

**A**            **ALLGEMEINES**

**AP**           **INFORMATIONSWESEN; ARCHIVE, BIBLIOTHEKEN,  
MUSEEN**

**APB**         **Bibliotheken; Bibliotheks- und Informationswesen**

**USA**

**Bibliotheksgeschichte**

**AUFATZSAMMLUNG**

**17-2**         ***Bibliotheken in den USA*** : Beiträge zur Bibliotheksgeschichte /  
Gernot U. Gabel. - Hürth : Edition Gemini, 2016. - 239 S. ; 22  
cm. - Festgabe zum 75. Geburtstag / überreicht von Gisela Ga-  
bel-Jahns. - ISBN 978-3-922331-55-1 : EUR 22.00  
[#5281]

Born in 1941, Gernot Uwe Gabel's career as a professor of library science and subject bibliographer spans several decades. In 1968, after his 1966 graduation from the Free University of Berlin with a degree in English philology and in history, Gabel and his wife Gisela Jahns began a five-year residence in the United States and Canada between 1968 and 1973. In 1972 he received the PhD in German language and literature from Rice University in Houston, Texas. He then took a position as assistant professor at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and in 1973 earned a master's degree in library science from UNC.

That same year the Gabels returned to Germany where he began his library career in the English philology (Anglistik) library at the University of Cologne, eventually becoming deputy director of the Universitäts- und Stadtbibliothek Köln.

Gernot Gabel has published over 200 articles and books.<sup>1</sup> In 1972 they started as self-publishers in Hamburg<sup>2</sup> and in 1981 Gernot and Gisela Gabel founded Edition Gemini, located in Hürth near Cologne, which publishes their subject bibliographies on dissertations in philology, literature, philosophy and especially on major German authors and philosophers, but also

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<sup>1</sup> His publications up to 2006 are listed in ***Schriftenverzeichnis Gernot Uwe Gabel zum 65. Geburtstag*** / Universitäts- und Stadtbibliothek Köln. - Köln : Universitäts- und Stadtbibliothek, 2006. - 52 S. : Ill. - (Kleine Schriften der Universitäts- und Stadtbibliothek Köln ; 20). - ISBN 3-931596-36-2.

<sup>2</sup> ***Daniel Casper von Lohenstein, Sophonisbe, Trauerspiel*** : ein Wortindex / bearb. von Gernot U. Gabel und Gisela R. Gabel. - Hamburg, [Glindwiese 70 : Selbstverl.]. - 1972. - V, 141 S. ; ; 21 cm.

personal bibliographies that are not limited to dissertations.<sup>3</sup> Most of these compilations of dissertations pertain to European or North American higher schools.<sup>4</sup> These bibliographies and other works are published primarily in German, but also in English and French.

Gisela Gabel-Jahns has compiled and published, through Edition Gemini festschrifts to Prof. Gabel every five years, starting at his 50th birthday.<sup>5</sup> The chapters in the festschrift for his 75th birthday are taken from his published articles in ***Buch und Bibliothek (BuB)*** and ***Bibliotheksdienst***. The oldest article (1996) is on the New York Public Library's 100th anniversary in 1995.<sup>6</sup> The most recent article (2016) covers the issues and plans for Barack Obama's Presidential library on the eve of his departure from the White House.

The 38 articles of the 2017 Festschrift<sup>7</sup> are arranged not by date of publication but by geographic region or by type of library. The first six essays cover the major historic northeastern US research libraries at Harvard, Yale, Columbia, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), as well as the Library of Congress. Next come three essays about very different types of libraries in the state of Illinois: the Northwestern University Library (a private university), the University of Illinois library (the state's public university), and the Center for Research Libraries (a consortium of currently 250 libraries who share major collections and large resources). Another important library consortium is the HBCU [Historically Black Colleges and Universities] Library Alliance, which presently includes 102 libraries at 105 schools.

Fourteen essays cover important special libraries, from the Hoover Institution in Stanford, California to the Library of the German Society of Pennsyl-

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<sup>3</sup> For example: ***Daniel Casper von Lohenstein*** : (1635 - 1683) ; Bibliographie zu Leben und Werk (bis 2000) / von Gernot U. Gabel. - 1. ed. - Hürth : Edition Gemini, 2005. - 112 S. ; 23 cm. - ISBN 3-922331-46-7 : EUR 29.00 [8607]. - Rez.: ***IFB 06-1-058*** <http://swbplus.bsz-bw.de/bsz121107337rez.htm>

<sup>4</sup> For example: ***La littérature française*** : bibliographie des thèses de doctorat soutenues devant les universités autrichiennes et suisses. - Hürth-Efferen : Edition Gemini. - (Bibliographien zur Romanistik ; ...). - 1885/1975(1981). - Suppl. [1.] - 1976/85(1991). - 2.1976/95(1999).

<sup>5</sup> ***Biblio et Franco*** : Beiträge zum Bibliotheks- und Verlagswesen Frankreichs ; Festgabe zum 50. Geburtstag / Gernot U. Gabel. Überreicht von Gisela R. Gabel. - 1. ed. - Hürth-Efferen : Edition Gemini, 1991. - 110 S. : Ill. ; 21 cm. - ISBN 978-3-922331-35-3 : DM 25.00. - ***Historic libraries in Europe*** : Beiträge zur europäischen Bibliotheksgeschichte ; Festgabe zum 60. Geburtstag / Gernot U. Gabel. Überreicht von Gisela Gabel-Jahns. - 1. ed. - Hürth : Edition Gemini, 2001. - 187 S. ; 21 cm. - ISBN 3-922331-45-9. - ***Anglo-amerikanische Bibliotheken*** : Beiträge zur Bibliotheksgeschichte ; Festgabe zum 65. Geburtstag überreicht von Gisela Gabel-Jahns / Gernot U. Gabel. - Hürth : Edition Gemini, 2006. - 200 S. ; 21 cm. - ISBN 978-3-922331-48-3. - ***Bibliotheken in Frankreich*** : Beiträge zur Bibliotheksgeschichte ; Festgabe zum 70. Geburtstag / Gernot U. Gabel. - Hürth : Edition Gemini, 2011. - 236 S. ; 21 cm. - ISBN 978-3-922331-50-6.

<sup>6</sup> This essay and eleven others had already been published in the chapter on the US in the 2006 Festschrift. See its table of contents: <http://d-nb.info/983058806/04>

<sup>7</sup> Table of contents: <http://d-nb.info/1126267872/04>

vania. Frau Gabel-Jahns has selected an interesting core of public libraries, which exemplify the best traditions and centuries-old histories of centuries-old histories of US public libraries (Boston Public, Peterborough Town Library), the ways that public libraries have had to revitalize their roles and missions in their changed cities (the Enoch Pratt Free Library of Baltimore, for example), and others embarked on significant architectural innovation (Seattle Public and Chicago Public libraries).

Subscription or mercantile libraries are also discussed, both specifically as in the case of the Boston Athenaeum and the Library Company of Philadelphia, and also in a general article on mercantile (business) libraries. In the 19th century these private libraries were established as places "where young men could pass their evenings agreeably and profitably, and thus be protected from the temptations to folly that ever beset unguarded youth in large towns."<sup>8</sup> Many of these membership libraries thrive to this day, either as parts of public or university libraries or as independent non-profit entities. Membership fees are nominal.

The book concludes with six essays on US presidential libraries, including one essay on the development of the Office of Presidential Libraries in 1939, at the close of the second term of Franklin D. Roosevelt's presidency. These 13 libraries are administered by the National Archives and Records Administration. Many other presidential libraries have been established since then, but they are administered by their respective state government agencies.

Gabel provides interesting anecdotal histories about each library, discussing important persons whose names grace the library buildings and whose large donations made the libraries possible. This history of the development of the Library of Congress in many ways is reflected in the foundation and growth of the other major university and public libraries that Gabel describes: the role of key personages (almost always men), the role of private funding, particularly from wealthy patrons, the importance of architecture in library buildings (the library as a public monument to books and reading, for example), and the inevitable contractions and expansions of library collections and physical spaces. The reader can infer that, perhaps unlike funding for libraries in Europe, US libraries' success have largely depended on large private donations, only to be followed by local, state, and sometimes federal government funding.

Of particular mention is the fact that while the United States has no official "national library," the Library of Congress has assumed that role over the course of its existence. In his 2000 essay on the 200th anniversary of the Library of Congress, Gabel explains that while the Library of Congress has long played the role of US national library, it is in fact the library of the Congress and provides dedicated services (such as the CRS) to the national legislature. The sixth Librarian of Congress, Ainsworth Rand Spofford (named by President Lincoln in 1864), was able to carry out his vision of the Library as a national library, stating to Congress that "there is almost no

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<sup>8</sup> From the charter of the Saint Louis (Missouri) Mercantile Library (1845).

work, within the vast range of literature and science, which may not at some time prove useful to the legislature of a great nation."<sup>9</sup> Also under Spofford's guidance the Library of Congress became the official depository for international documents; he worked with Congress to pass the copyright law of 1870, which among other provisions mandated that the Library of Congress receive two copies of every new publication in the country. In 1886 Spofford persuaded Congress to fund the construction of what is now the Thomas Jefferson building, a showpiece of Italian renaissance art and architecture.

A common thread among these 38 essays is the theme of sponsorship and funding. Most of these libraries were established through large bequests from wealthy individuals: railroad capitalists, industrialists as well as philanthropists and later the large foundations (e.g., Mellon, Rockefeller). Also stressed is the importance of architectural excellence, whether the buildings reflect the great structures of Europe or provide contemporary innovation by US and foreign architects (for example, Rem Koolhaas's design of the Seattle Public Library). And Gabel makes sure to discuss the men behind the names: Hollis, Tulane, Hoover, Pratt, for example. The statistical figures and information about systems and facilities are now dated, as library systems have changed with the decades and as innovations continue to demand an ever larger share of library budgets and funding. But Gabel makes clear the importance of these libraries as enduring institutions for books, reading, and community cohesion and growth.

It appears that these essays are reproduced exactly as they were first published in the journals *Bibliotheksdienst* and *Buch und Bibliothek*, as they were already in the 2006 Festschrift. There are no footnotes or bibliographies, nor is the original source given in the book. The absence of documentation and the fact that these compilations are in effect self-published unjustly diminishes the author's authority as a library scholar. This current anthology and (presumably the other festschriften) provide a readily available record of Gabel's scholarship and provide concise and interesting histories and ready facts about these unique examples of US libraries and librarianship.

Gordon Anderson

QUELLE

*Informationsmittel (IFB)* : digitales Rezensionsorgan für Bibliothek und Wissenschaft

<http://www.informationsmittel-fuer-bibliotheken.de/>

<http://www.informationsmittel-fuer-bibliotheken.de/showfile.php?id=8434>

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<sup>9</sup> Cited by John C. Cole in: *Libraries and culture*. - 40 (2005), 3, p. 3.