

## ***THE TRIUMPHS AND MISFORTUNES OF THE FIRST YEARS OF THE SEDIC***

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Promoter and Founder of the SEDIC

At a dinner which we attended recently, I began to tell the story of the first few years of the SEDIC's existence to some colleagues. José López Yepes proposed that I wrote the history of the SEDIC during those years, to be published in the already veteran and prestigious review *Revista Documentación de las Ciencias de la Información (Documentation of Information Science Review)*, which he had launched quite some years ago.

It was too much of a temptation for me to refuse: it brought back so many memories, so many feelings! And so here I am, pen in hand, ready to relate the triumphs and disasters of the SEDIC during the years when I was an active member of its Council Boards. Thirteen years of its life in total: quite a long time, all things considered.

In order to refresh my memory, I have read the Minutes of the various meetings held and the notes – more sentimental than testimonial – which I made in a “diary” of mine. Nevertheless, it is possible that a few of the notes are inaccurate, or that I have forgotten the name of a colleague who invested the same enthusiasm in the tasks associated with the creation and consolidation of the SEDIC as I did. I beg your pardon for any lapsus that might have occurred. This is not a chronological account of the different members of the Council Board, or a cold narration of more or less important facts. I would like this to be a more moving, interesting, and entertaining story, written for those who are interested in the history of the SEDIC and in Information Science in general.

### **THE FIRST YEARS**

I had just returned from Germany, and was immersed once more in my documentation work in Spain, firstly for Hispanoil, and later for the Faculty of Science of the Autonomous University of Madrid. Back then there were very few *documentaristas* (information scientists or information professionals) around, and we were scattered about in various institutions.

I missed the corporatism I had experienced in Germany, and I thought that we could also join forces in Spain. United, it would be easier to exercise our profession and make improvements in all aspects of the field.

It is true that some associations already existed, such as the National Association of Archivists, Librarians, and Archeologists (ANABA) and the Association of Librarians of Catalonia. But both excluded us information professionals. It is a well-known fact that at that time we were completely ignored by librarians. We therefore mulled the idea over of founding a society that would protect and defend information professionals with a wide-ranging programme of activities including training, which was also a neglected area at the time.

It was in 1972 or 1973 I think, when I had the first conversations on this matter with some colleagues, who approved of the idea but did not want to commit themselves to anything. I would have to prepare it all myself, and if they liked it, they would sign up. This position was as comfortable as it was unacceptable. It is true to say that I carried out the bulk of the work, and this was not a task that one person can or should have to do alone.

At this point it seems appropriate to transcribe the letter that I sent to colleagues and friends in June 1977 on the occasion of the celebration of the first Constitutional Assembly, which appeared in the Minutes of the same, although important details and anecdotes worth mentioning have been expanded upon in the following text.

Dear colleagues and friends,

I address you on this memorable day, on the occasion of the First Constitutional Assembly of the Spanish Society of Scientific Documentation and Information (SEDIC), in order to relate the story of those first days of the creation of this Society.

It was 1972, and although it is quite possible that the idea was already in the minds of some, the fact of the matter was that no association existed which brought together Spanish information professionals, and there was no place where we could meet and get to know what each other was doing, or help each other when necessary.

At that point I had already been working for twelve years in the field of information science, and although we were few in the beginning, and almost all of us knew each other, by the year 1972 there were enough information professionals for us to have lost track of each other, and we felt the need for some unity.

There had been various cases – and this will have happened to all of us – when colleagues had come to us for advice, so that we could indicate who was carrying out such and such a task, or how it was being done. There had also been many cases of tasks having been repeated due

to the fact that often no-one knew where a particular task was being done, or by whom.

With all this in mind, I thought it would be very useful to have a national Society which brought information professionals together.

And although, as I have just said, the idea was in the minds of many, it was not easy to find a group of colleagues who were willing to get down to work.

I then approached the Centre of Information and Documentation (CID, today the CINDOC) where so many friends and colleagues work. I visited some of these, but although the idea seemed to them to be a good one, they did not have time to help, or did not think that it was an absolutely essential endeavour.

My second attempt was more successful, perhaps because the number of information professionals had increased slowly, and I eventually found some colleagues who were willing to work with me. Among the first of these were M<sup>a</sup> Antonia Muñoz, Aída Méndez, Clara Otero, Remedios Pérez, and Emilia Ruiz Campuzano. I hope I have not forgotten anybody.

One day in May 1974, coming out of one of the sessions of the 1<sup>st</sup> Scientific Documentation Week (I Semana de Documentación Científica) which we used to organize within the Department of Information Science of the Science Faculty of the Autonomous University of Madrid, we met for lunch along with D. Javier Lasso de la Vega, Palmira Pueyo, Manuela Urcullum, and María Serrallach.

We decided that we needed to get to work, that it was necessary to create an association for information professionals.

We spoke to other colleagues working as information professionals and librarians, and twenty of us met in June of the same year in order to discuss the idea. On that occasion we met at the CID offices (now CINDOC).

Naturally, there was a wide range of opinions. Although the ANABA already existed, there were those that thought that, given the diversity and scope of its members, perhaps it did not concentrate enough on information professionals. It was also thought that it would be appropriate to carry out a survey in order to find out how many information professionals would be interested in joining an association. It was also said that we needed to have the support of the Directorate General of Archives and Libraries, and there were many other opinions besides.

This was all discussed during two or three more meetings attended by around twenty people, although the attendees themselves varied.

Some of the steps that my colleagues recommended that I take were quite difficult to achieve, mainly due to the opposition of some groups who did not agree with the idea of a society formed by information professionals for information professionals, or did not think it was necessary to have such a society. For this reason, little by little we refined the lines of action and the objectives that we wished to achieve.

We had the collaboration of the Catalan contingent, always a large group which included librarians, from the very start. In February 1974, during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference on Information and Documentation in the Service of Engineering and Business organized by the CEDIN, we met with P. Queralt, Nuria Amat, Domingo Turuquet, María Serrallach and later with Rosa Ricard, who all told me that I could count on their support. Ángela García de Mendoza also subsequently joined us.

Rosa Ricard had founded the Association of Librarians of Catalonia and she therefore believed that a national society could be very useful. I also managed to get in contact with the Valencian group, who were an important faction, although my attempts to meet with López Piñero were not successful. He was very busy, and was unable to dedicate his time to the things she wished, and so it was only at a later stage of the process that I managed to hold a meeting with him. He was enthusiastic about the idea, and although I had not had the pleasure of meeting him in person before, he was already in touch with other members of the CID.

Between one proceeding and another, we had reached January 1975, and we were holding a meeting at the same premises. We decided to form a management group in order to start drawing up the Statutes, since we had already agreed on the society's objectives, which was to found a society created by information professionals for information professionals in the widest sense of the word.

It was at this point that the CID offered to form part of this management board, as it was called in the beginning, and Barcala and Lara also consulted some people who had participated from the start, and who agreed to continue collaborating with us. The composition of the management board was approved unanimously by the attendees of that meeting; I believe there were about twenty-five of us.

From then on this small group met with the addition of Fernández Urraca and Domínguez, ensuring that we had representatives from all information science sectors. Our good friend and colleague Ángel Barcala will tell us more about this time.

Before I finish, I would like to thank from the bottom of my heart all the colleagues who have helped me since the beginning, and who continue to help me today. In particular, I would like to thank D. Javier, who has always encouraged me with his kind words; Aída Méndez, who spared no effort or time, and even went without sleep; M<sup>a</sup> Antonia Muñoz, who also invested a great deal of time in the project; and Ángela García de Mendoza, who sent 200 letters out in search of members in the Catalan region, as well as all our other colleagues. We have done everything we could, with all our hearts.

All the processes we went through and the efforts we made have been compensated, since we now have 126 members and two patrons.

It is at this point, we could say, that “they entrusted me with my tasks”; that is to say, the ideas would come from various members, but I was the one

who would have to carry them out on my own. Since the idea interested me, and I had become attached to the project, I did everything in my power to make things happen.

The meeting with the civil service librarians was potentially a great obstacle, since this group was in general, fully opposed to the idea. Someone suggested that I should present my ideas directly to the Director General of Libraries – at that time, Sánchez Belda – with the aim of gaining his approval for the project. I was calling him for a whole term, but he did not have time to receive me: finally, I decided to dispense with the matter and proceed to holding a meeting with our colleagues.

A first meeting took place, therefore, in the then CID–ICYT (now the CINDOC) on 19 June 1974, the Minutes of which are transcribed below.

***Meeting of 19 June 1974, at the CID headquarters, with a view to the eventual creation of an Association of Information Professionals.***

***Agenda*** The recommendations formulated by the Working Group are submitted for discussion by the attendees of the meeting following the various points contained in the Order of the Day.

The conclusions resulting from this discussion are recorded below.

***1. Name of Association***

The Spanish Association for the Development of Documentation and Information Science

***2. Association Objectives***

- a) To promote collaboration between specialists in information science, and in institutions that form part of the field of information and documentation by means of the exchange of knowledge and experiences, with the aim of ensuring a common use of the documentation resources available.
- b) To promote professional improvement for specialists working in information and documentation, and develop working methods in this field by means of the organization of courses and seminars, promoting the provision of funding for specializations.
- c) To contribute to the production, normalization, and unification of terminology in the sector of Information Science.
- d) To maintain relationships and collaborate with analogous entities both in Spain and abroad.
- e) To publish a regular Newsletter in order to communicate with members, eventually establishing an information and documentation publication which will be an organ of the Association.

### **3. *Member types and membership requirements***

The Association will tend to attract people who carry out information and documentation tasks at a high level, or who have the appropriate training to do so. Membership can only be accepted on the recommendation by 2 members and the approval of the Council Board.

All persons or institutions linked to activities in information and documentation in any way who are interested in the improvement and development of these activities in our country will be eligible to become members of the Association as Patrons.

### **4. *Fees***

The annual membership fee for Ordinary Members will be 750 pesetas. The annual membership fee for Patrons will be 5,000 pesetas.

### **5. *Election of Management Board***

The Management Board will comprise members of the so-called Working Group.

Action to be taken:

- Visit the Director General of Archives and Libraries in order to ask for their support for the creation of the Association.
- Draw up a list of information professionals who might be interested in joining the Association, and send these an informative leaflet with details of progress so far and a survey, which, when completed, will provide an idea of the nature of the human element which will be essential to the effective creation of the Association.

Subsequently, on the initiative of José Ramón Pérez Álvarez Osorio, the name of the Association was abbreviated to the Spanish Association of Scientific Documentation and Information.

I must confess that personally I thought that the term “Society” was more appropriate than “Association”, since it has more scientific connotations. The majority of the group disagreed with me, and I had to accept that.

During the spring of 1975 we met twice a week at the offices of the ICYT (CINDOC) in order to draw up the Statutes. If I remember correctly, present were Manuela Urcullum, Maria Antonia Muñoz, Aída Méndez, Alfredo Lara, Ricardo Jerez (on occasion), Conche González, Díaz de Garayo, and myself. I hope I have not omitted anyone. If I have done so, it has not been deliberately. I also wish to remember Manuela Urcullum in particular, tragically no longer with us, who was a great friend, and who encouraged me a great deal in moments when I felt dispirited.

With a view to being able to present the Statutes for official approval, a Board of Governors had to be formed which would be responsible to the authorities. Quite unexpectedly, Ángel Barcala appeared on the scene, and

presented himself as favourite to occupy the post of President, although until then he had not taken part in any interventions or acts. They offered me the post of Secretary, which I did not accept. It was not a position that I felt I could fill satisfactorily. After some deliberation, I was named Vice President.

We still had another obstacle to overcome. We needed an official office, some specific headquarters. Neither the ICYT (CINDOC) nor the CSIC nor any other institution was disposed to cede their headquarters to us, and only the Deacon of the Faculty of Science of the Autonomous University of Madrid would gladly take us in, and so that is where we established the official headquarters of the SEDIC.

Once we had resolved these official details, we dedicated ourselves in our frequent meetings to the final draft of the Statutes, and in the spring of 1976 Alfredo Lara and I were able to present them to the Directorate General of Security.

Those were years in which any union or associations were suspicious, and I had to visit the Sub-Directorate General of Associations on a number of occasions in order to give explanations and answers to all kinds of questions. Finally, an affable employee advised me that we should change our name from “Association” to “Society”, which aroused fewer suspicions. This was done, and on 26 December 1976 they returned the Statutes to me, duly authorized and stamped. The Spanish Society of Scientific Documentation and Information was constituted.

## **YEARS OF CONSOLIDATION**

It was certainly during the years from the end of 1976 to the spring of 1981 that the Society went through a period of consolidation, although not without its fair share of scares, and ups and downs of various kinds. But the important thing was that the Society had received Government authorization, and we could now get to work making plans for the tasks we would carry out.

In January, 1977 we held the first meeting of the council Board, which was still provisional, since we needed to organize a National Constitutional Assembly during which the members of the Council Board would be elected by all members.

In this meeting the guidelines we had previously drawn up were agreed upon, with the same objectives previously proposed, and the specialized work groups were established which would carry out these objectives.

One of the first tasks in hand was the recruitment of members. To this end we needed to produce an informative leaflet and come up with an

anagram. We decided to adopt the acronym SEDIC, and we set to designing a logo.

By the way, where were we going to get the money from to do... well, all the things that we had to do? The first thing we did was to collect the membership fees for 1976 and 1977 from the members that we knew. More than one of us covered certain payments out of altruism. And we must thank the ICYT (CINDOC) for the help that they have always given us: paying postage or photocopying bills on various occasions over those first few years. I would also like to remember José Dueñas, so suddenly and tragically taken from us, and who is much missed. All those working in SEDIC know who he was. He signed up to be the first Patron with a payment of 20,000 pesetas, when the rest of us paid 750 pesetas a year. Years later, when he claimed his membership card as a Patron of the Society, the Secretary found some reason or other not to issue it. Now he no longer needs it.

It is only natural that I make this digression and remember him, since, in all honesty, if it were not for Pepe SEDIC would not exist or would have disappeared years ago. He always supported and encouraged me, collaborating on a personal level.

With the money we collected we could produce the leaflets. The logo was achieved some years later when Julián Colina commissioned a friend to design it for us, which he did free of charge.

In order to find more members, I went personally to see potential members at their workplaces. Letters were sent, with the aid of lists provided by the ICYT (CINDOC) and other centres. We also contacted colleagues in Valencia and Catalonia. López Piñeiro had already approached me in 1975, along with Mari Luz Terradas, in order to talk to me and show an interest in my plans. Later, he stayed in the wings until some years had passed. So all the Valencians registered as members en masse. The Catalans were more receptive. There were many information professionals working in industry there, and both Rafael Queralt and José Mumbrú understood the problems that they presented. We ended up having some thirty Catalan members.

After all the meetings, visits to potential members, organization of the work groups, etc., the moment came on 28 July 1977 to hold the Constitutional Assembly at which the Council Board was to be elected. I do not know what strange manoeuvre or perhaps well-meaning gesture on the part of some of my colleagues led to my name appearing on the candidate list for Speaker, when I myself had only put myself forward for President. Although I sent a letter to all members clarifying the error, ballot papers for the post of Speaker with my name on them appeared, and had to be declared null and void. This reduced the number of votes I obtained for the post of

President, and so I found myself off the Council Board. I did not like this manoeuvre at all, and neither did Don Javier Lasso de la Vega, who drew up a panegyric which was more glowing than I deserved, which he later sent out in written form. I remember him fondly, as he was my tutor in documentation tasks in Spain.

Since this was the first Council Board, I shall name the members: President Ángel Barcala; Vice President Alfredo Lara; Secretary Manuela Vázquez; Treasurer Manuel Gómez Lozano. The names of the Speakers of the Board do not appear in the Minutes which I have at my disposal. I am sorry that I cannot name them, since I cannot remember exactly who occupied this post, and I do not wish to make a mistake.

On that day, it was agreed that all those present would be named Founding Members. We were some forty people. Subsequently, some of those who were absent from the meeting complained, and the list was extended to a number of around sixty Founding Members.

In the end, the fact was that I had been left out of the Council Board, and I could see how the meetings were postponed, and the activities never materialized. On the other hand, the creation of Regional Offices comprising more than ten members had been approved. Contact had already been made with Rafael Queralt in Catalonia, and it was proposed that I should take charge of the Madrid Office. Naturally, I accepted with pleasure, since I could see that it was the only way to promote the life of the SEDIC.

The Madrid Office – that is to say, me, and please excuse the immodesty – would be the office which was to organize acts and work groups, as well as the tasks themselves. There were those who opposed the idea, since the rumour was that I was “bossy” and “absolutist”. Poor me! Nobody wanted to risk taking decisions, and no-one had time to dedicate to the SEDIC. If I did not get things done, nobody would. The National Council Board only managed to organize a course on technical German which lasted 6 months. In such difficult times, when we had no money, the librarians were against us and the members were apathetic, much energy and determination were needed in order for spirits not to flag. And here are the results.

In the winter of 1977 I held a meeting with some colleagues, and we got to work, following the lines of actions proposed in the founding document. On 20 March 1978, the Madrid Office was constituted, whose Council Board was elected as follows: Speakers: Pilar Blanco, José López Yepes, Alda Méndez, and Emilio Temprano; Secretary and Treasurer: Julián Codina; President: E. Currás.

The territory which was covered by the Madrid Office came under discussion, since I saw that colleagues in other provinces were going to lack

support due to the fact that the National Board declined to take part in almost all of the activities proposed by the Madrid Office. In the end, it was decided that we would publish a Newsletter which could be issued throughout Spain, while the Madrid Office would be limited to Madrid and its province.

In order to give standing to the SEDIC I thought that we should hold conferences, mainly at the start and end of the academic year, with perhaps the occasional conference in between. Moreover, it seemed appropriate that current and potential members should receive briefs and updates on what was being done and the plans that were being proposed. The conferences were duly organized, and we looked to make use of relevant colleagues and interesting themes. The truth be told, in the beginning attendance was low: it was almost embarrassing to call a figure from our sphere and ask them to prepare a conference, unpaid, when in the end perhaps less than twenty people would be there to hear it. Nevertheless, we could not give up. One solution we found was to organize some conferences together with other entities, which also meant that they shared some of the costs, such as postage. And yes, attendance increased. Moreover, we invited speakers to dinner or a drink, according to their taste, and thus compensated in some way for the lack of fees.

We also constituted the work groups for the following items: production of a members' yearbook, with classification by specializations and interests; guided tours of specialist centres; terminology; production of thesauri; statutes for the information professional; teaching and training; documentation on medications; economic documentation; user studies; international section and regulations. Meetings and seminars were called with great success.

All this meant that we should send out invitations and briefs. How many afternoons were spent by Julián Colina, José Dueñas, Goyita – my housekeeper and good friend – and I, at home, addressing envelopes and sticking stamps. How excited we were about every act that was organized!

As President of the Madrid Office I became part of the National Council Board as Ex Officio Speaker. This was also the case with Rafael Queralt in Catalonia.

In 1980 a members list was drawn up, paid for by the Faculty of Science of the Autonomous University of Madrid, which was also sent to entities and colleagues, and served as propaganda for the Society. That year, the number of members increased substantially. Some editions of the Newsletter were also issued. But Julián Colina resigned, and things changed. Pilar Blanco took on the post of Treasurer, and José María Martínez Manrique became Secretary, taking the secretariat to his office and taking charge of correspondence.

At first, meetings were held at the ICYT office. Later, during some years, they took place at the Roca Solano Institute of the CSCI.

I contacted Luis Albedo Petit Herrera, and in 1979 the first session of the SEDIC was held in SIMO, with such success that the following year we were presented with a comsommé at mid morning. Since then, meetings have been held without interruption. In 1981 the presence of SEDIC was increased by our having a post at the IMPROSIMO.

Likewise, at that time we began to organize training courses, which had to take place in two sessions as demand was so great. This meant that there was a lot of work to do, and it was not always fulfilling. More than once I felt rather put out. But economically speaking they were a great success, and provided a cash injection for the coffers. Today these courses still take place, and they now possess a truly prestigious tradition.

At the end of 1979 Ángel Barcala resigned due to health problems. I would also like to extend my fondest regards to him. Some colleagues and friends were leaving us. He and Alfredo Lara disagreed on occasion, and we had to act as mediators. When Barcala resigned, Alfredo Lara became acting President until new elections could be held. Perhaps it will be interesting to tell the story as an anecdote, and also as an example of the extent to which I “imposed my will”. The National Assembly was convened, and the candidate list was drawn up. On the list was another colleague from the ICYT (CINDOC), much loved and respected, but with hardly any history in the SEDIC: this was José Ramírez San Martín, who presented himself for the post of President in competition with me. The day of the vote came, and the ballots were opened. It seemed that I was in the lead when someone said that many votes were missing, that the post had arrived late, and that the Valencians had not cast their votes. It was decided to seal the ballots, send the candidate list out to the members once more, and postpone the session. Good heavens, what a situation! Ramírez San Martín won the vote, with just one more ballot in his favour. Soon after that he retired for health reasons.

Activities continued to be carried out, emphasizing the statutes of information professionals, and so ANABA, which had become ANABAD, was contacted. Joint documents were drawn up and a meeting was called to present and discuss them. Nobody turned up! The speakers were all on their own.

The Presidency was vacant, and now, finally, my colleagues put their trust in me and voted me in without reservation. That was on 27 May 1981. In the corresponding vote for the Madrid Office, Emilio Temprano was elected, and he was incorporated as Ex Officio Speaker in the National Council Board.

## THE YEARS OF MY PRESIDENCY

These years, from 1981 to 1987, were more peaceful. SEDIC was well established and well known. The activities, some now a prestigious tradition, were shared out. There was some money in the coffers, and everything was a little easier, although some members of the Council Board did not respond as they should have done. They committed to activities that later they did not take part in, and in these situations I as President had to be on hand to help out. But this is always the case. For that reason they say that societies are made by the people in them.

On this occasion, Juan Rodríguez Bouyssi had been elected Secretary, and with him he brought a great deal of excitement and willingness to work. He took the secretariat to the IT Faculty (Complutense University), which led to its informatization, something which was an advantage. He also undertook the updating of the Members Yearbook and finished it, although it was not sent to the members. And we are still in the same situation today. I do not know which note is needed to finish this symphony. But I do know that the task is the main responsibility of the Council Board.

In the original Acts we can find the report presented by the Secretary, which shows a clear interest in the informatization of archives and other documents. Likewise, it is worth highlighting the interest for publishing, albeit in a simple form, some kind of newsletter and conference materials. It was also agreed that collaborations would be sought with other reviews and similar associations, that members would be recruited, international relations would be promoted, a premises of our own would be found, and a members list drawn up.

The matter of the secretariat also presents us with an episode worth mentioning. As it had no fixed headquarters, due to the fact that the Autonomous University of Madrid was quite far away, the secretariat had been moved around between the offices or workplaces where the Secretaries worked, each one organizing documents according to their own criteria. When Paloma Portela managed to persuade the National Library to allow us to share premises with the ANABAD, it seemed that our troubles were over. We purchased a metal filing cabinet and an electric typewriter. At that time, Concha Borreguero was Secretary, and she had an administrative secretary at her disposal. Our good fortune did not last. The new Director of the National Library very politely asked us to sling our hooks, giving us a very short period of time to do so. The filing cabinet and the typewriter went to live in the home of the administrative secretary, who later took them to a nightclub without telling me. When I realized, we were trying to arrange the rental of an office

in Gran Vía 67, where the Secretariat has been installed with the appropriate equipment, ever since.

The edition of the newsletter was another important issue. It is not easy to publish a half-decent newsletter. You have to dedicate much time and some money to the task. In those remote times, Margarita Pastor and I wrote some briefs which were printed by the ICYT (CINDOC). After that, the job was carried out by Margarita Pastor and Luís de Lamo, and after that... We always ran into the same problems: a lack of material to publish, a lack of news, and a lack of time. Recently there had been funds; nevertheless, only a few numbers were published in each period. But we still had to communicate with our members, and so we proposed sending them the Minutes of the meetings of the Council Board, which were already written down, and contained much information on what was being done. The proposal was rejected.

One way to resolve the situation and reach members was to propose to the ICVF that they allowed us to collaborate on their review. For the time being, we agreed to pay a proportion of the costs in exchange for the review being sent free to all SEDIC members, and a small section being dedicated to the Society which included news items. A SEDIC member would appear as a member of the editorial board, and something related to SEDIC would appear on the front cover. After some negotiations and comings and goings, all this was achieved, which was to the great advantage of both institutions.

We were no longer in a precarious situation, and it seemed to me that the money we had should be used on promoting activities. I therefore proposed that the activities of the work groups and those who collaborated with SEDIC should be paid. César López, who had served as Treasurer for many years, took charge of administration with great level-headedness, and the same can be said for his predecessors and successors. In this way some activities were revived, although not all of them.

Another task which we set ourselves was to publish the talks and conferences of our colleagues and other figures. They were very interesting themes, and it was appropriate to broadcast them. We even thought that they could be converted into a source of income if we could work out how to market them. We had an attractive front page prepared for the purpose, and we managed to gather the majority of the texts together. But there a lack of consistency on the part of the Council Board intervened, as did human weakness and petty personal discrepancies, and as a result the texts were never published.

As the years went by, Spain was organized into Autonomous Regions, and this affected the structure of the SEDIC. First came the question of the name, followed by the question of territory. *Delegación* (office) seemed to

suggest a dependence, and so another name had to be found. After some deliberation, the name “Agrupación” (Group) was adopted. With regard to the sphere, there were many discrepancies, including on the part of Margarita Badillo, who was at that time the President of the Madrid “Group”, and who brought a document drawn up by some lawyers which caused a great deal of controversy.

The Catalan group also presented their proposals. All of this seemed to be superfluous, since it seemed logical simply to use the territory of the Autonomous regions themselves. That is how the question was resolved.

At any rate, once the SOCADI had been founded in Catalonia, and all the Catalan members of the SEDIC unsubscribed on the same day, it made no sense to continue to have a Madrid Group, since there was now no other territory in Spain, and it was now the national SEDIC which united all the colleagues in other areas.

For this very reason, in order to ensure a national participation in SEDIC, I always tried to ensure that Speakers came from different regions. The first was Juan Antonio Martínez de la Fez de Canarias, who even managed to attend some meetings. Then we had Concha Cruz, who resigned when she was not voted President, claiming that she did not wish to work with me anymore. After my election, years later, she joined the Council Board once more. Eugenio Portela and Porfirio Morales also held the post of Speaker. In order to make it easier to attend Board Meetings, we paid for their travel, as we did with the Vice Presidents, Rafael Queralt and José Mumbrú, until they decided to join the SOCADI. A short anecdote to lighten this account. Rafael Queralt used to come on the night train, and on arriving home in the morning he would wash, breakfast, and set about his business. Sometimes he ate at home. At nights, Pepe and I accompanied him to the train. They were very agreeable, these visits from such a good, genuine friend.

Something I always tried to instigate and which the latest members have managed to achieve successfully was to celebrate informal gatherings, perhaps in a café or other such pleasant place, where we could each tell our stories, or experiences, or travels. This never came about.

I still think it is worth commenting on the attempts that were made to approach the ANABA and collaborate with them. I did not like the idea much, because I knew what the results would be, but I went along with majority opinion. Following various attempts to obtain an audience with David Torra, the President of ANABA at the time, without receiving an answer from either him or Margarita Vásquez Parga, we managed to get an interview with Alicia Girón, The Sub-Director General of Books and Libraries. She offered us the chance to join the ANABA and dissolve the SEDIC. We had not expected

anything else. What we did manage to achieve was that the ANABA broadened its field of action to include information professionals, becoming the ANABAD and naming colleagues from SEDIC on the Council Board. This initiated a period of good relations.

## **GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS**

In 1987 my term of office as President was over, and I retired from active life. I left behind a well consolidated society, with tradition and prestige, as well as close to 500 members and more than 2 million pesetas in the coffers. SEDIC had achieved some important things. I had ensured that information professionals were aware of their own situation, and that they exercised a recognized profession with great prestige in the labour market. It had also ensured that colleagues understood that there should be no rivalry between them and librarians or archivists, since we were dealing with a profession with three different specialities.

SEDIC was consulted on a professional level and was asked to collaborate on the elaboration of the Law on Libraries and the National Documentation Plan, 1983-86. Our opinion and action was also required with regards to the studies carried out in order to consolidate the official nature of training in this field at a university level. That is where the University Schools of Library and Documentation Science began, which today have expanded into Faculties.

SEDIC, along with the Universities, the Chemists' Association, FUINCA (Fundacion Para El Fomento De La Informacion Automatizada), the University-Business Foundation, the Spanish Society for General Systems, the PPO, etc., organized the first general and specialized training courses, some of which are consolidated, others of which gave way to different seminars or Master's courses. Likewise, meetings of specialized work groups ensured that colleagues felt a sense of solidarity in common tasks.

SEDIC was there to defend professional interests, intervene in official resolutions, calls for official exams, closures of documentation centres, and other similar situations. Thanks to SEDIC, today graduates from outside the spheres of philosophy and humanities are admitted into the circle of civil service librarians.

It was at the SEDIC that the idea first emerged to create a federation of Spanish associations, since there were already several of them on national territory, and the task was undertaken with consistency and interest. It is also true that there was no opposition to the idea, and that, on the contrary, there was good, lively collaboration. Today, the FESABID (Spanish Federation of

Societies of Archivists, Librarians, Documentalists and Museologists) is still out there, perfectly fulfilling its mission.

SEDIC became well known on an international level, since each time I or anyone else attended a conference or meeting, we did so in its name. Contracts were signed with the FID in order to celebrate joint meetings with the FID/ET committees on Education and Training, and FID/CR on Research in Classification. We also collaborated on the tasks encompassed in ISO/TC 46 – Documentation – as well as collaborating with the British Library. The Italians, who had founded their society of information scientists in 1983, invited me to Rome to ask for advice on the research plans that they wished to carry out. Likewise, we also collaborated on occasion with French associations of information professionals and librarians. Foreigners with links to our areas of specialization were invited to give seminars and speak at conferences, SEDIC was the first to organize a course on administration and office archives. By means of the newsletters and reviews published by societies abroad, the work of SEDIC was broadcast in many countries. I am sure that I am forgetting other important actions which I do not remember right now. I hope that you will forgive me, since this is not deliberate.

So after all those ups and downs, SEDIC's action has been positive, and although I carried most of the responsibilities on many occasions, I am happy with my work. It has been good for and useful to information science as a whole, as well as its professionals, my colleagues, and friends.

I thank you all with all my heart for the collaboration, help, and friendship which those who have shared these tasks with me over the years and eras have shown me. I wish I could mention you all. I hope that you understand that this is not possible, and I ask that you take this into account, appreciating my warmest regards and fondest wishes for you all. In any case, for some further details you can refer to the Minutes of the various meetings.

I would like to thank Dr. D. José López Yepes for giving me this opportunity to relate these experiences from the creation and consolidation of SEDIC. I always say, that it is like when a daughter reaches adulthood and becomes independent. Now she is in good hands. Thank you all.

Madrid, 22 March 1992