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Digital Germany: Virtual Archives, Powerful Portals, Wise Wikis

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Digital Germany: Virtual
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Winter 2006–07
Number 8

Global Resources

A newsletter of the Global Resources Network
an initiative of



The Center
for Research
Libraries

AAU The Association
of American
Universities



The Association
of Research
Libraries

Director's Message

In October 2006, the German–North American Resources Partnership (GNARP) and the University of Frankfurt Library hosted a two-day conference at the sixth Scientific Symposium in Frankfurt. It was my pleasure to be invited to the symposium to highlight the many successful aspects of the Global Resources Network (GRN). This issue features a variety of reports, summaries, and case studies that came out of the conference.

The symposium sessions centered on two important facets of GRN projects: **partnerships** and **technology**. The Global Resources Network was built on the premise that new technologies can increase and enhance our ability to connect with resources in far-flung places. GRN projects were designed to exploit technologically informed, cost-effective systems to aggregate, integrate, and deliver international information. Under GRN guidance, projects such as GNARP, the Digital South Asia Library, and the Latin Americanist Research Resources Project have pushed the bounds of traditional library collecting through innovative efforts and advanced solutions to the challenges facing research institutions today.

However, the technology underpinning the projects is only one piece of a more complex framework. The Global Resources Network has relied, first and foremost, on linkages among individuals and institutions to build collections and facilitate access. Partnerships among participants in the Global Resources Network and its projects are the sine qua non of the initiative. The “Network” component of the GRN relies on clusters of institutions committed to the same principles and common interests to build, share, and provide access to global resources.

The ongoing challenge of the Global Resources Network is to promote further collaborative connections among the partners, and to facilitate the kinds of cross-regional cooperation that scholars increasingly demand. In this manner, a German institution building a virtual library of economics or human rights resources can rely on the trusted links of the Global Resources Network to communicate and work with colleagues in the United States, Latin America, or South Asia.

The 2006 GNARP symposium and the continuing work of the contact partnerships GNARP supports are marvelous examples of the extensive relationships the Global Resources Network has fostered. Current and prospective efforts of the GRN will seek to capitalize on these linkages to fulfill the vision and promise of the network.

—James Simon

Director, Global Resources Network



Map from *Royal Atlas*, 1861, courtesy David Rumsey maps at www.davidrumsey.org.

Message from the Chair

The GNARP conference in Frankfurt gave me occasion to consult with the German firms Brockhaus-Duden Neue Medien (BDNM) and [Semantics Kommunikationsmanagement](#) about their databases and our concerns with them, their future plans, and our opportunities for collaboration. There have at times been little mysteries about why communication with our overseas partners was not working, but an occasional face-to-face encounter works wonders for smoothing over these problems.

BDNM is a wholly owned subsidiary of [Bibliographisches Institut & F. A. Brockhaus AG](#) (Leipzig), the union of F. A. Brockhaus booksellers and the publishing houses Brockhaus, Duden, Meyers, Harenberg, and Weingarten. BDNM is the purveyor of the *xipolis* suite of reference e-books to which many GNARP libraries subscribe. The database currently contains more than fifty dictionaries and encyclopedias, including seven of Duden's language dictionaries, Brockhaus's fifteen-volume encyclopedia, and a much larger number of subject encyclopedias from Brockhaus. Our conversation with Brockhaus at the Frankfurt Book Fair sadly confirmed that Kindler's literary encyclopedia, which had attracted many of us to this database, will be unavailable for the foreseeable future. More promising, the company is now testing a new interface for *xipolis* that will enable subscribers to access user statistics and tailor their selection of resources. BDNM recently rolled out the online version of its thirty-volume encyclopedia, and we are engaged in a limited free trial of this database.

Semantics is a software and database management firm based in Aachen, and I had the opportunity to visit the company and spent several hours there. I was impressed by their staff, and their attentiveness to the needs of researchers and to the ways German and American library systems operate differently. Semantics provides hosting for [Jiddische Drucke](#) and [Compact Memory](#), two online collections in Jewish studies noted by Dick Hacken in this issue. GNARP's primary connection with Semantics came through our licensing of the database for [Bibliographie der Deutschen Sprach- und Literaturwissenschaft \(BDSL\)](#), the premier index for German literary studies compiled in the [University of Frankfurt Library](#), published in print by [Klostermann](#), and placed online by Semantics. Today twenty-eight GNARP libraries subscribe to BDSL, which during the past year added links to external full-text resources via Open URL for books and journals and to the [German Wikipedia](#) for persons, works, and subjects. The collaboration of the Frankfurt library, Semantics, and GNARP has now been emulated with a new online version of the [Bibliography of Linguistic Literature \(BLL\)](#), a database with international coverage of general linguistics, English, Romance languages, German, and other languages. Eighteen member libraries are now participating in the free trial of BLL.

Our collaboration with the [DigiZeitschriften](#) project took another step forward in recent months with the addition of more journals, an English help page, and full-text searching. The database now contains 111 distinct journal titles, 57 of them with open access. New additions include mathematics journals as well as titles from Germany's neighboring countries. Since the DigiZeitschriften's search feature is open access, users can explore it even without a subscription, though access to fee-based journals is restricted to the nineteen institutional subscribers in North America. The full-text search engine is still in development and does not yet include all the journals, but it has been made available to users. Work on Open URL for the database is proceeding.

Our conference and consultations not only enhanced mutual understanding with our German partners but strengthened our resolve to do more to enhance our visibility in Germany. Two additional steps in this direction in the coming months are the translation into German of several parts of the [GNARP home page](#) and the purchase of the German internet address www.gnarp.de.

During the coming months we will be working on a revision of the [GNARP bylaws](#), which we hope will provide more opportunities to enhance our German partnerships. We created the bylaws in 2002 and since then, much has changed in our leadership, affiliations, and in the library environment in which we work.

—Jim Niessen, Rutgers University
Chair, German–North American Resources Partnership



Campus Westend at the Universität Frankfurt am Main, where the symposium was held in October 2006.

The World According to GNARP

James Simon

Director of International Resources, Center for Research Libraries

To explore opportunities for library partnerships and collaboration, the German–North American Resources Partnership (GNARP) and the Universitätsbibliothek Johann Christian Senckenberg of the University of Frankfurt sponsored the sixth Scientific Symposium Frankfurt. Concurrent with the Frankfurt Book Fair, [The World According to GNARP: Prospects for Transatlantic Library Partnership in the Digital Age](#) brought together nearly seventy participants from the United States and Germany.

Relations between U.S. research libraries and their German counterparts got a big boost in October 1998, when a group of fifteen American librarians visited the Frankfurt Book Fair, in part to experience the biggest book-related event of the world, but also to meet with fair officials and explore areas of possible cooperation. Michael P. Olson, then of Harvard University and now head of collections at Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts, arranged for a reception to be hosted by the director of the fair Peter Weidhaas. The U.S. delegation was hospitably received by Dr. Andreas Werner of the University of Frankfurt, who, with Ronald Weber, was then manager of the fair's International Booksellers' and Librarians' Centre (IBLC). Dr. Werner offered to sponsor a free booth in the IBLC for American research institutions and invited the librarians to present papers to German colleagues on topics of mutual interest.

The next big boost came in 1999. At the booth for American academic librarians at Frankfurt, one of the very first visitors was the then-current U.S. Ambassador to Germany, John Kornblum. Ambassador Kornblum recognized how important exchanges between German and American university libraries could be for improving the information resources available in each country about the other. He ultimately offered the support of the U.S. Embassy for sponsoring meetings between U.S. and German academic librarians. To this day the U.S. Embassy has supported the Frankfurt Scientific Symposium, chiefly by helping fund travel by Americans panelists and speakers.

This year's event was the first time the Global Resources Network, based at the Center for Research Libraries in Chicago, had partnered with the University Library of Frankfurt in the planning and execution of the Scientific Symposium. The conference sessions were designed to explore the wealth of archival, print, and digital resources available to students and researchers in Germany and the United States in five selected subject areas: North American Studies, German Studies, Judaica, Africana, and South Asia/India. Sessions highlighted both existing avenues and obstacles for transatlantic resource sharing along with future prospects.

GNARP is uniquely suited to take on the broad multidisciplinary scope of the conference, since the project does not necessarily focus on improving resources for German studies at North American universities. Instead, GNARP seeks partnerships with German academic libraries to improve access and exchange of resources in *all* subject areas of the humanities and social sciences.

The contact partnerships developed by GNARP were initiated at the March 1999 meeting of GNARP's Collection Development Working Group held in Göttingen. The partnerships were developed to promote an efficient exchange of information relating to comparable collections in Germany and North America. The initial range of subject areas, principally in the humanities and social sciences, are based upon the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) [Special Subject Collection Areas Plan](#), and adapted to reflect North American collections and practices. From this subject list, the group identified appropriate potential partners in the United States and in Germany, selecting from the German *Sondersammelgebietbibliotheken* (institutions formally designated as the primary collector of specific subject areas).

The contact partnerships were formed to facilitate collaboration among institutions, but

continued

formal activities were not prescribed. Among the envisioned areas of cooperation the GNARP/SSG partnerships were:

- ❖ identification of collections in the other country in the various subject areas
- ❖ exchange of bibliographic information (e.g., current acquisitions lists, collection development profiles and statements, reviews of print and digital products, etc.)
- ❖ identification of library services provided to visiting scholars
- ❖ identification of potential partners for transatlantic resource-sharing projects (e.g., cooperative digitization projects or the cooperative purchasing of electronic resources)
- ❖ exchange of acquisitions information (e.g., library-publisher relations and experiences with library vendors)
- ❖ identification of funding sources to support joint projects
- ❖ facilitating and directing various exchange programs for monographs as well as serials
- ❖ directing specific reference questions to appropriate partner institutions.

With this context in mind, the GNARP/Frankfurt symposium sought to revisit the partnerships to assess how the landscape has changed, whether successful cooperative projects have surfaced, and how GNARP might better bridge the Atlantic divide and find ways to encourage cooperative activities among its members.

In addition to the subject-based presentations, other topics contributed to the overall discussion. These included overviews of existing and planned electronic journal archives in Germany and the United States (highlighting JSTOR, ProQuest Periodicals Archive Online, and DigiZeitschriften), print and digital repositories, and a special panel on "comparative cataloging cultures" on both sides of the Atlantic. The conference program and presentations can be found through [Frankfurt's symposium page](#).

The symposium was cosponsored by GNARP and the University of Frankfurt Library, with the generous additional assistance of Chadwyck-Healey/ProQuest, Otto Harrassowitz, Thomson Scientific, U.S. Embassy in Berlin, Karger Libri, OCLC, Ovid, Swets and the Buchhandlung Bärsch, Frankfurt. ❖

This article and opening remarks at the symposium were prepared with the assistance of Jeffrey Garrett (Northwestern University).

The Frankfurt Book Fair's Guest of Honor in 2006, India, had a special exhibit space in a tent on the plaza.





Christiane Schaper, head of Frankfurt's Humanities Library, delivering the host institution's welcome at the opening of the GNARP conference.

The Host's Perspective

Dr. Volker Michel

University of Frankfurt Library

Over the last seven years, representatives of more than forty North American and German libraries have met at various locations in Germany and the United States to participate in a transatlantic dialog known as GNARP: the German–North American Resources Partnership. The Johann Christian Senckenberg University Library in Frankfurt is among the most important GNARP partner libraries, which explains why we seized the opportunity in 2006 to hold the annual research symposium of our university library under the GNARP umbrella. A clever play on words spawned the title of the meeting: “The World According to GNARP,” making playful reference to John Irving’s wondrous novel and to its eponymous hero, Garp. And yet the humorous conference title did not at all stand in the way of serious exchange at this jointly organized and moderated transatlantic encounter.

In Germany, we have a national and yet decentralized system of core libraries with specific collection strengths known as *Sondersammelgebiete* (special collection areas, or SSG). Each SSG library assumes supraregional responsibilities for its subject area. Within this national infrastructure, Frankfurt University Library is responsible for Sub-Saharan Africa, German Language and Literature, and Israel/Jewish Studies, among other disciplines. In planning the GNARP conference, it seemed clear that we should first enlist the bibliographers and project staff responsible for these subject areas to serve as our presenters. We then paired them with corresponding American experts, and together they reported on their respective local and national strengths, weaknesses, and peculiarities. Speakers summarized the history of each collection area at their library, often from the very beginning centuries ago, relating size and composition of current collections, describing projects, confessing deficits, and considering prospects for possible transatlantic collaboration.

In his remarks, Hartmut Bergenthum, Librarian for Africa South of the Sahara at University of Frankfurt Library, reported on the successful digitization of the Colonial Picture Archive, a database of photographs from former German foreign territories. His American counterpart, David Easterbrook (Herskovits Library of African Studies, Northwestern University), was amazed to discover that a number of Frankfurt images were also part of the Winterton Collection digital archive he curates. Rachel Heuberger talked about Germany’s largest Judaica Collection, which she curates in Frankfurt, while her colleague from the United States, Elizabeth Vernon (Harvard College Library, Judaica Division), dazzled and amused the audience describing Harvard’s near obsessive acquisitions program, which does not spurn ephemera in the slightest, and in fact engages the services of agents in Jerusalem to collect banners left over from demonstrations.

Virtuelle Fachbibliotheken (Virtual Disciplinary Libraries) was an entirely new concept for the librarians from the other side of the ocean. These are discipline-specific Internet portals that enable discovery of and also access to both traditional and digital resources. Internet resources are valuable and selective, from Web sites to specific research existing only in digital form. Three speakers representing SSG-libraries presented their respective collections and digital portals: Nicole Merkel (University of Heidelberg Library) for South Asia, Jens Mittelbach (State and University Library of Göttingen) for English and American Studies, and Volker Michel (University of Frankfurt Library) for German Literature.

With the extension of the mandate research libraries now have to give full attention to electronic materials, the problem of guaranteeing access to digital resources over time becomes acute. Only in this way can research verifiability—the basis of the scientific enterprise—be preserved. Efforts to achieve this goal are underway on both sides of the Atlantic. James Simon (Center for Research Libraries, Chicago), Stephanie Krueger (JSTOR, New York), and Michael Seadle (Humboldt University, Berlin) reported for the American side on a number of digital archiving projects, among them LOCKSS, Portico, and the Internet Archive. Berndt Dugall, host and initiator of the Frankfurt Scientific Symposium, recapitulated the state of digital repository

continued

development in Germany, specifically reporting on kopal, Dini, and Nestor, as well as actual production services of German libraries and research agencies, all of them highly relevant in the context of long-term archiving.

An appropriate introduction to the conference was offered by Professor Ludwig Eichinger, director of the Institute for German Language in Mannheim, who spoke on the future of German as a language of the sciences. Professor Eichinger appealed for “meaningful polylingualism” in a media world which would be impoverished by reliance on a single language. ❖

This article originally appeared in the UniReport, vol. 39 (November 14, 2006), Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität, Frankfurt am Main, p. 14. Translated by Jeffrey Garrett.



South Asianists Avinash Maheshwary of Duke University and Nicole Merkel of the South Asia Institute at the University of Heidelberg, in conversation before presenting their panel.



Cover of a recent issue of *Der Spiegel* (October 2, 2006): “Rescue German! The Decline of [the German] Language.”

Ludwig Eichinger on the Future of German as a Language of the Sciences

Jeffrey Garrett

Northwestern University

The signs are everywhere. In 2004, a study of the University of Hannover revealed that of the one hundred currently most popular words in the German language, twenty-three were actually English—in 1980 it had been only one. English and pseudo-English words like *relaxen*, *chatten*, *brainstormen*, and *downloaden* are rapidly displacing their German equivalents—respectively, *sich entspannen*, *plaudern*, *kollektiv nachdenken*, and of course, the never-really-popular *auf eine Festplatte herunterladen*. Books on the gradual (or rapid?) decline of the German language, such as Bastian Sick’s *Der Dativ ist dem Genitiv sein Tod* (2004) have sold millions of copies. In the sciences, the use of German is in full retreat. German science publishers such as de Gruyter and Springer now publish increasingly in English, but remarkably so do prominent art publishers such as Taschen and Prestel. The cover story of a recent *Der Spiegel* was titled “Rettet dem Deutsch!” It claimed that in the world as a whole, 90 percent of all research-level publications are now in English, compared to only 1 percent for German. It should therefore come as no surprise that the Technical University in Munich now offers sixteen courses of study in the English language only.

These developments—taken together with the fact that major U.S. research libraries still purchase millions of dollars of books in German each year—led us to invite Professor Ludwig M. Eichinger, director of the Institute for German Language in Mannheim, to present his thoughts on the future of German as a language of the sciences. Professor Eichinger gave the opening speech at the jointly sponsored GNARP–University of Frankfurt conference “The World According to GNARP: Prospects for Transatlantic Library Partnership in the Digital Age.”

Professor Eichinger, who (of course) presented his remarks in German with a mellifluous Bavarian accent, contrasted the importance of English as the new lingua franca of the sciences with the value he claimed for German and other national languages. English today, he asserted, is a *kulturunabhängiges Kommunikationsmittel*, a vehicle of communication independent of any given culture. This is its strength, as it allows scholars to interact effectively regardless of cultural and linguistic origins. The more abstract and “formal” the content of scholarly interaction is, for instance with the use of mathematical formulae, the less it must rely upon one spoken language rather than another. In such cases, English becomes more acceptable as a universal vehicle of exchange.

At the same time, however, the independence of scientific English from individual national and regional cultures is also its greatest weakness. This is true because often, nuanced expression and argument is more effective in national tongues than in international English—often called, humorously, BSE, short for “Bad Simple English.” Use of languages other than English therefore often offers “a means of precision.” The nuances of languages actually spoken, he claimed, also allow for more polite and humorous interaction. The importance of these nuances should not be underestimated in effective interactions, for example at conferences. Expressions in German and other languages—including the many spoken varieties of English—often have a complex allusiveness that can only be absorbed and appreciated by those who master the language and the entire associated cultures. Eichinger offered as an example of this “allusiveness” a very comic passage from Daniel Kehlmann’s recent bestselling novel about Alexander von Humboldt, *Die Vermessung der Welt*, in which Humboldt offers to translate what is perhaps the most beautiful poem in German, Goethe’s “Wanderers Nachtlied” (“Über allen Gipfeln / Ist Ruh . . .”), into Spanish, a translation which, though absolutely accurate, was totally devoid of the beauty and poignancy of the original: “I’m sorry,” Humboldt’s Spanish-speaking interlocutor said after listening to the translation. “But is that *all*?”

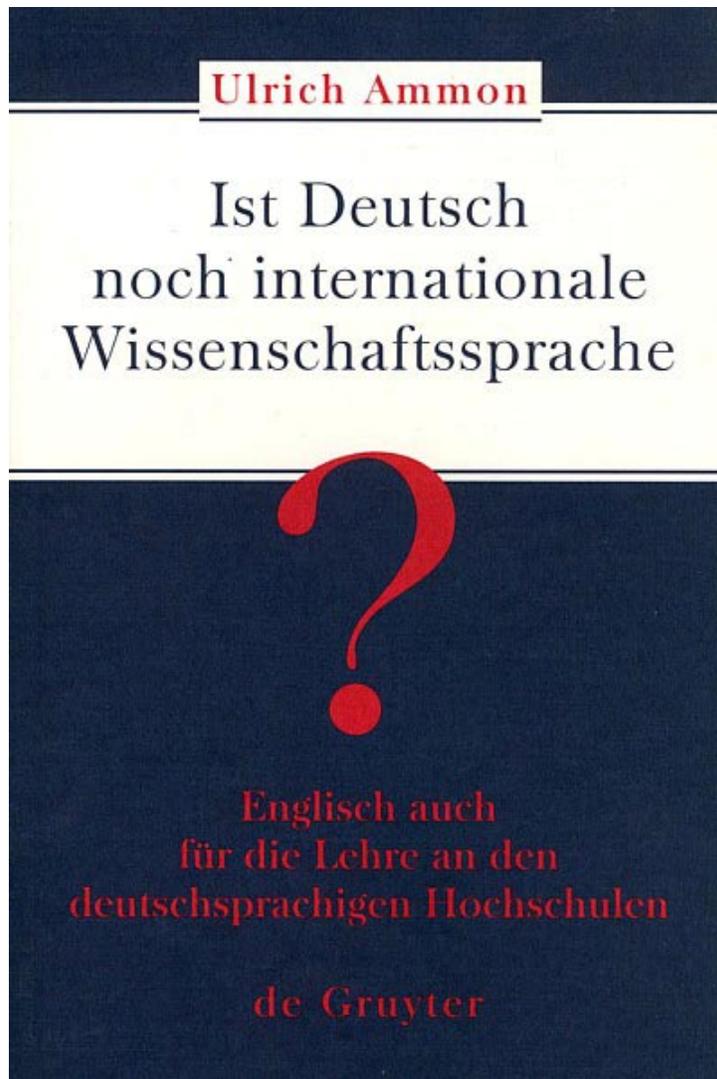
continued



GNARP chair Jim Niessen (Rutgers University), left, in conversation with Ludwig Eichinger of the Institute for German Language at the recent GNARP conference in Frankfurt.

What we therefore need in academic discourse is what Eichinger called “functional plurilingualism,” a mastery of English as the new lingua franca, but also a mastery of at least one other important language, such as German, to perform a bridging function and to open our eyes and minds to many areas of “special knowledge in a regional form.” There is still a host of important original scholarship available only in German—most prominently, of course, in the social sciences and humanities. To close with an observation from *Der Spiegel* on the future of German: “A lecture in English by a German expert on Hegel’s philosophy of history or Goethe’s concept of nature, and that in Berlin or Munich? *Hanebüchen.*”

Outrageous indeed, but not unthinkable. Greater attention on the part of American scholars to trends in German-language scholarship—which presumes, of course, continued ample access to that scholarship in our research libraries—will go far to preventing both the *Verflachung* (superficialization) and the *Verlotterung* (the running down) of scholarly exchange with our German colleagues. ❖



Some of the most serious work being done on the future of German as a language of the sciences is by Ulrich Ammon of the University of Duisburg. His 1998 work, whose title translates in English “Is German Still an International Language of the Sciences?” was [reviewed](#) by John Rutledge (University of North Carolina) in the *WESS Newsletter*, Spring 1999.



Contemporary Print Resource Sharing: The Frankfurt Book Fair's *Fachbuchausstellung*

Jeffrey Garrett
Northwestern University

One of the many sidelights of cooperation that have been generated by the U.S. presence at the Frankfurt Book Fair is a unique exchange agreement that links Northwestern University with the book fair, the University of Frankfurt Library, and the Library and Information Science Library at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign (UIUC).

For several decades the University of Frankfurt Library has been responsible for organizing the *Fachbuchausstellung* at the International Booksellers' and Librarians' Centre (IBLC) of the Frankfurt Book Fair, an exhibit of about 800 recent professional publications in information science, media studies, book publishing, library studies, and other publishing-related fields.. Books are solicited by Frankfurt staff from publishers and professional associations all over the world, including India, Poland, Hungary, Italy, France, Great Britain, the United States, but above all, of course, from Germany, Switzerland, and Austria. Submitted books are displayed for two successive years in the IBLC (recently renamed the International Library Center) and sometimes at other venues, such as the annual meeting of German librarians, the *Bibliothekarstag*. But what happens to them then?

At the fair in 1999, I discussed with Dr. Werner the possibility of packing these books up and sending them to the United States as an extension of the *Fachbuchausstellung's* outreach. Working with other universities, we would catalog these books and make sure they were available for loan to other institutions across North America. This seemed to serve both partners in the proposed relationship, since a sampling exercise showed that about 25–30 percent of the titles on display in Frankfurt were not in OCLC, even three years after publication. In the Library and Information Science (LIS) Library of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, we found a willing, appropriate, and above all capable partner for this project. Former GNARP chair Tom Kilton facilitated the connection to UIUC librarian Susan Searing, and the relationship was sealed.

The first shipment of 800 books was sent by air freight to Evanston in late 1999. Northwestern, which has long had a strong collection in book history and book arts, added about 350 titles to its collection. Another 350 in the area of library and information science were transported to Urbana the following spring. This tripartite relationship has continued and flourished ever since. Most recently, 1,000 books arrived from Frankfurt this past summer. Shipping costs of about \$2,000 were divided between Northwestern and UIUC. Our agreement with Frankfurt is that they should only be responsible for boxing the books: the German transport firm Kühne & Nagel takes care of the rest.

The relationship with Frankfurt was strengthened over the past year by adding an agreement to provide their library with regular shipments of duplicates from Northwestern's Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies. This is especially appropriate since the University of Frankfurt Library is the central collecting point in Germany for African studies resources, and also since Northwestern and Frankfurt intend to cooperate closely in the area of African studies in the future, in part by linking their online Africa-related photograph archives.

The collaboration with the *Fachbuchausstellung* books shows that the area of print resource sharing is by no means passé in German-American research library relations. Kathleen Kern of Illinois' LIS Library explains the value of the Frankfurt books this way: "It is difficult for the budget of the LIS Library to keep pace with the growth of publications not only in information science and digital information, but also in the areas of archives and preservation, library history, and information literacy, even within the U.S. market. The books from the Frankfurt Book Fair keep our collection from becoming insular by providing our researchers and students with materials from Europe. We are one of a small handful of U.S. libraries that own the European titles that we receive in this way." Through interlibrary loan, these resources are available to students and researchers all across North America. ❖

Books from the Frankfurt
Fachbuchausstellung awaiting
processing in Evanston,
November 2006.



Humboldt Becomes an iSchool

Michael Seadle
Humboldt University

Humboldt University in Berlin has long had the only institute in Germany where a student could receive a Ph.D. in library science. Most library education in Germany takes place at Fachhochschulen, which are essentially technical colleges that offer very focused practical training with little theory. Humboldt was the exception. When the last keystone professor Engelbert Plassmann retired, the university considered closing the institute.

A number of experts in Germany and the United States argued that the institute should be kept and refounded with a stronger and more modern research base. Among those involved in this effort were participants in the German–North American Resources Partnership, including Tom Kilton from the University of Illinois and Elmar Mittler from Göttingen. The group also solicited recommendations from C. Olivia Frost (University of Michigan), and me (Michigan State University). We both recommended refounding the school on the model of the School of Information at the University of Michigan. In the end the commission recommended this plan and Humboldt began searching for a new professor to fill the role. I was asked to apply, and was selected.

The goal of the institute over the next five years is to establish itself as a significant leader in the digital library and electronic publishing areas. Electronic publishing is the research area of Dr. Peter Schirnbacher, Humboldt's chief information officer, who became a member of the Institute's faculty in early 2006. Schirnbacher has significant grant money from the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (German Research Society) and is co-chair of DINI (Deutsche Initiative für Netzwerkinformation), the German equivalent to the Coalition for Networked Information.

Digital libraries are my research area. Over the years I have concentrated on how they are constructed, how the metadata is built and used, and how copyright laws affect their use. I have also started to look at how digital libraries should be evaluated using anthropological as well as more traditional human-computer interaction techniques. The builders of digital libraries belong to distinct microcultures that may not understand and anticipate the information needs of the various groups that use their systems. Examining the language, expectations, and preconceptions of all the communities involved with a digital library can show its gaps as well as its strengths, neither of which may be obvious within a particular microculture. Another project I developed uses Open Archives Initiative Protocol Metadata Harvesting to retrieve deep-web materials and to test tagging and recommender systems.

In addition to electronic publishing and digital libraries, the institute has other significant research strengths. Konrad Umlauf is a noted and widely published authority on public libraries. The institute also has a strong mathematics group, including Michael Heinz and Frank Havemann, that publishes regularly on citation analysis and bibliometrics.

The students are one of the institute's best assets. They played an integral role in persuading the university to keep and strengthen the institute. They have an active student organization that manages training and support programs. They have started and maintained a journal, and they take part in representing the institute at conferences. Their English is also generally remarkably good.

The institute has the only German-language distance education program for a master's degree in Library Science. The program is unusual in requiring students to pay what passes in Germany for high tuition, and the program has a waiting list for entry. Part of its key to success has been contracts with a number of states, particularly in the north of Germany, though students come from all over the world, including (at the moment) Alaska. Like the program at the University of Illinois, our program requires students to come to the institute periodically to meet each other and the faculty.

Future plans for the institute include active collaboration with iSchool programs in the United States, Europe, and elsewhere. The institute has its own videoconferencing capabilities,

Institut für Bibliotheks-und
Informationswissenschaft,
Humboldt-Universität zu
Berlin.

continued

and the university has additional facilities that the institute can use. We are planning for a variety of student-to-student projects as well as possible team-taught courses. Humboldt will host one of the mirror sites for the Internet Public Library (IPL), and students will very likely take part in providing services for IPL patrons.

Plans for research will include cross-institute collaborations that support the Excellence Initiative of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft as well as the university's own goals for reclaiming its reputation as a major producer of internationally acclaimed research. As Humboldt's president said at a recent convocation, research universities in the United States modeled their institutional structure after the one Humboldt established in the nineteenth century. The university still has a long way to go to catch up after the long years of neglect before the wall came down, but it is exciting to be part of an institution that has set its aims high. ❖

Upcoming GNARP meetings at ALA Midwinter in Seattle:		
GNARP Steering Committee	Fri. 1/19	4:30–6:30 PM
GNARP Digital Libraries Working Group	Sat. 1/20	8–10 AM
GNARP Bibliographic Control Working Group	Sat. 1/20	1:30–3:30 PM
GNARP Collection Development Working Group	Sun. 1/21	1:30–3:30 PM

For further information on these meetings, please contact Judy Eckoff at CRL: 773-955-4545 ext. 323 or eckoff@crl.edu.



Dr. Jens Mittelbach reports on digital access to English and American Studies in Germany.

Digital Germany: Virtual Archives, Powerful Portals, Wise Wikis

*Richard Hacken
Brigham Young University*

Shakespeare, writing from a decidedly pre-online disposition, never thought to opine “What fools these portals be,” though his view on mortals is clear. Online portals and digital gateways into focused subject and area studies are both boons and blessings. For German Studies—but even more extensively, for all disciplines relevant to the German–North American Resources Partnership—this past year has seen explosive growth in the preparation, expansion, proofing, and proclamation of virtual libraries, scholarly digital projects, and multidisciplinary portals. German digital scholarship has reached a maturity that calls for the types of systematic registry and centralized access that are vital to researchers from Aachen to Zzyzx.

In Germany, the systematization of digital projects has been a natural outgrowth of the nationally coordinated [Sammelschwerpunkte](#) (areas of collection emphasis) distributed throughout the country. Within [fifteen broad classifications](#)—including language and literature, history, law, economics, and earth sciences—various research institutions have been designated to collect intensively for their given specialized disciplines. One natural spin-off of these subject and area study assignments has been the appearance of the Virtuelle Fachbibliothek (virtual subject library) in many areas of study. These finely focused digital libraries can be synoptically discovered and browsed at the German [Vascoda](#) portal. They allow users to find not only print materials, databases, online guides, newsletters and other central tools for the various disciplines, but also digital projects in full-text, sound or image. On this English-language version, simply click on “More Information” under “Subject Gateways.”

The sixth [Scientific Symposium](#), cosponsored by [GNARP](#) and the [Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt am Main](#), provided an opportunity for German librarians to introduce some of the virtual subject libraries within their areas of specialization. Dr. Volker Michel, a prime shaper and mover of [Germanistik im Netz](#) (German Studies on the Web), enumerated and explained facets of this virtual subject library and its pathways to online public access catalogs (OPACs), indexes, book reviews, recent acquisitions, communication opportunities for colleagues, and a host of Internet sources in the fields of German language and literature. Similarly, Nicole Merkel presented features of [Savifa](#), the virtual subject library for South Asia, which she, the [Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg](#), and the [South Asia Institute](#) have caused to flourish in the past two years. Dr. Hartmut Bergenthum gave an overview of digital resources for African Studies, including [Indaba](#), a specialized Internet database coproduced by the [Institute for African Studies](#) in Hamburg and the [Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen](#). Dr. Rachel Heuberger, who is in the midst of plans for a [Virtual Library of Jewish and Hebraic Studies](#), focused on two current databases that offer virtual access to important historical collections of her [Judaica Division](#) at the Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt am Main: [Yiddish Prints](#), with access to hundreds of rare and precious Yiddish and German-Jewish books in facsimile from the sixteenth century onwards, and [Compact Memory](#), with a gateway to more than 100 German-Jewish periodicals from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Finally, Dr. Jens Mittelbach, specialist for English and American Studies at the Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen, turned our collective attention to the [Virtual Library of Anglo-American Culture: Literature](#), which he has recently been crafting. All in all, the symposium presented us with a virtual scholarly feast.

On the North American side of the Atlantic, GNARP members have realized that the [Vascoda portal](#), even when augmented with recent attempts to map digitization projects for [German printed matter](#) (still relatively empty in a number of disciplines) and for [pre-1800 imprints](#) (with decentralized results), does not fully satisfy the needs of North American scholars. One reason for this is that the named portals ignore Switzerland and Austria, along with online German studies gateways from North America. Another problem is the dearth

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of links to digitized manuscripts and other nonprint materials. As a result, an [Inventory of Digital Projects](#) has been developed in cooperation between GNARP and the [Western European Studies Section](#) of ACRL (WESS). This inventory, mirroring the fifteen classifications suggested by [collecting priorities for German libraries](#), adds multidisciplinary area studies, nonprint materials, generic considerations, and North American contributions into the mix. Recently reworked into a wiki format, this portal to digital projects in German studies or from German-speaking countries is available for consultation, but it is also for editing by those in the scholarly library community who may want to add descriptions and links to other useful digital projects. Please feel free to contact the wikimaster (gnarp@byu.edu) for editing access. The project, which can easily be located by typing “gnarp wess inventory” into your favorite search engine, is still very much in the building phase.

The German–North American Resources Partnership is determined to increase and simplify digital access to resources in German studies and from German research institutions. In time, these portals will become indispensable to us mortals. ❖



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