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The Royal Library of Denmark

Annual Report 1995

ERLAND KOLDING NIELSEN

Det kongelige Bibliotek, Copenhagen

The Royal Library is the National Library of Denmark, the University of Copenhagen Library for theology, the humanities, social sciences and law as well as the Danish Museum of Books and Printing.

The Royal Library is open to the public and comprises three service points in buildings on the Castle Island [Slotsholmen], in Fiolstraede and at Amager. Access is possible directly or through the public libraries, other libraries or research institutions, and the Library also takes part in international library cooperation.

The library in politics

In 1986-87 long-term plans concerning the future of the Royal Library were drafted comprising the physical structure, organization, resources and services, together with the setting up of new goals and strategies.

In continuation of this an extension and a renovation of the National Library, on the Harbour Front has been granted in 1993-98 as well as the building of new central stacks and an extension of the University Library functions at the University of Copenhagen Amager in 1993-97. Furthermore, public services will be extended and renovated at all three service points. The most extensive

building renovation is taking place at the Harbour Front with the construction of 'the Black Diamond' at Christians Brygge, which will be connected to the present library building on Slotsholmen (the Castle Island). This building is to be finished before the end of 1998.

Due to renovation of the old buildings on Slotsholmen the main building will be closed to the public from 1 July 1996 until the middle of 1998. During this period the users will be served from the access points in Fiolstraede and at Amager. A temporary reading room will be established at Amager.

Within the new buildings the collections of the Library will be reorganized and relocated; large parts will be placed on open shelves for public self service. This task will partly be fulfilled by addition of new staff, but mostly by the present staff with the consequence that ordinary activities have to be reduced during the planning and construction years.

As a consequence of the new buildings the appropriations for building operations and maintenance have been increased. With the opening of the new buildings the activities of the Library will be expanded, both with respect to extent and to goals and objectives. One of the implications of this is that the Library will increase its research, exhibitions, and other cultural activities, and the necessary appropriations will be stipulated in a contract between the Ministry of Culture and the Library on the total business activities of the Library for the years after 1997.

Legislation (legal deposit)

The importance of electronic documents is increasing. It has therefore been a priority at the library to adapt to receiving and handling this type of document. The legal deposit law in Denmark is from 1927 and does for obvious reasons not refer to electronic documents. The Royal Library has in cooperation with the State and University Library in Århus worked intensively on promoting

a revision of the legal deposit legislation. This is now under way. In the meantime the Royal Library has started the necessary changes in procedures for receiving digitized documents which at the moment are currently mostly in hard form (CD-ROM). The library has also launched a project analyzing the development of information in networks, thus enabling the library to receive electronic information whether it arrives in hard form (CD-ROM) or in dynamic form (networks and databases).

New building / construction problems

The Royal Library is renovating and constructing at all three service points. The renovation of the Royal Library in Fiolstraede is the last major change in a process started in 1992-93 to remodel the service point in Fiolstraede into a modern research library for the students and faculty of social sciences and law. The goal is to renovate the library with respect for the historic building yet giving students and faculty the best possible service with a good number of work stations giving access to all sorts of electronic information.

Construction of new central stacks, offices and university library facilities at Amager started in 1995. This extension will be completed in several stages. The first is a completion of new central stacks and offices for the library. The next stage is to enlarge the building and turn it into its final use as a modern library with open shelves.

Work on the Black Diamond, the extension on the Harbour Front, has until now mostly been visible outside where the routing of the road has had to be changed and excavations for the foundations is well under way. As the new building is to be connected to the present library building, staff will have to be temporarily relocated and extensive alteration and construction on the existing buildings has begun and will continue in the coming years.

Building activities at this intensive level create a variety of temporary changes. The Building Planning Office has in 1995 relocated 102 persons, 14.499 meters of books a.o. material thus clearing 47 offices and stacks, and this is only the beginning.

While architects, engineers and construction workers deal with the building, the library staff has started preparing the contents of the new library buildings. The IR-project (Information and Reference) prepares what information and reference tools are to be placed on open shelves when the library opens again. The first goal is to define an overall policy for information and reference works on open shelves relating to the three locations of the library and the specific functions thereof. The general concept has been agreed upon and the work on a more detailed level of choosing titles for the various information and reference collections has been begun.

The next step is the physical preparation of materials, the OK-project. A system has been developed and tried out which makes it possible to keep the material in the stacks as long as possible, preparing changes in the catalogue without having to handle the material more than once, i.e. when the label with the new physical position of the material is put in place.

Automation, data processing, retroconversion of already processed data

The core of the library, the online catalogue REX, has been changed, now running on a so-called twin-system, i.e. the catalogue is now split up onto two machines. The twin system is only a temporary answer to the needs of the library. The Royal Library has therefore in cooperation with three other big libraries of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs begun work on developing a national and institutional strategy for the library's edp-development and finding a replacement system as of 1997.

The most visible sign of the ongoing electronic development is the World Wide Web Service. The homepage of the Royal Library offers information on the library and its services, it offers full access to the library's online-catalogue REX by means of a specially developed WWW-interface, and the visitor can browse in part of the library's collection of prints and photographs, to mention but a few of the services which are under continued development.

An important part of the library's development of information technology is the DD-project. The purpose of the project is to develop a plan for giving the audience access to the library's collections in digitized form via Internet and establish the technical requirements for doing this. In short the goal is to establish Digitized collections on Document servers (hence the abbreviation DD) which can be distributed from the library's servers via WWW for use in as well as outside the library. Four main projects each consisting of a number of smaller projects have been started:

- Establishing digital servers and mass storage units on Internet, primarily for giving students and professors of the University of Copenhagen access to the library's collection of CD-ROM databases (a CWIS-system).
- Establishing digital collections
- Establishing a WWW-informations system for the Royal Library
- Promote access to and the use of Internet / WWW

Conservation and preservation of the collections

In 1995 the Department of Preservation was reorganized in three sections consisting of the Bookbinding & Conservation

Workshop, Photographic Studio and the Collections Inventory. The Department of Preservation works across all departments of the library and the Head of Preservation has the overall responsibility for preservation, binding and conservation. The Council of Preservation has as a result of this organizational change received a new mandate. In this forum the head of preservation, the board of directors and the department heads discuss and plan the politics of preservation thus making coordination and delegation easier.

The Department of Preservation lends its expertise to a number of external clients and work on a series of projects financed by outside sources such as the music collection of Carl Nielsen, the company archive of GN Store Nord (The Great Northern).

The photographic studio has begun preparations for working with digitized photography thus being able to service photographers as well as the publishing business with the latest technology.

Public relations

The library produced three major exhibitions in 1995.

Small State and Super Power. Danes and Russians meet. 1815 - 1995 produced in cooperation with the Danish National Archives and the Russian State Archives. The exhibition shows for the first time documents hitherto hidden in closed Russian archives. Many things changed with the system change in 1991, among others access to public archives. In 1993 a new law for Russian archives was adopted. The library's idea of showing documents pertaining to Danish Russian relations is but one of the results of the agreement of cooperation between the Danish and Russian Archives signed in 1993.

The exhibition *Clandestine Printing* was produced to commemorate the liberation at the end of World War II, 50 years

ago. The exhibition does not only show parts of the large and unique collection of illegal printing from World War II, it was also the first presentation of a major collection in the Danish Image Base on the Internet, as a series of photographs from the years of occupation are now scanned and accessible in the library's image base on the Internet.

The exhibition *F. L. Ae. Kuntzen (1761-1817) Dansk hofkapelmester 1795* (F. L. Ae. Kuntzen Danish Court Conductor 1795) is the last to be shown in the hall of library before we open again in new and enlarged surroundings. The exhibition will be shown in two institutions in Germany in 1996.

The 5th bookseminar took as usual place in the spring. The general theme was The Book in Denmark 1850-1920, including topics such as: translated literature in the end of the 19th century; the bibliography in Denmark at the end of the 19th century; technological influence on the art of illustration in the 19th century; the schoolbook and its use in the country; the development of dictionaries of technical terms in 19th century in Denmark.

International cooperation

The library is represented in a number of international organisations.