# The Book - Past, Present and Future

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## Introduction

The attempt to establish a definition of the book, to explain what this effectively is, proves to be a difficult task simply because no matter how much we should try to catch an image of the book as close as possible to its true complexity, we shall only succeed in the end to reduce it, to minimize its role and complexity, to look at it in a static dead manner, limiting it.

The empirical definitions given to the book along the time show us the limits above mentioned. Thus, we can find definitions like that given by Littre in 1882: „gathering of number of leaves to be used as a support for a written text, manuscript or printed"; in 1931, in *Art du livre* de Malo-Renault: „gathering of written notebooks, printed, sewn together and put under the same cover"; in 1962, in Grand Larousse Encyclopedique: „Assembly of printed leaves gathered into a sewn or bound tome" (Labarre, 2001, p.11). It is also to discuss to what extent the book can be reduced to the shape we know today. Enlarging the sphere of this shape, we can keep in mind 3 elements which, joining themselves, can define the book: „writing support, distribution and text preservation, handling easiness" (Ibidem). As concerns the writing support, we can remind here the Sumerian clay plates, Egyptian papyrus, medieval manuscripts, etc. As for their distribution, there is a distinction to make, compared to other writings. Last, but not least, the handling, the mobility, represents an essential factor and thus, the texts engraved in huge blocks of stone cannot be, obviously, part of this category (Labarre, 2001, p.12).

Taking into account all the aspects mentioned above, it will be easier to us to orientate, to clarify and to understand the evolution and the transformations the book has witnessed.

## The beginnings of the books

It is not possible to discuss about the appearance of the book, in an incipient shape of course in accordance with the three above mentioned criteria, until the writing has been perfected. The needs, the desire to preserve the information, relied at the basis of the achievement of some attempts, adequate to this purpose. The reasons of these attempts have been complex, specific to each culture, but in general, the economic, the political and the social motivations prevailed.

As concerns the required supports to fix the writing, they passed through many variations both in time and space. Reminding here the first writing



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supports, we must mention the famous clay plates used by the Sumerian people, an archaic millenary support, which inspired, roughly speaking, the shape of one of the most popular today's technological products, the tablet. The cuneiform writing, called this way because of the characters shape like little nails (lat. *cuneus*), was used on this clay support. It is very impressive the huge number of the clay plates found. Clear evidence exist proving the utilization on a very large scale of these plates. An example is the fact that 22 thousand clay plates, dated back to VII century B.C., have been discovered in Ninive as part of the archives and library of the Assyrian kings (Labarre, 2001, pp.16-17).

Besides the clay, a large variety of other materials has been used as a writing support: the bone used by the Chinese people as well as the tortoise carapace and the bronze. The shells and earthen pots fragments have also been used by the Semite and the Greek people. The palm tree leaves, after drying and then a greasing process have been used especially by the Indians. There were some other materials used too, but with a more restricted area of dissemination.

Talking about the antiquity, about the book and the writing, we cannot forget to remind here two supports that have a decisive contribution on the book evolution: the papyrus and the parchment (bellum). Quite often and not by accident, we make a connection between Egypt and papyrus. The papyrus, a plant, grows in the Nile area and delta. Passing through a preparation process that makes it adequate for writing, the papyrus proved to be in the course of time one of the most appreciated writing supports, widely utilized in Egypt. The papyrus has a millennial existence, from the III-rd millennium B.C. up to the X-XI centuries A.D., being lesser and lesser used after that (Labarre, 2001, p.18). The shape of a papyrus made book was really remarkable. The leaves followed one after the other, being unfolded like a roll. The roll length could be quite impressive. The Harris papyrus, for example (which is a chronicle of pharaoh Ramses the III-rd), is over 40 meters long. Byzantine documents, reminding the papyrus, relate about the fact that some of them could reach even 100 meters! (Ibidem).

As about the scrolls of parchment, its appearance was influenced by some pragmatic and political aspects. The fact that the papyrus hold the monopoly as a writing support and the intention to come out of this influence determine the king of Pergam (a city in Asia Minor) Eumenes the II-nd, to adopt a policy of finding a new writing support. The parchment was made of animal skin passing through a dressing and tanning process. Calf, goat, sheep, lamb skins were used, but the manual labour was expensive. Nevertheless, the material was profitable being resistant, it was able to be scraped, the old writing could be removed, a palimpsest resulted that could be reused to write on it again (Labarre, 2001, p.19). The scrolls of parchment have been related for a long time to the city that gave its name, Pergam.



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**The printing press appearance and the influence it had**

To copy the manuscript in the classic manner, by hand writing, represents a disadvantage and this determined the need to accelerate the writing process, searching new methods that could help people to exceed these limitations. An answer to this issue came initially from the xylography, the wood carving. Technically speaking, the process consisted in realizing a cutting, a wood engraving which, using an ink, was applied on a leaf, printing the text. But in time, this procedure was also lesser and lesser used because the needs asked for something better. In spite of the fact that initially it represented a progress, the xylography has been replaced by probably the most revolutionary technique in the history of the book and the writing, the printing press.

The printing press is attached to the man who is considered its father, namely Gutenberg, born in Mainz, and who put his activity in the service of the continuous improvement of his creation, all along the XV-th century. The printing press creation and the capability to produce a large number of copies of a book, had as a direct consequence to reconsider, obviously, the support of the writing, the activity which had no more technical limits. Looking back to the most used materials as writing support, the parchment was no longer found appropriate for this new writing technique, it was not even enough, not thin enough to be positioned under the press and, not the last, its restricted area spreading, all these were now impediments in books multiplication on a large scale. Nevertheless, the ideal support was soon found, represented by a material which came of rather short time in contact with the European continent, and we talk here about the paper. It appeared in the XII-th century approximately and was preponderantly used two centuries later (Labarre, 2001, p.59). The paper proved to be compatible with the printing press, it stimulated writing and consequently the book production.

The printing press spread quite rapidly during the XV-th century. Thus, during the above mentioned period, in Germany, the printing activity was performed in 60 towns, in Italy in 80, in France in 40 and in Iberian Peninsula in 39 towns. Central Europe met the printing press too, Poland, Hungary and, during the next century, it spread in Transylvania, too (Labarre, 2001, pp.64-66). From that time forth, the book evolution was special, a large printing number meaning a wide circulation of the ideas and a wide circulation of the ideas signified influence and power. The humanists found in the printing press the ideal instrument for the revival and the wide dissemination of the ancient culture within the Renaissance period. Many times they approached the classical texts in their attempt to translate them which was part of the process of re-discovery of the ancient literary values.

Speaking about spreading and influence we cannot forget to mention the important part played the Reformation has played. Whether, in Jan Hus case, his reformative ideas that brought upon him the death sentence, perishing at the



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stake in 1415, had a certain, but not enough, dissemination, we cannot say the same thing about Luther, a century later. Short time after his reformative thesis appeared, within several months they spread over the entire Germany and after few years, 800 editions of his texts in German, in Latin and other languages existed already. At his death, in 1546, no less than 3700 editions, many times in important printing off, have been published (Labarre, 2001, p.85). We can realize now the impact that a large scale printing and spreading of a book can have. As it will happen, the book shall make history!

The modern age had of course a large impact over the book evolution. The industrial revolution, bringing an important number of innovative technical benefits, represented the required background for the technical development of the book production. The support, the paper, remained the same, but the production process became faster and, thanks to Louis Nicolas Robert's invention (1798) it became a mechanized process (Labarre, 2001, p.117). The printing press has witnessed a lot of transformations as well, the old press was no longer able to meet the new requirements imposed by the technological development, so that, by the end of the XVIII-th and the beginning of the XIX-th centuries, the printing press became more and more technically improved.

Therefore, we remark the continuous book improvement along with its production process, the requirements and the necessities of the historical ages marking decisively the general book evolution.

**The reader**

It is not by accident that an important space is given to the reader within this journey in the book's world. He is and he will always be the essential factor producing the book metamorphosis or the one who will be the subject of modifications of the book perception and utilization, these modifications being produced by the book itself. It is, therefore, difficult to establish the influence priority between the two factors, the book and the reader, the most certain thing is that they influence each other equally, being interdependent. To create a reader's profile, based upon scientific and statistical norms, besides the fact it stiffens and make more difficult the perception of this work, it doesn't often mean to catch the real reader's dynamic. Therefore, to observe certain common situations and to discuss about them seems to be more appropriate.

In the same time with the book evolution, both qualitatively and quantitatively, the reader evolved too, reading and writing spread more and more rapidly, as the book penetrated deeper and deeper into the society. The ancient societies were not formed of readers and reading, as we imagine it today, looking at the general historical scale of the book, is quite recent. Consequently, we observe that there were societies without large scale readers, where art, music, law systems were produced, societies that had orators, poets, teachers, predicators, in other words, complex functional societies. In the Middle Ages, the reading in a loud voice was practiced, the reading we know



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today that does not imply the voice came later on (Lascu, 2012, p.57). Certain expressions that we use today ignoring their origin, remained from that time : „This text sounds so bad" or „Change a little bit this text to make it sound better", etc.

Coming up to the present days, the young people are often reproached they don't read enough. Analyzing more carefully this reproach, we observe that in the most cases, it refers to the fiction, the belletristic literature, to the necessity of reading books during the period of their formation and not the least important, to the good state of mind the reading can induce thanks to the little escapes from the daily reality. It is exactly this last argument that represents our main motivation for reading, for the belletristic literature. It is obvious that reading has many other advantages, from the vocabulary enriching allowing us to nuance our ideas, to a sustained exercise of our memory and the concentration capacity. Nothing can replace our need to feed our imagination, the internal excitement produced by the idea that few pages only separate us from the Russian aristocracy of the XIX-th century or from the interwar Romanian peasantry, all these worlds waiting for us in solitude in the library, either the 5 meter library in the living room or the few centimeter library of your e-book reader. But it is right here that we find the common element between the reader fascinated by the perspective of other fictional worlds and the young man who satisfies the same ancient need using some other means, the video games, for instance. That need is common and evident, we can say archaic, but the means are different and the expected result should satisfy the need. By trying to present the book in a less solemn manner, we can bring under the same magnifying glass some common aspects, we can re-examine other people's needs and we can initiate an approach. To present the book on the top of a pedestal is making the young man going away from it. But presenting the book pragmatically, explaining to him the fact that this object is able to bring a good state of mind to him, that it can help him to put himself together when he feels disorientated, to show him that he has a need that can be also satisfied by reading, all these will determine him to come near to the book. The necessity of a better communication is obvious, the book suffers too maybe because the readers of today are not able to form the readers of tomorrow. The internet, the computer, the video games, the movies are not in antithesis, nor alternatives, but complementary. The benefits will go to the one, young or senior, who succeeds using in a balanced manner all these instruments and enjoy them. Mircea Cărtărescu was asked why he reads and he answered: „Before, I was reading because I had no other entertainment sources, now I read because I feel the need to oppose to the existing entertainment sources".

The addiction to the past, to look back all the time, is one of the determinant factors of how the reader's position is perceived today. Unfortunately, there are not many people who understand the context determining the great reading appetite of the fore-December generations.



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Observing it within the context, the reading became the necessary place of refuge helping people to improve the perspective over the life, the resistance impulse, a book which was not accepted by the political regime at that time became a fascinated object, scarring but in the same time enchanting its possessor. As a paradox, the lack of alternatives could outline a more coherent course, the reader being spared of the *disorientation as a consequence of the abundance.* The multitude of options that people have today makes them manage more carefully their time. Any total escape, no matter it is in reading or cinema, in sports or in passive listening of the music, in video games or in socialization networks, can be regarded as a self-imposed limitation, an obstruction of our horizon. Reading becomes one of the options, we can approach it by our-selves or guided, we might be scarred looking at its complexity or we might understand it gradually. We learn to read and we acquire in time the joy of reading. To perceive the predisposition adequate to the reading, to have the best environment, the literary options adequate to one's state of mind, all these are acquired in time, the reading habit can be transmissible from one generation to another along with the "user's guide".

There are persons who read a realistic novel in the subway train, this is inexplicable for many others; we need the optimum space and time, we cannot split so often into small fragments such a work (many people would say), and yet it happens, maybe in order to impress the others or maybe for an authentic need for reading. The reader is divers, he is complex, of all ages, of all professions, it is difficult to surprise him. There is a mass of specialized books readers, a perfectly normal activity for the man who prepares himself for a profession, the reading gets in this case a practical nuance. There are readers of belletristic literature, reading is in this case determined by emotional reasons. There is a middle category, of the readers who combine fiction and specialty books and there is also, a restricted category of the multivalent persons, real encyclopedic spirits, their orientation in the book field being a very large one.

Surprisingly, there is another category, less remarked and yet very present, of those people who don't read books, but they read however. We are often inclined to think that nowadays people don't read anymore, but, if we look the situation in a nuanced manner, we observe that writing and reading are very present today. We read blogs, articles in on-line papers, the messages on the socialization network, e-mails, messages received on our mobile phones and we answer them, which implies the writing too. We go to our work places or to school, everywhere we look we see advertising texts at each street corner, even in the public transport vehicles. Everyday we search for information, the internet is the most frequently used instrument. We have to learn everything about the technological devices around us, from the last model of television sets up to the intelligent phones. We read alertly and, many times, not for pleasure. We read in order to be informed, for fear maybe of not being adapted to a continuously changing society. (Maciuc & Ștefan, 2010; Mogonea & Ștefan,



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2014; Popescu & Ștefan, 2014; Smarandache & Vlăduţescu, 2014; Vlăduţescu, 2006; Vlăduţescu, Bunăiaşu, & Strungă, 2015; Voinea, 2013).

The readers are also in the publishers' attention, which is an absolutely normal process aiming to determine the readers' preferences. Lately, the reader, of electronic book this time, can be thoroughly monitored, observing the trends inside the reading act. To determine even more precisely the reader's dynamic transforms the act of reading, on one side, in an exposed act, giving on the other side, the publisher the possibility to respond more promptly to the reader's needs. The reader's behaviour is a source of information like the number of working hours required to finish a tome, the average number of pages read per hour, the emphasized phrases, the impulse of giving up reading of the fiction or non-fiction books, etc. (Dumitru, 2012, pp.103-104). Thus, the collected information can influence the publishing house decision concerning a book, the reader being understood in a revolutionary manner.

**A generation gap?**

As we already observed, directing our look towards the book evolution, towards the transformations it had to undergo, the book experienced generations, the context which the book appeared in determining the specific changing mark that the book meets from time to time, from one history threshold to another. The generation gap has developed and still develops on a large scale, in many fields, so that a first step towards this phenomenon understanding is to accept it. The electronic book and the printed book have met recently, this fact determining already radical points of view between the apologists of the electronic book enforcement and the fervent missionaries defending the printed book. On the other side, somewhere in between, it's us, all those who don't embrace the new only because it's new and, also, don't remain stock-still in time only because we are frightened by the idea of change.

Considering the book transformations as a whole, we cannot stop thinking that our restraints we have sometimes concerning the electronic book, wishing to protect the book in general, might have an opposite effect, meaning to kill the book, by the very fact that a living book is a circulating book and a circulating book has to be able to adapt to the environment in order to be assimilated by the training generations. A little imagination exercise can lead us to the perspective of using in the present the book of the past. How useful, accessible and adequate should it be? Certainly, not very much and that only if the lack of adaptation should not made it disappear. When renewal is needed, there is also an official response from the State. For example, the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research of Romania already offered the alternative of the digital school manuals for the 1-st and the 2-nd grades (www.manuale.edu, 2015). Beyond other considerations, the reason of the need to adaptation must exist. In children environment, gadgets, modern electronic devices penetrate more and more often, their utilization becoming an integral part of children



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development. At what extent this is a right or wrong aspect, it is hard to say, it is a long time that the answer is waiting for the result of the debates. Looking over the opinion exchange, the general direction can be observed. It's up to us too, to push the book towards this direction, in order to prevent the book from falling into solitude, but to be received by the new generations, to push it closer to them.

The relationship between man and the words, between the reader and the text, is profound. Certain people consider the book support expression to be essential in the harmonization and emphasizing this relationship. Are all the books able to enjoy the digitalization benefit? Are there some books more appropriate than others to be submitted to this process? Should we establish certain priorities depending on the book category? All these questions are of present day interest and this is a justified reason, the book is changing under our very eyes. Most of times, the profound, intimate, sentimental relationship is concentrated around the belletristic literature. On this field we can observe a humanization of the book, regarding from a particular angle. Something that for any other book could represent maybe a disadvantage, as for example, the yellowish pages, a slight deterioration, the obvious touch of the time, all these are, for our favourite novel, the proof of its living existence. Therefore, we have different points of view as concerns the perception of the book depending on its category. We can say that there is not the same profound relationship with the specialized books. We become attached to them too, there is no doubt, with the difference that the relationship is regarded from another position, these books give us punctual information and are not able in such a great measure to feed our imagination. We don't pretend from a specialized, technical book, after few pages we have read in the evening, at the side-lamp light, to create that state of union with the text and its meaning, penetrating us so deeply that only the early dawn of the day makes us quit that „reality", replacing it with the other one, many times less exciting. Thus, we realize why certain books are more predisposed to transformations than others, their resistance consisting in the relationship between the reader and the book. The book accessibility becomes a stronger and stronger argument, and maybe with good reason. On one side, there is the accessibility as a form of expression of the book, close to the development environment of the individual and, on the other side, there is the accessibility as transmission, shape, price, and so on. The electronic book and its advantages rely upon these two accessibility levels. The individual is developing his life today in an environment where there are plenty of electronic device, the digital book has already penetrated this space, people can easily enjoy its presence anytime and anywhere, because he has the book onto his tablet, his phone, his laptop or even onto a special created device – the e-book reader. With the same speed we can access it, we can also buy a new book, the on-line book stores selling electronic books are developing progressively. There is in this way a market offering this kind of services. Amazon, for example, is



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offering at present over two million electronic books (www.Amazon.com, 2015), and they expect sales to be greater and greater. Statistics made on a ten-year period (2008-2018) show the positive and alert evolution of the electronic book sale in the United States of America (www.statista.com, 2015), the position of the electronic book support being more and more consolidated on a continuously changing market. The relationship between the digital book and the intelligent electronic devices is not accidental. They were practically the basis for the digital book coming out and, as its constant improvement progressed, the book too found a wider appreciation. Thinking about how the ordinary mobile phones looked 5 years ago, we observe that the technological development is astonishing, so is the book which can reach new development elevations. Within the same accessibility area we can emphasize the advantages concerning for example the space that the electronic book occupies, infinitely more reduced that the real one. An enormous library of thousands of tomes can be transported on a memory card having the dimension of a finger nail and can be read onto a device as big as our hand palm or a little bit larger. There are also advantages concerning the cost, an electronic book being less expensive, or even advantages concerning the vulnerability, a digital book is less exposed to the risk of being destroyed in time or by the environmental factors, etc.

One of the most important advantages also related to the accessibility, is the easy access to the documentary content. For a specialist, the documentation is essential, the geographical space limits representing a barrier. The archives, documents, books digitalization represents for the specialist to remove the barrier consisting sometimes of thousands of kilometers, of big financial efforts and of finding, crossing time and space, the necessary material. The digitalization revolutionizes the research, opening new ways to the performance and thus to the knowledge. Related to this subject, in Romania a program is developing, called „The Digitalization of the Medieval Documents belonging to the National Archives of Romania", which is a project aiming the digitalization of the medieval documents earlier than the year 1600 (www.arhivaistorica.ro, 2015). Such projects can be found all over the world, concerning documents or books in general. The library of the Harvard University collaborates with Google in order to digitalize a large number of books, making them available with the help of the internet (www.Harvard.edu, 2015). The Google collaboration does not stop here, more than 40 libraries of high reputation all over the world having a partnership with Google, such as the National Library of Austria or some top universities like Oxford or Princeton.

Therefore, we realize the extent of this continuously developing phenomenon. At one first sight we could feel overwhelmed, even scarred, thinking that our relationship with the book changes once for all, and this is the truth, as well as our relationship with the book is totally changed compared with that of our predecessors and so on. This conflict between the book generations can be elegantly settled, aiming the permanent balance between the history



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perspective and the amplitude of the millenary phenomena. As a matter of fact, to what extent the book destiny transformation depends on us? Is the book autonomous? Could it find by itself its place in history, under different forms, like a resistance in time, like an adaptation protecting it from disappearing? When the television appeared, the cinema seamed to live its last days, many people denying its further usefulness. We realize now that there is a complementarity between the two parts and, in spite of the fact that our relationship has changed, we didn't renounce neither the television nor the cinema. Is it possible for the book to have a similar history over the next decades? A larger and larger dissemination of the digital book, but without the printed book disappearing? Definitely, we cannot predict the future, but we can discuss about it, imagining it under different forms.

**The book of tomorrow**

To talk about the future generally implies to accept that it is impossible to predict it precisely, but knowing the present, some directions can be drawn up in order to outline a possible future. We observe today that the life tempo is more and more alert, the technological progress determines essential transformations, even if our way of interacting each other is modified, the way we move, work, live. The book has been drawn too into this avalanche of changes, as an object constantly present in our life, and our life is about to see another rhythm. As we already mentioned, the attempt to prevent the book of following this new path, although initially the reason is to protect the book, can have an opposite effect, meaning that the book could remain detached from the actuality, from the new potentially readers. This is exactly the way the book must follow to survive, being alive, circulating, reaching the new generations of readers, adapting itself, adopting a shape more appropriate to their development environment, where the technology is more and more present. The major impact concerning the way the book should be received in the future shall be observed within one or two generations, not now! The book has to prepare itself for tomorrow reader, this reader shall have probably a different relationship with the book, although the relationship man – words, a very profound one, shall probably remain like this, regardless of the book support.

The future, as a sum of the transformations that the present is submitted to, the present considered in the past as the future, is the result of the changes that took place on short periods, the technological progress growing faster and faster each year, showing us the perspective of a future very rich in events over a just few year period. Therefore, the future is marked by continuous essential changes forcing the tomorrow man to adapt himself several times all along his life as his environment passes through constant transformations. This reality determines the governments all over the world to find the adequate solutions. As concerns the education, the changes are sometimes very profound, having with no doubt an impact on the book, the manual as integrative part of the



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teaching process. In more than 40 states of the USA the hand writing is not compulsory anymore in public schools, and Finland, a country well known for the great efficiency of the educational system, shall also adopt this trend from 2016, emphasis being put on the „speed-texting" and the „touch-typing" (Blair, 2015), these abilities being considered very important to answer the future necessities. The book has to adapt too to this context of the new generations formation. We understand, therefore, why the changes arouse so much interest and sometimes contradictions, by the simple motive that the changes are all the time submitted to criticism, at any level, the „Good" and the „Bad" are coming into collision in our attempt to see the future essence. Unlike the printed book, the digital book has a tremendous capability of transfer and accessing, the Internet relying at the basis of its effectiveness. We cannot ignore the help the Internet offers today to the information, and consequently, the book spreading. A research performed within 2014 on a sample of 250 school pupils (133 boys and 117 girls) of the XI-XII forms in 6 colleges and high schools in Dolj county shown that 63.2% of the pupils indicated the Internet as the first and the main source of information they access when they have a school project to draw up. The other 4 of the list of 5 documentary sources were, in order, the manuals (2), the family library (3), the school library (4) and the city public library (5). We observe the fact that the order of these sources depends on how quick they can be accessed, a trip to the city library supposes a strong will, determination and motivation. We also have to mention that the book fund that pupil can find in the personal family libraries, school libraries or even in the city libraries is played out, most of times the information contained (especially in the social field, science or technology) in these books are obsolete, the public institutions have limited money funds directed to the books acquisition. It is remarkable that the answers to the same question addressed to a sample of 246 school pupils (129 boys and 117 girls) of the V-VI forms in colleges, high schools and secondary schools in Dolj county show as first and main source of information the Internet in a proportion of 69,8%. Once more, it is obvious that the Internet is becoming the most important information source for the new young generations and this is a continuously growing trend. Moreover, 43% of the pupils answered that the Internet is the only source they access when they need information. These figures could be considered as arguments for the electronic book importance, especially regarding the impact and the accessibility, both as concerns the publishing houses and the cultural and education institutions, as schools or libraries. Looking from the angle of the efficiency we observe that as the worldwide access to the Internet is growing, the book too has more chances to penetrate into some people's lives, people who, from economic, geographical or even political (censorship) reasons, had limited access to the books. Consulting the statistics, we can see a promising future, taking into account that within the last 5 years, the number of the Internet worldwide users has grown in a spectacular manner, receiving an impulse from the technological



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development, the recorded growth being of almost one thousand millions people, meaning that today there are over 3 thousand millions users (www.Internetlivestasts.com, 2015). One thousand millions in just 5 years… this determines us to think even more about the future. The Internet penetrates into the disfavored areas, allowing a quite large book fund to be accessed so that new directions are open for the individual self-teaching, the lack of book resources in schools is considerably reduced, which gives the disfavored areas the possibility of human resource improving. This wide spreading of the information and of the access to knowledge, which probably will become more intensive in the future, comes along with a negative aspect that, at the first sight, could seem harmless: the disorientation of the individual as a consequence of the information assault. For the teachers, this represents one of the greatest challenges as concerns the individual forming, as the teachers have to help pupils forming the critical ability of separating the essential of the non-essential. It is very easy to get lost into a world where the writing and spreading of a book shall be easier, the offer shall become overwhelming and the choice essential. In this regard, the teacher's part also can change, he is not limited to give information, but moreover to direct pupils towards the information.

Can the printed book become in the future a museum object? It is very possible that, in a far future, its part to be limited to this position; we observe that even today, ancient book forms are exposed in museums in order to offer the watcher the evolution perspective. As long as such an event should take place naturally, not suddenly nor conditioned, it could represent a natural transition of an object from one age to another. Therefore, with this short crossing through the books' world, we tried to emphasize certain moments that determined book rhythm and shape transformations, having in mind to offer the reader the perspective of time, in order to have a general view over the book and to understand why the book also is submitted to a constant change and perfecting and, in this way, we, the readers, could be able to improve our point of view concerning the present book condition. For the book, it is essential that it succeeds to surpass the strain moments of its existence and for us, the readers, to enjoy the benefits of the book presence, no matter the form it takes, in our life.

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