

Summary



Fundamental Principles for Answering the Questions of Tomorrow / The German National Library – Yesterday and Today (Susanne Oehlschläger, Ute Schwens)
(pp. 234 – 238)

The 106th German Library Conference will take place from May 30 to June 2 in Frankfurt am Main. »Media - People - Markets« is this year's motto of the largest professional development event for librarians and information experts in Europe – which more than 3 000 visitors are expected to attend. Along with a wide range of lectures, workshops and discussion meetings on the trade fair grounds, visitors will be interested in the libraries in Frankfurt, first and foremost the German National Library (DNB). This issue of BuB presents an overview of the long tradition of this institution since its founding more than 100 years ago as well as its current collection policy and mandate, which now includes digital publications.

In 1912 the German National Library was established in Leipzig as the »Deutsche Bücherei«. The Frankfurt location was at first a separate entity known as the »Deutsche Bibliothek«, though only established in 1946. This was due to the division of Germany after the Second World War, after which it was no longer possible to gain access to the collections held in the »Deutsche Bücherei« in Leipzig.

Initially the »Deutsche Bibliothek« was housed in the library of the University of Frankfurt, before becoming the responsibility of the State of Hesse in 1952. As the result of a law passed in 1969 it became an institution of the federal government. Until Germany's reunification each of the libraries continued to follow along their own course, until in 1990, thanks to the provisions in the unification treaty, they were united under the name »Die Deutsche Bibliothek«.

The library is mandated by law to collect, without a gap, and to permanently maintain, catalogue, and make available to the public all German and German-language works published since 1913, including Germanica appearing abroad, translations of German-language works, and the works by German-speaking emigrants published between 1933 and 1945.

Tracking Provenance of Older Holdings / The HeBIS Union Catalog and the Academic Library of Mainz in an Exemplary Report on a Provenance Research Project (Annelen Ottermann)
(pp. 252 – 257)

In its December 2016 issue BuB published an extensive review of the difficulties encountered in dealing with »Nazi plunder«. Yet with this alone, the topic of provenance research is by no means exhausted, as Annelen Ottermann reveals in this report. Using the HeBIS Union Catalog and the Academic Library of Mainz she explores the issues in light of a current provenance research project that goes beyond Nazi looting.

Since the beginning of this millennium notations of provenance – a new, third level of cataloging in addition to title cataloging and descriptive cataloging – has been considered a central task of librarianship. Whether this includes all works printed since 1500 through to the current day or focuses particularly on works plundered by the Nazis may vary from library to library. However, the tools they use and the underlying philosophy is always identical.

The specifics of an individual exemplar of a work express its origins and history and convey, moreover, certain meta-information, which may include such singular properties as an ex libris, indications of ownership, notations of a book-binder or sales price, censor's notes, marginal notes, and type of binding. These and other item specifications are recorded, given documentation, and made searchable.

No Tomorrow Without the Yesterday / Children's Books and Libraries in Romania – A Travel Report (Birgit Dankert)
(pp. 270 – 275)

For more than 25 years Professor Birgit Dankert taught library and information science in Hamburg and is well-known in Germany as an expert in children's and young adult literature. On the occasion of a book donation project for Romania, she now takes the opportunity to give a presentation of the situation of children's literature and libraries in Romania for readers of BuB.

With its nearly 20 million inhabitants, Romania has a long tradition of highly diverse and multi-lingual writing in its national literature. Since the end of the dictatorship and a period of reorientation the country has developed an effective infrastructure for the literary world which makes it possible to publish about 15,000 new titles each year, including 2,000 titles of children's and young adult literature. Authors, illustrators, publishing house staff, and those in literature-promotion professions are all interested in finding marketing channels which increase both readership and profits. For the present they see no difference in the two.

Many difficulties facing this branch are comparable to those in Germany. Internet sales accelerate the disappearance of local bookstores. Every rural location of a public library must employ clever strategies of self-defense. Translated works come predominantly from English-speaking countries. The wish for an international range of literature, including German-language titles, is caught up in the turbulence of mainstream-oriented market optimization. Romanian authors, illustrators and dedicated publishers are now attempting to expand readership and the representation of their interests abroad, where until now it is mainly the works by emigrants that are known.

Translated by Martha Baker