

editor's note

This issue focuses on German and Arab libraries and archives. Erica Foden-Lenahan's opening viewpoint "It is more different than you think: Art libraries in Germany and the UK" was originally published in the journal *AKMB-News* in 2020 as part of a volume celebrating the 25th anniversary of Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Kunst- und Museumsbibliotheken (AKMB), the organisation supporting and representing German art and museum libraries and librarians. Our former editor offers comparative librarianship but also a personal, insightful exploration of the fundamental connection between language, and professional and wider culture, highlighting the challenges (and pleasures) of translation and of working in a second language environment.

Nicole Döll, President of the Managing Board of AKMB, 2019-2021, introduces in her article the history of the organisation and provides an overview of its current activities and membership. Margret Schild, founding member of AKMB and a member of its editorial board since 1995, discusses the main German language journal in our field in "More than 25 years of *AKMB-news*: one way to reflect the work within art and museum libraries".

"Documentary heritage in the Arab region: a regional survey" by Anissa Harfouche is based on a recently published report of the same title and outlines the key outcomes of a project initiated in 2018 by the UNESCO Office for the Gulf States and Yemen, and its partner, Qatar National Library, aimed at supporting the preservation of documentary heritage in the region by surveying the needs and challenges faced by libraries and archives at national and international level.

Finally, we discuss archives and publishing in the Eastern Mediterranean and North Africa in an email interview with the art collective Fehras Publishing Practices, founded in 2015 in Berlin by Syrian artists Sami Rustom, Omar Nicolas and Kenan Darwich. Translation, indexing, as well as karaoke, are some of the topics covered in our conversation.

This is the last issue of 2021. In his editorial note in January this year, Kraig Binkowski wrote that librarians worldwide were trying to approach work with some sense of normalcy, when in fact nothing was normal or business as usual. Almost a year later, the Covid-19 pandemic and its consequences are still with us and enormously challenging, but there are also signs of improvement. We wish everyone a healthy and productive 2022!

Gustavo Grandal Montero
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