



Nazi Library Policy and Practice in Europe

International Conference

Organiser:	Bibliothèque nationale du Luxembourg
Coordinators:	Claude D. Conter, Jean-Marie Reding direction@bnl.etat.lu ; histoire-bibliotheque@bnl.etat.lu
Venue:	Bibliothèque nationale du Luxembourg 37D, Avenue John F. Kennedy, L-1855 Luxembourg
Date:	27-29 October 2022
Deadline:	20 December 2021

One of the tasks of the National Library of Luxembourg is to research the Luxembourg library landscape from the Echternach Scriptorium to the 21st century. The 'Nazi Library Policy and Practice in Europe' conference inscribes itself within this research focus. The aim is to describe the library landscape in a European comparison in the annexed and occupied territories.

The starting point of the conference is the observation that the library landscapes in Europe changed significantly as a result of the Nazi library policy. The library system was largely turned upside down after the Nazi party came to power in Germany: in addition to new appointments and the political-ideological reshaping of libraries, the 'Generalreferat für das Bibliothekswesen' and the 'Reichsbeirat für Bibliotheksangelegenheiten' also determined changes with regard to training, usage, examination or cataloguing regulations, such as the introduction of the German Union Catalogue. Above all, however, a fundamental reform of stock policy and a division into different categories of libraries, each with different tasks, were undertaken: academic libraries, 'Volksbüchereien' (local public libraries) or school libraries. Academic libraries, i.e. state, regional and university libraries, had a less rigid stock policy than the 'Volksbüchereien', which became a central steering instrument of Nazi educational and cultural policy, because of a thematic and interdisciplinary collection mandate. In contrast to the 'Volksbüchereien', the academic libraries were largely spared the 'purges' of the mostly incomplete lists and inventories of 'harmful and undesirable literature', although access to and use of academic libraries was restricted or blocked; the procedures also differed from library to library and location to

location; even the listing of titles in the main catalogue or in special catalogues was handled differently in the various districts.

While these changes have already been analysed in detail, the situation in the territories, which were annexed, occupied and governed by Nazi Germany, remains poorly explored. Thus, there are only isolated studies on how libraries were dissolved, library holdings confiscated and discarded, or new forms of libraries introduced in these countries. The conference will thoroughly describe and analyse these processes of institutional realignment. As has already been demonstrated many times in recent studies on Nazi cultural policy in Europe, it can be assumed that a uniform practice did not necessarily prevail in the respective occupied states and in the regions under Nazi rule. Thus, library policy and development in the "Third Reich" by no means led to comparable innovations and practices being implemented in an identical manner in the occupied territories. In fact, very different regional approaches to the Nazi book policy in libraries can be observed.

Contributions from the fields of library history, book history, cultural politics and history, sociology of literature, architectural history, etc. are welcome. They may cover the following topics (or subjects), however, analyses rich in sources and documents are preferred:

- Country or site-specific overviews
- Institutional history
- Cultural and educational policy and its practical implementation
- Analyses of library holdings
- Confiscation and policing of holdings (including of private libraries)
- Biographies of cultural officials and library employees
- New beginnings and continuities after 1945
- Restitutions after 1945

We invite you to submit an abstract for a thirty-minute presentation in German or in English:

- Working title with an abstract of 300 words.
- Bio-bibliographical information on the author

Abstracts must be submitted by 20 December 2021 to the following addresses direction@bnl.etat.lu and histoire-bibliotheque@bnl.etat.lu. A notification of participation will be sent by 24 January 2022.

The conference language is German and English. The language of presentation is left to the discretion of the presenter. Passive knowledge of the respective language is assumed. Translations are not provided. Each lecture will be followed by 30 minutes of discussion. The organiser bears the travel and accommodation costs.