International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions
Fédération Internationale des Associations de Bibliothécaires et des Bibliothèques
Internationaler Verband der bibliothekarischen Vereine und Institutionen
Международная Федерация Библиотечных Ассоциаций и Учреждений
Federación Internacional de Asociaciones de Bibliotecarios y Bibliotecas

Cataloging of the Hand Press

A Comparative and Analytical Study of Cataloging Rules and Formats Employed in Europe

Prepared by
Henry L. Snyder and Heidi L. Hutchinson

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

PREFACE

In November, 1990 the Director General of the British Library, London Branch, J. Michael Smethurst, and the director of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Dr. Franz Georg Kaltwasser, convened a conference in Munich to consider Retrospective Cataloging and Conversion in Europe 1500-1900.[a] At the close of the conference the delegates requested the organizers to appoint a Working Group whose charge was "to plan a European programme for co-operation between major European libraries with scholarly and national collections for the inter-availability of automated databases on equal terms at minimum cost under "not for profit arrangements."[b]

The members of the Working Group included Dr. Ann Matheson, National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh (Chair); Dr. Xavier Agenjo, Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid; Dr. Maria Luisa Cabral (succeeded by Fernanda Campos), Biblioteca Nacional, Lisbon; Mrs. Elly Cockx-Indestege, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, Brussels; Mrs. Odile Gantier (succeded by François Dupuigrenet-Desrusilles), Bibliothèque National, Paris; Dr. J.A. Gruys, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague; Dr. Klaus Haller, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich; Mrs. Gunilla Jonsson, Kungliga Biblioteket, Stockholm; Dr. Peter Rau, Universitätsbibliothek, Bonn; Mr. Winston Roberts, IFLA Headquarters; Dr. Maria Sicco, represented by Dr. Isa de Pinedo, Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo Unico delle Biblioteche Italiane e per le Informazioni Bibliografiche, Rome; Prof. Henry L. Snyder, University of California, Riverside (Expert adviser) and Mr. Michael Crump, the British Library (Secretary).

The Working Group early on decided to focus on the hand press era, to 1830 as the place to begin to create a cooperative European database and union catalog. To assist the Working Group in determining what materials were available to lay the foundations for a union catalogue, in analyzing the feasibility of loading files constructed under varying catalog rules and formats into a single database, and the steps which could be taken to facilitate the use of and access to such a file when it was created, I agreed to prepare this study. In fact, the first steps in creating a European union catalog had already been undertaken.

In a series of meetings of the Rare Books and Manuscripts Committee at the annual meetings of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) over a three year period from 1988 to 1990 I and the other individuals who attend those meetings learned of the existence of national and local cataloging projects being conducted throughout Europe that could be tapped to begin a European union catalog. As none of the records were available on line outside the country of origin, and some not even within the country, I proposed to the Research Libraries Group, Inc. (RLG) that we create a European Short Title Catalog (EuroSTC) file in the Research Libraries Information Network (RLIN) and load as many of these files as we could identify and obtain. By making the records available in North America we would be rendering a great service to the custodians of older book collections and also to the scholars who use them.

---

[a]. The proceedings of that conference have been published as Retrospective Cataloguing in Europe: 15th to 19th Century Printed Materials. Proceedings of the international conference, Munich, 28th-30th November 1990. Ed. by Franz Georg Kaltwasser and John Michael Smethurst. München: Saur, 1992.

[b]. The full charge and the objectives adopted by the Working Group are included in Chapter One, section five, below.

Dr. John Haeger, Vice President for Programs and Planning at RLG endorsed the proposal enthusiastically and obtained the approval of the President of RLG, James Mihalko. With the support of an officer's grant from the Andrew Mellon Foundation I began to visit libraries in Western Europe to obtain the files to load into the Early Printed Books file, as it came to be called, in RLIN and to lay the foundations for a European union catalog, the EuroSTC. When the need for a report of this kind became apparent I applied to the Council on Library Resources for funds to support two colleagues whose expertise was critical to preparing this report. When the grant was approved I engaged Heidi L. Hutchinson, a librarian in the technical services department of the Tomas Rivera Library at the University of California, Riverside (UCR).

Heidi has unique talents which she brought to this report. She has degrees from library schools and has been employed as a professional librarian in both Germany and the United States. Her linguistic fluency and technical proficiency have been invaluable. Heidi is wholly responsible for Chapter Two and has contributed vitally to the other sections as well. I was also able to engage Laura A. Stalker, the assistant director of the Center for Bibliographical Studies at UCR, which I direct, to work on the report. As chairperson of the Bibliographic Standards Committee of the Rare Books and Manuscripts Section of the Association of College and Research Libraries within the American Library Association, and as supervisor of the English Short-Title Catalogue her contribution has also been invaluable. It was presented first to the Working Group and then by the Working Group to the conveners. With their approval it was distributed to the delegates to the reconvened conference at the end of January, 1992.

We have had a great deal of help in preparing this report. The members of the Working Group, in particular, made comments more than once on both the report itself and also the section related directly to their responsibilities. We have also had critiques and received information from some of their colleagues and representatives from each of the institutions discussed herein. For all this assistance, and for the support of RLG, the Council on Library Resources and the Andrew Mellon Foundation we want to express our great thanks. The American-Scandinavian Foundation has made a grant to the Center which is enabling us to develop and then mount the file in RLIN. These underwriters deserve our special gratitude.

Henry L. Snyder
Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research
The University of California, Riverside
15 September 1993

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

I. UNIVERSAL BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONTROL IN EUROPE

A. The Challenge

The printed archive of our civilization defines and preserves our culture. It encompasses the accumulated wisdom of man, the cultural and historical record of our world. The products of the printing press, which was introduced into Europe little more than five centuries ago, have largely replaced the manuscript as the primary means of conveying and preserving text to the reading public. The sheer volume of the output of the press has ensured the survival of much of that previous record, manuscript and even oral, that would otherwise have been lost. Yet the printed record, too, is perishable. In the hand press era, which extends to the second quarter of the nineteenth century, the cost of rag paper and the labor-intensive manual printing presses resulted in limited press runs of most impressions. In the succeeding era of the machine press that employed bleached and sized wood pulp paper, the size of press runs could be greatly increased. But the deterioration and ultimate self-destruction of the paper stock has introduced another factor that threatens to destroy that record. Aside, then, from the oft sought desire to obtain bibliographic control over the products of the press, the urgent need to create a cooperative preservation program has intensified the drive to assert that control.

B. The Problem Posed by Conflicting and Often Incompatible Cataloging Rules

Universal bibliographic control is the ultimate goal, but the task is so daunting that some reasonable division of that task, by time span, by area of production, by genre, or some other scheme, is essential. Through the development of machine-readable cataloging and the establishment of bibliographic utilities and the capacity for shared cataloging, great strides have been made. But the sharing of records on an international basis is compromised by the national if not regional or local nature of cataloging practices which are often contradictory and incompatible. Attempts to introduce standardization in rules and acceptable levels of data in practice have met with considerable success. The International Standard for Bibliographical Description (ISBD) and the complementary publication for antiquarian books (ISBD(A)) have been the most successful examples of cooperation in planning on an international scale. The development of the format for Machine-Readable Cataloging (MARC), in the United States, and the adoption in North America and the United Kingdom of a joint set of cataloging rules have also had a substantial influence on setting standards elsewhere. The immense number of records created under these standards and their availability to other countries through the efforts of the Library of Congress, the major American bibliographic utilities, and a host of commercial vendors, may have more to do with the acceptance of *Anglo-American Cataloging Rules*, 2nd ed.,revised (AACR2R) and MARC than any formal review and acceptance of those rules by other nations.

As a corpus of records of varying detail and forms is gradually amassed, and the pace of retrospective conversion of the great library catalogs of Europe picks up, the problems of compatibility and standards are accentuated. As we study what has been accomplished and

what remains to be accomplished to establish full bibliographic retrieval over the output of the Western press, we are once more faced with the question of division of responsibility. The need for international cooperation based upon divisions by time period and country of origin becomes ever more apparent.

C. The Requirements of Different Time Periods

We treat these periods in reverse order to conclude with the earliest time period which is the focus of this report.

1.   The Era of National Bibliographies and National Magnetic Tape Services, Circa 1970 to the Present

In terms of time periods there would seem to be three major periods, roughly defined, which can guide our systematic efforts to develop retrospective bibliographies. The most recent period is that covered by the machine-readable national bibliographies for current publications that have become a fixture in virtually every Western country. Although there is no universal starting date,[1] and this period predates the introduction of the computer for use as a cataloging tool and for data storage, the subsequent automation of these catalogs inaugurated a whole new era in shared cataloging. In most countries a national scheme was adopted by some date in the 1970s or the late 1960s. For this period the desired bibliographic control is at hand.

2.   From the Introduction of Machine Printing to the Computerized National Bibliographies, 1825-1970

The second time period is that beginning with the introduction of the machine press and ending with the creation of the national bibliographies described above, or roughly 1825 to 1970. For this period the retrospective conversion of the great national library catalogs of the Library of Congress and the British Library - to which we can soon add many more from Spain, France, Germany and most other European countries - can provide access in the first instance. The rapid deterioration of book stocks because of chemically damaged paper and the urgent need for preservation programs - whether by treating still usable copies or by microfilming - dictates the creation of a comprehensive file as rapidly as possible. Practical considerations, the sheer number of items printed, the nature of the material and the preservation problem necessitate the employment of retroconversion of existing records rather than recataloging as the essential first step to achieve some form of bibliographic control. Once that has been achieved, and the most urgent preservation task addressed, the long range task of creating full bibliographic records to modern standards can be tackled.

3. The Hand Press Era, 1450-1825

There remains the third period, the first chronologically, that of the hand press era. The hand press era of printing forms a coherent whole during which both the technology and economics of the book trade remained remarkably stable. Although the transition from hand to machine printing was by no means an overnight phenomenon, the end of the eighteenth century or the

---

[1]. For retrospective service offered by individual countries the dates are Denmark, 1976; Germany, 1972; France, 1975; Great Britain, 1950; Italy, 1975; Netherlands, 1981; Norway, 1971; Spain, 1976; and Sweden, 1976.

first quarter of the nineteenth century provides an appropriate and convenient cut-off point before which the same research methods and descriptive standards can be applied. The different method of production, and the resulting differences that distinguish the product, call for a modification of the cataloging rules developed for modern books.[2].

This is a theme emphasized repeatedly by leading bibliographic authorities. Moreover, the introduction of the machine press at the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth century resulted in an exponential increase in both the number of titles and size of editions printed. The superior durability of the products of the hand press, though still perishable, means that the materials will survive indefinitely if properly stored and conserved. The surviving artifacts of this period are concentrated increasingly in major public repositories where they are given priority treatment. At the same time the number of recorded copies of any single impression may be very small, especially of ephemera, single sheet material, newspapers, and tracts.

D. The Special Requirements of the Hand Press

The idiosyncracies of hand printing, which could produce as many variants as copies printed, require more detailed and sophisticated bibliographic records than the products of the machine press. Mere retrospective conversion of brief list catalogs will simply not enable one positively to identify an edition or even a title. And we must note also the limited number of surviving copies due to the limited output of hand presses. To give only one example, there are approximately 300,000 separate records in the *Eighteenth-Century Short-Title Catalogue*, and we estimate the total will be no more than 350,000. An analysis of the file early in 1991 revealed that a third of those items exist in only a single recorded copy. And this with much of the contributed records of nearly fifteen hundred libraries world-wide entered in the file. Even in so well-studied a period as that covered by *A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, & Ireland and of English Books Printed Abroad 1475-1640 (STC)*,[3] the English STC cataloging team at the Henry E. Huntington Library has already identified several new editions in this well-reported collection, because of the full bibliographic record we are producing.

II. THE DREAM OF UNIVERSAL BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONTROL

A. Pioneering Efforts

From the early years of printing history there have been pioneering efforts to achieve broad bibliographic control, starting with Conrad Gesner's *Bibliotheca Universalis* in 1545. Later examples include Martin Lipen's *Bibliotheca realis universalis omnium materium* (1679-1685), and Christoph Hendreich's *Pandectae Brandenburgicae Continentes* (1699) of which only volume

---

[2]. This is the *raison d'etre* of ISBD(A).

[3]. 2nd ed., ed. by Katharine Pantzer, 3 vols. (1976-1990).

I (A-B) appeared. The last such attempt, Theophil Georgi's *Allgemeines Europäisches Bücher-Lexicon* was completed in 1758. The grand scheme of Sir Anthony Panizzi and his ambitious plans for a general catalog of the library of the British Museum may be the first example of a large-scale, international catalog undertaken by a national library for the period from Gutenberg to the present that was remarkably comprehensive for European printing, reflecting the equally grand acquisition scheme laid down by Panizzi and carried on to some degree by his successors. If the *General Catalogue of Printed Books* of the British Museum presents one marker, then the *National Union Catalog*, produced by the Library of Congress, must represent another, and perhaps the last, attempt to encompass a broad range of the Western press in one manual product.

B. Period-Oriented Union Catalogs

On another level the ambitious *Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke* represents a pioneer modern effort to provide a complete retrospective catalog on an international scale for a limited time span. The goal was to create a definitive bibliography of incunables. But the glacial pace at which that catalog is progressing,[4] further complicated by two world wars interspersed with depressions and the four-decade division of Germany, does not augur well for control of later centuries through the same process. But just as the computer revolutionized the process and medium of achieving universal bibliographic control, rendering the earlier examples in many ways obsolete, so too it offered a realistic possibility for achieving the same goal in a rational time frame.

C. The Development of National Union Catalogs

The *Gesamtkatalog* is only one example of a comprehensive printed bibliography. The conference on retrospective cataloging and conversion of European books printed before 1901, convened by the British Library and the Bavarian State Library in Munich in November, 1990, revealed the advances that have already been made in individual countries in the creation of national retrospective bibliographies. Some countries have projects well-advanced, some only in the talking stage, but the will and desire to create national bibliographies in every country seemed very clear. Moreover, the progress already made in several countries demonstrates without doubt that a machine-readable, national bibliography of the hand-printed book is a realistic and attainable goal. For the purposes of this statement we define national as a specific country and its dependencies. For national bibliographies we mean a set of records reflecting the total monographic[5] production of the press of that country. We also extend that to mean a union catalog, for it would contain all recorded holdings. By restricting the definition to monographic production we do not mean to imply that graphic and serial material is any less worthy of consideration. They do require different cataloging rules and approaches.

---

[4]. The first seven volumes were published between the wars. Since it resumed publication in 1972 only two further volumes have been published.

[5]. A letterpress imprint of a single title or collection of titles issued as complete in itself, or as a complete volume in a multi-volume set, as opposed to a serial, a title published at regular intervals, the issues normally numbered.

D. Existing National Union Catalogs

Smaller European countries, where the output to be treated is more manageable have, in fact, produced national bibliographies from the beginning of printing and extending into the era of the machine press. Such is the case in Denmark[6] and Finland[7], the latter in progress, as is that of Estonia. For countries with larger outputs to contend with, the catalogs are not so ambitious. Great Britain set one standard with its *Short Title Catalogue*, first published in 1926. It was extended by Donald Wing in his *Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and British America and of English Books Printed in Other Countries 1641-1700 (Wing)*, which was published in three volumes between 1945 and 1951. The Spanish *Patrimonio Bibliográfico*,[8] organized by century and extending to 1900, is the most ambitious in terms of chronological coverage. Many countries have published national union catalogs of incunables. The Dutch produced a catalog for the first forty years of the sixteenth century,[9] the Swedish one for the whole of the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[10] In terms of manual catalogs the most impressive may be the German sixteenth century catalog, which, though still in progress, has already produced some ninety volumes containing nearly 90,000 entries.[11] The first alphabetic survey has nearly been completed with a supplemental survey to follow, which, it is estimated, will contain another 50,000 to 60,000 entries.

E. Machine-Readable National Union Catalogs

Three other printed catalogs deserve mention in this place, the *Censimento delle Edizioni Italiane del XVI Secolo*, the seventeenth century (1641-1700) English catalog compiled by Donald Wing[12] which continues *The Short-Title Catalogue* (STC), and the Spanish *Patrimonio Bibliográfico* covering the whole press to 1900. Hard copy editions of these catalogs were the initial goal,

---

[6]. Bruun, Chr[istian] V: Bibliotheca danica. Systematisk fortegnelse over den danske literatur fra 1482 til 1830, efter samlingerne i det Store kongelige bibliothek i Kjobenhavn. Med supplementer fra Universitetsbibliotheket i Kjobenhavn og Karen Brahes bibliothek i Odense. Udgivet fra det Store kongelige bibliothek ved Chr. V. Bruun. 4 vols. Kjobenhavn, Gyldendal, 1877-1902.

[7]. The Finnish National Bibliography 1488-1927, a retrospective database, is machine-readable only.

[8]. Catálogo colectivo del patrimonio bibliográfico Español produced by the Biblioteca Nacional. It is divided into centuries. The volumes for the fifteenth century have been published. The initial volumes for the seventeenth and nineteenth century have appeared. Work is progressing on each of the century subdivisions.

[9]. M.F.A.G. Campbell, Annales de la typographie néerlandaise au xv⁰ siècle (La Haye: 1874-90) and M.E. Kronenberg, Nederlandsche bibliographie van 1500 tot 1540 ('s-Gravenhage: 1923-71). These two bibliographies provide coverage for both the present-day Netherlands and Belgium. Belgium alone is continued by Belgica typographica (in progress, 2 vols. published.)

[10]. I. Collijn, Sveriges bibliografi intill å 1600. 1-3. Uppsala: 1927-38 and I. Collijn, Sveriges bibliografi 1600-talet. Uppsala: 1942-44.

[11]. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek: Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachbereich erschienenen Drucke des XVI. Jahrhunderts. VD 16. Hrsg. von der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek in München in Verbindung mit der Herzog-August-Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel. Redaktion Irmgard Bezzel. Vols 1-. Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1983-.

[12]. Donald A. Wing, editor, A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Published in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales and British America and of English Books Printed in Other Countries 1641-1700, second edition (New York: 1972-1988); third edition, volume one, in progress.

and they are slowly appearing, but the records are produced through the computer and machine-readable versions can be available sooner than the printed versions. Machine-readable national bibliographies are clearly the basic building blocks by which universal bibliographic control over the whole of the Western press can be attained. And though only the English-speaking world is close to achieving that goal - through the English Short Title Catalog - the adoption of similar comprehensive schemes in the Netherlands and Spain demonstrate the reasonableness and practicality of such projects. However, such ventures are at the present limited to those three. Most of the rest of the countries of Western Europe have no such projects in place.

From the model of five national projects already underway, those for Britain and North America, the Netherlands, Spain, Finland and Sweden, it would also appear that there is a consensus that the era of the hand-press has an integrity and special qualities that warrant national bibliographies, based upon full new bibliographic records taken from the book in hand, and restricted to that era.

F. Employment of Existing Records

Each country as it initiates a project to create a national bibliography must determine the most efficient means of organizing the project and how best to canvass collections to ensure coverage as complete as possible. Where existing printed bibliographies that cover much if not all of the ground exist, they form a logical starting place. The great retroconversion projects of manual catalogs of national and major regional library catalogs is an obvious start. The existence of those catalogs in machine-readable format also offers one method of approach to the creation of the bibliographic records. Are these existing catalogs used to identify titles and locations or are the records themselves to be taken over as an initial record to be amended with copy in hand?

Although this latter approach appears to have some merit, the near if not complete rejection of this approach would suggest it is not desirable. Catalogers find it is as easy to create a new record directly from the book as to modify an existing record, particularly when that record is very brief and cataloged according to idiosyncratic or outdated standards. The only exception to this practice of which we are aware is Denmark. The Royal Library plans to create a machine-readable file of early Danish imprints, but has not yet decided whether to key the handwritten shelf list for those collections in its library or convert the existing, printed national bibliography. The latter does not have shelfmarks, but is more accurate on many points than the handwritten catalog upon which it was based.[13]

The value of these large existing catalogs, manual or machine-readable, to identify titles for inclusion and locations is indisputable. The British Library created the base file of the Eighteenth-Century Short-Title catalogue (ESTC) by going through its printed General Catalog to identify relevant items and then paged them to create the records, *de novo*, book in hand. The planning for a seventeenth-century German catalog (VD 17) is based upon analyses of existing catalogs. Moreover, it has been proposed to use the machine-readable records obtained by retroconversion as a base.[14] None of the projects described in detail this report, however, has employed this practice.

---

[13]. Letter of 26 March 1993 from Dr. Niels Ivan Boserup, Royal Library, Copenhagen.

[14]. See Wolfgang Müller, Die Drucke des 17. Jahrhunderts im deutschen Sprachraum : Untersuchungen zu ihrer Verzeichnung in einem VD 17. Im Auftrag der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft vorgelegt. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1990. (Beiträge zum Buch- und Bibliothekswesen; Band 31.)

III. THE TASK

A. Scope: Materials

If Universal Bibliographic Control is to be achieved, what is the scope of the task that lies ahead? The first question one must ask is what is to be included? It seems evident from a review of the literature that printed material falls into at least three major subdivisions: monographs, serials and engraved material (principally maps and music). The distinction between monographs and serials is so well-enshrined, whether in cataloging rules or International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) publications, that it does not seem to require any special justification at this stage. Moreover, the major focus of this report and the Munich Conference as well as all the national bibliographies we consider in this report is on monographs. What constitutes a monograph may be a somewhat trickier question. In Great Britain, for example, book plates are included in STC but not in Wing and the ESTC. Other letterpress ephemera, playbills, printed forms, and business cards may be included or left out but the general outlines seem universally recognized. There is also a blurred distinction between serials and monographs. But again, a rule that separates them based on publication more frequent than once a year provides a reasonable dividing line. Whatever the distinctions that may be made in individual national projects that result in some slight variations from a norm, the problem of count and therefore projection of the work to be accomplished remains.

B. Scope: Chronological

As we have indicated above, the division between the hand press era as opposed to the machine press seems generally recognized. Any date one selects must remain arbitrary. ISBD(A) suggests

It is in these areas that the hand-printed books show certain distinct characteristics, which in western Europe at least become less distinct from about 1820 when machine processes of printing made format less significant and revolutionized the organization of the book trade.[15]

The first edition of AACR2R noted 1821 as the cut-off point for antiquarian material but dropped this definition in the second edition. 1851 is frequently the division point for old, rare or antiquarian material and cataloging related to it. 1801 is a convenient date for many wedded to the traditional century concept. But we suggest 1830 as the point where machine-printing is sufficiently adopted to form the watershed date, although 1825 is a common alternative. The Short Title Catalog Netherlands (STCN) goes to 1801, but another Dutch catalog, which covers the period to 1830, makes the bridge and allows for combining with the material on either side. The Swedish SE 17 goes to 1834; the Finnish national bibliography to 1825; the English STC (EngSTC) to 1801; the *Bibliotheca danica* to 1830. The Spanish *Patrimonio* also divides along centuries. In the words of the old English adage, "You pays your money and you takes your choice."

C. Scope: Geographic

Geography introduces a series of issues: 1. the definition of Europe; 2. national versus linguistic boundaries; and 3. colonial printing.

---

[15]. P. viii.

1. The Definition of Europe

Generally we have dealt with this issue as a Western European one. In part this is a political one, the major division of Europe into a Slavic/Cyrillic dominated, Eastern half and a Latin/Germanic Western half. The inclusions we have adopted in this report are pragmatic. We have, first of all, restricted ourselves to languages and countries employing the Roman as opposed to the Cyrillic alphabet.

The initial impetus and resources will come from the West. Scholars, that is users, in the West and the custodians and catalogers who organize and access collections can normally work within a family of Western languages and Roman based alphabets, but few cross the wall erected by Cyrillic alphabets and Slavic languages. It is also a matter of access and collections. The collections of the libraries which we must survey broadly divide along the same lines, although there is much Western material in Eastern European libraries and some Cyrillic/Slavic material in Western European libraries.

The second relates to bibliographical control. For a variety of reasons that do not need detailed explanation here the libraries of Eastern Europe, because of more limited resources and more primitive catalogs, will find it much more difficult to participate initially in a European union catalog although they must be included. We hope that a base file of records created by the major Western libraries and countries may ultimately help them to improve access to their own collections. Unquestionably their cooperation must be encouraged and their efforts integrated into a European-wide effort as early as possible.

There are as always blurred distinctions to be recognized and compromises to be made. Records of texts in Slavic or Finno-Hungarian languages which employ the Roman alphabet are much easier to assimilate technically though the pervasive lack of familiarity of the languages themselves among Western scholars and librarians remains a formidable barrier. We have included the Finnish national bibliography because it is available as a prototype and we would expect to include others as they are developed.[16] If the Estonian national bibliography, now in progress, were converted to machine-readable format it would constitute another logical candidate for inclusion, especially as a large percentage of the early publications were in German.

2. National Boundaries

The problem of national boundaries may not be too great an issue, if considered narrowly, as it seems proper and inevitable that the organization and construction of a European union catalog will be accomplished along national lines. The Danish union catalog, currently manual but to be converted, always includes Norway and Schleswig-Holstein, both areas that were under Danish political control throughout the hand press area and beyond. Norway willing, since the catalog purports to be complete for that current nation, this might not seem to be an issue. But what of Schleswig-Holstein, which would clearly seem to be the responsibility of Germany? There is the possible conflict with linguistic boundaries, related to former national boundaries, that must be faced.

---

[16]. We understand, for example, that there are plans underway to create a Hungarian union catalog that would meet the standards discussed elsewhere in this report.

Those national projects which have been initiated all take as their purview all imprints within their current political boundaries as well as all imprints in their language without. These can create a great deal of duplication if not controlled. The EngSTC includes titles in Dutch printed in England; the STCN includes titles in French printed in the Netherlands. What about countries which share a language, the Netherlands and Belgium; France, Belgium and Switzerland; Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Poland, etc.? For the purposes of the statistics offered below, we have made compromises along linguistic lines, recognizing what we believe is the practice in some instances.

3. Colonial Printing

There is the further issue of what constitutes a European press. Does that include the output of areas outside Europe that were under European control for all or part of the hand press era? The EngSTC includes North America and that has created no controversy of which we are aware. That includes French printing in Quebec as well as English (and Spanish and German, etc.) printing in what is now Canada and the United States. Would a French union catalog also include Quebec? Latin America, the Philippines and the Dutch East Indies would seem logical candidates for the Spanish and Portuguese union catalogs. We understand that the *Patrimonio* will include Latin American imprints in Spanish but not in Latin. Who will take responsibility for including Latin American imprints in Latin if colonies are considered appropriate candidates for inclusion, the Vatican? And finally, what about non-Roman printing in colonial possessions? India falls within the purview of the ESTC. The project has obtained, for example, records of unique Tranquebar printings in the library of the Frankische Stiftung in Halle. But as well as employing German and Latin they also employ Tamil. Do these Tamil titles have a place in a European union catalog? In practical terms perhaps it is only Latin America that may still be a subject for discussion, as North America is already included in the EngSTC and outside Latin America and possibly the Philippines we assume there is relatively little printing in European languages in the rest of the world before 1801 if not 1831.

D. The Estimated Size of a European Union Catalog

Estimates are notoriously difficult and unreliable. One never really knows until one has done the job. And, of course, when is the job completed? When can the canvass be considered exhaustive? And perhaps most intriguing of all, what is the scope when one considers all the ramifications we have attempted to delineate above? For the purposes of this estimate we have limited the analysis to Western Europe (again, a political as much as a geographic definition) and have accepted the figures obtained primarily from the members of the Working Group[17] without considering too closely to what extent they may overlap (if language as opposed to political considerations determined the scope) and sidestepping the colonial issue.

a.   Incunables

Incunables are a special category as there is already an international file in construction as well as national bibliographies for most countries. The editor of the Incunable Short-Title Catalogue (ISTC), Dr. Lotte Hellinga, estimates the total number of recoverable items at 30,000.

---

[17]. Elly Cockx-Indestege (Belgium), Peter Rau (Germany), Isa de Pinedo (Italy), J.A. Gruys (Netherlands), Gunilla Jonsson (Sweden). Erland Nielsen (Denmark), Jussi Nuorteva (Finland) and Mercedes Dexeus (Spain) also provided information. In some cases I have incorporated major portions of their responses without quotes and herewith apologize for such plagiarism!

The two largest figures are for Italy and Germany, each estimated at 10,000. The Low Countries add another 2,300.

b. Belgium

For the sixteenth century 16,000 is the best estimate. There are less data available for the seventeenth century and indeed the only figure we have to work with is a figure of 225,000 for the items preserved in the National Library for the period to 1830. For the period after 1600, therefore, we have extrapolated figures for Belgium from the Dutch estimates, based on a comparison of the Dutch and Belgian figures for the sixteenth century.

c. Denmark/Norway/Schleswig-Holstein

The Danish national librarian has estimated that there are 200,000 entries before 1831 in the printed Danish national bibliography. That includes Norway and Schleswig-Holstein as well. The former creates no problem but the latter will overlap with German estimates. The total must be reduced therefore to eliminate the German imprints.

d. Finland

The Finnish national bibliography, which covers the period to 1825 and is now nearing completion, is expected to contain about 25,000 entries. As it includes books by Finnish authors printed outside Finland, there will be some overlap with other national bibliographies, but the number should not be very great.

e. France

We have no French source for an estimate. As a country it had the largest population in Western Europe. On the other hand the press was carefully controlled through most of our period. We have guessed that the figure should be less than that for Germany, but higher than that for Great Britain or Italy and finally arrived at a figure of 850,000. We take that to be the number of imprints in France and French-speaking Switzerland, but not French language imprints in the Low Countries or elsewhere in Europe.

f. Germany

For incunables we estimate 10,000. For the sixteenth century a figure of 150,000 has been projected by the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek for VD 16, the sixteenth-century Germany printed catalog. In the planning for a comparable catalog of the seventeenth century the figure of 265,000 has been estimated.[18] For the eighteenth century a figure of 575,000 has been adopted, based upon the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft sponsored study by Gose and Syré in which the number was placed between 500,000 and 600,000. For the first three decades of the nineteenth century Peter Rau has suggested 250,000-300,000. These totals are intended to reflect the German-speaking parts of Europe, not just contemporary Germany proper. For example, parts of Switzerland, all of Austria, part of what is now Poland, are embraced in these figures.

---

[18]. See the paper "Planning for a VD 17 project: estimates and prognosis" by Wolfgang Müller in Retrospective Cataloguing in Europe: 15th to 19th Century Printed Materials. Proceedings of the international conference, Munich, 28th-30th November 1990. Ed. by Franz Georg Kaltwasser and John Michael Smethurst. München: Saur, 1992.