



# A Travelogue of Serbia Libraries

# Who am I?

Dylan Baker  
Deputy State Librarian  
Idaho Commission for Libraries

I've worked at ICfL since 2017  
and in Idaho libraries since 2000

Prior to visiting Serbia earlier this year, I'd  
only left the U.S. once before – a family trip  
to the Philippines when I was a teenager

*SLIM Department International Trips*

**WE ARE COMMITTED  
TO LEARNING IN AN  
INTERNATIONAL  
CONTEXT**

# Why Serbia?

- Pursued my Master of Library Science online through Emporia State University in 2021-2023
- For my final semester, I enrolled in the annual Global Experience Trip
- Dr. Smith has been leading the Global Experience Trip since 2013 and developed connections with libraries and archives in Serbia

# Where is Serbia?



Serbia [Online media]. (2023). In *Discover by World Book*. <https://www.worldbookonline-com.lili.idm.oclc.org/discover/#/media/lr005609/type/map-artl>



Serbia [Online map]. (2023). In *World Book Advanced*. <https://www.worldbookonline-com.lili.idm.oclc.org/advanced/media?id=mp000261>

# Hotel Moskva

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- In English, it's the Hotel Moscow
- Oldest operating hotel in Serbia
- Opened by King Peter I in 1908
- Outlived two World Wars and eight state systems
- Their breakfast buffet shames every American hotel I've stayed in





# Belgrade City Library

- Largest lending library in Serbia
- 13 municipal libraries, with over 70 total branches
- Holdings of over 1.5 million items
- Approximately 200 employees
- More than 140,000 users
- This building, known as Serbian Crown, is the headquarters



## Closed Stacks

- Majority of the collection is in the basement and not publicly accessible
- Staff retrieve items and use a dumbwaiter to move them up to the circulation desk



# Galleries & Reading Rooms



# Roman Hall

- Roman ruins were uncovered when renovating the basement in the 1980s
- The library created a space around these Roman ruins to use for hosting public events
- These Roman ruins date back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup>-century AD as part of a Roman fort in the Upper Town of Belgrade Fortress



# Belgrade City Library: Serials Department

- Over 35,000 items
- Over 1,200 magazine titles
- Current work is preserving and digitizing serials, but copyright is challenging





# Belgrade City Library: Children's Library

# American Corner Belgrade

- Partnership between Belgrade City Library (staff), Belgrade Youth Center (facility), & U.S. Embassy (programs & resources)
- 20 years of American Corner in Belgrade
- 7 American Corners in Serbia (not all connected to libraries)
- Free library card (paid membership for rest of city library)



# University of Belgrade Library

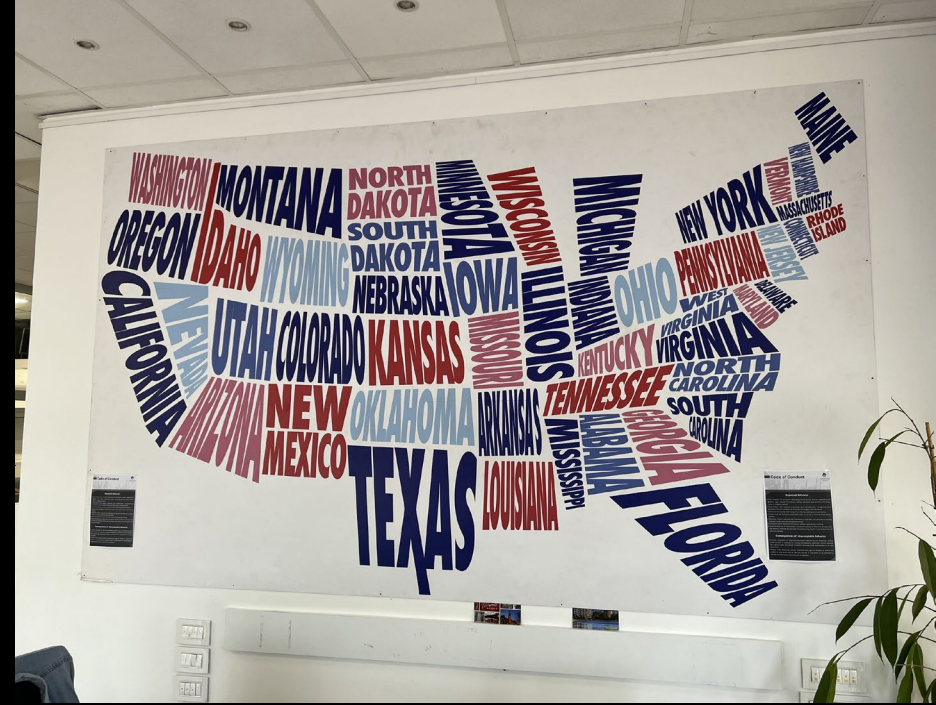
- It's a Carnegie!
- First purpose-built library in Serbia (\$100,000 in 1926)
- Largest academic library in Serbia



# National Library of Serbia

- Destroyed in 1941 during Nazi Germany bombing of Belgrade, new library built in 1973
- Special reading room for the blind designed by a blind director
- Lab for conservation of library materials (8 employees)





**American Corner Novi Sad**

- Partnership with Cultural Center of Novi Sad
- Largest American Corner in Serbia
- Local artist gallery space
- Computer room & testing center for TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)





## International Library of Novi Sad

- City of Novi Sad has 30 branches, with 4 branches (including this one) in city core
- 15,000 books in 13 languages (plus a few unofficially)
- It's a one woman show & open six days a week





# The Historical Archives of Novi Sad

- Founded in 1954, opened in current building in 2016
- 13 fire-proof repositories
- 19 employees
- Petar (the director) offered us shots of rakia (traditional fruit spirits of Serbia) and we toasted to new friends: “živeli” (zhee-ve-lee)



# Matica Srpska Library

- Founded in 1826
- Oldest national library and first Serbian public and scientific library
- Collects all materials published in Serbia
- A few old card catalog records are still being transferred to electronic records



# Belgrade City Library Branch: Biblioteka Moma Dimic

- One of two branches serving a Belgrade municipality (subdivision) with 100,000 people
- On the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of community center; a music school is on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor
- One of the smallest branches
- 300 monthly users





# Viminacium

- Roman city & military camp in 1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup>-century AD
- Peak population of 40,000
- Covers 1,100 acres
- Only 3-4% explored, but all has been geophysical mapped
- Vika, a 1-million-year-old mammoth skeleton discovered in 2009

# Viminacium Roman Meal





Doviđenja (Goodbye)

# Bonus LibGuide

[https://is.gd/serbia\\_trip](https://is.gd/serbia_trip)



## 860XI2023Summer - Serbia Trip Collaborative Presentation: Travelogue

Search this Guide

Search

A collaborative guide by Dylan Baker, Jenai Trefny, and Nicole Weber of their Global Experience trip to Serbia in May 2023.

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Travelogue

Librarianship Comparison

Cultural Comparison

Ideas and Discoveries

### Overview

Our Global Experience Trip to Serbia took place between Saturday, May 20 through Monday May 29. We visited 13 locations, including libraries, an archive, an archeological site, and a museum. Highlights of our visits and information we learned about locations are detailed below.

#### Belgrade City Library

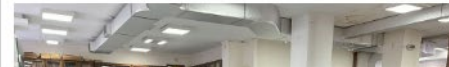


- We visited the headquarters of the Belgrade City Library on May 22.
- The building was originally built as a hotel in 1869 and later repurposed as a library in 1986.
- The Belgrade City Library is the largest lending library in Serbia, composed of 13 municipal libraries with over 70 branches.
- They have approximately 1 million library members (active and inactive).
- Has a gallery atrium space, a large reading room, and a public event space in the basement built around Roman ruins.

#### Belgrade City Library: Serials Department



- We visited the Serials Department of the Belgrade City Library on May 22.
- Zoran, Library Advisor/Consultant, runs the Serials Department and gave us a tour.
- This department contains only serials and has over 35,000 items and over 1,200 magazine titles.
- Half of their space is for users/staff (15-20 users per day use the reading room) and the other half is for the serials collection.



#### Belgrade City Library: Children's Library



- We dropped into one of the two dedicated Children's Library branches of the Belgrade City Library on May 22.