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**Oriental Studies at the State and University Library Saxony-Anhalt**

Ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues,

it is a great pleasure for me to give this lecture today in Chicago at the ALA-conference. I visited Chicago and the Newberry Library, the DePaul Library as well as the Public Library a few years ago as a member of a group of German librarians, and I was wondering whether I would have the opportunity to return. Well, as George Frederick Handel, the German or depending on your viewpoint English composer who was born in Halle, where I live and work, once put it: "Strange ways, but glorious ends..." – it has worked out thanks to the efforts of the German Resources Project.

In my paper I will introduce you to our institution – the State and University library Saxony-Anhalt, Halle, which may also be of interest to those of you who are in the business of librarianship, since it owns a now famous systematic catalogue, which was presented at the world exhibition in Chicago in 1893 and even awarded a price.<sup>1</sup> I am not quite sure, if this years' world exhibition, which is taking place in Hannover at the moment, deals with libraries at all. It does deal with information issues, but certainly no longer with systematic catalogues. Meanwhile, the library in Halle is pursuing other challenging projects, one of them being the oriental collections, which will be the focus of this paper and which are hopefully also of interest to you.

The State and university library has to be seen in close context with its parent body, the Martin-Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, which provides the external operating environment of the library. The internal organisational structures and policies of the library have to be geared towards the tasks and demands of the university which the library serves for research and teaching purposes. This is also emphasised in the mission statement of our

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<sup>1</sup> [Prämierung des Realkatalog-Schemas der Universitätsbibliothek Halle auf der Weltausstellung in Chicago 1893], ZfB 13, 1896, S.42

library: it gives priority to servicing the Martin-Luther-University for research, teaching, study and further education.<sup>2</sup> Both university and library are old institutions and can look back at a history of more than 300 years. The university was founded in 1694 as a Prussian university of reform, the library only two years later in 1696.

The range of subjects taught at the university is extraordinarily differentiated and corresponds to the model of a classic German university. Besides the faculties of theology, law, economics and agriculture, Martin-Luther-University has a faculty of philosophy with departments of language and literary studies, history of art and studies of classical antiquities as well as history, philosophy and social sciences. In addition, there is a faculty of natural sciences, including departments of mathematics, computer science, biochemistry, biotechnology, pharmacy, chemistry, geological sciences, biology and a faculty of medicine. This diversity of subjects also is reflected in the scope of collections of the library, which was intended to become a universal library for research and study at the university. In addition to that the library is responsible for the provision of literature in the federal state and performs special functions as the regional deposit library. It has served as a regional deposit library for the former Prussian province Saxony since 1824. Since 1948 the Ministry of Culture of the State of Saxony-Anhalt has also acted as parent institution. This decision was confirmed again in 1991 by the newly elected authorities of the State of Saxony-Anhalt, which was re-established after German unification. As the largest academic library of Saxony-Anhalt it seeks to obtain, collect and preserve comprehensively all books and media dealing with the territory, that is mainly the history, culture and political system of Saxony-Anhalt, which are published within the territory of the state. According to the 1991 press law publishers, business companies, organisations, associations, parties and private persons have to submit a copy of their respective publications automatically and free of charge.

At present the library works as an integrated one-tier system divided into a main library and 72 branch libraries, which are spread all over the town. Responsibility for finances, staff and administration of all branch libraries is with the main library. According to the 1995-2005 long-term strategic plan, the main library, with its collections, serves as a complementary library to the branch libraries, which are to be merged into large special libraries.<sup>3</sup> The collections comprise about 4.9 million books. The total number of acquisitions both in 1998

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<sup>2</sup> *Mission Statement of the library*, 1997. Benutzungsordnung der Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt Halle (Saale), 1.1.1999

and 1999 was about 206.985 media, costing 16.9 million DM. The regular budget in 1998 was about DM 9.3 million, it was cut in 1999 to 7.6 million DM. The library serves 22.400 users both from the university and the territory.

The state and university library became part of the common database of the libraries of the states Lower Saxony and Saxony-Anhalt in 1992. This common database formed the nucleus for the Gemeinsamer Bibliotheksverbund (GBV), to which a considerable number of German libraries belong today. At present, it is the Common Library Network of the Federal states Bremen, Hamburg, Mecklenburg-West Pomerania, Lower Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, Schleswig-Holstein, Thuringia and the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz. Today its Union catalogue covers more than 14,7 million titles with over 23 million holdings, which include all types of documents. The library in Halle runs a local library system with PICA LBS3 software, which provides the necessary tools for OPAC, acquisition and circulation. The installation of OPAC and the work with the different modules was, after the first implementation phase in the main library, gradually extended to the various branch libraries. During the last few years the library has extended its services towards various forms of electronic document delivery, both within the GBV and the national initiative "Subito".<sup>4</sup>

The introduction of PICA in 1992 was an important presupposition for the participation of the library in the initiative for projects of retrospective cataloguing, which were launched and supported by the German Research Council (DFG). Besides, the library contributes actively to the databases for the great German national bibliographies for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries VD16 and VD17.

<http://www.vd17.de>

As regards special regional bibliographical information, you may have heard of our regional bibliography, which has been published since 1965 and which will also be available online in future.

<http://www.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/bibliogr/rbindex.htm>

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<sup>3</sup> *Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg. Bibliothekskonzeption 1995-2005, Halle an der Saale im Mai 1995 (internal paper)*

<sup>4</sup> see <http://www.subito-doc.de>

The library has also acquired reasonable experiences with a number of digitisation projects. During several projects all card catalogues have been digitised - I am speaking here of a volume of 5.5 million catalogue cards. They are now visualised on the internet. The single cards have been equipped with an order-modus so that our users can order the books via the internet. They do not necessarily have to come to the library.

<http://zkat2.bibliothek.uni-halle.de>

Thanks to a generous donation of the Thyssen foundation we have also digitised our old systematic Hartwig-catalogue – the one which was awarded a price here in Chicago, as I have mentioned before.

<http://pcdoc.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/digitalisierung>

In its original form the Hartwig classification scheme is a hand-written catalogue, laid down in 178 Folio-books<sup>5</sup>. The Hartwig catalogue has not merely been reproduced in a new media – an attempt has been made to improve its functionality by inserting an order-function for the single entries within the classification scheme as well. The library is also engaged in other projects like the digitisation of cards or unpublished bequests.

<http://webdoc.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/elkarta>

<http://www.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/info/news/nachlass.htm>

We are currently developing in co-operation with Microsoft and Cisco a multimedia project within the frameworks of e-commerce.

<http://webdoc.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/multi-media/>

I have been asked to inform you about the state of oriental studies at Halle university library, since this could be one of the areas of interest for mutual collaboration within the German Resources Project. As we have realised this afternoon, German Resources can encompass more than German language material. Oriental studies in this context are likely to appear as an exotic topic of peripheral importance. I would like to stress that in our view future collaboration with our institution should not necessarily depend exclusively on a specialisation in oriental studies, which is, of course, very welcome, but that we are open also to other approaches. On the other hand, we are aware that with respect to the exploding information market and the steady increase of publications world-wide, the mental pattern of a 'universal library', assembling all material from all subjects, has become a fiction. Libraries will no longer be regarded as individual entities. Rather, they will serve specific sectors

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<sup>5</sup> Armin Angelus, Christine Eichhorn-Berndt, ; Heiner Schnellling: Digitalisierung des Realkatalogs (Hartwig-Katalog) der Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt und seine Visualisierung im Internet. *Bibliotheksdienst* 3. 34. (2000), 422-434

within the knowledge market and it will depend on their technical equipment and knowledge management how well they will retrieve and provide information. Libraries are thus increasingly forced to collaborate at a global level and to bundle their resources in order to deliver their services. At the same time, there is rising competition for funds and for the users they want to attract. Roger King, chancellor of a British university, has characterised the scenario for this century quite strikingly and I quote:

“The twenty-first century will see the rise of a number of specialist university distributors, in which high-quality delivery to clients transnationally is their crucial value. Such universities will source materials from the best producers of materials (i.e. not necessarily from their own university) and specialise in their adaptation, delivery and support infrastructure.”<sup>6</sup>

Oriental studies have had a long tradition in Halle. Since 1845 the Library of the Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft, which is the oldest German institution for Oriental studies and which was founded in Halle, has been collecting oriental literature. This library, which comprises about 70 000 books has been administered by the university library. Of course, the university library also has quite a collection of literature focusing on the Middle East both in the main library and diverse branch libraries. These are collections devoted to Arabic studies, Islam sciences, Semitics, India, Jewish studies as well as Oriental Archeology and Byzantine studies. These collections are situated in different branch libraries at present, but soon they will be united – together with the respective institutes – in a single building: the Center for Oriental Studies at Halle university. All in all the collections comprise about 147 000 media. Halle University Library took over responsibility for the special Middle East/ North Africa collection from Tübingen University Library in 1998. The principal aim and duty here is to collect materials on and from the Middle East on a national level. This means that collection management has to aim at comprehensiveness, i.e. a broad acquisition of media items, sufficient coverage, which includes the identification, selection and acquisition of relevant items as well as timeliness of delivery within the whole of Germany. Thus a speedy document delivery plays an important role. Halle University Library provides local services via HARIEL<sup>7</sup>, national and international services via GBV–Direkt and Subito. Libraries, participating in the national special collections programme, also have a special document

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<sup>6</sup> Roger King: What is higher education for? Strategic dilemmas for the twenty-first century university. *Quality assurance in Education*. Vol. 3, No. 4, 1995 MCB University Press, 14.

<sup>7</sup> Gerald Lutze, Heiner Schnellling, „Hariel-Halle ARIEL, Dokumentlieferung innerhalb der Universität,“<http://www.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/text/scientia/harie01.htm>“

delivery service called SSG-Direkt. This document delivery service was introduced in October 1999. It enables users to order and receive documents via e-mail.<sup>8</sup>

These days collection development increasingly means not only to have physical access to the book and to the provision of media, but also tapping knowledge resources electronically. The policy of the special Middle East/ North Africa subject collection is therefore directed towards providing access to electronic resources as well as resource sharing and discovery within the opportunities of the internet. In order to achieve this policy of providing access to information (versus holdings) the library Halle supported by colleagues from the National Web Information System (WEBIS), has developed the following electronic tools:

First of all, a Virtual Catalogue Middle East/ North Africa was developed and introduced in February 1998. It presents literature collected in Tübingen until 1997 and from 1998 onwards in Halle in a single electronic catalogue.

[http://www.ubka.uni-karlsruhe.de/hylib/vk\\_ssg\\_vo.html](http://www.ubka.uni-karlsruhe.de/hylib/vk_ssg_vo.html)

Secondly, we have developed electronic lists, which provide information about the current acquisition of books.

[http://webis.sub.uni-hamburg.de/ssg/bib.3/ssg.6\\_23/neli.html](http://webis.sub.uni-hamburg.de/ssg/bib.3/ssg.6_23/neli.html)

Thirdly, in October 1999 we set up the already mentioned document delivery service.

<http://www.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/ssg/>

Fourthly, a list of periodicals held at the subject collection was installed. It presents tables of contents in Latin as well as in Arabic characters (for a restricted number of titles as yet). As you can imagine, the recognition of the different characters of the Arabic languages can give rise to a number of difficulties.

<http://www.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/ssg/zsliste.htm>

Fifthly, the classification of the special subject collection is now electronically available in a version with links established to the OPAC of the library. It facilitates access to materials with a broader scope of Middle East studies.

<http://www.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/ssg/SYSNELK1.htm>

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/ssg/>. Wiederhold, Lutz: Vorderer Orient Direkt (SSG-S)- der Direktlieferdienst des Sondersammelgebiets 6,23 „Vorderer Orient einschließlich Nordafrika“, *Bibliotheksdienst* 33 (1999),12, 2121-2122

The tools mentioned above show the electronic resources currently available from Halle university library. In a second step, aimed at resources discovery and evaluation within the framework of the emerging distributed digital library, Halle University Library has applied to participate in a project initiated by the German Research Council (DFG), which has as its objective the development of virtual special subject libraries.<sup>9</sup> The idea is that staff as well as contributors from other institutions co-operate in the management of electronic resources and handle the information-overload from the proliferating network resources. The project proposal of Halle University Library to participate in the “Virtual Special Subject Library” with regard to electronic Resources of the Middle East/North Africa was submitted in December 1999 and accepted in April 2000.

To a certain degree the objectives of this project are to extend and refine the electronic tools already developed. Thus, it is intended to add the local catalogues of other relevant libraries to the Virtual Middle East/ North Africa Catalogue, as well as operating and maintaining a current contents service for periodicals. The main focus of the project will be the development and implementation of a Subject Gateway of relevant digital, and also in a limited number printed resources, on and from the Middle East. A list of internet addresses related to Middle East studies has already been created. It gives access to 400 internet sites. The technical structure of the subject gateway will correspond to the already existing gateways of other areas of research within the project. Bibliographical information will be supplanted by a set of metadata, which follow Dublin Core Standards.

The virtual library is designed as a co-operative venture. Co-operation is not restricted to libraries, but aimed at research institutions as well. The following institutions have already agreed to participate:

Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft (DMG)  
Deutsche Arbeitsgemeinschaft Vorderer Orient (DAVO)  
Institut für Orientalistik der Martin-Luther-Universität  
Middle East Librarians Committee (MELCOM, UK)  
University Library and Information Center, Exeter (UK)  
Research Group Contemporary Arabic Studies, Malaga  
SUB Göttingen (technical tools for current contents)

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<sup>9</sup> Rutz, Reinhard, „Positionen und Pläne der DFG zum Thema Virtuelle Fachbibliothek.*ABI-Technik* 18, 1998,

Verbundzentrale des GBV

UB Karlsruhe (extension of virtual catalogue)

Etude et Programmation en Optimisation et Software (EPOS, Paris).

Halle University Library invites colleagues and institutions to join forces in creating a structured subject guide on the Middle East and North Africa. The contributing institutions act as members of the editorial board of the subject guide. Thus we hope to provide a tool which facilitates research discourse within this special subject area. It remains our aim to achieve an appropriate balance when managing our resources. Thus we prefer to perceive our library tasks within the framework of a 'hybrid library' with 'multiple media', both physical and virtual.



