

# Book Studies and Information Science Within Media and Social Communication Studies: The Differentiation or Complementarity?

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## ABSTRACT

**Scientific objective:** The thesis of the paper is to confirm the need and the possibility of preserving the specifics of research aimed at book and information in the new classification of science and scientific disciplines by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Poland. **Research methods:** The method of analysis and criticism of the literature has been used. **Results and conclusions:** The authors are in favor of preserving the specificity of research focused on a book and information, while looking for a new and common areas and ways to solve research problems in collaboration with researchers representing media and social communication studies. **Cognitive value:** The paper is included in the scientific discussion initiated by the paper by Marek Jabłonowski and Tomasz Mielczarek “Komunikowanie społeczne i media – federacja, a nie inkorporacja” (Media Studies 2018, 4(75), 13–29) on the new classification of science and scientific and artistic disciplines.

## KEYWORDS

research, book studies and information science, media and social communication studies



The new classification of branches and disciplines of science as well as artistic disciplines triggers discussions in which the evaluation of the classification itself as well as its consequences for scientific research and organization of science are raised. Bearing in mind the best interests of the discipline we represent, not so long ago an independent one, known as book studies and information science, and keeping in mind the good of the future research in this field, we want to make a recapitulation of the specifics of book studies and information science research, including its current place in media and social communication studies. The heterogeneity of this new discipline combined with organizational solutions (such as we deal with, for example, at the University of Warsaw) makes a good indication of what distinguishes library science, bibliography, information science, and book studies research from media, communication, and cognitive studies. On the other hand, it requires us to notice the opportunities created by this new situation, among others the perspective of creating new research teams with diverse knowledge and competences, strengthening the potential and cognitive optimism in spite of some concerns; and these opportunities are conducive to better solving complex, multifaceted, multi- and interdisciplinary research problems.

Book studies and information science as an independent scientific discipline until September 30, 2018, were included in the humanities. Currently, by virtue of administrative decisions, the discipline found itself in the social sciences as one of the three components co-creating media and social communication studies. It is difficult to provide a decisive answer to the question of which of these qualifications is better, because research conducted under the name of book studies and information science had (and still have) a strong position in the field of humanities and social sciences (Migoń, 1976). The works of book studies and information science researchers and scholars are published in humanistic journals (historical, linguistic, literary, philosophical, cultural), social (media studies, sociology, pedagogy, law, management), but also, though rarely, in journals in the field of, among others, art and conservation of works of art, engineering and technical sciences or security sciences. It would be unacceptable, due to the loss of scientific cognition, to limit the possibility of publishing only within one branch, within one field. There are several paradigms and philosophical perspectives in book studies and information science, research is multi- and interdisciplinary, and the subject and field of research include objects with different ontological and epistemological status. Looking from the perspective of historical book studies, it is more appropriate to locate it in the humanities. But one can also find arguments in the form of research, which are closer to the social sciences. Therefore, placing sciences in one area and one field should be treated as a bureaucratic-statistical solution that does not reflect the specifics of research, issue of publication of results or individual assessments.

The basis of today's book studies and information science is bibliography and library science. The first works of librarians, i.e., inventories, catalogs, collations, bibliographies, etc., laid foundations for the history of literature, which pushed bibliography and library science to the role of auxiliary disciplines of literary studies and historical sciences. Fortunately, intensive research on books, the universe of books and other documents, their complex social functions, materiality, aesthetics, bibliophilic values, cultural role, etc., as well as libraries and their users, allowed preserving and isolating the strictly bibliographic features of what belongs to other studies and disciplines. Today, library science research includes, among others, library management issues, information education, education in the use of libraries, quality analysis of libraries (including digital libraries) and repositories (Głowacka, 2017). Bibliography and library science constitute a historical, but still valid canon of research, from which other powerful research branches grew. Bibliography and library science research belong to the discipline we practice, constituting

its inalienable element and it is difficult to imagine its further development without them. “It is widely accepted that the information science has developed from the information activities practiced within the framework of bibliography and library science” (Sosińska-Kalata, 2017, p. 313). If the development of media and social communication studies is to be full and balanced, all components will have to participate, including bibliography, library science, book studies, and information science research.

### **Book Studies and Information Science from a Historical Perspective**

Let’s start with the fact that the name of book studies and information science can be interpreted in two ways. It can be understood as a collective name created as a result of joining of two equal parts with the conjunction “and,” thus indicating the “federative” nature of book studies and information science. It can also be interpreted as a specifically constructed name for one discipline. In other words, book studies and information science can mean “studies on books and information” or “studies on books and studies on information.” And this second perception is accepted in this paper, because it is historically and scientifically conditioned. At the end of the 20th century, both disciplines became autonomous, but closely interrelated, which resulted from the fact that both have common research roots. They come from bibliography, considered the first form of both book studies and information science. They also have a common research object, which is a book, document or information, but they have a separate methodology, theory, and tasks to be fulfilled, in comparison with media studies (Sordylowa, 1989). It is difficult to separate their research fields unambiguously, because both disciplines developed on the basis of library operations, which were already so extensive at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries that have developed theoretical bibliological reflection, and almost a century later, at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries — the information science. Referring to the current conditions created by the new taxonomy of science and scientific and artistic disciplines, this issue, as it is not the most important from the point of view of the goals of our paper, has only been flagged up here and will not be considered further, and the narrative will be quite clearly carried out in two directions — the direction of book studies, and the direction of information science.

### **The Scientific Objective of Book Studies and the Scheme of Bibliological Communication**

Book studies (Fr. *science du livre*), examine, in a classical sense, a book and bibliological processes: production, dissemination and social circulation of books, up to the reading reception. People and various institutions associated with books participate in this system. As one of the first media it is the source and medium of information contained in the text, more broadly — in the content, and fulfills its numerous functions (cognitive, communication, information, aesthetics, entertainment, ideological, therapeutic, etc.), becoming a tool for social and cultural communication. Karol Głombiowski (Głombiowski, 1980, Aleksandrowicz & Rusińska-Giertych, 2015) wrote extensively on the role and importance of a book in the process of social communication in the second half of the 20th century.

The theoretical model of bibliological communication in the European tradition was presented for the first time more than two centuries ago, at the beginning of the 19th century by the French librarian and bibliographer Gabriel E. Peignot, who described the whole universe of issues related to writing and its circulation for the first time with the name of book studies (Fr. *bibliology ou science des livres*). He included issues related to knowledge about languages, journals, making a book, printing, book-keeping, bibliographic knowledge of books, and knowledge about the

universal history of writing in its research area. This wide, yet Enlightenment view of this science, recognized by Peignot as “the most comprehensive of human skills” in subsequent centuries underwent changes (Koredczuk, 2005). However, the main concept was shaped in the 19th century, including printing, book-keeping, bibliography and library science is up to date and has been expanded to include reading and scientific information. Further intensive development of particular sciences resulted in changes in their fields of research, which resulted in a book becoming the subject of interest for many other disciplines. This, however, made it difficult to define the boundaries of book studies. However, not everything that touches the book’s affairs can be considered as a scientific objective of book studies, and such an interpretation is relatively common in the scientific literature. In the 20th century, the research focused on the role and function of a book as a medium of content and material subject, strongly emphasizing the book-reader relations. An important role in this process was played by information about a book and its communication function (Kocójowa, 2017). This is confirmed by both book studies researchers (Estivals, 2000, Górný & Nowak, 1985, Migoń 1984, Woźniak-Kasperek & Kotuła, 2014; Zawisza, 1980) and representatives of other sciences (Czerwiński, 1976; Eco, 1996; Escarpit, 1973), schemes and models of bibliological communication (presenting the model of bibliological communication in various perspectives: historical, evolutionary, semiotic, functional, cultural, communication, networking), extremely important for the construction of one research paradigm of this discipline.

The basic scheme of bibliological communication, according to Wojciech Jerzy Zawisza (1980), appears in the author-reader relationship and specifies intermediary elements, such as patronage or censorship, then includes the publisher, which receives the text subjected to editorial processing, to its publication and dissemination, where an important role is played by booksellers and book stores, librarians and libraries, or even antiques as far as the secondary circulation of books is concerned, up to its recipient – the consumer of the book. It is a classical model, to which later theoretical proposals refer, paying special attention to the cultural aspect or communication of books. The scope of the discipline, as Irena Socha aptly points out, has changed, from a book as a literary and editorial phenomenon, through a book in the bibliological process and its social function, a book in the context of multimedia communication, to social relations, activities, and valuations that create culture of books (Socha, 2016, p. 67). Bibliological communication, regardless of whether based on writing, printing or digital recording, is related to social communication, because it is closely related to the introduction of the book into the social circulation, mediates in the author-reader relationship and has the task of consolidating and providing the widest possible information and its individual and group reception (Cybulski, 1979). This, in turn, is associated with the social, political, legal, economic or media situation, especially with technological and digital development.

## Paradigm

Book studies in Poland, at the beginning of the 21st century, are considered already a fully formed scientific discipline, fulfilling all the requirements and scientific criteria of the philosophy of science (Such & Szcześniak, 2006, p. 51) having an established position in the structure of science and numerous connections within it. Discussions held, for example in specialist scientific journals, regarding changes in the field of research and methodology, are a proof of its consolidation as a science, vitality, and development of book studies creatively distinguishing new and changing research areas (Bieńkowska, 2011; Drózdź, 2007; Kotuła, 2018). This diversification of book studies topics is also manifested in the use of such terms as: proper book studies, political book studies, historical book studies, anthropological book studies, etc., which

does not change the fact that this discipline, although differently understood (Pomorski, 1988), has a specific field research, specific object of research, own conceptual apparatus, research methods, also used in other scientific disciplines, and close links with other sciences. Its long history deserves to be emphasized, because the first treatises on books appeared in antiquity, and in the following centuries in various civilization circles from bibliographic and library practice it created a theory of this discipline that was already developed in the 19th century, that it obtained the institutional and academic status — first as an auxiliary scientific discipline, up to its autonomy as a science. In European culture, this discipline is variously defined and occurs under different terms (in the Anglo-American culture as “bibliography,” in German-language literature as “*Bibliothekswissenschaft*,” less frequently “*Buchwissenschaft*,” in the culture of Romance languages is called “*bibliology*”) (Migoń, 1993). But regardless of the name, the subject of research was always common for these disciplines, that is a book being a product of material and spiritual culture, participating in the transmission of the writing between the author and the reader, using publishing institutions such as publishing houses, bookstores, libraries, antique shops, acting as a medium of information and the first medium that plays an important communication and social function. It is worth quoting the opinion of the outstanding Polish librarian and book studies researcher Kazimierz Piekarski, who at the beginning of the 20th century emphasized that “not every manuscript and not every print is a book. What constitutes the essence of a book is not only in its external side, not only in its content, but also in its function. This manuscript and this print become a book, which destiny is a free impact on society” (Piekarski, 1932). In this way, Piekarski set the paradigm of this discipline focused on the social functions of books, which was developed by successive generations of researchers. The functional trend has been enriched with a cultural aspect, which paved the way for a new paradigm focused on the culture of a book, extending it to interdisciplinary borderlands (e.g., bibliography) (Woźniczka-Paruzel, 2010). According to the new ministerial classification of sciences, the inclusion of book studies and information science in media and social communication studies can result in increasing of the rank of communication (social, scientific, public communication) in research and close connection with new technologies (Migoń & Skalska-Zlat, 2009 Wójcik, 2014), in which a book and information actively participate.

### **Interdisciplinary Research on the Book**

A book, which is the central category of book studies research, is also the subject of interest and description of many other sciences. This has influenced the nature of book studies as an inter- and multidisciplinary science, connected with various scientific disciplines and the humanities and social sciences situated on the borderland (Głombiowski, 1980, Pulikowski, 2018, Migoń, 1976). Therefore, it is difficult to explicitly include it in the classification systems of science and assign it to one of the listed areas, although today, emphasizing the communication aspect of book studies, it is closer to the social sciences. Interdisciplinary, even, it can be said, theoretically and methodologically eclectic are considerations concerning many issues falling within the scope of book science. An example of a study of the publishing repertoire (Socha, 2003) or editorial and publishing issues (Marszałek, 1976, Wójcik, 2012) and booksellers (Nieć, 2014), thanks to which the text (content of a book) is introduced to the social circulation and only then participates in the communication process mainly through reading. The modern methodological challenge, common for book studies and information science is the digital revolution, including electronic, multimedia, interactive, and hypertext. These new forms of books combine the two previously mentioned disciplines with media studies, giving them all a new research perspective. There are more examples of the interpenetration of various issues, but undoubtedly for the book's

knowledge, book studies is a central discipline, and these research categories are fundamental to this science, because the strength of book studies depends on the multiplicity of its applications in the context of related sciences.

## Methodology

Book studies have developed their own research methods, but they are mainly used in historical research. Such methods include typographic method, used already in the 17th century on the basis of incunabula studies (incunabula were the first prints issued until the end of the 15th century), extremely useful in the 19th century in the study of old prints, but much less frequently used in new prints (Bulhak, 1977). The next is the provenance method, started already at the beginning of the 20th century and developed in the following years, which allows to follow the paths of books and other printed matter in society through the analysis of proprietary marks retained in specific copies, those include supralibros, bookplates, seals, dedications or traces of its use, i.e., notes on the margins, underlining, comments of readers, etc. (Juda, 2016, Sipajłło, 1975). However, the most recognizable is the bibliographic method, which, being the most frequently used in other sciences, was considered a general scientific method (Biełkowska, 1989), and the bibliography, in turn, as one of the auxiliary sciences of history. Nowadays, based on the bibliographic method, the method of citation analysis has been developed, more developed in the field of information science. Book studies also use research methods and techniques taken over from various sciences (historical, sociological, pedagogical, medical, etc.). This is particularly visible in the case of reading research, where the survey, interview, and questionnaire are the basic tools of sociological research, but supported by methods taken from psychology (e.g., direct observation) using philological and pedagogical methods only give reliable results.

## Book Science and Media and Social Communication Studies

It should be noted that contemporary book studies regardless of the multiplicity of views and disputes held on it, as noted by the eminent Polish book studies researcher Krzysztof Migoń, “according to the basic rules of communication processes I want to speak about all phases of the existence and functioning of books” (2017, p. 27). Such a broad view justifies its subdiscipline status in the structure of media and social communication studies, but it should not be isolated from the communication and media-related issues, due to its own area and subject of research over the years. The three sub-disciplines that make up media and social communication studies should complement each other, while respecting their own separateness. Only in this way can they broaden the research field of the new discipline, in the new communication reality, ruled not only by books, but also by digital records, ubiquitous in the world of the Internet, social media, and various search engines (Dobrowolski, 2001; Fiałkowski, 2003; Próchnicka, 2004). A word and print subjected to technology have changed social, media, and civilization reality (Ong, 1992). The possibilities of new solutions in the field of publishing, mainly digital and network, or even access to library collections and digital collections have been created, including unlimited access to the literature, which already changes and redefines the research field of book studies and information science. Perhaps interdisciplinary humanistic and social research, in which a book participates, is heading towards some new meta-discipline. Already at the end of the 20th century, French book researchers, especially Robert Estivals (1987) and Jean Meyriat (1983) perceived book studies more broadly than in other European countries. Apart from typical fields such as the history of books, printing, editing, bibliography, they combined book studies issues with other sciences: literature, linguistics, sociology, psychology, economics, politics, and mass media studies, etc. They did not cover book studies as a study of a book in the traditional



sense, but as a science about writing, information and on literary communication / using letters (*science de l'écrit, de l'information et de la communications écrite*). The gradual broadening of the circle of joint research, while preserving the specific problem of studying the book's culture and its social function, may become a proper, complementary research perspective, allowing to emphasize the role of a book and its institutions and processes related to its production, to the reading reception in media and social communication studies (Migoń, 2002). In turn, book studies research will enrich and obtain a wide necessary context of the issues related to other media.

## Information Science

Information science, also known as scientific information or information studies, explores theoretical and practical aspects of information activity, the whole problems of effective transmission of information and knowledge units from the source (resource) to the recipient (user), taking into account social, cultural, psychological, and practical, factors affecting this transmission, etc. The research field therefore includes methods and tools related to information activities, including information systems, sources and information resources, information processes, methods and tools for their implementation, users of information and their behavior in various situations and processes, including the process of searching, and searching for information. Since the 1950s, there has been an ever-closer binding of information activities using computers (information technology), which is a kind of *spécialité de la maison* of information science. Spectrum of information that is of interest to information science researchers increasingly includes not only information about the results of scientific research (scientific information), but also a professional, managerial, public, health, business, everyday information etc.

In the European tradition, actions taken at the end of the 19th century related to the organization of large-scale cooperation in the field of documentation, i.e., the development and collection of information on the results of research conducted in specific fields of knowledge, including bibliographic registration of specialist scientific literature gave rise to modern information science. Therefore, it is assumed that the precursor of today's information science was the documentation of Paul Otlet, that is the concept of universal science about the recording of knowledge, its sharing and dissemination. In the 1970s, a discussion took place in Poland ("Z dyskusji ...» 1979), the subject of which was, inter alia, the name of the scientific discipline dealing with the theory and practice of activities which concern information. There were proposals for various names, from which, after almost forty years, the information science came into the national scientific and bureaucratic nomenclature. Since 2010 ("Uchwała ...» 2010) it appeared in the official list of branches and disciplines of science, where it found itself in the group of humanities, in parallel with book studies, as book studies and information science.

## Subject and Major Areas of Research

The research object of a scientific discipline is a part of reality seen in the aspect relevant to this discipline and considered from a specific perspective. It is no different in the case of information science, in which the subject of study is fixed and materialized information (along with its medium), which is an element of the previously mentioned information and knowledge transfer processes, including scientific, social, public, and other communications. In other words, information science deals with information in the aspect of what people do with information, what methods, tools, means do they use, and what information can do with people. The factor of transmission of information and knowledge as well as the implementation of information processes that is important for information science is computer technology together with the so-

called intellectual technologies, for example to represent knowledge. This technical aspect, starting from the so-called small mechanization to modern digital technology, was in fact a causative factor in the emergence of information science. Thanks to information technology, information became independent of time and space, and at the same time it grew, which increased the need for its selection and ecology (ecology of information). The research paradigm of information science since the beginning of its existence, however, had a consolidation nature, unifying the computer trend with the knowledge of human needs and information behaviors, individual and social practices related to the search and use of information and knowledge. As a result, two approaches to the subject are characteristic for research belonging to the domain of information science, both exposing the aspect of mediation in the field of information and knowledge transfer, i.e., the approach with a humanistic and social attitude and the IT and technical approach. “The results of research conducted in these two trends should interact, research conducted in one should use the results obtained in the other and inspire to undertake new problems” (Sosińska-Kalata, 2017, p. 316). In practice, this balance is not always maintained and hence false images of information science research appear.

Making some simplification, one can assume that the information science examines resources, distribution, and use of information, its properties and behavior, factors influencing the communication process (this is the above-mentioned approach or “humanistic-social” field) as well as the technology necessary to data processing, creating and functioning of systems to ensure optimal availability and use of information (approach, technical field, engineering). The mediating model specific to book studies and information science (a man — a resource of information / knowledge, with a special place of a book) is rooted in the cultural and social human environment and as an object of research cannot be isolated from the influence of this environment. Information technology is also of interest to information science, the use of various codes for effective transmission, storage and retrieval, as well as devices, ways and methods of processing and transmission. Information science is comprehensive, though heterogeneous, drawing, among others, from linguistics, psychology, sociology, philosophy, social communication, management, mathematics, statistics, logic, and computer science. “It is a conglomerate of different research subfields in terms of the degree of recognition, objective importance and potential durability. What unites them, and more precisely should combine, is the perception of the universe of information as a comprehensive system, the individual elements of which, in their existence and in their properties, depend on the entire universe, from more difficult or easier predictable changes in the conditions initiating processes and information activities. Information science research is inter- and transdisciplinary” (Woźniak-Kasperek, 2015, p. 144). It is necessary to add that information science does not deal with any objects, processes or information events, for example, does not deal with mass information, traditional mass media, or information in the human mind, not internalized, not fixed.

Many authors commented on the subject of information science research, presenting various views (Cisek, 2002, Cisek, 2009, Cisek, 2013, Sosińska-Kalata, 2013, Sosińska-Kalata, 2017, Woźniak-Kasperek, 2015). Interesting observations were formulated by Sabina Cisek, she was trying to explain this situation. “Firstly, the information world in recent years has undergone far-reaching transformations, i.e., the field of study has changed fundamentally, which naturally inspires to rethink the mission, problems, and assumptions of the discipline. Secondly, mediation in the social world of information, which is the axis of our considerations, is multifaceted, has an educational, institutional, communication, cultural, organizational, political, legal, psychological, social, technological (mainly IT) and utilitarian dimensions. The objects, processes, events, and information phenomena can be understood differently, it is not easy to specify what the information



resources are, and the information needs and behaviors are even more difficult. Thirdly, the information science essentially integrates what is physical / material (medium, technology), mental (information users), and ideal (information as such, knowledge of humanity); what is individual and social; subjective and objective. This is not easily included in the formulation of the subject of research. Fourthly, there have been various concepts of information science and paradigms within it (the power of tradition, we have become accustomed to having different approaches)” (Cisek, 2013). An issue that would connect horizontal disciplines joined in media and social communication studies is precisely the subject of social communication, with a conceptual approach that also includes scientific communication realized with the use of digital devices, inscribed in the broad context of information culture, books, and the media.

## Methodology

If we assume that through the methodology we will understand the accepted way of exploring the world, including metatheoretical foundations, research methods and techniques, methods of categorization, generalizations, models, etc. and methods of presenting results and providing intersubjective control, verifiability of research and achievement of results, it is possible to distinguish, as in many other scientific disciplines (at least those belonging to the social sciences and humanities) in book studies and information science, three basic methodological approaches, *i.e.*, quantitative, qualitative and mixed approach.

The quantitative approach is primarily used to study documents and their representations, systems, and users. Quantitative methods should include statistical, biblio-, infor- and webometric methods. Bibliometric methods, in contrast to statistics, which is of a universal nature, include the study of the state and development trends of the literature, and hence the state of science (scientometrics) and its resources and information processes (informetrics). The processed datasets are often bibliographic databases, also used in determining the thematic structure of science, selected disciplines, trends and dynamics of development of these disciplines. The research object consists of scientific publications analyzed by methods and techniques developed by the bibliometrics to study the literature. “Bibliometrics, scientometrics, and informetrics have the property, with reference to scientific literature, that the basic criterion distinguishing their uses is the goal which the research aims to achieve” (“Nauka o informacji,” 2016, p. 99). For about 30 years, research has also been carried out on the Internet resources, using the research instruments of biblio- and informetrics, *i.e.*, the so-called webometrics. The various “-metrics” listed here can be extended to other data resources and used in the area of science aimed at higher education and the society (information, knowledge, etc.), integrating into the research stream of scientific and social communication.

The application of qualitative methods is associated with a paradigmatic change that took place in book studies and information science in the 1970s and 1980s. It consisted in the transition from system-oriented research to user-oriented research. Similar changes could be observed in many other scientific disciplines as a turn from the systemic to the cognitive paradigm. Of course, the qualitative research approach is not homogeneous. It covers many epistemological and axiological perspectives. What unites them is among others, the subject of the study (people, their characteristics, organizations, needs, relationships, behaviors, etc.), perception of the subject as an element of sometimes very complex network of connections, inductance, iteration, the use of research methods such as analysis and criticism of the literature, study in action, ethnographic, biographical, Delphi, historical, comparative, grounded theory methods. “The qualitative approach is used in information science primarily to study broadly understood users’ information behaviors, factors and conditions influencing it, needs and motivations, including education,

competence, and information culture. The qualitative methodology also occurs in connection with the study of information professionals, e.g., their relationship with representatives of other disciplines or the perception of their own professional role. Information systems and services, evaluation of websites, digital archives are also analyzed in a qualitative manner” (“Nauka o informacji,” 2016, p. 121).

Finally, there is a mixed method, the third basic approach, in addition to quantitative and qualitative methods. It was created, inter alia, in response to the polarization of quantitative and qualitative strategy that was too far advanced, which turned into a “paradigmatic war,” especially in the 1980s as a proposal offering their integration and emphasizing the advantages of using different cognitive perspectives simultaneously.

## Summary

One can look at scientific knowledge as a system, and at disciplines as the subsystems identified within it. The systems evolve thanks to two processes: the progressive cohesion of their constituent parts on the one hand, on the other, as a result of segregation, division into subsystems, which become more and more consistent, until possible independence. An Indian librarian known to librarians and information science researchers, an excellent theoretician of classification and the creator of the Collon Classification, S.R. Ranganathan has distinguished several metaphorically named forms of dividing disciplines (“fission” and “denudation”), as well as combining them by: Agglomeration, Loose, Assemblage, Cluster, Distillation, and Fusion (Iyer, 1995, pp. 12–24). Book studies and information science placed in media and social communication studies are currently one of three component subdisciplines filling the scope of the new classification of science in Poland. We leave the question open of which of the forms of combining the disciplines we had to deal with in this case. The best interests of the new common discipline, fortunately, does not require us to give up the preservation of our own specifics and separateness of research issues directed at a book at various stages of its development and information that plays an increasingly important role in all kinds of communication. Researchers of books and information are aware of the theoretical and methodological insufficiency of the “old” discipline in relation to certain objects, phenomena, issues etc. classified as being of interest to book studies and information science. Undoubtedly, there is a need for a general discussion on many problems that are a consequence of the merger and creation of a new discipline, involving book studies and information science as well as media and social communication studies and cognitive studies

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