

**Fiesole Collection Development Retreat,  
March 18-20, 2004**

**Shared collection building: the  
philosopher's  
stone in hard times?  
German experiences.**



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March 2004

Klaus Kempf

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**I. Preface:  
„Shared collection building“ a  
contradiction in terms? – against  
the nature (of the librarian)?**

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Collection building belongs without doubt to the absolute core activities, perhaps it is the core activity of the libraries. The ideal librarian is an egoist sui generis, an archaic gatherer and hunter of (written) treasures. Therefore he/she is always eager to catch material and after a successful hunting to retreat together with his/her prey back home, not to the cave like in the stone age, but to his/her own library. Given this historical-philosophical background, don't you think that shared collection building (=s.c.b) is a contradiction in terms or even against librarians' genetic programming?

As librarians are creative people and much more realistic than some people assume at least in Germany, very early in the library history it became clear that collections would always remain incomplete. The necessity to accept the limitedness of resources available also lead them to accept s.c.b. as something inevitable and indispensable for survival.

However to change from the concept of a „suffered compromise“ to a compromise actively strived for and permanently lived, and that is precisely what „cooperation“ means, is hard work to do. The best school master, we say in German, is misery. In times of great financial pressure and economic plight also the unimaginable becomes reality. And misery, even a lost war, was the reason why we in Germany still today have an nationwide cooperative collection development plan in action.

In my following remarks I will first define s.c.b. and name its barriers and/or characteristics of success in a general way, then I will present the German situation and in particular focus on the existing system of s.c.b., its institutional context, its specific qualities, problems and current trends. Afterwards I hope, of course, for a stimulating discussion about any open questions.

## **II. What is shared collection building?**

- Two or more libraries are cooperating**
  - to build up interdependent collections**
  - on one or more argument(s)/subject(s)**
  - for all or only certain types of material**
  - for a long term perspective**
  - by maintaining independent infrastructures**

Shared or cooperative c.b. does not mean the simple collaboration of several libraries in a time- limited agreement to get some price reduction, nor does it imply consortia building where via specific licenses, for example on the basis of a „cross access-clause“, digital materials become available for members (and their patrons) who don't have any real coordination in the acquisition of contents. S.c.b. is much more.

It is when at least two or more libraries ....

### III. Characteristics of success or barriers of shared collection building

- Commitment to the project
- Infrastructural support
- Budget issues

To be successful, a project of shared collection building has to overcome some obstacles or even barriers. In the professional literature the three following aspects are cited as the main potential barriers:

1. **Commitment** to a scb must come from all the levels within the individual institutions and the group of participating institutions, but, this is very important, also from their specific environment, universities, faculties and their representatives.
2. Decisive for the success or the failure of a s.c.b. agreement is the existence of an **infrastructure to support the s.c.b.**: Having a single integrated library system with a union catalogue (which lists all the holdings of the members including the retroconverted records), capable of user-initiated borrowing and completed by an affordable courier and/or document delivery system which ensures that material reaches individual users quickly.
3. Two primary areas where **budget** can be a barrier to successful s.c.b.:
  - No central or specific funding so that the individual institution must contribute to support any initiative often in competition with local needs/initiatives and
  - fluctuations in budget cycles which make it difficult if not impossible to share the costs.

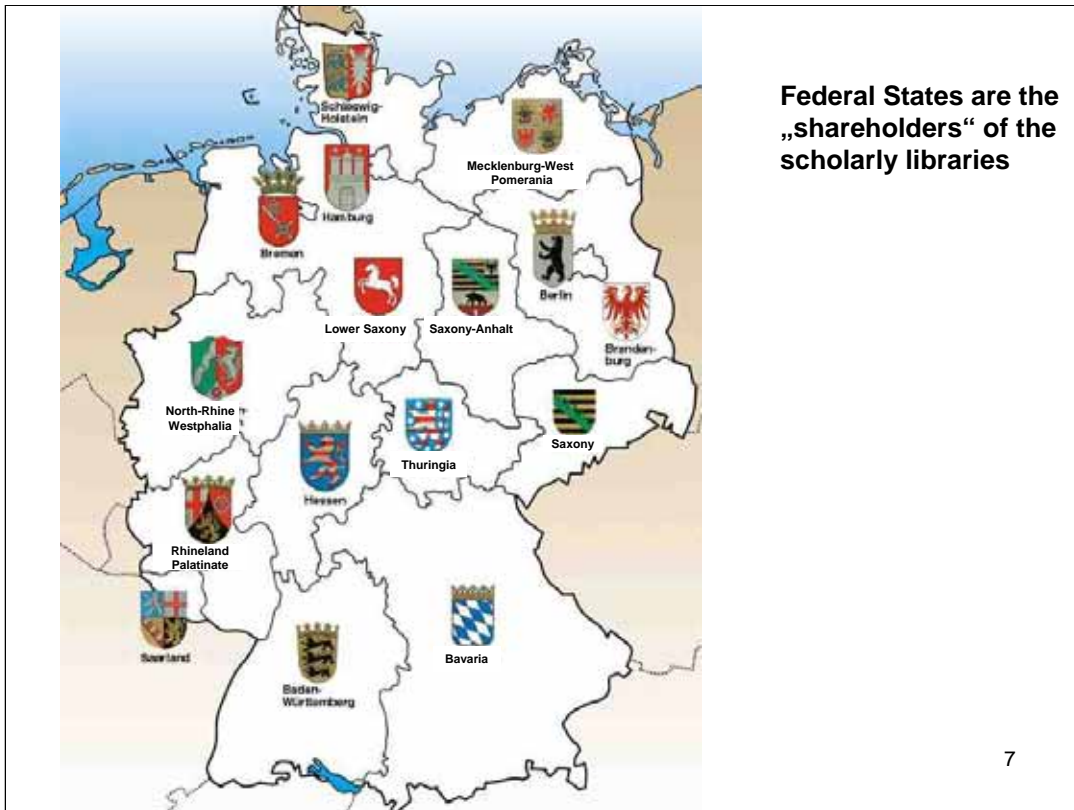
## **IV. German Scholarly Library system: Cooperation as a basic principle**

The German scholarly library system must be imagined in its basic structure as a matrix consisting of horizontally running lines for regional or federal initiatives and vertically running lines for national projects and nation-wide focal points. The latter are of a supplementary character on the one hand, and serve to stabilize the complex system on the other.

At first we take a look at the federal components of the system:

## **IV. The German scholarly library system**

### **1. A bottom-up-system: Regional components as the basis**

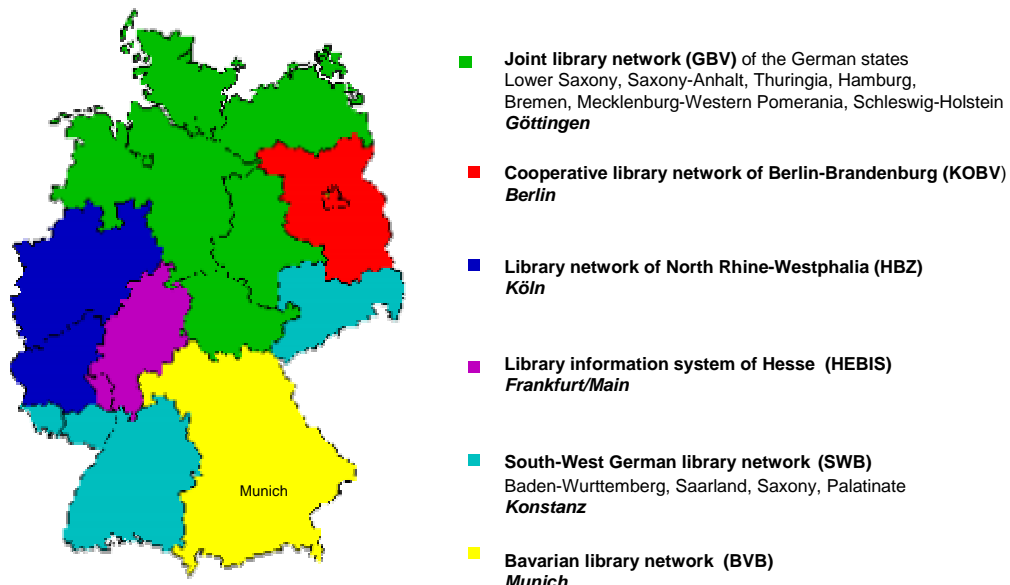


**Federal States are the „shareholders“ of the scholarly libraries**

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The German library system reflects recent history and the current political situation, and it mirrors the country's federal constitution. The maintenance, promotion and financing of universities and university libraries are ultimately the responsibility of the states (at the moment 16). The bulk of scholarly libraries in Germany are found at universities. As endowments from sponsors or charities play a very subordinate role, all important libraries depend almost entirely on tax-based financing. This fact plays a prominent role in the following remarks.

## Regional library networks in Germany



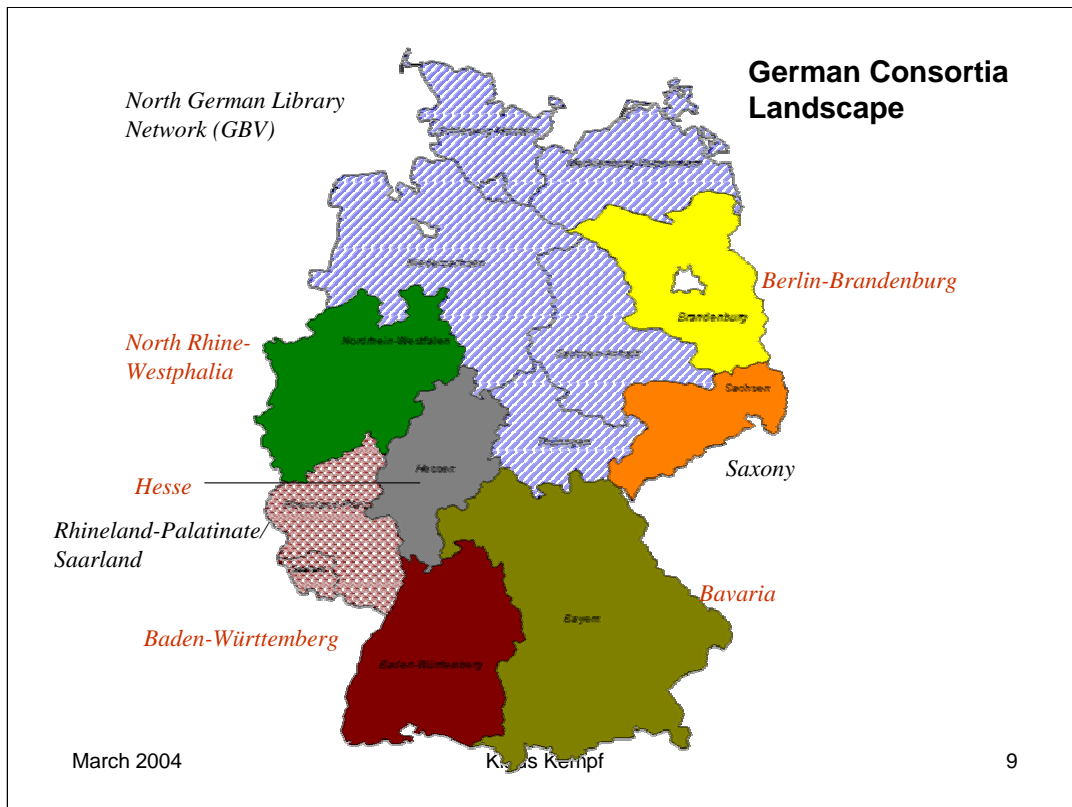
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Another indication of their federal character is the strong regional component found in German scholarly libraries. In the 1970s, regional library networks were established. Their original goal was to facilitate electronic cataloguing and the creation of network catalogues, which listed the library contents of the entire region. Today there are six networks and they have become complete digital library service centres.





The youngest expression and the latest proof of the strong regionalism dominating the German scholarly library system has been the emergence of regional and/or supra regional licence consortia (today 9) in the midst and/or towards the end of the 1990s. The consortia or better their deals are exclusively financed by the respective federal states.

## **IV. The German scholarly library system**

### **2. ...and national focal points at the top.**

Any cooperative system of sub systems or components on an equal rights basis needs some focal points or may be better, some vertically running “corset elements” to stabilize the system and to promote its efficiency. The following (cooperative) initiatives are commonly financed by the respective Lander and/or co-financed by the central government or one of its governmental bodies.

## National focal<sup>□</sup> points

- Virtual National Library
- SDD (Sammlung Deutscher Drucke)
- Zeitschriftendatenbank (ZDB)
- National document delivery and interlibrary loan service
- Countrywide courier service
- **National Network of special subject collections**

At present the system is characterized by 6 outstanding national focal points.

## „Virtual National Library“



**BSB** Bayerische  
Staatsbibliothek

Germany does not have a national library in the sense of the British Library or the Bibliotheque National de France, nor does Germany have a library whose scale and resources compare to the Library of Congress. In Germany, long before the age of the Internet, the idea of a so-called „virtual“ national library was discussed. This library would be formed from the national bibliographic centre, Die Deutsche Bibliothek, with locations in Frankfurt am Main and Leipzig, as well as the two historically significant research libraries – Bavarian State Library in Munich and the State Library of Berlin (previously Prussian State Library).

The long lasting idea of a virtual national library has found its continuation in the initiative of ...

# AG SDD

**AG Sammlung Deutscher Drucke**

**Deutsche Version**

**AG Sammlung Deutscher Drucke**

- History
- Concept
- Realization
- Goals
- Future developments

**News**

**Libraries**

**Imprint**

### The AG Sammlung Deutscher Drucke

In the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft Sammlung Deutscher Drucke (AGSDD)* six libraries have collaborated to build a comprehensive collection of printed literature published in German-speaking countries from the beginning of letterpress printing to the present, to provide information on it, to make it accessible to the public and to preserve it for future generations.

This venture has led to the creation of a virtual national library in which the participating libraries are responsible for the following periods:

1450 - 1600	Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München
1601 - 1700	Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel
1701 - 1800	Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen
1801 - 1870	Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt am Main / Senckenbergische Bibliothek
1871 - 1912	Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz
1913 ff.	Die Deutsche Bibliothek Leipzig, Frankfurt am Main, Berlin

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Robert Völsche / 18.06.2003

Home Dr. Winold Vogt

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...In the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft Sammlung Deutscher Drucke* six libraries have collaborated to build a comprehensive collection of printed literature published in German-speaking countries from the beginning of letterpress printing to the present, to provide information on it, to make it accessible to the public and to preserve it for future generations.



## Zeitschriftendatenbank

- ▶ **Startseite**
- ZDB Aktuell
- Wir über uns
- Recherche
- Katalogisierung
- Datendienste
- Die GKD
- Sigelstelle
- Projekte
- Statistik
- Publikationen
- Service + Kontakt
- ZDB von A-Z
- 🖨️ Druckversion

### ZDB-OPAC

Schnelle und effektive Recherche in den Zeitschriftenbeständen deutscher Bibliotheken.

### ZDB für Katalogisierer

Die Seiten für Katalogisierer bieten Zugriff auf alle Informationen, die Sie für die tägliche Arbeit mit der ZDB benötigen: ZETA, WinIBW-Handbücher, Informationen aus der Zentralen Redaktion usw.

### ZDB für Neueinsteiger

Ihre Bibliothek möchte am Katalogisierungsverbund der ZDB teilnehmen? Informationen zu den Modalitäten und Arbeitsunterlagen finden Sie hier.

### Service und Kontakt

Ansprechpartner, E-Mail-Adressen von A-Z, Mailingliste ZDBINFO

Letzte Änderung: 08.11.2001

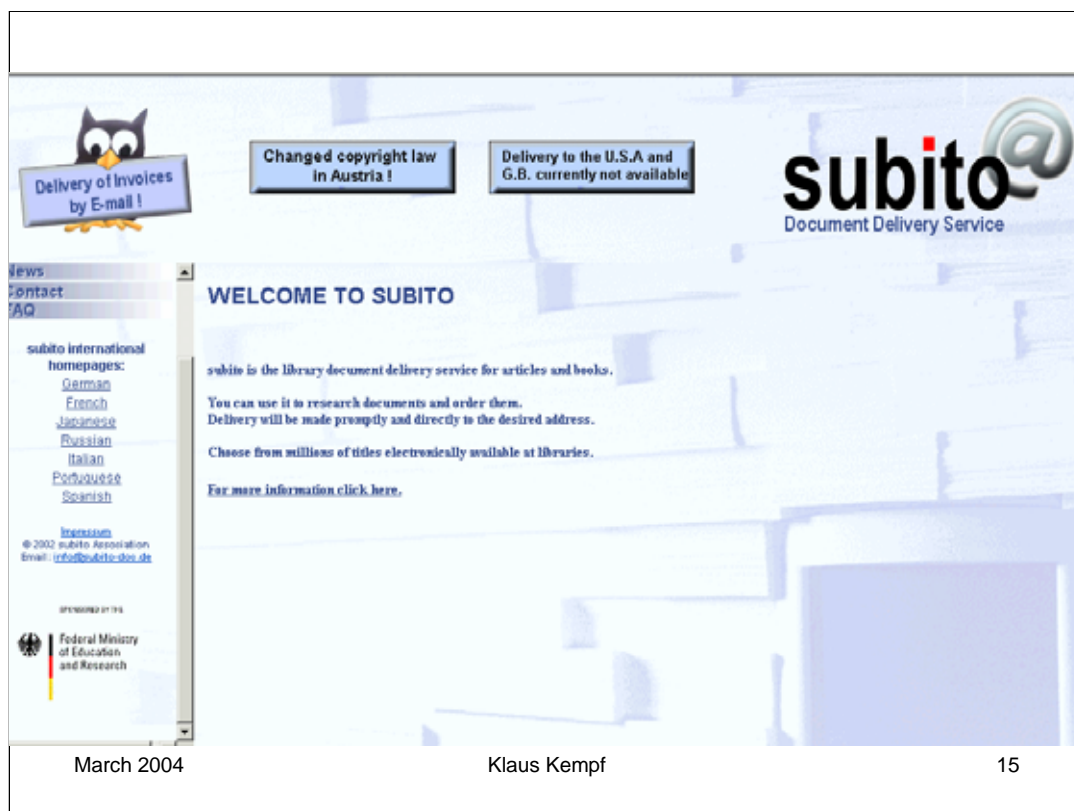
Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin   
Preussischer Kulturbesitz 

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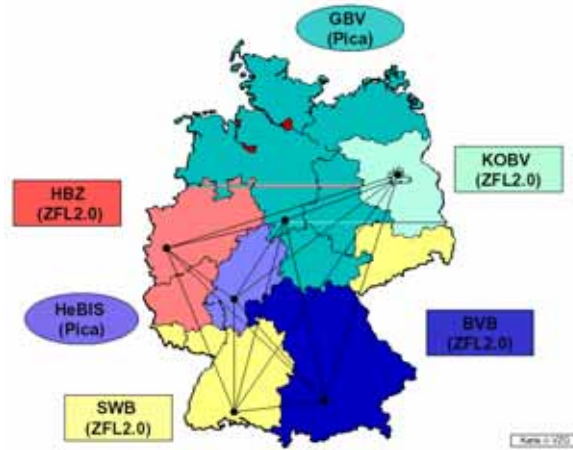
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The Zeitschriftendatenbank (German National Serial Union Catalogue) is an electronic database containing bibliographic and holding data on all types of periodicals in German libraries. Currently, about one million serials are listed with about 5 million data on holdings.



National document supply service founded at the end of the 1990s;  
Largely based on the holdings in the ZDB;  
Guarantees online document ordering and delivery (copies as well as returnables) in 24 – 72 hours on the basis of standardized fees

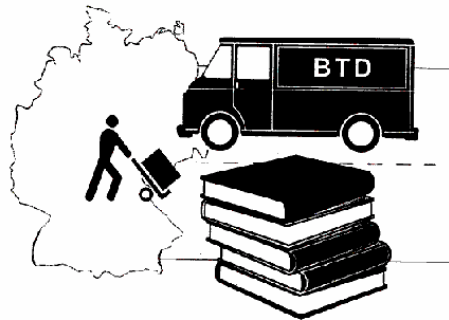
## Online patron-initiated interlibrary loan system - server network configuration





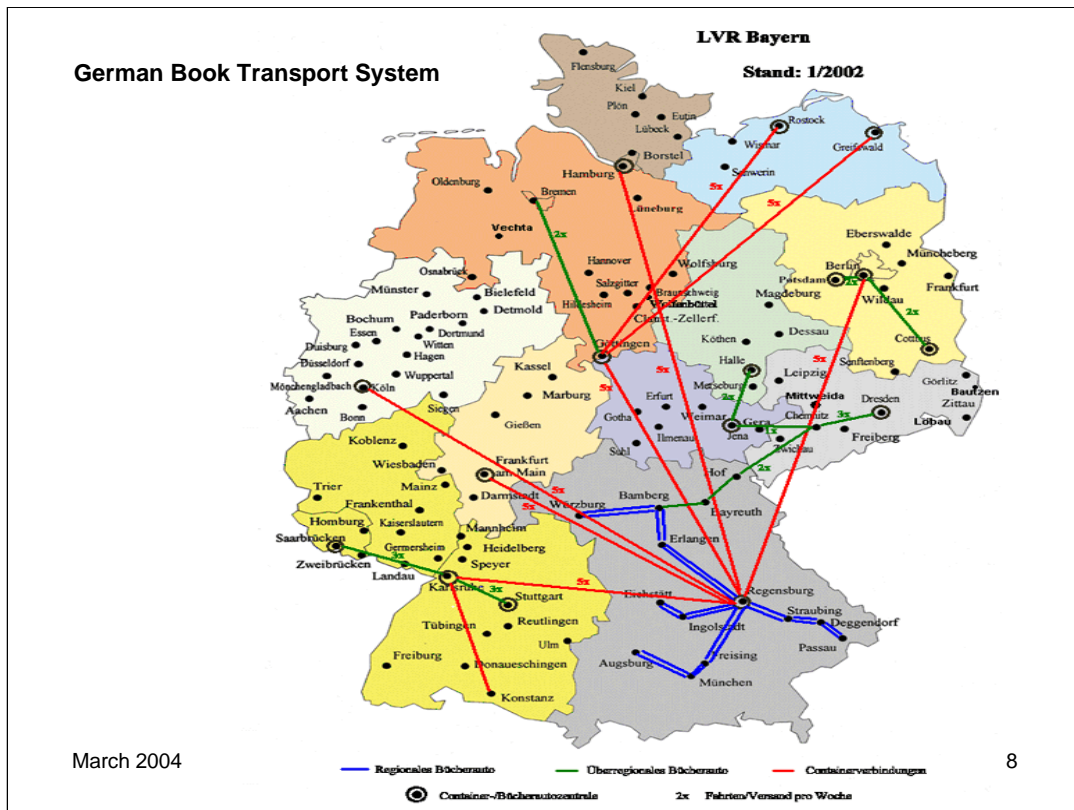
## German Book Transport System

Büchertransportdienst Deutschland (BTD)



 weiter

At the end of the 1990s a nationwide, regionally based courier service was realized. It is the logistic back bone of the national interlibrary loan system.



The transport in the regional network is done by book vans and/or containers sent by the federal mail; between the regional freight terminals (see the map) the transport is done by container only.

## **V. Shared collection development in Germany:**

**The national network of special subject collections  
supported by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft**

Soon after the Second World War West Germany began to establish a countrywide cooperative system of special subject collections. This foundation was not the result of some grand vision by librarians or of a strategic plan of collection building, but it was rather a reaction on the disastrous economic situation of the academic world in those days. In the meantime it is a highly-developed system of distributed literature acquisition and supply, but

## **1. The features of the system**

...let me first briefly sketch the financing body of the system, the DFG and its funding and promotion activities with regard to the libraries and their projects

## **Funding institution: Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG)**

- **Research funding**
- **Policy advice**
- **Interdisciplinarity and networking**
- **Internationality**

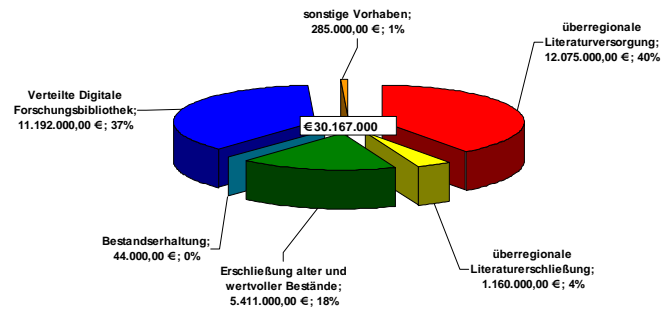
The Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, the German Research Society, is a non-governmental body, re-founded after World War 2, and today the most important institution to support science and academic research– in its broad sense, that is including the humanities – in Germany.

The DFG has taken over various major responsibilities, which you find listed here.

Libraries, too, play an important role in the DFG support. While current financing of academic libraries lies in the hand of the respective Land/federal state, the DFG provides short- and even long-term funding for projects and/or even long-lasting initiatives, like the system of special subject collections. See the next chart...

# Library funding by the DFG in 2002

## Bibliotheksförderung der DFG 2002



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The „funding pool“ for library initiatives comprises approx. 30 million Euro. Approx. 40 % are dedicated to the shared collection development program.

## „System der überregionalen Literaturversorgung“

- **National network of „Sondersammelgebieten“ (= special subject collections)**
- **Basic idea:**
  - **at least one copy of every relevant scientific publication in the world should be available in Germany**

The philosophy behind this system is that the demand for frequently asked or used literature should be satisfied on a local or regional level; the creation of a network of special subject collections tries to ensure the nation-wide availability of special and very special literature. So at least one copy (siehe Textbaustein in Image)...

## Participating Libraries

- **23 research libraries appointed as SSG libraries**  
*(Sondersammelgebietsbibliotheken)*
- **47 Special libraries** *(Spezialbibliotheken)*
- **3 Central special libraries** *(zentrale Fachbibliotheken)*

The special subject collections network currently consists of 23 research libraries appointed as Sondersammelgebietsbibliotheken, 47 Spezialbibliotheken (Special libraries) and 3 zentrale Fachbibliotheken (Central special libraries).



## **SSG libraries**

- **23 University libraries or State/Regional libraries**
- **DFG:**
  - Long-term funding for collection development

The 23 appointed s.c. Sondersammelgebietsbibliotheken – SSG libraries, for short – are large university or state libraries, already collecting extensively in many fields and being accessible to a broad academic public. They are the mainstays of the shared collection development system and thus receive from the DFG regular and long-term funding for collection development

## SSG libraries

- [Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz](#)
- **[Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München](#)**
- [Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Bonn](#)
- [Universitätsbibliothek der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin](#)
- [Universitätsbibliothek der Technischen Universität Braunschweig](#)
- [Sächsische Landesbibliothek - Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Dresden](#)
- [Universitätsbibliothek Erlangen-Nürnberg](#)
- [Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt/Main](#)
- [Senckenbergische Bibliothek Frankfurt/Main](#)
- [Universitätsbibliothek der Technischen Universität Bergakademie Freiberg](#)
- [Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen](#)
- [Universitätsbibliothek Greifswald](#)
- [Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Halle](#)
- [Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg](#)
- [Bibliothek der Tierärztlichen Hochschule Hannover](#)
- [Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg](#)
- [Thüringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Jena](#)
- [Universitätsbibliothek Kiel](#)
- [Universitäts- und Stadtbibliothek Köln](#)
- [Universitätsbibliothek Leipzig](#)
- [Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Münster](#)
- [Saarländische Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Saarbrücken](#)
- [Universitätsbibliothek Tübingen](#)

The distribution of more or less extensive „subjects“ to these libraries was done pragmatically in the 1950s: it was dependent on where collections had survived the war least damaged and where they could be made accessible with the least effort.

## **Spezialbibliotheken (Special libraries)**

- **47 smaller libraries affiliated to specialized research institutions**
- **DFG: medium-term funding for**
  - Collection development
  - Cataloguing of special collections
  - Improving public access

Besides these SSG libraries, 47 smaller „special libraries“ are at the moment participating in the system. This is quite a mixed bunch, also including, for example, museum libraries and libraries of administrative bodies. They usually try to complete the SSG libraries in their areas of responsibility – by procuring certain types of materials specifically related to the subject. Yet, in some instances they may also take the place of a SSG library. In contrast to the SSG libraries, the special libraries usually don't get long-term funding by the DFG. Mostly they receive medium-term financing to expand their collections, to catalogue important parts of their collections, or to improve public access.

## **Zentrale Fachbibliotheken** (Central special libraries)

- **German National Library of Medicine in Cologne**
  - **German National Library of Economics in Kiel**
  - **Technical Information Library in Hanover**
- 
- **Basic funding from the Leibniz Society**
  - **Project funding from the DFG**

The 3 zentrale Fachbibliotheken (Central special libraries) are a particular kind of „special libraries“. These large libraries were founded in the 50s and 60s. Each of them is specialized in one broad subject area with an emphasis on application: medicine, economics, technology/engineering. They are also, by charter, dedicated to national, statewide information supply. It is typical of these libraries that, besides scientific journals and monographs, they also collect all the other types of materials relevant to their subject. So, instead of spreading responsibility for one broad subject over many libraries like a patchwork, in these cases it was concentrated intentionally on a very few efficient libraries.

The central special libraries get their basic funding jointly from the federal government and the Länder, being members of the so-called „blue list“ of the Wissenschaftsgemeinschaft Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz. Here, the DFG only sponsors certain special projects, but does not regularly subsidize acquisition funds.

# System der überregionalen Literaturversorgung (System of special subject collections)

## Distribution plan

(<http://webis.sub.uni-hamburg.de/ssg/text/ssgliste2.html>)

- 121 special subjects
- 73 libraries

Currently, the distribution plan of the special subject collections covers 121 „subjects“, spread over 73 libraries. You can find a table of the single subjects on the **internet information service WEBIS – see next page** - as well as all necessary information on the special subject collections network.

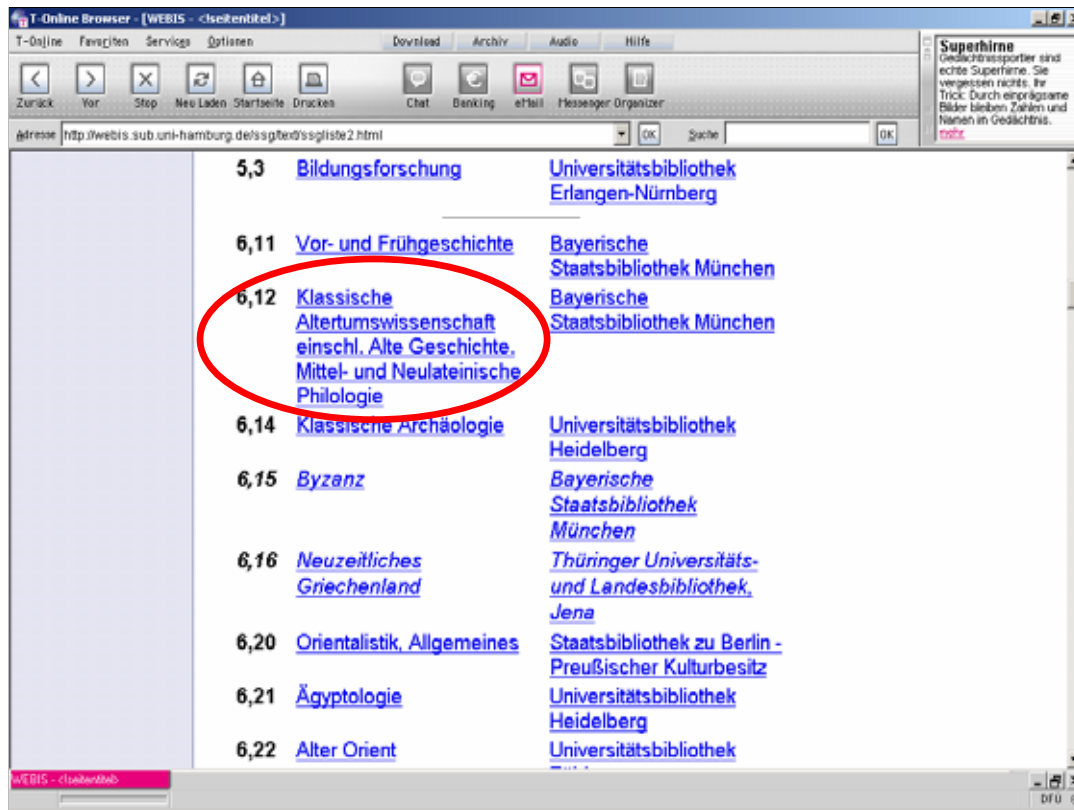
## The system of special subject collections at a glance

<p>Sucheinstiege:</p> <p><a href="#">Fach</a></p> <p><a href="#">Region</a></p> <p><a href="#">DFG-Index</a></p> <hr/> <p><a href="#">Bibliotheken</a></p> <p><a href="#">DFG-Plan</a></p> <p><a href="#">[Hilfe zu den Sucheinstiegen]</a></p> <p><small>© WEBIS 1995-2000 <a href="#">Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg</a>; gefördert durch die <a href="#">Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft</a>.</small></p> <p><small><a href="#">WEBIS-Einzelkür</a></small></p>	 <p><b>Sammelschwerpunkte an deutschen Bibliotheken</b></p> <p>Überregionale Literaturversorgung durch Sondersammelgebietsbibliotheken, Zentrale Fachbibliotheken und Spezialbibliotheken.</p> <p>Hierzu und zum Aufbau des WWW-Informationssystems WEBIS -&gt; <a href="#">weitere Informationen</a> </p> <p>Mit einem Klick auf <b>webis</b> gelangen Sie immer zurück auf diese Seite.</p>
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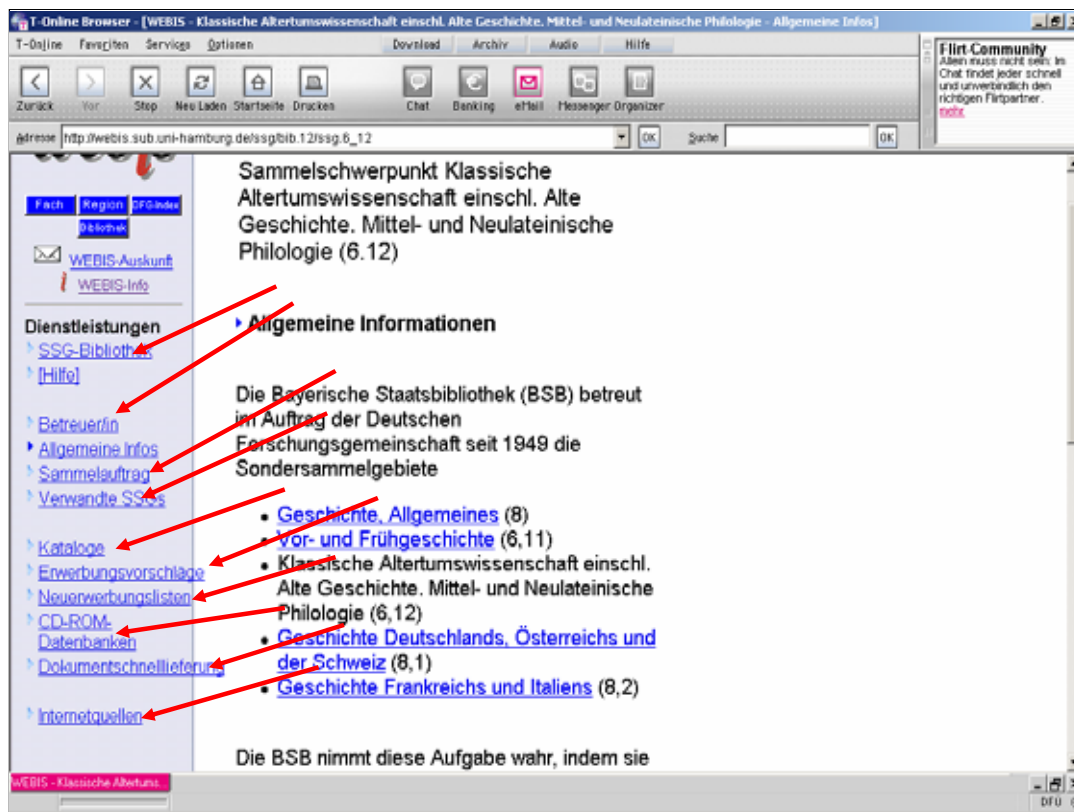
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The (re)presentation on webis is the same for all 121 „subjects“; the menu data is maintained by the respective libraries.

On the left (**red eye**), you see the indication of the „subject“ with the DFG’s code number, on the right the library in charge of it. Clicking on one of the subjects leads you to another page with a menu.



For each subject you get information – **hier mehrfach klicken, um Pfeile anzuzeigen** - on :

- Content
- the collecting library
- and whom to contact.
- You can also find related „subjects“ and the libraries responsible for them
- and you can click through to the OPAC of these libraries
- Moreover, you can make suggestions for acquisitions
- and look up lists of recently acquired books, which several libraries offer.
- You can also find information on CD-ROM databases concerning the subject and even request a search in such a database, as it is most often not freely available on the net.
- Additionally, you can click through to the document delivery service of the library in question and order a title you need.
- Also, internet sources relevant to the subject may be given, but please remember that it is the responsibility of the individual library to collect and maintain this information.

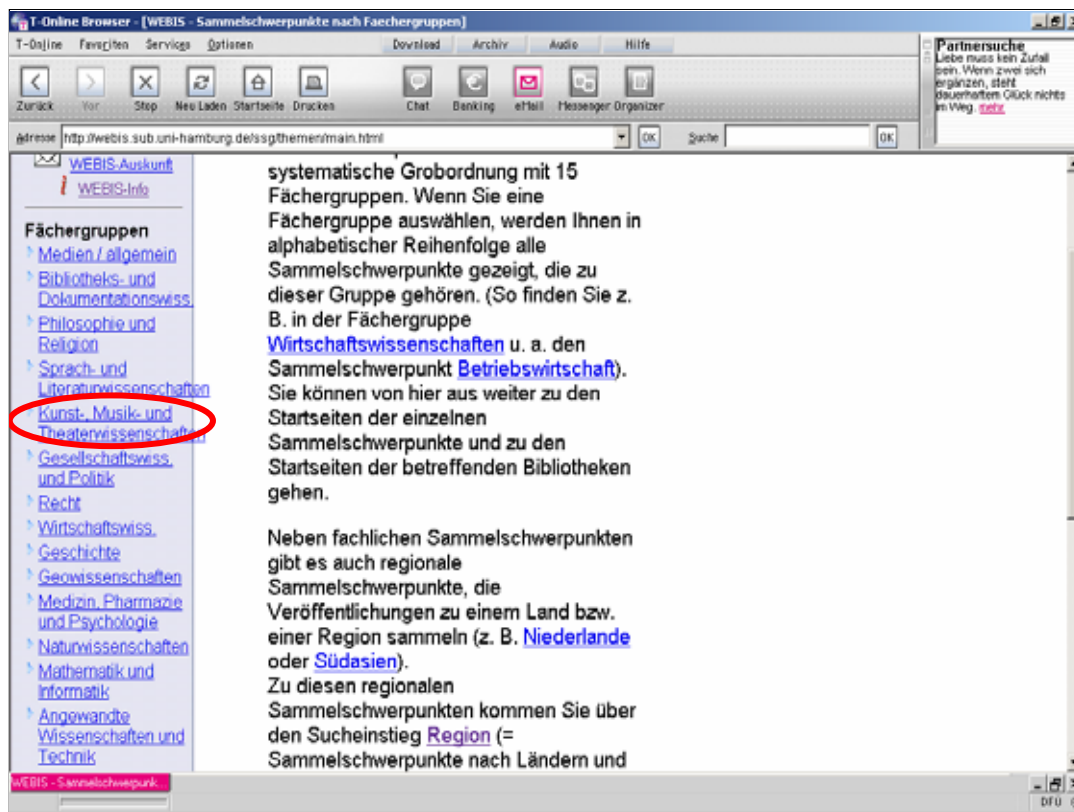


## **System der überregionalen Literaturversorgung** (System of special subject collections)

- **Special collections according to subjects**  
(<http://webis.sub.uni-hamburg.de/ssg/themen/main.html>)
- **Special collections according to geographical areas**  
(<http://webis.sub.uni-hamburg.de/ssg/text/regional.html>)

You may have noticed that many of these „subjects“ actually correspond to academic disciplines or subdivisions of them. Others, however, are based on geographical areas.

In fact, the distribution plan is a bit like the organisation matrix of some large companies, with product-line and area responsibilities co-existing.



The discipline-based subjects are listed in the sidebar in broad categories.

Selecting one of these subjects ...



... gets you to a list of the relevant subdivisions, with the libraries in charge in brackets.

Superhirne  
Gedächtnistrainer sind echte Superhirne. Sie vergessen nichts. Ihr Trick: Durch eingetragene Bilder bleiben Zahlen und Namen im Gedächtnis.  
roste

adresse: <http://webis.sub.uni-hamburg.de/ssg/ber/regional.html> Suche:

**zur Wirtschaftswissenschaften Kiel (200) erworben.**

Fachgebiet:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Literatur bezogen auf:	Sprache Literatur Volkskunde	Geschichte einschl. Sozialgeschichte u. Wirtschaftsgeschichte Politik Verfassung Verwaltung Parteien, Gewerkschaften u. a. Verbände Anthropogeographie Länderkunde	Vor- und Frühgeschichte Volkskunde	Erziehungs- u. Hochschulwesen Wiss. Einrichtungen Informations-, Buch- und Bibliothekswesen Publizistik	Religionen Philosophie Kunst Musik Theater Tanz Film, Rundfunk, Fernsehen	nicht regionalisiert, wie z.B. Naturwissenschaften, Medizin, Technik, Recht, Volks- u. Weltwirtschaft, Psychologie
A Deutschsprachige Länder	30	12	Fach- liche Sonder- sammel- gebiete	Fach- liche Sonder- sammel- gebiete		
B Frankreich, Italien	5	12				
C Belgien, Luxemburg	5	38				
D Niederlande	6	6				
E Spanien, Portugal	18	18				
F Großbritannien, Irland, Finnland, Ungarn	7	7				
G Skandinavien (außer Finnland)	8	8				

But you can also access an overview of the regarded geographical area based subjects in webis.

The areas (for example: German-speaking countries, France, Italy and so on) are listed on the vertical axis. On the right hand you can then find out how many broad topical headings are covered by the geographical area aspect. There are six such topical headings:

- Language and literature
- History, including politics, regional studies and administration
- Prehistory and early history
- Education system and publication system
- Religion, philosophy, music, theatre, arts, media
- Sciences, medicine, technology, law, economics, psychology.

Please note that the topics of the last block are never part of a geographical area based „subject“; the library in charge of a discipline-based „subject“ in this block – it will usually be one of the three Central special libraries -- covers it without geographical limitations.

As you can see, each library (characterised by a respective code number) with a geographical based „subject“ covers a different number of topical blocks.

For example: The Frankfurt public and university library (code number: 30) is responsible for „language and literature“ of the German-speaking countries, while the Bavarian State Library (code number: 12) collects literature on the history of these countries. All other topical blocks of this regional „subject“ are covered by the SSG libraries responsible for the respective discipline-based subjects.

Taking a look at Scandinavia, you can see that one library, the University Library in Kiel (code number: 8), is in charge of „language and literature“, „history“ and „prehistory and early history“.

	Makedonien					
L	Baltische Länder	9	9	9	9	
M	Rumänien, Albanien	27	12	12	12	
N	Griechenland	27	27	12	27	
O	Israel	30	30	21	30	30
P	Ibero-Amerika (einschl. Karibik)	204	204	204	204	204
Q	Vorderer Orient einschl. Afrika nördlich der Sahara	3	3	3	3	3
R	Afrika südlich der Sahara einschl. Republik Südafrika, Ozeanien	30	30	30	30	30
S	Südasiens	21	21	21	21	21
T	Ostasiens, Südasiens	1, 1a	1, 1a	1, 1a	1, 1a	1, 1a

WEBIS 1995-2003  
[Lehr- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg](#)  
[Lehrbuch-Umfrage](#)

WEBIS - claskentitel Fertig

In fact, the further away the geographical area is from Germany, the wider, in terms of topical blocks, will be the area of responsibility of the library in charge of that region.

Concerning Latin America, the Middle and Far East and Africa, only one library each is in charge of all topical blocks, with the exception of the last block, of course. So here we have the widest possible area of responsibility.

This has proved to be quite a good rule, especially by considering the various procurement/book trade problems associated with these “acquisition areas” which almost compromise a continent.

## Funding principles

- **Only (highly) specialized foreign publications to be acquired**
- **„Reservoir Function“**
- **No funding of infrastructure costs**
- **Special collections to be made available countrywide**

Now let us turn to the DFG's funding principles relating to the special subject collections:

Premise: Every library appointed in the SSG-program acquires on principle German and foreign publications relating to their subject and/or region in the most complete and extensive way. However:

- DFG funding is given only in a supplementary way, that means only for the acquisition of highly specialized – currently published - foreign literature, while the acquisition of German literature and of foreign *basic/standard* literature has to be financed from the library's own funds. The acquisition of literature by DFG funding is only a supplementary one. Even then, the library is not paid 100 %; for the acquisition also of highly specialised foreign literature the library has to provide a quota of between 20 and 25 % from of the total amount spent for this type of acquisition from its own budget.

- “Reservoir Function”: The goal is to acquire literature for present and for future research which is specialized and most probably cannot be found in any other library in Germany. So, according to what might be called the „reservoir function“, taken from a memorandum in 1975, all literature of academic relevance should be acquired, regardless of current potential or actual demand. The recent debate has shown that some modification is possible here towards a more demand-centred collection development.

- **Infrastructure costs**: Organizing acquisition remains the preserve of the library; of course, depending on the subject, the modus operandi, how to get information on new publications and how to buy them, will be quite different. To ensure reliable access to foreign literature, and to react flexibly to changes in publication habits in certain countries, it is often necessary to have quite a close business relationship to foreign suppliers – even including travels to the countries in question to buy books.

Also the cost for cataloguing, preservation, presentation in form of lists of recent acquisitions, user information, provision of specialised bibliographies, and so on: these fall all on the SSG libraries. Only in special cases the DFG will agree to pay short-term staff costs, as a kind of seed-money, or give supplementary grants to prepare library bindings for completed collections.

- Literature paid out of DFG funds has to be made available by inter-library loan throughout Germany. Of course, orders coming in via ILL are a perfect instrument to evaluate the quality of the collection development policy followed in the years before.

## Funding rates

- **Foreign print-journals**
  - DFG funding 75 %
- **Foreign Monographs**
  - DFG funding 75 %
- **Foreign literature on microform**
  - DFG funding 80 %
- **CD-ROMs**
  - Only highly specialized titles
- **E-journals**

Given the principles mentioned on the chart before, in detail – distinguished by categories of publications - we have the following funding rates:

- In the case of **foreign print journals** and **foreign monographs**, the DFG provides 75% of the acquisition expenditure, the SSG library has to contribute 25% from its own budget. You ask for the (co)funding for the current year in the year before by a global application.

- Another acquisition area is **foreign literature on microform**, where the DFG provides 80% and the SSG library 20%. Here, as well as with **CD-ROMs**, a further acquisition area, no global application is allowed: you have to list all planned acquisitions for the next year, including title and price. As to microforms, mostly historical source materials (such as foreign archival documents) with detailed guides are bought. For CD-ROMs there are further limitations: only single-user licences are financed by the DFG; and you can only buy specialized bibliographical databases, reference sources and fulltexts, but not software, newspapers or CD-ROM versions of generally available online databases. By buying a CD-ROM with DFG support, the library commits itself to do searches in this CD-ROM for users within Germany for free. Imagine having to do that with books or journals!

- A new acquisition program, as far as the DFG is concerned, covers **electronic journals**. Since 2002, the DFG has been running a pilot scheme where it supports „acquisition“ of **electronic-only journals** with 75% of the cost of a basic licence. Possible further pay-per-view costs are borne jointly by the library and the DFG; at the moment, this is fixed at a flat-rate of Euro 2,50 per view. Similar to microforms and CD-ROMs, the application (=Beantragung) has to list the titles separately, with no parallel edition to print-journals being allowed. The libraries have to ensure the access also if license is discontinued and the archiving of the journal.

- Online databases still remain **outside** the regular funding by the DFG. The concept of a single-user licence or a campus-licence being agreed between publisher and library interferes with the DFG's principle of putting the resources it sponsors at the disposal of users in all of Germany. However, *the DFG is currently financing a project at the Bavarian State Library in Munich exploring approaches for sponsoring online databases, too.*

## Co-ordination in the cooperative system of special subject collections

- **Guidelines for delimiting special subjects and procuring literature for related subjects**

(<http://webis.sub.uni-hamburg.de/ssg/text/allgemein.html>)

- **No external co-ordination**
  - **Except for a few types of publications**

March 2004

Klaus Kempf

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The cooperative system of special subject collections is about as complex as its name suggests. To minimize, as far as possible, expensive and time-consuming co-ordination the DFG has issued a highly detailed set of „**guidelines for delimiting special subjects and procuring literature**“. By participating in the networking system the libraries commit themselves to respect these guidelines.

These rules regard duplicate acquisitions for related special subjects – which are permitted to some degree --, the acquisition of special kinds of literature (such as light fiction, non-conventional literature and official publications) and the procurement of information resources in light of linguistic, thematic and regional aspects. However, it has to be emphasized that it is very hard to come up with general rules, say, to define the “Spitzenbedarf” to be funded by the DFG. Especially in the regional “subjects”, to give just one example, “grey literature”, while not being highly specialized academic literature, may count as “Spitzenbedarf”, because it is rare, hard to get, and may be important for academic research.

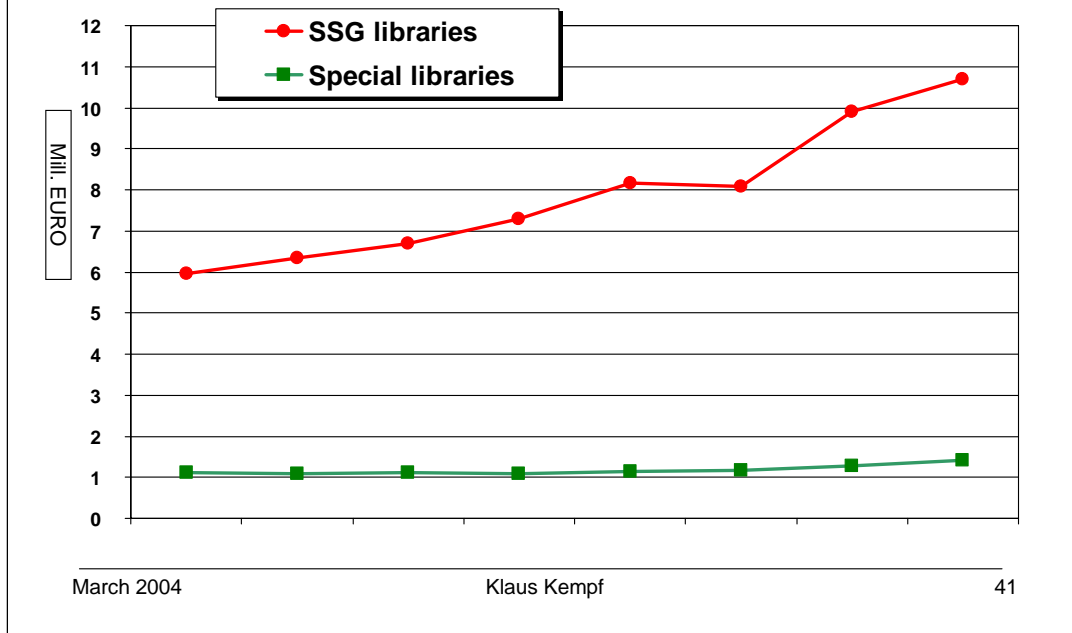
Up to now, **no external co-ordination** has been established between the system’s libraries, or using the DFG’s sub-committees, except for a few types of publications. However, the DFG’s administrative office itself has some kind of auditing function by requiring from the libraries highly detailed annual reports about the use of the grants.

In the case of microform publications, which are often extremely expensive, a small co-ordinating center has been established at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, where libraries have to enquire before acquisition whether any other library already has the desired microform publication or is planning to buy it. Yet, in this area there usually exist good contacts between SSG libraries, so certain microform collections embracing more than one „special subject“ may be bought by two libraries sharing the DFG’s grant for one collection and putting in more money from their own budget in response.

Now, you may wonder whether the system also works in other areas, such as book acquisition, without prior consultation between the libraries. In fact, it does work quite well. Yet, this may be true only as long as the DFG continues to largely approve the requests of the participating libraries. With funds getting scarcer and competition between the libraries growing, the system’s future ability to work remains to be seen.



## DFG grants for special subject collections 1995 - 2002



In the past, we have been fortunate in actually seeing a substantial increase in DFG grants for special subject collections. In all, the DFG put about 11 million Euro into the special subject collections in 2002. The chart shows that during the past decade the DFG's grants grew by about 10% a year.

As a result, some impressive collections have been established: currently, subscriptions to about 23,000 academic journals are financed in this way, which are thus made available to users all over Germany. The annual increase in foreign-language monographs amounts to c. 90,000 units. Taking into account the publications bought with the libraries' own funds, the system makes available about 30,000 current journals and, each year, about 120,000 new monographs to the academic community .

## 2. Problems and new trends

Since the system was created in the 1950s, the basic conditions have fundamentally changed. This makes it necessary to verify whether it is necessary to adapt its principles and procedures to the changed environment and the needs of the scientific community of today. It is evident that the system has reached a turning-point. This is of course also a consequence of the dramatically changed economic situation in our country and the enormous financial budget deficit of the responsible government bodies.

## Problems and new Trends

### ➤ **Exponential costs vs. shrinking budgets**

- **Exponential costs vs. shrinking budgets:** The present aim of the system, as I mentioned already, is to procure as completely as possible all domestic and foreign publications to ensure that one copy at least of each publication is available in Germany, no matter how highly specialized it may be. In view of exponential growth in the number of publications, both printed and electronic, and the immense expansion of academic interests, which was scarcely predictable in the 1950s, this aim is becoming more and more unrealistic. This growth leads to ever higher expenditures not just relating to acquisition, but also relating to cataloguing, storage and, of course, usage. Moreover, price inflation, especially in the case of STM journals, and, on the other hand, shrinking acquisition budgets aggravate the situation for the libraries. Faced with this cost explosion, some SSG libraries are increasingly unable to keep complete their special subject collection by buying the related basic and/or standard literature – which they have to do with their own budget - and to provide their financial share for the acquisition of highly special literature. And it is obvious that the DFG will have to cut its commitments in the future, too. Even more important, there will have to be more thorough evaluations of holdings and usage to find out whether supply and demand are really matched. Increased competition for grants will then inevitably lead to increased competition between libraries, something that has been quite unusual up to now.

## Problems and new trends

### ➤ **Concentration vs. fragmentation**

- **Concentration vs. fragmentation:** An evident lack of the cooperative system from the beginning was the overcrowding number of participating libraries and the consequent fragmentation of the system. This fact in former years led to the foundation of some central special libraries. This reasonable partial process of concentration by bundling responsibilities and resources in adequately sized institutions were interrupted by the German reunification. Following the reunification for more general political reasons the Wissenschaftsrat (German Science Council), the German University Council and finally the federal government promoted the idea to extend the existing cooperative system to former East German libraries. To ensure their participation, many „subjects“, just fragmental, had to be further split up and reassigned in 1995. This led to a still more complex and fragmented system. Not only for users, but also for librarians it lost any transparency and became very awkward. Because, as a result and to prevent wasteful duplications, the administration of the system and the coordination input of the single participating institutions had to increase considerably.

## Problems and new trends

### ➤ **Co-operation vs. Competition**

- **Co-operation vs. competition:** As mentioned at the beginning of my paper, cooperation is the basic element of the German scholarly library system and over the years this idea has become something of a genetic quality of German libraries. But today this principle which brought a lot of advantages for all the “family members” is no longer undisputed. The recently started university reform in particular preaches competition and the advantages of profiling and the concentration on one’s own strengths. It also enforces the libraries, mainly university libraries, to think about their core activities in this new context and so to rethink their participation in the special subject collection initiative. Where the library responsibilities for certain subjects and/or regions no longer coincide with the (perhaps changed) preferences of the respective university for certain subjects – maybe today it is biology instead of languages and literature where the library also had its traditional commitment to the SSG plan – the library finds itself at a crossroad. Normally, it will not get the resources to continue its engagement in the SSG-Plan and it will run the risk of having to give up its participation altogether (as recently happened to the UB Tübingen).

## Problems and new trends

### ➤ Access vs. ownership

**-Access vs. ownership:** Another challenge is presented by electronic media. The rapid development of digital information and communication technology is leading to the overcoming of the traditional concept of collection building and therefore also of cooperative collection development. The traditional „just-in-case“ collecting even in the field of specialised and highly specialised publications is increasingly being replaced by „just-in-time“ collecting. In addition, there is the advent of a so-called “enlarged collection idea”: Its no longer enough to put only one’s own (physical) holdings as completely as possible at the users’ disposal, the library also has to give him access to digital information resources (licenced or freely available), but not necessarily within its physical realm. In times of such „hybrid“ libraries, when local ties are loosening, the SSG libraries’ traditional claim to aim at completeness in their local holdings is beginning to look hackneyed (= abgedroschen) and outdated. Rather, it has to be considered whether part of the foreign literature really has to be acquired within a national shared collection building plan or maybe this could be the right moment to start with international partnerships aimed at sharing resources and saving money for both partners. Of course, before starting with this idea the state of the arts needs a detailed analysis by single (discipline-based) subject and/or geographical area. Not for all subjects and in particular not for all geographical areas of the world renouncing national independent collection building in favour of international partnerships will be reasonable and really cost saving.

By supporting the creation and establishing of so-called „virtual special libraries“ the DFG has accepted some of the new challenges and begun to transform the system of shared special subject collections into a network of service and collection centers.

## Virtual special subject libraries

- **since 1996**
- **23 projects, each relating to one subject**

Since 1996 SSG libraries have been encouraged to build up „**virtual special subject libraries**“ which facilitate service-oriented access for researcher to digital information. Up to now, 23 separate projects have received grants.

These „virtual special subject libraries“ are meant to be „hybrid“, that is, they offer both digital (for example databases) and printed resources (for example lists of newly published, acquired and catalogued books) relating to their subject. The crucial point is whether something is relevant to the subject, not in which form it comes along.

See for instance the “virtual library for Eastern Europe” on the **next page!**

**vifaost**  
virtuelle  
fachbibliothek  
osteuropa

**Start** Start

## Virtuelle Fachbibliothek Osteuropa

Das Wissenschaftsportal für die Länder Ost-, Ostmittel- und Südosteuropas

ViFaOst bietet umfassende wissenschaftliche **Fachinformationen** zu **Geschichte, Kultur, Politik und Gesellschaft** der Länder und Regionen Osteuropas.

- ▶ Projektbeschreibung
- ▶ Impressum
- ▶ Weitere Kooperationspartner
- ▶ Haftungsausschluss
- ▶ Osteuropa auf einen Blick

**Metasuche:**  
   
[\[Hilfe\]](#) [\[Tastatur\]](#)

**Linktipp**

**Mailinglisten**  
Eine Auswahl an Mailinglisten zu Osteuropa  
[Rezension lesen ...](#)

**Neu!**

**Neue Publikation in der Digitalen Osteuropa-Bibliothek: Sprache und Kultur**  
Andrea Schutte: Die jüdische Thematik im Werk Jiří Weils.

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▶ Neuerwerbungen  
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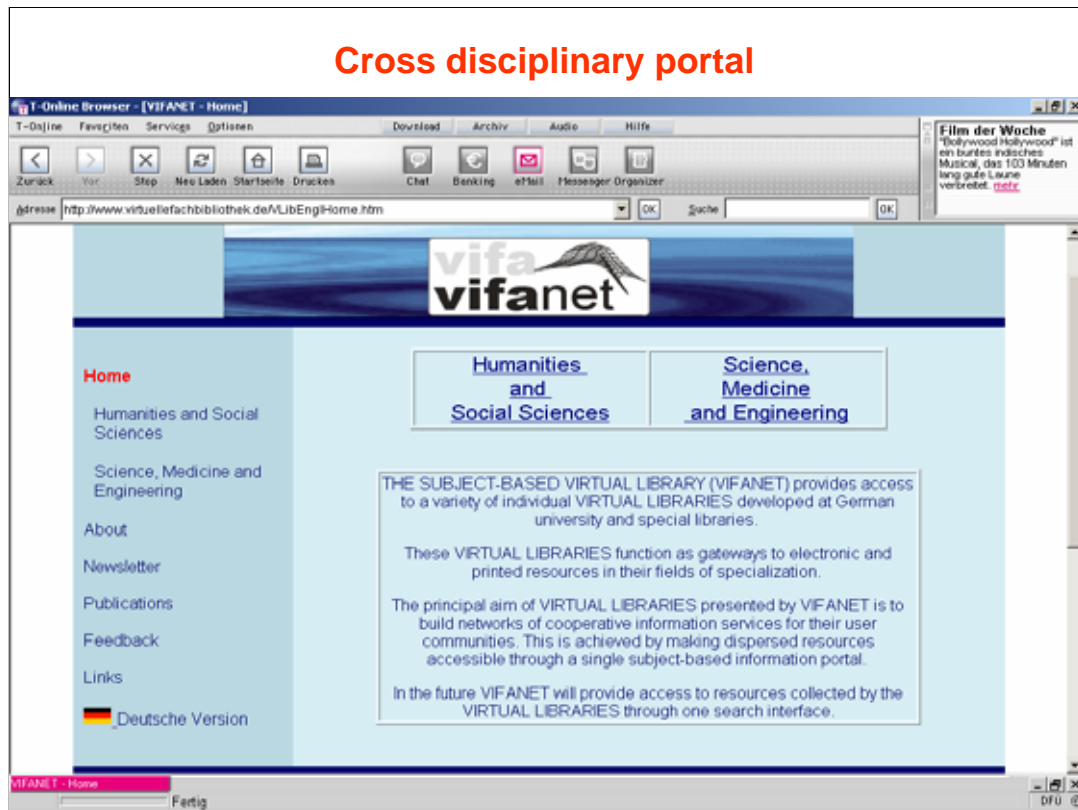
**Kooperationen**  
▶ Ethnodoc  
▶ Münchner Osteuropa-Bibliotheken

As a further aim, these separate single-subject projects are to be combined in one system across the disciplines, so as to provide one global academic portal.

A first step is the joint web-portal of the “virtual special subject libraries”: **ViFanet**



## Cross disciplinary portal



The decisive step towards a real inter-disciplinary web portal is the project called „Vascoda“, alluding to Vasco da Gama – see next page!

## **vascoda project**

<http://www.vascoda.de/index.html>

### **vascoda is the nucleus of a future „German research information portal“**

- Central access point to comprehensive scientific information in Germany.
- Co-operative network of important libraries and information providers in Germany and their **international partners**.
- The vascoda portal integrates resources of participating institutions in a systematic manner and offers a variety of search strategies.
- **vascoda** is designed to create an important venue for research by providing efficient access to a great variety of relevant resources.

Here, the virtual special libraries, certain information networks and the electronic journals library have entered a strategic alliance to offer their information holdings (print + digital) via a unique access point. This project is being funded jointly by the DFG and the federal ministry for education and research.

## **VI. Conclusion: International Partnerships could be a new cornerstone of the system?**

Last but not least, more or less as a conclusion of my paper, I would like to say a few words about the possibility of the internationalisation of our system or more precisely, to ask whether an international partnership at least for some aspects of the existing system is imaginable and could enhance its efficiency. First of all, let me remind you of the general conditions of cooperative collection development as just mentioned before: commitment, budget and infrastructure. I think there is no doubt that the required infrastructure support, also for an international partnership normally is given today. The aspects “commitment” and “budget issues” have to be discussed in every single case.

A perfect starting point could be the above-mentioned new aspect of the collection building strategy, to change from a just-in-case policy to a more just-in-time oriented acquisition policy, thus the foreign partner could act as a sort of lender of last resort. A very helpful infrastructure support could be the recently emerging subject- or area-based so-called information portals. They will ease information and communication between the partners considerably.

Taking into consideration a real and long-term oriented shared collection building both partners should start with realistic ideas about the possible results of this cooperation, but especially about the attending obstacles and problems. The background of my somewhat sceptical attitude are the results of our first attempts in the BSB to initiate an international partnership within an already existing structure “across the ocean”, which were not really convincing. But, as I believe you say in English, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. We shouldn't get discouraged too soon, but rather try to play an active role in the globalisation process, which no library will be able to ignore.