ROYAL LIBRARY OF BELGIUM. REPORT 2006-07

1. Management of the library

The official organisation chart of the Royal Library (cf. report 2005-2006) has been 'translated' to a practicable and efficient one.

2. Handling of electronic publications and formats

In the voluntary e-depot of Belgian publications some 750 electronic monographs have been deposited as well as a few new periodicals. A new collection of electronic publications of the Belgian federal institutions has been created and allows the archiving of and the structured access to electronic publications. Specific agreements have been dealt with the civil services *Economy* and *Human resources and Organisation*.

The migration towards the new DigiTool 3.0 has been realised in September 2006. The version includes an hierarchical collection management, the possibility to create and maintain complex objects and holds an adequate ingest module. Within the same collection bibliographical metadata can be created in both Dublin Core and MARC21.

3. Information technology and networks.

3.1. General

Software update on the SUN-Solaris web/mail server : Operating system and application software (apache2, php, phpMyAdmin, MySQL etc.) have been updated.
Installation of the viewer for digital still images (maps, photographs, etc.) : XL-image software (client-server) has been installed.

3.2. The Library Management System (LMS)

Detailed specifications have been drawn up for the acquisition of the new library management system which will replace the currently running VUBIS system. A call for tender has been published. Four organisations have submitted a proposal. A team of the Royal Library has studied those proposals which lea up to a report for the qualified authority. A decision will be taken in October 2007.

3.3. Retrospective conversion of the card catalogue

The preparation of the retrospective conversion of the remaining set (about 1.000.000 descriptions) of cards of the catalogue of **printed books** has been finished. The real retrospective conversion started in September 2006 and will be finished by the end of 200!.

The Royal Library of Belgium holds an important collection of **engravings**. Access to the collection is possible by an artist catalogue and a subject catalogue. Both catalogues hold each nearly 250.000 cards. In the second half of 2006, these catalogues cards have been scanned and the content has been digitized. A library user has the possibility to browse the catalogue in two ways: card by card, or by heading (artist or subject).

3.4. The UniCat project

The general objective of the UniCat project is to establish a multilingual 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 second and final phase of the UniCat project has been started in may 2006. This project is financed by the Belgian Federal Science Policy Office.

OAI-PMH protocol forms the base of the technical realization. Supported formats are MARCXML and UMODS (MODS format of the Library of Congress adapted in function of the specificity of Belgian environment). All the software developed for UniCat makes use of the open source technologies and standards - for example LUCENE has been chosen recently for the indexing of the database. The software will be modular and reusable – it can be easily used for establishing other repositories in different library applications.

The operational prototype has been realised at end of 2006. The KBR upload is going on. A business plan for later operations of UniCat is one of the important challenges of this project.

3.5. The DIGMAP project

DIGMAP, an *e*Content*plus* targeted project will develop a solution for indexing, searching and browsing in collections of digitized historical maps. It will be able to index maps by their geographic boundaries and make it easy to classify, index, search and browse them with the support of multilingual geographic thesauri. This will make it possible, for example, to find all the maps in a collection where eg. Paris is represented even if it was not explicitly indexed in that sense. Using geographic thesauri with the geographic coordinates of Paris, it is possible to match that with the geographic areas covered by each map in the collection and find Paris on them. The system will take also advantage of any available descriptive metadata to improve the services.

DIGMAP will propose also advanced features for the automatic indexing of historical maps, in order to make it possible to add and process new maps at very low human cost. This can be achieved by comparing, at the image level, the new maps with the rest of the collection. Maps can be very rich in decorative and stylistic details, making them very different from photos, so this requires much more then simple image comparing, but new image processing techniques will be developed and tested for this purpose. The system will offer also a sophisticated browsing environment for humans with special features, such as timelines (for those maps where it is possible and easy to assess the date).

The DIGMAP infrastructure can be used as a local digital library of maps, as a standalone system, or as a component integrated with a wider local system (managed for example by a portal management system). It will be based on open data models and will be made interoperable with remote systems (web services).

Partners are: the national libraries of Portugal, Italy, Belgium and Estonia, UPM - the Geographic Information Technology Laboratory of Technical University of Madrid (Spain) and the Institute of Mathematics and Informatics of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (Bulgaria).

The project started on 1 October 2006 and lasts 24 months.

3.5. EDL - European Digital Library

As decided for the EDL project, the Royal Library of Belgium (KBR) will deliver the data via OAI-PMH protocol. KBR is already data provider in the national project UNICAT (http://www.kbr.be/unicat) constructing a prototype of an OAI-PMH application providing the services of the virtual Belgian union catalog. Unicat repository is based on a modified MODS format called UMODS –two elements have now been added to MODS in order to fulfill the Unicat technical requirements.

Until recently whe worked with the OAI protocol for Unicat only. This was based mainly on simplified MARC21 tags.
E-mail communication and testing together with the TEL team.
Finally we have succeeded in establishing the upload of records to the TEL database.

4. The digital library

Several hundreds of links, sorted by topic (history, literature, mathematics, biology, business, law,...) and by resource type (databases, banks of images, electronic periodicals, open archives,...) are made accessible.

The of digitisation of 30 Belgian newspapers will start in October 2007 and will end at the end of 2008.
Parts of the collections of maps, historical medals, engravings are digitised on a regularly basis
The digitisation of the oldest cadastral documents, The *Atlas cadastral parcellaire de la Belgique* realised by Philippe-Christian Popp (1805-1879) has been started in collaboration with the Catholic University opf Leuven and will be gfinished at the end of 2008.

Cf. also 3.3. The DIGIMAP project and 3.4. EDL – European digital library

5. Acquisitions

Outstanding new acquisitions

- *16th-century books* rang high among the notable acquisitions. *Die natuere der dieren ... La nature des animaux* is a very rare bilingual quarto, intended for use at school. It was published at Antwerp in 1561 by Jan Mollijns and contains a series of woodcut animal illustrations. The Royal Library copy is probably unique (LP 12.973 A). *De genealogie ende afcompst vande poetische goden ... tot profijt ende instructie van alle liefhebbers van consten* is a Dutch literary version of a text by Gilles d'Aurigny. The edition acquired was printed by Marten de Ridder at Antwerp and can be dated '1547' (privilege) or following years (LP 12.994 A).
- *Editions from the 17th and 18th century* include Franciscus Haemus' *Poemata*, a rare volume of Neolatin poetry printed at Courtrai (Kortrijk) in 1630 (LP 13.090 A); the *Introduction à l'amour de Dieu* by Pierre Pennequin printed at Mons by Jean Havart in 1645 (LP 12.982 A); the *Sainte Bible* in a Liège edition of 1701 by Jean-François Broncart (LP 13.035 C); and a very rare ephemeral theatre programme printed at Oudenaarde in 1798, *Ziet hier den getrouwen onverwinnelycken ... prins Belizarius* (LP 13.031 A). In preparation of the exhibition *Constance et Inconstance: les livres de*

Juste Lipse à la Bibliothèque royale de Belgique the library was able to acquire in the single year 2006 some 21 editions of his works.

- The Department of *Manuscripts* bought eleven folios with fifteenth century coats of arms. Originally, these pages were part of two heraldic manuscripts, the so-called armorial Gorrevod and the armorial Van Nieuwenhove, both acquired by the Royal Library in 1932. The codices mainly concern the duchy of Brabant and were illustrated by highly skilled artists. Thanks to the latest acquisition, the two manuscripts could finally be completed. Moreover, the missing folios appeared to be important study material which can be expected to provide new insights into both the history of the duchy and the heraldic practice in the fifteenth century."

- With the aid of the King Baudouin/Baldwin Foundation the *Coin Cabinet* acquired in 2007 a very important and impressive collection of some 1350 large cast iron and bronze bas reliefs. These circular objects (diameter 20-80 cm) are artist models for historical and commemorative medals that were used in reducing machines that produced the final dies for striking the medals. These bas reliefs were collected by M.-L. Dupont, former managing director of the medal producing firm Fibru-Fisch in Brussels. Most objects date between 1880 and 1970

6. Legislation

Belgian legal deposit legislation dates from 1965 and is almost outdated. At present one copy only has to be deposited and that only holds for printed publications. There is therefore a great need for a legislation which takes into account all data carriers. A multiple deposit obligation of all data carriers is the aim, as well as a practical agreement involving all parties. A new bill containing the deposit obligation of 2 (instead of 1) copies of printed monographs and the deposit obligation of offline electronic publications has been voted in the Belgian Parliament on 7 December 2007.

7. Preservation and conservation

Preservation policy for '*printed books and reference books*':
- Printed books and reference books are systematically controlled.
- Minor reparations are carried out by employees of the Royal Library.

Preservation and conservation of *newspaper collections*:
- Agreements are being 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:
  - o an electronic database of Belgian newspapers;
  - o development of a working method and of criteria for programming the microfilming policy.

From 1999 onward the *section of Old and Rare Books* gives preference to the restoration of badly damaged bindings. Each year about 90 books are expertly restored by private restorators. Each restoration is accompanied by a restoration report. If possible the work is

microfilmed before the restoration. Belgian Bibliophilic editions and bindings are conserved in acid free boxes or envelopes.

35 *maps* and 9 atlases have been restored. Smaller restauration activities were executed by the staff.
The Coronelli *globes*: restoration of celestial globe and its socle is coming to an end.

8. Services to readers

8.1. CD-ROM server

The utilisation of the Linux Samba server has been abandoned and the CD-ROM application has migrated to a Windows 2003 Server. Software of H+H, Goettingen is used. Installation of CD-ROM's is still under progress. End June 2006, some 425 CD-ROM's have been installed.

8.2.. The union catalog of Belgian federal libraries.

The new union catalogue of the Belgian federal libraries has been presented. This catalogue contains more than 3 million bibliographic descriptions and is updated four times a year. The Royal Library of Belgium contributes to the practical realization and to the content with more than 1 million bibliographic descriptions.

9. 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 exhibitions and concerts.
The major exhibitions were :

Bruegel imagined
> Displays all of Pieter Bruegel the Elder's paintings by means of high-quality reproductions

Bruegel in prints brings together all of Bruegsl's print in a single show. The Royal Library has an unparalleled collecdtion of Bruegel prints.
Léon Spilliaert in the collections of the Royal Library of Belgium
Henrik Ibsen
Justus Lipsius
Europe à la Une ? Les traits de Rome à travers la presse belge
Philippe le Beau (1478-1506). The tresors of the last dukes of Burgund

10. Library cooperation

National cooperation :

The Royal library participates in the Belgian French and Flemish councils on scientific libraries.

International cooperation :

The Royal Library is member of :
10.1. CERL
The Royal Library participates in the CERL project.

10.2. ELAG (European Library Automation Group)
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.
At the University of Barcelona Paula Goossens organized, last May, the 31st ELAG meeting on "Library 2.0". The topic deals with new Web functionalities applied to the library profession. The ELAG 2007 Website can be consulted at: http://elag2007.upf.edu/
Since the Web 2.0 developed in 2004 the user and user communities become more and more important players in the Web happening. Think on the innovative services like wiki's, blogs, folksonomies etc. These "social networking" activities bring new challenges to the services libraries can offer to their users. In this meeting a number of emerging new facilities were presented and discussed. The most popular workshop: "Library 2.0: What is in a name?" started some weeks before the meeting as a blog.
All participants of ELAG 2007, 130 in number and originating from 24 countries, were enthusiastic and argued about the new directions to follow. So the topic of next years meeting will be: "Rethinking the Library".
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.*

10.4. EROMM

10.5. ISSN. The Royal Library organises theISSN Center Belgium..

10.6. RILM (Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale)
10.7. RISM (Répertoire International des Sources Musicales)
10.8. International Numismatic Commission
10.9. Fédération Internationale des Médailles (FIDEM)
10.10. Groupe des Cartothécaires de LIBER
10.11**.** Centre International de Codicologie
10.12. FIAT (Fédération internationale des Archives de Télévision).