New Aspects and Trends in Interlending in the Federal Republic of Germany

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1. Interlending in West Germany may serve as an example of a decentralised, cooperative library system. In a relatively small geographic area Germany has a large number of towns, with the usual scientific and cultural institutions, including libraries. There are indeed a few national libraries, such as the Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz in West Berlin, the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich and the Technische Informationsbibliothek in Hanover. These and some other large libraries play an important part in interlibrary loans, but they cannot be called the only centres for interlending in Germany. It would be more exact to say that the burden of interlending is shared by more than 500 libraries which have been accepted as interlending libraries by the education ministers of the individual states of the Federal Republic.

The interlending scene in the Federal Republic of Germany has begun to change. Matters of interlibrary loan, in fact, have never been of minor interest to the librarians. Few other library services attract equal attention, and this is mostly of a critical rather than appreciative nature. Anyone who has to deal with interlending matters at all knows of the complaints about difficulties that may arise when a request is made for an item not existing in a local library. This is at least a matter of discussion among librarians. Complaints on the part of the users usually relate to cases when they have to wait an unreasonably long time for the item they requested to be obtained from elsewhere. Moreover, the loan statistics show that in Germany a considerable percentage of loan forms do not return to the user at all, or return after a long time without the request being satisfied. These loan forms, being provided with a large number of official stamps, tell of the diligence of the librarians in lending departments and Union Catalogues. The user, however, is hardly interested in learning that many offices were anxious to fulfil his wishes; he is merely interested in the speedy satisfaction of his loan request.

2. In the fifties interlending in Germany had grown so fast that the few lending libraries that existed could not supply anywhere near all the books that were wanted.
Therefore, the Union Catalogues, which already existed to some extent in the lending regions, were expanded and charged with the control of interlending, according to new interlending rules that are still in force today, although we shall see the introduction of a revised version by the end of this year. At seven different places large catalogues were built up, recording not only the holdings of university libraries, but also those of special and public libraries. These Regional Union Catalogues are located as follows:

Zentralkatalog Baden-Württemberg in Stuttgart,
Bayerischer Zentralkatalog in Munich,
Berliner Gesamtkatalog in West Berlin,
Hessischer Zentralkatalog in Frankfurt-am-Main,
Niedersächsischer Zentralkatalog in Göttingen,
Norddeutscher Zentralkatalog in Hamburg,
Hochschulbibliothekszentrum/Zentralkatalog des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen in Cologne.

By the beginning of 1979, these catalogues contained the locations of 87.6 million volumes from more than 500 libraries in the Federal Republic. The proportion of positive locations in the individual Union Catalogues varies from a bare 50% to just over 70%. Since that time the organisation of interlending in Germany has resulted in a fair distribution of the Union Catalogues. In addition, a number of Specialised Union Catalogues (the so-called "Fachzentralkataloge") are being established. Their listings are not included in any of the Regional Union Catalogues. Users interested in a particular subject area can apply direct to these Specialised Union Catalogues, whilst the Regional Union Catalogues pass on to them specialised requests which they have been unable to fulfil. We are referring here principally to four card catalogues which are being compiled at the Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz in West Berlin:

Osteuropa-Sammelkatalog (OSK, - Eastern Europe Union Catalogue),
Zentralkatalog der Orientalia (Union Catalogue of Oriental Material),
Sammelkatalog Südostasien (South East Asia Union Catalogue),
Zentralkartei der Autographen (Union Index of Autographs).

There are three other Specialised Union Catalogues:

Standortkatalog der deutschen Presse (Locations Catalogue of the German Press), Bremen,
Zentralkatalog der Bundeswehrbibliotheken (Union Catalogue of the Libraries of the Bundeswehr), Düsseldorf,
Gesamtkatalog des wissenschaftlichen Schrifttums für Ostmitteleuropa (GKO, - 
Union Catalogue of Specialist Literature on East Central Europe), Marburg.

All the Union Catalogues are co-ordinated by the Kommission für Zentralkatalog-
fragen (Standing Committee on Union Catalogues) of the Deutsches Bibliotheks-
institut (DBI, - German Library Institute) in West Berlin. The chairmanship of this 
committee is at present held by the Hochschulbibliothekszentrum (Centre for 
University and College Libraries) in Cologne. The committee's task is to ensure the 
effective co-operation of the various Union Catalogues. The aim is to provide, as 
quickly as possible, comprehensive information giving at least one location for each 
of the very large number of book requests received. Unfortunately this aim is only 
partially fulfilled. About 15% of the total number of works cannot be located. 
Furthermore, the tracing of each location takes a significant amount of time, 
particularly when more than one Union Catalogue has to be consulted.

In the meantime, the rapid development of new universities and the general expansion 
of scientific activities have had consequences for the supply of literature. Just as the 
building of new roads in Germany hardly meets the needs of the permanently growing 
volume of traffic, so the new interlending roads constructed at the same time are 
being subjected to excessive pressure by the extremely large increase in loan 
requests. Just as new roads seem to bring new cars, so in the sphere of inter-library 
lending every improvement in resources seems to bring forth a new demand. The loan 
statistics provide clear evidence of this. Whereas at the end of the fifties each Union 
Catalogue handled some ten thousand requests, in 1978 the Union Catalogues had to 
handle more than 2 million requests.

3. The broad pattern of interlending in Germany is further complicated by the existence 
of a considerable number of printed indexes. These fall into three categories:

3.1 National periodicals indexes.

These are compiled in the Staatsbibliothek Preussicher Kulturbesitz. Not all the 
periodicals catalogues in this category have so far been printed in their entirety, 
but it is intended to publish them all with financial help from the Deutsche 
Forschungsgemeinschaft,

Gesamtverzeichnis der ausländischen Zeitschriften und Serien (GAZS, - Union 
list of foreign periodicals and series),

Gesamtverzeichnis der deutschen Zeitschriften und Serien (GDZS, - Union list of 
German periodicals and series),
3.2 The databank.
There exist in West Germany a considerable number of printed reference tools for locating periodicals and series. The result is that about 20% of the total interlending of monographs takes place directly with the holding libraries and bypasses the Union Catalogues completely. In addition most of the Regional Union Catalogues also contain locations for all periodicals and series held by the libraries they cover. There are two reasons for this. Firstly none of the periodicals indexes mentioned is comprehensive. Even the large national lists cover only a selection of the relevant libraries, despite the fact that they aim at more or less complete coverage. The DBI started to install a German databank for journals in collaboration with the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin and some other libraries. This "DABA" is produced as computer output microfiche (COM) and is growing very quickly. DABA not only contains new periodicals but also many earlier titles. The latest edition of January 1979 has locations of 145,000 different entries. There remains one problem with DABA; until now only a proportion of the German libraries have been sending their titles to DABA. On the other hand most of the bigger libraries have a copy of the DABA-COM. So more interlending forms are received by the DABA-libraries than by those other libraries which don't send their titles to DABA. In the Union Catalogues, on the other hand, locations are given for a large number of small and medium-sized libraries and special collections, which tend to be used less heavily for interlibrary loan than the larger libraries. A further reason is that it is easier for many libraries, in view of the large volume of interlending in Germany, to direct all their interlibrary loan requests as systematically as possible to the appropriate Union Catalogue, which then undertakes the rest of the work.

3.3 Regional indexes.
Some of the states in the Federal Republic, such as Lower Saxony, Hesse, Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg, possess periodicals indexes which have already been printed or are being prepared for publication. These indexes are being compiled with the aid of data processing techniques, in collaboration with the Union Catalogues, and with partial assistance from the DBI, formerly the "Arbeitsstelle für Bibliothekstechnik" (ABT). They are used in particular for interlibrary loan requests from the respective states themselves, but can also be employed to a certain extent for requests from other federal states.
One year ago, unfortunately, a project of the DBI and the Union Catalogues came to an end. This was the GK, the "Deutscher Gesamtkatalog" (German Joint Catalogue). The idea was to film all the catalogue cards of the seven Regional Union Catalogues and of some old catalogues of great libraries such as the Bavarian State Library in Munich. After filming, 44 million catalogue cards were to be sorted into a single alphabetical sequence and after further filming they were to be put out on microfiche, which although not COM would be similar in form. The cost of this project was estimated at about 40 million Deutsche Marks. Such a large amount of money could not be found. Now the DFG is discussing the possibility of giving the Union Catalogues separate grants of money to reproduce their catalogue cards on microfiche. They have started with a section of the Hesse Union Catalogue in Frankfurt containing 760,000 entries on 402 microfiches and consisting of literature from 1960-1973. Other regional indexes on microfiche should follow.

The Union Catalogues of Hesse and of Northrhine-Westphalia were started some years ago with the co-operation of the Hochschulbibliothekszentrum (HBZ) in Cologne and the Kommunales Gebietsrechenzentrum (GKRZ) Frankfurt, two ISBN Registers for use within their regions. In the latest version of their COM catalogues the two ISBN Registers contain more than 200,000 locations of new literature produced since 1974 in Hesse and Northrhine-Westphalia.

3.4 Local periodicals indexes.

In a few towns in West Germany, a number of university and college libraries have collaborated with other libraries in the locality to draw up local periodicals indexes. Some of these indexes contain all known locations, and so include periodicals held in institutes which are not normally accessible to the general public. These local lists are used to a limited extent only for external lending purposes. They serve principally to facilitate the supply of literature within the locality, and to assist bibliographical research.

3.5 Data Processing.

It was pointed out above that in some interlending regions there exist or are being compiled pools of records which have been produced by data processing and which are being used for direct requests for literature among the libraries of the region. The HBZ in Cologne is installing a computer catalogue of the acquisitions and holdings of the libraries of five new universities, called "Gesamthochschul-Bibliotheken", the "Fernuniversität" in Hagen, the "Zentralbibliothek der Medizin" in Cologne and two smaller libraries. This combined COM catalogue is used for acquisition and for interlending. A similar computer catalogue was established in Bavaria to facilitate interlending among some libraries there.
Hesse and Lower Saxony similar projects are being started. An attempt is being made to combine these data bases into a unified German Computer Catalogue, the so-called "Verbundkatalog" 1).

3.6 Participation in international networks.

I should also like to mention the installation of some terminals in German libraries in order to make use of international information networks such as DIMDI, etc. These services do not relate specifically to interlending matters but nevertheless have some bearing on them. The use of the terminals is generally very expensive. Therefore the German Federal Administration gives grants to support the use of terminals. In this respect an important role is played by the "Fachinformationszentren" (FIZ), which are new establishments in the Federal Republic of Germany, some of them formed by co-operation or in combination with existing libraries.

4. In addition to what has already been said, I should now like to say a few words about a small number of libraries called "Zentrale Fachbibliotheken" (Central Specialist Libraries) which play an important part in regional and national interlending in their own particular subject. They are:

Technische Informationsbibliothek  
(Library of Technical Information), Hanover

Zentralbibliothek der Wirtschaftswissenschaften  
(Central Library of Economics), Kiel

Zentralbibliothek der Medizin  
(Central Medical Library), Cologne,

Zentralbibliothek der Landbauwissenschaft  
(Central Library for Agricultural Science), Bonn.

These Zentrale Fachbibliotheken collect the literature of their own fields comprehensively, and this includes, in particular, publications which are notoriously difficult to come by, such as conference proceedings, reports, material issued by commercial firms, etc. Whilst general inter-library lending in Germany is done by means of free application forms, special loan forms for these libraries may be purchased and a request made direct to the libraries listed. Heavy use is made of this facility, in particular, by many firms at home and abroad. The monograph and periodicals holdings of these central libraries are, however, listed in full in the appropriate Regional Union Catalogue, so that they are also accessible through the normal interlending channels.
5. Mention must also be made of the so-called "Sondersammlungs-Programm" (Special Subject Collection Programme) of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG). For many years the DGF has been providing university libraries with special funds for the acquisition of foreign literature in particular subject areas. This 'SSG-Programm' covers all the main fields of knowledge, and is modified at regular intervals to match changing conditions in research and teaching. It is organised in a similar way to the American 'Farmington Plan'. The purpose of this program is to ensure - particularly in view of constantly rising book prices - that a copy of every important scholarly work produced abroad is available in at least one generally accessible research library. The SSG holdings are all recorded in the Regional Union Catalogues. It is possible, however, for a library to rely on a knowledge of the SSG plan and to send its request direct to the SSG library specialising in a particular subject area, if it is sure that the work required is not available in its own region. In other cases the Regional Catalogue, when it fails to locate a work, will itself pass on the request to the SSG library.

6. I have waited till now to mention deposit copies, because the law of legal deposit in West Germany has not been particularly effective. The Deutsche Bibliothek in Frankfurt receives a copy of any new publications for its reference collection (but usually not for lending). Apart from this, the individual states have variously framed laws of legal deposit, dating mostly from the early years of the 19th century. One is bound to say that the German law of legal deposit is fragmented, and is really only significant in interlibrary lending when historical literature of a regional or local character is requested. The various copyright libraries are required to report such holdings to the relevant Regional Union Catalogue, although this sometimes takes the form of a short-title entry only.

7. It is clear from what has been said so far that the German library scene is extraordinarily complex when it comes to the provision of literature at regional and national levels. Depending on its knowledge of the possibilities, an individual library may request a book or periodical article which it does not itself possess by way of the appropriate Regional Union Catalogue. The statistics show that this is very often the case. It may also, however - if appropriate - apply to a Specialised Union Catalogue, a Central Specialist Library, one of the big national libraries, an 'SSG library' or a library holding deposit copies. An abundance of possibilities which it is not easy for the outsider to penetrate!

It is hardly surprising that demands have come from librarians for the simplification of the German interlibrary loan system. Such attempts have so far been unsuccessful. For myself I am sceptical about them, since the extent of interlending in Germany and the very varied functions it has to fulfil demand equally varied solutions.
A draft of new interlending rules (the so-called "Leihverkehrsordnung", LVO), compiled in co-operation with union catalogue experts and now nearing completion will introduce modifications to the LVO from 1966\(^4\) which is now in force. This draft\(^5\) is to be issued as an instruction this year in the individual states of the Federal Republic.

One could say that users who complain about the German inter-library lending system are unimportant from a statistical point of view, for every day thousands of loans are speedily processed, whereas only a few cause difficulties. One should, however, start from the fact that behind every request is the just claim of a user.

Leaving aside the isolated cases, we are obliged to state that interlending in the Federal Republic of Germany is altogether slower and more ponderous than, for example, interlibrary lending in Great Britain, where it is centralised by the British Library Lending Division. For the present we have to accept the fact that a comparable central lending institution for Germany cannot be expected. What matters is to make the most intensive and efficient use of the existing resources. From the point of view of the Union Catalogues there is little promise in levelling the richly structured landscape of interlending in the hope of finding an ingenious solution. The experiences of the last thirty years show that with an increasing volume of interlending an integrated network must be created in order to satisfy the demand.


DISCUSSION

Mrs. E. Törnudd: What is the volume of interlibrary lending in the BRD?

Heydrich: More than 2 million per year.

Dr. N. Fjällbrant: What is the speed of the interlibrary lending process?

Heydrich: If there is immediate satisfaction from the first library - the time is about 10 days. If the request has to be passed on to another library, it could take 3 to 4 weeks.

Mr. S. Westberg: Is there a conflict for the university libraries between the needs of their local users and external interlibrary users?

Heydrich: Yes, SSGP (Sonder-Sammel-Gebiets-Programm) has dealt with this.

Westberg: Is the service free of charge?

Heydrich: Yes, it is.

Prof. M. Slajpah: I would like to report that at the Central Technical Library of the Edvard Kardelj University, Ljubljana, we are very pleased with the good interlibrary service given by the Technische Informationsbibliothek, TIB, Hannover. I think that the central specialist libraries are a great benefit for interlibrary lending.

Mr. G.A. Hamel: On page 1 of your paper you say that 500 libraries have been accepted as interlending libraries by the Ministry of Education. What does this mean? Do these libraries receive extra funds for their participation in the system?

Heydrich: These 500 libraries are allowed to borrow, but they must be prepared to lend in order to qualify.

Fjällbrant: What is the satisfaction rate for loans from the first library?

Heydrich: It varies greatly from region to region, from 65% to about 50%.

Mr. M. Hopkins: You said that it would cost about 40 million DM to create the GK. Do you have any idea as to how much money is being spent at the moment on the existing union catalogues?

Heydrich: About 22 to 24 million DM per year.

Mr. F. Boeckx: Have you adopted the new German catalogue rules (RAK) in the different union catalogues?

Heydrich: We discussed this and decided that it would be difficult to change from the PI (Preussische Instruktionen) to RAK without automation of the union catalogues.