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Summary of the speeches and presentations of the "Open Seminar on RDA in Europe: a reality and a challenge"

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ABSTRACT

Two days prior to the EURIG annual meeting 2017 the University of Florence and Casalini Libri hosted the Open Seminar on RDA in Europe. The international cataloguing code Resource Description and Access (RDA) has the potential to become a popular, globally used standard and to connect library data with data from other communities. This short article summarizes the speeches and presentations of the seminar held on May 8, 2017 in the Aula Magna, University of Florence.

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RDA is gaining more and more ground in European libraries. For this reason, the European RDA Interest Group (EURIG) organizes, in addition to the annual members' meetings, open seminars and conferences with different topics such as translating RDA, future trends of RDA or RDA and linked data. Two days prior to the EURIG annual meeting 2017 the University of Florence and Casalini Libri Fiesole hosted the very well organized event Open Seminar on RDA in Europe: a reality and a challenge that was attended by nearly 100 participants and 16 speakers. The seminar offered the opportunity to learn more about the cataloguing code RDA, to listen to experience reports, and to discuss different understandings of the implementation of an international code.

The seminar started in the morning with welcome addresses by Luigi Dei, rector of the University of Florence, who noted that in a globalized world bridges are needed to connect different sides as well as bring together the project partners, and Michele Casalini, managing director of Casalini Libri, who thanked the participants and speakers from Europe and overseas. Afterwards Professor Mauro Guerrini gave an important talk spanning a range from the Paris principles published in 1961 to the imperative of a broadly used international cataloguing code with options for cultural diversity and naming conventions used in different countries. He finished his presentation by asking especially the Italian librarians, whether it makes sense to hold on a regional cataloguing code or if it is "more useful and more preferable to participate in the drafting of international guidelines, namely RDA, bringing our rich cultural heritage and our Italian cataloguing background and perspective to an international dimension?"

In the second presentation, the current chair of the RDA Steering Committee (RSC) Gordon Dunsire talked about the RDA governance and strategy. He showed the new organization model of the RDA Board and the RDA Steering Committee and described the challenges and tasks in the implementation process. Especially establishing the six regional representatives for Africa, Latin America and the Carribbean, North America, Asia, Europe and Oceania will take several years. EURIG decided already in 2016 not to set up European working groups but to participate in working groups of the RSC (Aggregates, Archives, Capitalization, Music, Places, Relationship Designators and others).

Alan Danskin, the chair of the European RDA Interest Group (EURIG) presented the EURIG annual report 2016-2017. In 2017, EURIG has already 42 members from 26 countries. The revised version of the cooperation agreement has been adopted and signed by the EURIG members during the last months. One of the challenges relating to the on-going development of RDA will certainly be to establish it as a cataloguing code used by as many libraries worldwide as possible.

In his paper, Alan Danskin also talked about EURIG governance and strategy for the next few years. He pointed out the primary objectives of EURIG amongst others:

- to encourage and promote co-operation, communication, and the exchange of experience among current and prospective users in order to facilitate implementation of RDA in Europe;

- to disseminate information and co-ordinate development of RDA according to the bibliographic needs of European libraries and users by working closely with the RDA Steering Committee, and

- to encourage and promote co-operation in the translation of RDA into European languages by the exchange of experience.

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Alan Danskin recommended visiting the EURIG website from time to time on which new information is published on a regular basis. A short while ago the EURIG website has been moved to the RSC website. It can be accessed here: http://www.rda-rsc.org/europe/.

Renate Behrens, German National Library, reported on her experience as the European representative in the RDA Steering Committee. She said that it makes her really happy to work and cooperate with librarians in Europe and throughout the world. She also explained that a lot of skills are expected from a region representative for example bringing together experts from many countries and coordinating agreements between countries with varying cataloguing traditions and practices. She pointed out that cataloguing with RDA is at its very beginning, that some special fields are still under construction, and that experts have to enhance rules for archive material, manuscripts, old books or pictures. Every expert is invited to play a part in the further development of RDA. Only if European librarians get involved in working groups, the European voice will be heard in the growing RDA community.

The morning session was finished with five enlightening talks presented by Giovanni Aldi (Casalini Libri Fiesole), Tolga Çakmak (Hacettepe University Ankara), Paola Manoni (Vatican Library Rome), Stefano Bargioni (Pontificia Università della Santa Croce Rome), and Margaret D'Ambrosio (IRIS Consortium Florence). It was very interesting to get to know the different approaches to RDA in Italian libraries.

- Casalini Libri started with RDA already in 2011 with a one month in-house training. Since March 2015 all bibliographic records sold to US customers are catalogued with RDA.

- The Vatican Library was engaged in the Italian translation of RDA in 2016. The staff was trained in March 2017 and cataloguing with RDA will start in July 2017.

- Unione Romana Biblioteche Ecclesiastiche (URBE) with a total of 18 institutions started the RDA project with a three day course in June 2014. One of the main reasons to adopt RDA is to have new possibilities of cooperation within the URBE network as well as beyond this.

- The IRIS consortium in Florence decided not (yet) to change to RDA. However, it made some "RDA inspired" decisions, for example to avoid abbreviations and not to edit RDA records that are picked up from the Library of Congress.

Tolga Çamak reported on the RDA implementation in Turkey. The RDA leaflet was translated into Turkish language, workshops and seminars are organized since 2012. The lack of a national authority file makes the transition process difficult. As a result, there will be a decentralized approach to RDA.

In the afternoon session, Gordon Dunsire presented the challenge of aligning RDA with the FRBR (now IFLA) Library Reference Model (LRM). He explained the new entities res, agent, nomen, and time-span and introduced in detail the 4-fold path that allows libraries to optimally represent relationships.

James Hennelly, ALA Digital Publishing, gave a short presentation about the RDA Toolkit Restructure and Redesign Project (3R project) and the significant effects to the RDA toolkit. He pointed out that a new translation system has already been implemented and the redesign of the user interface will start soon. RDA has to be revised to conform to the IFLA Library Reference Model. Therefore, the structure of the toolkit will be changed and the demand on more examples will be

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satisfied. As users request institutional and personal profiles increasingly it is necessary to provide the possibility to filter and refine specific content.

Carlo Bianchini, University of Pavia, reflected about the Italian translation of RDA. Essential for the understanding of RDA is the choice of words from a familiar vocabulary. In this framework, the Italian translation group discussed about possible approaches to a useful translation. They asked whether a term already exists in the target language or if it is based on a specific translation tradition. Therefore, new translations had to be fixed for example for the RDA definitions access point or comprehensive description.

Last but not least, Ahava Cohen, National Library of Israel, rounded off the afternoon session with a very interesting and enjoyable insight into the problems of translating RDA into Hebrew. Sometimes it is nearly impossible to find adequate Hebrew terms. For example, the re-translation of preferred access point would be happy access point.

Finally, Gabriele Meßmer, Bavarian State Library, thanked all the speakers for their interesting and appealing presentations. In her opinion RDA is the best way into the future of cataloguing, because there is a number of benefits and advantages such as the existence of an international community and - which is extremely necessary - the integration into the linked data world inside and even more important outside of libraries. She invited the participants to join the conference RDA towards linked data that took place the very next day in Fiesole.