this childhood dream with the adolescent delight on hearing Breton's answer to the meaning of life: "rather life unfavourable and long", and watch how a mental balance has been tipped, once and for all, to a side of a profession that safe-keeps, describes and documents the preserved.

First of all, I would like to mention: each of these books had multiple chances to be discarded, misappropriated, sold to a black market, none of which happened....

Each of these books was fortunate enough to remain hidden and realize "life, unfavourable and long."

Much was written about the 16th century book. This is the book of renaissance, the book for the man whose perfect figure was in the centre of Leonardo's circle. It is the book whose format was reduced to an octavo size by Aldo Manuzio, who also introduced a typeface that was friendly to the human eye. The transformed world has created the book endowed with a new form and a new content, the book that continued changing the world. From a German "cradle" of incunabula, the art of printing by movable type spread throughout Europe and within next fifty years all the bigger European cities had printing houses whose editions and their beautiful production, printing skills and erudition of the drafters, translators and publishers have not been surpassed to the present day. Venice, Lyon, Paris, Antwerp, Florence, Köln, Frankfurt, Basel and Rome were the biggest publishing printing and bookselling centres. During the first period, until the middle of the 1500s, the roles of publisher, printer and bookseller were not yet dissociated. It wasn't before a number of titles and copies grew that their roles got separated. National particularities developed, both those aesthetical and those

pertaining to the content. Humanistic Italy printed the biggest number of Roman and Greek classics, while in France, from the very beginning, prevailed the texts written in a native language....

The seventy-six titles of the 16th century books from the Historical Collection of the Rijeka University Library are like a microcosm of printing industry of that great century. Herein we find editions from all the big printing centres, diversity in terms of content, linguistics and aesthetics.

So much about the books on a level of their description which the librarian profession calls "a description of an ideal copy", the copy as it was on the day it was made.

The book, as a conveyer of ideas and information, as often as not an object of beauty, was created to find its owner as soon as possible. The owner uses a written or printed *ex libris* to enter upon his possession. If the book is given as a gift, s/he writes in and dates the gift, always in the same place, on a front cover, or either endorses its back. Handwritten *ex libris* of the Jesuit's colleges have always been placed at the upper part of the front cover, most often between the title and a printer's plate. De Benzoni used to record the giving of a gift at the bottom of the front cover. When the front cover's central or lower part is cut out, this provides data that we include into "the description of ideal copy".

The "ideal copy", with all of its *ex libris*, marginalia and damages becomes a carrier of information on its own history, a historic source, a complement and confirmation of archival explorations.

When in 1948 The Science Library in Rijeka was founded, it inherited *Biblioteca civica*, a library founded in Hungarian Rijeka in 1892; the former in entirety retained the holdings of the latter, its location and catalogues. This was a great victory of the guardians of literary heritage, the guardians of City's culture. It is insufficiently known that neither a single book of politically inadequate content has been removed from the shelves. Actually, only their catalogue cards have been excluded from the Library card catalogue and neatly classified into a special box, unreachable to the users.

In the same year of 1948, the Library begun creating its own holdings. Obligatory book copies from all of the Croatia were sent to the Library, paralleled by numerous and rich donations during the 1950s and 1960s. Inventory books recorded numerous donors: Management board of People's Goods, County's Education Department, People's Board of Rijeka County, Economical Trade School and many others that have mediated in gathering the materials from historical sources or else have donated "non-functional" parts of their own holdings. The amount of received materials was such that it enabled solely the inventory-making.

By the end of the 1990s begun a search for the 16th century books, whose existence was testified by the inventory records. Renewed interest in exploring literary heritage was joined by extraordinarily stimulating archival explorations of the library of Jesuit College and Rijeka's private libraries that were published under a title *Ex libris fluminensis* in a book *Ogledalo bašcinsko*, written by professor dr. Irvin Lukežić from the Rijeka University who, though being our colleague librarian for only a short time, forever remained a bibliophile and a great connoisseur of literary history. At a certain moment, all of the above mentioned converged and initiated "the search for treasure".

A result of this search is here, described and documented.

Once again I would like to return to a jovial beginning of text and joyfully state how it is nice to find oneself on that side of the life wherein abide those who frequently get dusted, rather than those who kick dust.

Ines Cerovac

The University Library Librarian