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Comparing Cataloging Cultures in the US and Germany / Katalogisierungskulturen in den USA und Deutschland – ein Vergleich

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- **How does one become a cataloger?**

  Germany: 3 levels of employment: *Mittlerer Dienst* (mid-level grade): employee for information and media management. Prerequisites: secondary school exam ("Mittlere Reife") followed by 3 years of classroom instruction and practica, with concentrations in libraries, archival work, information and documentation, media agency or medical library. *Gehobener Dienst* (upper grade): qualifying exam for university studies ("Abitur") + study at a university of applied sciences ("Hochschule") in information management (4 years); *Höherer Dienst* (highest grade): civil service position. Prerequisites: Completion of studies at a Universität (any subject) + postgraduate studies (3 years)

  North America: following undergraduate education (Bachelor's degree), completion of a master's program leading to a Master of Library Science degree. Most programs offer at least one course in cataloging (although the number of cataloging courses offered has decreased in recent years). Many catalogers receive a significant portion of their training on the job, in a mentor relationship.

- **What do catalogers do?**

  North America: Most catalogers perform both descriptive cataloging and subject cataloging, and also classification and shelf-listing. In large libraries, specialization according to publication type (books, serials, non-book media). Division of labor: Role of the paraprofessional in "copy cataloging" – acceptance of record as is with minimal editing. Professional catalogers perform original and complex copy cataloging.

  Germany: Catalogers usually perform either descriptive cataloging or subject cataloging, but not both; in large libraries, specialization according to publication type.

- **Divergent traditions and outlooks**

    North America: Tradition shaped by Panizzi at the British Museum, by Charles Ammi Cutter, and by Seymour Lubetzky. Early adoption of dictionary catalogs as opposed to classified catalogs. Pragmatic approach (AACR was an attempt to make the rules more principle-based). AACR1 and AACR2 based on the Paris Principles and ISBD(M). Wider acceptance of corporate authorship. Wider use of uniform titles (for musical works, constitutions, laws, but in particular for series). Descriptive cataloging is governed by AACR2; subject cataloging is governed by the Library of Congress' Subject Cataloging Manual (N.B. The SCM applies primarily to topical headings; subject headings for persons, corporate bodies and works are formulated according to AACR2).

    Germany: *Regeln für die Alphabetische Katalogisierung* (RAK) introduced in the 1960's, concurrent with the first forms of electronic data processing; RAK replaced the Prussian Instructions. RAK is based on the Paris Principles and the first ISBD(M). Later on, additional RAK rules were developed for special types of publications (music, serials, etc.). Less corporate authorship than in AACR. Uniform titles for musical works, constitutions, laws, but not for series. Descriptive cataloging is governed by RAK; subject cataloging is governed by the *Regeln für die Schlagwortkatalogisierung* (RSWK). Descriptive and subject headings are now being harmonized.

    Both: Future rules will take into account the Statement of International Cataloging Principles of the IME-ICC and the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR) and Authority Data (FRAD). Work now underway on the cataloging code Resource Description and Access (RDA).

- **Specific points of difference in current cataloging practice**

    Access points for names

    North America: "Differentiation" of authors' names – in the case of authors with the same name, users are presented with a browsable index to choose from. Headings contain identifying dates and/or other identifying elements.
    Germany: "Individualisierung" of identical names was originally not provided for in RAK, but it has now been introduced into RAK and RSWK. It is applied in the authority files.

    Treatment of multi-volume works and monographic series

    Germany: Preference for hierarchical structures, with records for the parts linked hierarchically to a record for the whole. The planned changeover from the German format for data exchange (MAB) to MARC21 may affect this.
    North America: Preference for "flat" record structures, with each record able to stand alone.

    Use of linking technology

    Germany: Widespread use of links between authority records and bibliographic

records, along with the linking of bibliographic records to other bibliographic records.

North America: Not all library systems offer the capacity to link authority records to bibliographic records. Rise of commercial vendors who offer authority updating services ("authority vendors"). More interest in linking technologies now that OCLC has adopted this model in its WorldCat database.

"Cataloger's judgment"

North America: Rules encourage catalogers to apply their own judgment to specific cases.
Germany: Stronger emphasis on uniformity.

- **Cooperative Cataloging programs**

Shared authority files

Germany: Personennamendatei (PND) = Name Authority File; Gemeinsame Körperschaftsdatei (GKD) = Corporate Body Authority File; Schlagwortnormdatei (SWD) = Subject Headings Authority File .
North America: LC/NACO Authority File contains authority records for persons, corporate bodies, uniform titles, and subject headings.

- **Origin of bibliographic records: Where do they come from?**

North America: Role of OCLC and Library of Congress.
Germany: Deutsche Nationalbibliothek, MVB, ekz Bibliotheksservice GmbH, regional library networks, German Union Serials Catalogue: ZDB.

- **Challenges of the future**

Future role of libraries – cataloging codes -- formats in the information world -- cataloging of the future -- metadata -- semantic web