



Cooperation on the Continent

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COOPERATION AMONG LIBRARIES has been for some time a characteristic trait of many continental European countries. Whereas in Germany, especially in Prussia, cooperative cataloging and interlibrary loan service were well established before 1914, in other countries library cooperation developed during the inter-war years. Since 1945 cooperation, even in countries that have entered this field of library activity only lately, has made great progress.

Germany. As early as 1893, under the powerful influence of the Prussian ministry of education, an interlibrary loan service had been established between the then Royal Library in Berlin and the Prussian university libraries. Its regulations were of the most liberal kind, the reader paying a nominal charge for each book that came into his hands. This system was gradually extended to all other state-supported libraries, including libraries for the teaching staff of high-schools, and even to libraries outside the controlling power of the state. Other Länder of Imperial Germany, like Bavaria and Saxony, followed the example set by Prussia, but only after the inflationary chaos following World War I was a unitary system comprising the whole of Germany established. The Deutsche Leihverkehrsordnung of March, 1924, has become the Magna Charta of the German interlibrary loan service and has survived the constitutional changes of the post-war years. It was redrafted in 1951, extending the right of participation to a great number of public and special libraries. The number of library participants now totals about 400.

In principle, a reader in any one of the libraries participating in the scheme is entitled to borrow books from any other library, provided those books are needed for scholarly work or for professional and vocational purposes. Although the library receiving a book pays the postage both ways, the individual reader is charged a very small

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fee of between the fifth and the third part of a mark (which is about ten cents in American currency), but differing as yet in the various Länder.

Interlibrary loans are a necessary feature of modern library activity, as no single library is any longer in a position to buy or procure by means of exchange all books that may be needed some day by one of its readers for special research. But in contemporary Germany the interlibrary loan service fulfills another function that explains the vast number of books that are being sent to and fro among hundreds of libraries: supplementing the stocks of libraries that have suffered great losses during the last war and are only able to build up an adequate collection of books in the course of many years. This makes the daily work in the interlibrary lending departments of many libraries a formidable task. Cologne University and Municipal Library, for example, during the fiscal year 1956, sent 23,378 volumes to other German libraries and received 9,291 from them. In the same period the libraries of the Land North Rhine-Westphalia (only for this region the latest statistics are as yet available) sent 83,000 volumes to libraries all over Germany and received 90,000, the latter number reflecting the fact that two of the three university libraries of the region have suffered heavily during the war.

It would be a foolish thing indeed to try to get a book for a reader, say, in a town on the southern border of Germany from a library in the extreme north of the Federal Republic, if the same book was actually in a library not far off. So the system has been subdivided into six regions. All application forms are sent around those libraries within the region that are most likely to have the desired book in their stacks. In some cases the book may be found in the first library, in other cases the application form may wander from one library to another without a copy being traced within the region. At the end of the round it has to pass the "Schlussbibliothek," the most important library of the region, which acts as intermediary between its own region and all the others. This library is responsible for the correctness of all data should the application form be forwarded to a library in an adjacent region. Of course, no regional circulation is expected in cases where a location is secured by means of published catalogs or bibliographical tools which give locations. In such cases direct application to the library owning the requested book, irrespective of regional boundaries, is self-evident.

On the whole this must seem a rather clumsy method, and it cer-

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tainly is. So, complaints of scholars wondering at the length of time between ordering and receiving a book have been common. In many cases it takes weeks before a copy has been located and can be forwarded to the library that sent the application form around. But the system for years has supplied to professors, students, and to research workers of all kinds thousands and thousands of books they urgently needed.

German librarians have been intent on thinking of a faster and more reliable method of supplying books from one library to another. They well remembered the wonderful tool for locating books, the Prussian Gesamtkatalog, that, from the letter B onward, had been being expanded into a German Gesamtkatalog during the process of editing the manuscript union catalog at the Berlin State Library for publication. Printing had already stopped during the war. The manuscript card catalog had been removed from air-raided Berlin to the country-side. By 1947 it became clear that it had to be reckoned a war casualty. With no prospect of ever seeing the series of printed volumes completed new thinking about union-cataloging had to be done. There were put forward good reasons for building up regional union catalogs instead of one national union catalog—even the Prussian Gesamtkatalog had been a regional union catalog, if on the grand scale. Not only did constitutional considerations point into this direction—the various Länder being sovereign in the field of cultural policy—but library policy as well. Whereas it would be very difficult to get hundreds of middle-sized and small libraries all over the Federal Republic to cooperate with one single center, they would be ready to cooperate with the regional center well known to them. If every region of the interlibrary loan system had its own regional union catalog to rely on, the loan service could be run according to standards necessary in our time. Of course there would be a good deal of overlapping, but less than is commonly assumed.

Things are actually developing upon this pattern. There are now in the Federal Republic and West Berlin seven regional union catalogs in various states of progress. Each of them, when completed, will contain from two to three million titles. This number compares fairly well with the national union catalogs of smaller countries like Switzerland and the Netherlands. The union catalogs of North Rhine-Westphalia at the University and Municipal Library at Cologne, of Hesse at the University and Municipal Library at Frankfurt, and of Berlin at the Library of the Free University are nearing completion.

Work has begun on the union catalogs of Baden-Württemberg at the State Library at Stuttgart, of Bavaria at the State Library at Munich, of Lower-Saxony at the State and University Library at Göttingen, and of the three Länder Hamburg, Bremen, and Schleswig-Holstein at the State and University Library at Hamburg. As the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, the self-governing corporation of scientific institutions of all descriptions, is interested in the smooth working of the interlibrary loan system for the benefit of research workers, considerable funds have recently been forthcoming from this body for the speeding up of the work on regional union catalogs. It is expected that all union catalogs will be working effectively no later than 1960. From that date the regional union catalogs will not only serve as centers of the interlibrary loan service of their respective regions, but among them will constitute a national system of locating books and of bibliographical information.

The importance of regional union catalogs as now developing in Germany may be seen from the working of the union catalog of North Rhine-Westphalia: all application forms for books not in a local library but requested by a reader from outside are being sent to the regional center at Cologne where they are being looked up in the union catalog. Recently, applications for books and volumes of periodicals are coming in at a daily rate of about 180, about seventy per cent of them being represented by one or more locations. This seems a rather good result since the catalog lists only about 1,500,000 titles up to now. It is doubtless due to the fact that, small as the number of libraries actually participating in the scheme may seem—about thirty-six—they are fairly representative of all branches of knowledge, ranging from the three university libraries and the library of the technical university of the land to highly specialized libraries, from theology to mining and metallurgy. Applications for books not located are returned for the local library to decide whether the request is to be forwarded to another region. In two or three years' time these requests will doubtless go around the several regional centers according to a well-devised pattern. Before long a first step in this direction will be taken in that the regional center at Cologne will ask the Frankfurt center of the Hessian union catalog to check those requests against its own titlecards that have been unsuccessfully handled at Cologne, and vice versa.

Mention must yet be made of the *Sammelkatalog* at Frankfurt, now housed in the Municipal and University Library, a union catalog

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of selected libraries in the German-speaking countries of central Europe. It was practically a one man achievement, that of Dr. Berghoeffer, then director of the Rothschild Library. Starting on his self-appointed task in 1891 he was the first to make use, on the grand scale, of printed catalogs for the compilation of a union catalog, a method followed later by Dutch and Swiss librarians. His aim was to get together as many different titles as possible from as many printed catalogs as possible of libraries specializing in some field or other all over Germany, Austria, and German-speaking Switzerland. Later on many libraries sent their accessions lists, printed or multigraphed, for incorporation of their titles in the *Sammelkatalog*, that in 1939 contained several million titles. Though lacking the bibliographical precision of the *Berlin Gesamtkatalog* it in a way supplemented it as an instrument for guiding interlibrary loans especially in the southern part of Germany. While its value has been diminished by the destruction, whole or partial, of many libraries that are represented as the only locations on many of its cards, the sheer mass of titles brought together will nevertheless yield good results in many cases of inquiries. The *Sammelkatalog* will continue to fulfill its supplementary function, in the future along with the system of regional union catalogs of the *Länder*.

When the inflationary period after World War II came to an end in midsummer 1948 and foreign books again became available, the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*, anxious to secure at least one copy of every foreign book of some importance for professors and research workers, initiated through its committee on library matters (*Bibliotheksausschuss* which consisted of four professors and eight librarians), a scheme of subject specialization in the field of foreign publications since 1939. About ninety subjects (*Sondersammelgebiete*) were allocated to some thirty-six university libraries, libraries of technical universities (*Technische Hochschulen*) and some special libraries. The *Forschungsgemeinschaft* subsidized the purchase of foreign books and periodicals in the allocated subjects on these conditions: (1) that the book purchasing funds of the libraries allocated a special subject may not be lessened in view of the subsidies, and (2) that books and periodicals acquired in this way are liable to be lent to other libraries for the use of research workers. After initial difficulties the system of cooperative book purchasing under the guidance of a central agency is working well. The grants of the *Forschungsgemeinschaft* are generous. Together with its own funds each library participating in the

scheme is able to purchase all foreign books of a scholarly standard in its special field. In this way the thirty-six libraries represent a really universal library of modern scientific literature accessible through the interlibrary loan service to any research worker anywhere.

The same applies to foreign periodicals. About 7,000 periodicals, other than the standard ones in both the humanities and the sciences, are subscribed to by the Forschungsgemeinschaft and distributed to the libraries responsible for the Sondersammelgebiete. They have been chosen from a far greater number by a subcommittee of the Bibliotheksausschuss assisted by specialists in the various fields of research and, of course, are supplemented from time to time by new titles. An index of these periodicals, giving titles only but no locations, has just been published as V.A.Z. (*Verzeichnis ausländischer Zeitschriften*, 1957). The foreign standard periodicals in the humanities and in the sciences, so far as fundamental research is concerned, are assumed to be currently received by each university library on its own financial responsibility, and the more technical periodicals in the field of science and technology by the libraries of the technical universities. In some interlibrary loan regions these libraries have made arrangements to see that, within their region, about 1,800 foreign standard periodicals are subscribed to regularly, most of them of course by more than one library.

One condition the Forschungsgemeinschaft attached to its subsidies was that all books and periodicals should be accessible to all German research workers. In 1949, when the Forschungsgemeinschaft began its work, union cataloging had only been started in one or two Länder. To know exactly where the foreign books so much sought after were to be had would be welcomed by research workers and librarians. Moreover to know what books had been acquired by other libraries and especially by those responsible for a Sondersammelgebiet would help librarians in their choice of foreign books. Both these viewpoints led to the publication of the union catalog of foreign books (*Zentralkatalog der ausländischen Literatur*) in 1951. It is formally attached to the regional union catalog of North Rhine-Westphalia, but financially dependent on the subscriptions of about 120 libraries. In monthly numbers the recent acquisitions since 1950 of about eighty libraries sending duplicates of their catalog entries to Cologne are registered according to subjects. Well over 20,000 titles are brought to the knowledge of librarians and students every year. The annual alphabetical index giving all additional locations assembled during the year

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has proved an efficient instrument for all lending departments. Besides, about 100,000 titles of foreign books published between 1939 and 1949 acquired by German libraries have been indexed in two alphabetical series between 1951 and 1955.

Whether the Zentralkatalog der ausländischen Literatur will still be necessary when the system of regional union catalogs is working efficiently must remain a matter for future deliberations.

As regards foreign periodicals since 1939, a union list is being compiled at the Westdeutsche Bibliothek at Marburg. Many hundreds of libraries including academic, institutional, and industrial are cooperating. A provisional list was multigraphed two years ago and has already proved indispensable for the daily work in German libraries. The final edition comprising about 35,000 entries is due for publication in 1958. The editorial office at Marburg will become a permanent one for collecting additional titles and locations and for preparing supplementary editions.

In East Germany the tradition of the Berlin State Library is continued by the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek as it is now called. For several years, monthly lists of new acquisitions of the scholarly libraries of the DDR (German Democratic Republic) have been published in two series: science and technology on the one hand, and social sciences on the other. Cumulative yearly volumes are part of the scheme but only the 1954 volume has appeared to date. Regional union catalogs are in progress and the one for the region of Sachsen-Anhalt, with its center at Halle, is advancing rapidly. A union list of foreign periodicals on the same plan as the Marburg list is in progress for publication.

Borrowing and lending of books between the libraries of the two parts of Germany is on a large scale.

Switzerland. Cooperation is most intense in this small country with a population of over four million, and almost 400 libraries, large, small, and very small. If you can visit most of your colleagues with only a few hours' journey and if you are likely to meet most of them at the annual congress of your professional association, the cooperative spirit is apt to be kept alive. It certainly is alive among the Swiss librarians. Considering that with the exception of the Swiss National Library (Schweizerische Landesbibliothek) there is no central federal authority in matters of library policy—any more than in other field of educational activity—and that conditions in the various cantons differ markedly from one another, what Swiss librarians, mostly through the agency of their professional association (Vereinigung Schweizerischer

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Bibliothekare), have achieved in the field of interlibrary loan and union catalog must be estimated very highly.

A characteristic trait is the participation of numerous non-public libraries in cooperative library activities: libraries of learned societies and clubs, ecclesiastical libraries, libraries of industrial firms, and even private individuals. All these book resources are available through the inter-urban loan service (*Interurbaner Leihverkehr*), for which a standard application form has been introduced.

But where does one apply for a book not on the shelves of one's own library? No difficulty arises in the case of modern Swiss publications and books dealing with Switzerland. They are sure to be found in the *Schweizerische Landesbibliothek* at Bern that was founded in 1895. As for foreign books and Swiss books to the end of the nineteenth century, a union catalog has been built up in connection with the *Landesbibliothek*. Work on the Swiss union catalog (*Schweizerischer Gesamtkatalog*) was begun in 1928. The method followed at first was that of cutting titles from printed catalogs and accessions lists and having them pasted on catalog cards. As many Swiss libraries already had had their catalogs printed work started at a good pace. Of course, all libraries cooperating in the scheme pledged themselves to send title copies of their current acquisitions of foreign publications. By 1939, 180 libraries were cooperating and about a million and a half catalog cards had been assembled. Since then, besides taking in an increasing number of new titles from an increasing number of libraries, the main task has been to cover those titles in the various libraries that had been cataloged after the publication of a printed catalog, but before cooperation with the union catalog had begun. Today the union catalog contains well over 2,000,000 titles representing the contents, wholly or partly, of about 350 libraries. Applications are received at a daily rate of about 125, two-thirds of which are dealt with successfully. Only sixty per cent of the applications by post come from libraries, forty per cent being inquiries by private persons.

There are two important lacunae to fill before the Swiss union catalog can be called a truly national union catalog, i.e., to incorporate the titles of all books acquired before 1928 by two very important libraries, the university libraries at Basel and Bern. There were no printed catalogs to cull from and no funds available for transcribing titles. Perhaps the filming process will ease the problem of incorporating those titles that would enhance the usefulness of the union catalog considerably.

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The catalog, after much thinking and many experiments, has been split up into a number of alphabetical series comprising authors, and anonymous titles containing a personal name (*Personenreihe*), plain anonymous titles, anonymous titles containing a geographical name as a convenient catchword, oriental books, and periodicals. The last named series is especially valuable as a means of locating single volumes of the vast number of foreign periodicals strewn over hundreds of libraries. It is being constantly kept up to date. It has furnished the basic material for the compilation of the *Verzeichnis ausländischer Zeitschriften in schweizerischen Bibliotheken* (*Répertoire des périodiques étrangers secus par les bibliothèques suisses*, 4th ed., 1955), though double the number of libraries have collaborated to achieve this well known and much used union list of periodicals containing about 35,000 titles.

Netherlands. As in Germany there is a long tradition of liberal lending of books both among libraries and to private persons outside the local library. Up to the beginning of this century locating books was to a certain extent, if not easy, at any rate possible by looking up the printed catalogs that, as in Switzerland, many libraries had been able to publish. But very important libraries, like Leyden University Library, had never had their catalog printed, and the great advantage for the quick locating of books by assembling the titles of many libraries into one single alphabet had been demonstrated by the efficient working of the Berlin Gesamtkatalog.

Plans for a union catalog supplementing the catalog of the Royal Library at the Hague had been made by the director of the Royal Library as early as 1919. Actual work on the catalog, known as the *Centrale Catalogus* (C.C.), was begun in 1922. If Leyden University Library had no printed catalog in book form, it had been among the first libraries to make use of the printing process for its sheaf catalogs. Entries were printed on sheets, cut and mounted on slips. Fortunately, spare sheets were available for the union catalog to cut, mount, and file. In this way a broad basis was achieved on which to build the whole structure. The titleslips of Utrecht University Library and some other libraries were incorporated in the same way, always discarding duplicates. In the case of printed catalogs two copies had to be procured and handled in the same manner as did Berghoeffler and the Swiss. Other libraries sent transcripts of titles. Including the titles of new acquisitions that are coming in at regular intervals from over fifty libraries, the *Centrale Catalogus* contains today more than

2,000,000 titlecards, thus ranging in the same class as the Swiss union catalog.

Periodicals are listed in a union catalog of their own, the *Centrale Catalogus van Periodieken* (C.C.P.), containing about 100,000 slips. The number of libraries contributing to this union list is about 180, a good many industrial and commercial libraries among them, that do not, as a rule, cooperate with the *Centrale Catalogus* of books at the Hague but instead with the *Central Technical Catalog* of books at the University of Technology at Delft, a specialized union catalog containing about 170,000 titles of technical books contributed by sixty-five special libraries.

Postal applications sent to the Royal Library amount to about 300 daily. They are checked first against the alphabetical catalog of the library, only those titles not to be found there are looked up in C.C. and C.C.P. On the average eighty per cent of the applications are dealt with successfully. In these cases the forms get the symbols of the libraries stamped on and are sent around to those indicated on the titlecard.

France. Although in France loans between university libraries were introduced as early as 1886, for a long time loans were practically restricted to manuscripts and rare books and duplicates of modern books. As French scholarly activities are centralized to a high degree in Paris with its magnificent research libraries of all kinds and as many professors of the provincial universities are wont to go to Paris for a time to work in those libraries the need of a liberal loan service was not widely felt. But things have gradually changed. In 1953-54 more than 7,000 books were on loan within the system that comprised state and municipal libraries, the university libraries being, of course, its backbone. As a state agency the interlibrary loan service is charged no postage fees, thus enabling the individual reader to get his book free of any expense.

In the field of union catalogs France is a newcomer, but it has made great strides quite recently. The expansion of international research and book production seems to require, as in other countries, quick information on foreign books and periodicals available in the country's libraries. In 1952 a union catalog of foreign books was started on two levels. At the library of each provincial university, as the center of the *région académique*, a record is being kept of all foreign books acquired from that date by all scholarly libraries, academic seminar, and departmental libraries of the region, so that interlibrary loans of

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modern foreign books will, it is hoped, to some degree, be successfully dealt with within the region. A duplicate of every title inserted into the regional union catalog is sent to the Bibliothèque Nationale where the Catalogue collectif des ouvrages étrangers is kept to date as the sum total of the regional catalogs. Thus, if a requested book is not found within a region, the application is forwarded to the Catalogue collectif at the Bibliothèque Nationale, where a copy may be located in another region.

As regards foreign periodicals a union file of current numbers (*Inventaire permanent des périodiques en cours*) was started at the Bibliothèque Nationale in 1953. One thousand seven hundred libraries, national, provincial, municipal, academic, and special, are cooperating in this new venture that has already listed well over 20,000 titles of current foreign periodicals and has proved invaluable for quick information which is needed especially by research workers in the field of science and technology.

There is also in progress the big union list of periodicals, French and foreign, in the libraries of the Paris region and those of the provincial universities up to 1939. A supplement covering the period 1940-53 will follow soon. This list is being multigraphed, thus, besides being a finding list for home use, will become a valuable bibliographical tool even for librarians outside of France.

Italy. Since the beginning of the 1950's the Italian library scene has been gradually becoming dominated by the ambitious scheme of an all-Italian union-catalog (*Catalogo Unico*) that, when completed according to plans, would bring together in one alphabetical catalog the titles of books in about one hundred Italian libraries. A special feature of this vast enterprise is that the books in the cooperating libraries are, for a large part, recataloged in order that the titlecopies may fit into the proposed union catalog of high standard quality. The catalog will be housed in the Biblioteca Nazionale at Rome, a supervised copy of its alphabetical catalog forming the basis of the whole. A beginning has been made with the books in eight Roman state libraries, i.e., the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Casanatense, Angelica, Alessandrina, Vallicelliana, Biblioteca Medica, Biblioteca di Storia Moderna, and Biblioteca di Archeologie e Storia dell' Arte. Modern technical appliances will be used to get through the immense task. Punched cards and selection machines will facilitate many operations, e.g., inserting large quantities of cards in the right order into the ever-expanding basic alphabet. The system

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adopted, though independently, is that used by the Library of Congress for compiling the *Union List of Serials* and its supplements.

If a catalog on cards of the international size is the ultimate form aimed at, as an intermediary stage the union catalog of the above named Roman libraries (Catalogo Collettivo Romano) is being edited on sheets each containing twelve titles corresponding to the card size. Letters A and B have already been completed in this way. This nucleus of the national union catalog will be useful to bibliographers and especially to the Italian librarians working through their own title material for inclusion in the Catalogo Unico. One of the already visible results of the enthusiasm aroused among our Italian colleagues by the idea of the Catalogo Unico is the energy bestowed upon improving the catalogs of the individual libraries. At the big national libraries at Florence, Milan, and Naples hundreds of thousands of books have already been recataloged—a valuable contribution to the union catalog.

If at some future date all titles contained in about one hundred Italian libraries will be represented in a union catalog on cards in a near-print form that have been produced in a central office, why not centralize alphabetical cataloging of the new acquisitions of the co-operating libraries? Work on the Catalogo Unico has led to the prospect of printed titlecards of Italian publications edited and distributed by the Biblioteca Nazionale at Florence and of foreign publications by the Biblioteca Nazionale at Rome, thus saving time and staff work in many libraries.