ROYAL LIBRARY OF BELGIUM. REPORT 2004-05

1. Management of the library

Since May 2nd Patrick Lefèvre has been appointed as general director.

2. Handling of electronic publications and formats

The Royal Library has installed the necessary hardware and software for the implementation of a depot of electronic documents. A Linux server, with one Tb of hard disc memory, is used in order to store the documents and make the documents available. The DigiTool system, developed by Ex Libris has been choosen, in order to manage the system; Oracle is used for database management facilities. The user interface of the DigiTool system is Web based.
The function allows a publisher to store electronic documents, and their metadata, in a "Temporary Collection". The electronic document is approved by a librarian and stored in the database. There are virtual databases for Belgian monographs, Belgian periodicals, monographs of international organisations and periodicals of international organisations. Bibliographic metadata are stored in Dublin Core format; indexes will be available for creator, title, publisher, subject, ... ; full text indexation is also implemented. The bibliographic database will be available on the Internet. The consultation of the electronic document is reserved for the patrons at the Royal Library.

Actually, the publishers are not obliged to deposit electronic documents. The Royal Library contacts succesfully the publishers for a voluntary deposit. Supplementary research and development will be undertaken in order to guarantee the long term availability of the electronic documents.

The e-depot has been started in the beginning of January 2005, as a voluntary depot. Publishers have been contacted and have been asked to deposit. Nine months later , some 180 monographs have been deposited. Also 10 periodicals are deposited on a regularly basis.

Contacts have been organized with the Universities of Gent and Leuven, in order to deposit doctoral dissertations. The Royal Library offers the e-Depot system as a back-up to the repositories, existing or in construction, at the universities. If these projects can be started, contacts will be set up with other universities as well.

The digitalization of land register maps is studied in collaboration with the Leuven University. 2308 maps will be digitized. The accompanying registers will be digitized in a later stadium. The DigiTool application will be extended with a JPEG2000 viewer.

, in order to access the resources of the electronic library by title and title words.

3. Information technology and networks

3.1. The Web site of the Royal Library

- The Web site has been entirely reorganised. For this, we called upon a consultant.
- **Continuous development:**
  - Updating (compiling and configuring new versions and new programs) of the open source software used by the Royal Library.
  - Installing new services.
  - Technical study of the possibility and the necessity of integrating a server of protected and watermarked high-resolution images (downloading is forbidden). Installing and activating this server (test version).
  - Updating the Web site (exhibitions, heritage days, concerts, guest organisations on the Web site and in the building of the Royal Library, publications of the Royal Library).
- Creating html-pages regarding the exhibitions at the Royal Library of Belgium.

3.2. Realising a **DVD on Rimbaud** at the occasion of the exhibition *Arthur Rimbaud (1854-1891) A Season in Hell* at the Center for Fine Arts, Brussels, from 27 February to 16 May 2004, in cooperation with the Library's departments of Photography and Manuscripts. Through the accounts of twenty persons who knew Rimbaud, this project aims to present Arthur Rimbaud's personality and writings thematically and chronologically.

3.3. Readers' management

The necessary material for the production of readers' cards has been acquired and installed : the program KBarcode, delivered with SuSE-Linux. The system is in function since January 2005.

3.4. Updating of the servers and the firewall

Transfer of the mail server from «sendmail» to «qmail».
Installation of a spam filter and an anti-virus system on the central mail server.
Review of the firewall's functionalities.
Study and follow-up of the safety of the Royal Library's computer system.
Update of the servers following an attack of the computer system.

3.5. Retrospective conversion of the card catalogue

Due to financial restrictions this conversion is going rather slowly. Tis year the firm JOUVE converted 150,000 records into a MARC format.

3.6. The Library Management System (LMS)

In preparation of the addaptation or replacement of the VUBIS, the system that is currently used, a report was written evaluating the actual operating procedures in the different sections and establishing new and future needs. The LMS has an enormous impact on the functioning of the entire institution. In addition to technical problems of the computer infrastructure other essential items such as cooperation, standardisation and training have been discussed.
The market of library management systems has been explored.
The Department of Logistics has written specifications for a new library management system in view of replacing the current VUBIS system.

3.7. The UniCat project

http://www.kbr.be/unicat

The general objective of the UniCat project is to establish a gateway allowing users to simultaneously search and retrieve bibliographic records from Belgian library catalogues. As such UniCat can be considered as a virtual union catalogue of Belgian libraries.

The first phase of the UniCat project has been finalised in 2003
A team of international experts evaluated the work carried out within the framework of the UniCat project as being excellent. The project runs now for another two years (2004-2006). Many technical tasks remain to be carried out.

3.8. Organisation of the international conference "Virus – Safe in Networks"

The Royal Library has organized, in collaboration with Goethe-Institut Brüssel and Zentralbibliothek des Forschungszentrums Jülich, an international conference "VIRUS - Safe in Networks". The conference took place in Brussels at Goethe-Institut on 02.02.2005-03.02.2005. It has examined the various broad aspects of security in networks, especially in the domain of libraries and archives. Network security has been studied under different aspects. What technical advances and developments will determine the future? What importance do these technical possibilities have for the user? What position do information sciences take regarding network security? To what extent are copyright and editors affected? Legal guidelines and political requirements are of importance too. Where are the points of intersection and points of friction between the national, European and international regulations and directives? What impact does our democratic way of thinking have on the network security? The philosophical, ethical and artistic dimensions of network security have also been examined. Hackers often claim to have high ethical motivations for their actions worldwide. Can we put network virus in the context of arts? Hackers often describe themselves as artists: where does art start, where does it end?

The proceedings of this conference will be published shortly.

4. The digital library

4.1. System for analysis of the development of a structured high-performance system for the availability of historical atlases via metadata and digitising

The Royal Library of Belgium possesses an important historical cartographic collection that reflects, in a sense, the two periods that were crucial for the development of the cartography in Belgium as it exists today. The first period begins in the 16th century and Louvain was an internationally recognised center of scientific cartography, whereas Antwerp was a center of commercial cartographic activities. A second period that was equally important for the cartography in Belgium coincides more or less with the Belgian independence and the origins of the Royal Library of Belgium. One of the pioneers in this development was Philippe Vandermaelen, founder of the *Etablissement Géographique de Bruxelles* (1830). This collection contains important and rare atlases.

There are no Belgian institutions (university libraries, Museum Plantijn-Moretus, Mercator museum, ...) where a specific cataloguing and/or digitising project of atlases is currently running. In the Royal Library of Belgium these documents are insufficiently catalogued and hence difficultly accessible to researchers.

Within the framework of historical research, it is important that this rich heritage of historic atlases is made available via extensive search possibilities and "just in time". This availability does not only concern a detailed database of bibliographic records of the documents, but also the actual documents in a (substitute) digitised form that is in its turn stored in a structured database. Both databases should be linked.

4.2. EVAMP: International project

- The Royal Library of Belgium participated in the European EVAMP project (EVA Market Validation Project) within the framework of the TEN Telecom Call 2001/2 of the European Commission. It concerns the continuation of the EVA project in which a certain amount of historical images were already digitised and made accessible. EVAMP aims at further developing the EVA prototype and elaborating a Business Plan. Within the framework of the project, the oyal ibrary of Belgium provided the EVA-system with 3.000 digitized historical images and their detailed descriptions. This collection contains mainly photographs of Brussels from the beginning of the 20th century: buildings (houses

4.3. The digital library

The digital library gives access to CD-ROM's, electronic periodicals and a number of selected web sites. An interface has been created in order to give access by themes and by topics. CD-ROM's and electronic periodicals can be accessed by the Vubis catalog. The interface will be restyled

5. Acquisitions

Outstanding new acquisitions

- A rare post incunabulum : Liber secretorum Alberti Magni, de virtutibus herbarum, lapidum & animalium quorundam … printed in Antwerp in 1532 with Symon Cock.
- A unique print of Dirk Martens and Jan van Westfalen dated from 6 May 1474).
- A rare print of Plantin, *Liber disceptationum* from Jacobus Simanca (1575)
- Historical maps:
  - J. Speed, *New mape of ye WVII Provinces of Low Germanie* (1654)
  - Hondius, *Pascaert vande custe van Vlaenderen, van Walcheren tot Cales en Bouloigne in Vrakrijk* (1631);
  - Two maps from Ortelius ;
  - World Map from Myritius ;
- Manuscripts :
  - Prayer book containing latin and dutch texts with miniatures (1475), parchment ;
  - Latin book of hours (1450-1475), parchment ;
  - Book of hours from *chanoine van Reynegom* (1450), parchment ;

  - An unedited double farthing of Philip the Fair;

6. Preservation and conservation

Preservation policy for 'printed books and reference books':
- Reference books are systematically controlled: in 2004, 395 severely damaged volumes were committed to professional bookbinders;
- Minor reparations are carried out by employees of the Royal Library.

Preservation and conservation of newspaper collections:
- Agreements have been made with other depositary institutions regarding microfilming. Many years ago, a collaboration agreement was concluded between the Royal Library and the library of the Belgian Parliament;
- The Royal Library of Belgium co-ordinates a 'National project for the conservation of Belgian newspapers'. Agreements have been made regarding:
  - an electronic database of Belgian newspapers;
  - development of a working method and of criteria for programming the microfilming policy.

Preservation and conservation of precious books:
- Since 1999 the emphasis is on the restoration of books in a very poor state.

Historical Maps and atlasses :
- 34 maps and 1 atlas have been restored in 2004.

Manuscripts :
- 25 manuscripts have been restored in 2004.

7. Services to readers

7.1. New CD-ROM server

The old network CD-ROM server was out of use since August 1999. A new machine and software were purchased, but special client software was required for the installation. Among other things thanks to the advice of the consultant of the company B.A. this machine has been converted into a Linux Samba Server.
The CD-ROM images are read into a Samba partition on the machine's hard disk and are installed in another Samba partition.
The Windows clients see the Samba Server as «//cd-tower» (intranet address: 10.2.0.150) and can mount the installation partition as W: drive. Next, the bat files in this partition mount the CD-ROM image-partition as L: drive and the contents of the CD can be viewed.
For an average user it is difficult to mount the W: drive. This can be done with a simple icon, but this results in a partition where all structure is lost. In order the make its use more flexible, a menu programme is being written.
The CD's can also be consulted on the Linux JavaStations, using an intermediary Windows machine and remote desktop. However, the JavaStations go back to 1998 and are being considered as working very slowly by readers and catalogue librarians alike. This approach is being realised on faster clients.

7.2. Possibility of on-line reservation for readers

The possibility of making on-line reservation available for the readers has been mentioned repeatedly. In the current Vubis software, this possibility is integrated in the borrowing module. Our library does not possess that module and it is not easy to incorporate it in our outdated software.
A preliminary study has been carried out. Most problems are of organisational nature, e.g. the lack of standard identification of the readers by means of a unique number. The ideal solution consists of using the new electronic identity cards, but these are far from widespread. The deviant opening hours of the sub-libraries are another difficulty.
It has been convened to make it possible for anyone (including non-registered readers) to reserve 3 works per day.
Most of the software is ready and the system can be tested according to plan in the second part of 2005

8. Cultural events, exhibitions and publishing

Public-relation policy includes: guided tours 'on measure', the yearly 'Open House day', the publication of the semi-annual Bulletin, participation in the Brussels cultural events and the participation in book fairs, exhibitions and concerts.

9. Library cooperation

9.1. CERL

The Royal Library participates in the CERL project.

9.2. ELAG (European Library Automation Group)
http://www.elag2003.ch/main.htm

The Royal Library coordinates the organisation of the ELAG activities and chairs the yearly meeting. ELAG brings together once a year colleagues involved in library automation in leading European libraries and information centres. The seminar of 2004 (9-11 June 2004, Oslo) focused on *Interoperability : new challenges and solutions.* The seminar of 2005 (1-3 june 2005) focuses on *Open Access.*

9.3. Bibliotheca Universalis
9.4. EROMM

9.5. ISSN. The ISSN Center Belgium started to work with the VIRTUA client for the encoding of records of Belgian periodical publications.

9.6. RILM (Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale)
9.7. RISM (Répertoire International des Sources Musicales)
9.8. International Numismatic Commission
9.9. Fédération Internationale des Médailles (FIDEM)
9.10. Groupe des Cartothécaires de LIBER
9.11. Centre International de Codicologie
9.12. PUC work group within IFLA
9.13. ICC (International Cataloguing Code) for bibliographic description