# Africa
# Spectrum

# African Studies – Striving for Integrated Information Services: Recent Developments in Germany and Europe

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**Abstract:** New projects, services and collaborations have recently brought the infrastructural services for African Studies a big step forward. This report gives an account of new subject gateways and digitisation projects. It discusses recent European cooperation ventures in the field of librarianship. Additionally, new developments and services of the Africa Collection at Frankfurt University Library are presented, which help to address the changing needs of researchers and to handle information overload, while keeping up with the latest developments. Nevertheless, the fragmentation and compartmentalisation of the different services still hinder more integrated information services.

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Not only are the organisational structure of and the funding opportunities for African Studies departments constantly changing, but so are researchers' expectations in regards to service institutions (e.g. libraries), ways of searching literature, and modes of communication within the African Studies community. Social-tagging and computer-aided qualitative-data analysis (CAQDAS), along with blogging as a new means of publication and discussion, are all salient examples of changes on the part of researchers. As far as funding is concerned, the "Excellence Initiative" of the German Federal and State Governments is perhaps the most striking development in the field of higher education. The Excellence Initiative has provided grants to the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS)[1] and to the University of Frankfurt's cluster "The Formation of Normative Orders",[2] which consists of a media project and two junior research groups working on Africa. However, these grants did not include funding for library or electronic materials.

As a matter of fact, the development of libraries and other information institutions has often taken place relatively independently of changes in research and funding. While libraries are expected to capably handle today's flood of information, they are in fact often not present where the researchers are – neither virtually in the web 2.0 nor physically in funded projects. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that the different services offered by libraries in the field of African Studies are fragmented and compartmentalised. Searching for relevant literature and sources remains labour- and time-intensive. To date, libraries have digitised and presented online only very few sources (historical and other); there is a lot of room for improvement in taking advantage of the opportunities that modern media has to offer.

However, since the last report on this topic in this journal (Bergenthum 2006), the situation has improved somewhat. This report gives an account of the first steps towards a web-based, one-stop resource centre for African Studies. Further, it presents two large-scale digitisation projects and reports on recent European cooperation projects in the field of librarianship that have the potential to make African Studies more visible in Europe. In addition, this report mentions the major conferences that have taken up the subject of "African Studies on the Web" (Barringer 2009) – conferences that have led to some lively discussions. Finally, the report charts the new developments and services in connection with Frankfurt University Library's

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1    <http://www.bigsas.uni-bayreuth.de/en/index.html>. All URLs in the references were checked on 17 September 2010.

2    <http://www.normativeorders.net/de/forschung/forschungsprojekte/80-western-norms-and-local-media-in-africa> and <http://www.normativeorders.net/en/orga nisation/junior-research-groups>.

special collection "Africa South of the Sahara", which is funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation). These new services are more adequately meeting the changing needs of today's researchers.

## New Portals and Digitisation Efforts in the Field of African Studies

As an Internet portal, the "internet library sub-saharan Africa" (ilissAfrica)[3] offers orientation in the Internet, makes researching literature more time-efficient, and references both conventional printed materials as well as new electronic and online media. Its main focus is on topics of humanities and social sciences relating to the countries of sub-Saharan Africa.

One feature of ilissAfrica is a collection of more than 4,300 websites, mostly from Africa. These websites are highly indexed via keywords, abstracts, and classifications. They are not only searchable but also browsable according to country, subject, and resource type. Covering social, historical, philological, and cultural sciences, it is a good tool for qualified interdisciplinary research. The fact that the websites are quality-tested and indexed gives ilissAfrica added value compared to conventional search engines and regional portals (Schams 2009/2010; Africa Positive 2009).

Another major feature of ilissAfrica is that cross-searching is possible within the catalogues of the Africa collections at Frankfurt University Library, the African Studies Centre (ASC) in Leiden, the Nordic Africa Institute (NAI) in Uppsala, and the Department of Anthropology and African Studies (IFEAS) at the University of Mainz; further, cross searches are possible within the "World Affairs Online"[4] database (including the catalogue of the GIGA Hamburg), within a part of the Swets database "Online Con-

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3    <http://www.ilissafrica.de/en>.
4    The International Relations and Area Studies Gateway – IREON (<http://www.ireon-portal.de>) – has similarities to ilissAfrica. This virtual library is operated by the German Information Network International Relations and Area Studies (<http://www.fiv-iblk.de/eindex.htm>), a network of libraries and documentation departments of 13 research organisations (12 German and 1 Nordic), coordinated by the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik – SWP). This network is also the initiator of the "World Affairs Online" database that focuses on foreign and security policy, international cooperation, and development policy. To date, the IREON portal is very much based on "World Affairs Online" and has no explicit Africa focus.

tents"[5] with information on articles in 180 journals on Africa, and within the database of the indexed websites mentioned. In the future, the cross search of ilissAfrica is to include even more catalogues and databases (Cohen and Siebold 2009).

The portal ilissAfrica was set up between 2007 and 2009 by the Frankfurt University Library in cooperation with the Hamburg-based GIGA Information Centre, Africa Library. Project preparation and design of ilissAfrica took place in close collaboration with the Vereinigung für Afrikawissenschaften in Deutschland (VAD, African Studies Association in Germany) and the Fachverband Afrikanistik. Both support ilissAfrica with advice and evaluation efforts – a positive example of how the disconnect between libraries and research organisations can be overcome.

To reduce language barriers and to improve the contact between francophone and anglophone academia, the subject gateway of ilissAfrica is offered in French, English, and German. Additionally, ilissAfrica aims to be a useful bibliographic service for researchers based in Africa and guest researchers in Germany. An open-access guide lists projects that disseminate free or affordable scholarly journals and databases in developing countries.

At the VAD conference in Mainz in June 2010,[6] in combination with the 19th Afrikanistentag, an ilissAfrica information booth was set up. Among other things, a workshop was organised with the aim of evaluating ilissAfrica.[7] Thanks to ilissAfrica's close connection with the VAD network, an expert database was conceptualised (at the VAD meeting in Freiburg, 13 May 2008) and finally presented and discussed (in Mainz, 7 April 2010).[8] The database offers excellent networking opportunities and gives foreign aid institutions an overview of regional and language experts. In addition, ilissAfrica supports the expert databases "Connecting Africa" (Europe) and "The International Directory of African Studies Scholars – IDASS" (worldwide) as well as the mailing list "H-Africa". Furthermore, ilissAfrica offers

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5    The online content of the special collection "Africa South of the Sahara" (<http://gso.gbv.de/DB=2.159/LNG=EN/>) is realised by the "Gemeinsamer Bibliotheksverbund". It contains 178,292 references to journal articles. The references are traceable with the "general search" feature (cross search) of ilissAfrica.

6    Theme of the conference (7–10 April 2010): "Continuities and dislocations: 50 years of African independence".

7    Title: "Zeitgemäße Literatur- und Informationsrecherche für die African Studies: Workshop zur Evaluation des Portals ilissAfrica" (9 April 2010) (cf. <http://www.vad-ev.de/2010/index.php/en/programme>). Feedback can still be given via an online poll: <http://www.ilissafrica.de/about/poll>.

8    Nadia Cohen of the scientific project staff presented the junior database at the "1. Wiener Afrikawissenschaftlichen Tagung für JungforscherInnen" at the Institut für Afrikawissenschaften der Universität Wien (16–18 October 2009).

an Africa section of the Electronic Journals Library (EZB Regensburg) with 770 e-journals on Africa, lists of new library acquisitions in Hamburg and Frankfurt, and lists of official country and language names.

While ilissAfrica is a library project referencing mainly secondary sources (books, journal articles, published reports, thematic websites, etc.), there are other examples that demonstrate researchers' renewed interest in large-scale digitisation of primary sources.[9]

Between 2006 and 2009, the digital pictorial archive of Germany's oldest ethnological research institute in Frankfurt, the independent Frobenius Institute, was set up. Approximately 70,000 images, most of which were produced during the Africa expeditions of Leo Frobenius between 1904 and the late 1930s,[10] are now available online: photographs, watercolours, ink drawings of ethnographic material, landscapes, portraits, and rock art. For the online picture databank, five thesauruses were created: a subject, a material, an ethnic, a country, and a regional thesaurus, which all include synonyms used for descriptions that are in some cases now outdated terms. It goes without saying that this historical material should be accessible, but the question remains of how to properly index and contextualise it while avoiding outmoded and/or colonial mindsets and categories evoked by the material itself or by outdated indexing systems.[11]

Since 2008, the Bayreuth-based project "Digitalisierung | Edition | Vernetzung in den Afrikawissenschaften" (DEVA), also funded by the DFG, has broken new ground in the area of collecting, presenting, and archiving primary data collected in the field.[12] DEVA is in the process of building up a central digital archive for the Bayreuth Institute for African Studies and the BIGSAS, and it is developing an extensive information retrieval system. A wide range of scientific data, documents, and artefacts have been recorded and will be made available in structured databases to preserve scientific raw data, including pictures, audio and video documents, scrapbooks, interviews, etc. The concept of creating a digital archive in the very moment that the research takes place, or very shortly thereafter, is truly groundbreaking.

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9    Digitisation efforts have so far been mainly limited to colonial pictures.

10   <http://www.frobenius-institut.de/index.php?option=com_content&task=view& id=175&Itemid=228>.

11   Compare Richard Kuba in a paper at the workshop "African Studies on the Web II: Exploring Network Architectures" in Bayreuth, 26–28 March 2010, where he asked: "Is there such a thing as a post-colonial thesaurus?"

12   <http://www.deva.uni-bayreuth.de/en/index.html>.

# Recent European Developments and Discussion Networks

The association of European Librarians in African Studies (ELIAS),[13] a group of professionals founded under the umbrella of the Africa-Europe Group for Interdisciplinary Studies (AEGIS), is also tackling the question of how to handle digital materials. The ELIAS annual meeting in Leiden in 2007 centred on the future of area studies and the organisation of infrastructure according to changing demands.[14] One year later, in 2008 in Paris, the ELIAS conference was devoted to examining difficulties in acquiring Africana books, and librarians shared the practical experiences they had with vendors in Africa (Damen 2008). In 2009 in Leipzig, country reports provided information about new projects and developments in the six European countries present at the meeting. For example, the ELIAS sub-group "Africana Digital Materials" maintains a Wikipedia site on "African Studies Journals"[15] and discusses the acquisition of free online documents and the question of how to avoid duplicate effort (cf. Damen 2009). Attached to the ELIAS meeting in 2010, whose main topic of discussion was "Cooperation between African and European Librarians",[16] was the annual meeting of the UK Libraries and Archives Group on Africa (SCOLMA) on the subject "The Real Story? Personal Papers, Life Histories and Africa". Thirteen papers dealt with the acquisition, acceptance, selection, archiving, digitisation, and accessibility of personal papers.[17]

The established ELIAS cooperation and its regular meetings are in themselves a success, having strengthened the connection between the anglophone and francophone worlds. Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany, and Portugal also take part in regular exchanges. Given the fact that Africa libraries are often very small, a joint appearance makes them much more visible. Also, some libraries are threatened by budget and staff cuts. Practical cooperation – e.g. the inclusion of the ASC and NAI catalogues in iliss-

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13   <http://eliasnet.pbworks.com>.
14   At that time, the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) was moving from a more regionally centred to a more thematic-comparative organisation built up around focal topics like water.
15   <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_studies_journals>.
16   Discussions centred inter alia on support activities of the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP) and digitisation efforts of the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD).
17   <http://www2.lse.ac.uk/library/scolma/conference.htm>. Compare also the recent activities of the African Studies Association UK, the Standing Conference on Library Materials on Africa (SCOLMA), and the British Academy, who set up a portal called The Africa Desk: <http://www.africadesk.ac.uk>.

Africa – can be used as an argument in the quest for funds. In the event of budget cuts, it is useful to know colleagues and the profiles of their collections in order to develop workarounds and second-best solutions. Learning from colleagues' experiences with certain vendors can facilitate the highly demanding task of acquiring books from Africa.[18] For these reasons, mutual assistance and European cooperation are very important.

The close collaboration between the three German projects (Frobenius, DEVA, ilissAfrica) led to a panel called "African Studies on the web – new possibilities and new services for academic research"[19] at the 3rd AEGIS European Conference on African Studies[20] in Leipzig. Chaired by Ulf Vierke (Bayreuth) and Hartmut Bergenthum (Frankfurt), the panel discussed the complex task of making primary data (e.g. field notes, survey material, photography) accessible on the web. Some of the questions were: How and for whom can primary data be made accessible? How many different types of data can be combined on a digital platform? How can we develop innovative documentation solutions for research groups? How can researchers use new trends in African Studies on the web? How could elements of future African Studies e-science look?

In their papers, Jos Damen (Leiden), Miriam Conteh-Morgan (Columbus, OH), Marco Guadagnino (Naples), and Ansie van der Westhuizen (Pretoria) discussed e-journals and institutional repositories as means of publishing academic findings. It became clear that, for the time being, new media are still used in traditional ways (e.g. articles in e-journals rarely include other types of media as sources in so-called "enhanced publications") (Damen 2009).

The issue of publishing primary data was addressed in papers by Margrit Prussat (Bayreuth), with reference to the DEVA's work, and Richard Kuba (Frankfurt), with reference to the Frobenius Institute's image database. The discussion stressed the need to contextualise the material in the database with the help of additional information, as well as the importance of sharing this data with the African countries in question. At the end of the conference, Thomas Siebold (Hamburg) and Nadia Cohen (Frankfurt) introduced the ilissAfrica subject gateway.

Following up the discussion between librarians, archivists, and researchers, a successor workshop took place at Bayreuth University in March

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18    For example, the Basel-based Namibia Resource Centre & Southern Africa Library (Basler Afrika Bibliographien) offer other libraries the possibility of acquiring books from Namibia through them, see <http://www.baslerafrika.ch/e/index.php>.
19    <http://aegis-eu.org/archive/ecas2009/panels_round_tables/151.htm>.
20    The conference ECAS 3, titled "Respacing Africa", took place at Leipzig University, 4–7 June 2009.

2010 with the title "African Studies on the Web II: Exploring Network Architectures".[21] Marion Wallace, curator of the African collections at the British Library, discussed her paper on collection and preservation of digital official publications from African countries. A session called "Data Formats and Migration" dealt with data formats (as Encoded Archival Description) and standards of description as proposed by the International Council on Archives and the Library of Congress. It became clear that, in practice, most projects make individual adaptations of metadata standards rather than strictly applying one of the systems. Finally, a session called "Web 2.0" offered a platform to discuss the question of how the infrastructure of African Studies is connected to these new forms of communication. Six examples of social media and web 2.0 tools were introduced: wikis, social networks, social-bookmarking, blogging, microblogging, and feedreaders. The key features of these "social" media are the sharing of knowledge (wikis, commenting), the organisation of information (tagging), the connecting of information (bookmarking, followers), and the worldwide availability of information (real-time communication in the public sphere). A lively discussion followed on the topic of social-tagging vs. subject-indexing; the quality and role of Wikipedia, Facebook, and other popular virtual spaces where information providers on Africa could or should be present; Twitter privacy issues; the blogosphere; and last but not least, the problem of coping with mass amounts of new information.

## New Services of the DFG-Funded Special Collection "Africa South of the Sahara"

Using the personalised web desktop is one technique for researchers to cope with the ever-increasing amount of information. It can serve as a tool to neatly organise a multitude of sources: AllAfrica.com, the Africa News from BBC World, the table of contents of the latest volumes of selected academic journals, information about upcoming conferences, news on recent African publications, new websites on Africa, tweets on Africa, and other RSS feeds can be integrated and monitored simultaneously. Once customised, the service is accessible around the world via the Internet. The Frankfurt University Library staff has made a pre-selection[22] for African Studies scholars

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21   At the Iwalewa-Haus at 26./27. March 2010: <http://www.deva.uni-bayreuth.de/de/news/Workshop/index.html>. A successor panel at ECAS 4 in Uppsala 2011 is proposed.

22   Credits: The original collection of RSS feeds to the African journals is from Ursula Oberst of ASC Leiden.

and offers a dashboard on Netvibes[23] and a pagecast on Pageflakes.[24] Both are ready for use as awareness tools but can also be customised according to personal preferences. The underlying OPML file can also be imported into iGoogle or other feedreaders.

To foster information literacy among students and researchers of African Studies, the staff of the special collection "Africa South of the Sahara" set up a tutorial[25] as a wiki in 2010.[26] The tutorial presents the resources needed for an introduction to a topic, a quick overview of the current state of research, and comprehensive bibliographies needed for dissertations. For quick access to the most important databases, the site "Quick Links to Key Resources for African Studies" was added.[27]

For users with a focus on African history, a special tutorial was developed as part of the regional "guides" of the subject gateway "Clio online" (Bergenthum 2010). The article gives an overview of digital projects, databases, picture archives, and podcasts all relevant to historical research on Africa. Another specialised tutorial that deserves mentioning is an introduction to the search feature of ilissAfrica.[28] Its pedagogical approach, based on short films and exercises, enables users to quickly become experts in searching the web with the help of ilissAfrica.

With 200,000 volumes, "Africa South of the Sahara" is the largest collection on sub-Saharan Africa in Germany and is generally regarded to be one of the top five collections in Europe. The DFG has been funding the acquisition of foreign literature since 1964. Its aim is to acquire at least one copy of every book, keep it in a German library, and make it available to the rest of the country via interlibrary loan. Since 2007, the Frankfurt Library has taken part in the "Cooperative Acquisitions Program" of the Library of Congress Office, Nairobi (Kenya), an innovation that has considerably improved the process of acquiring books.[29] Books from nine, periodicals from

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23  <http://www.netvibes.com/ilissafrica>.
24  <http://www.pageflakes.com/ilissAfrica>.
25  <http://wiki.studiumdigitale.uni-frankfurt.de/UB_AFRICA_LIB/index.php?title= African_Studies-Informationskompetenz>.
26  The tutorial is a summary of the material developed for professional training courses held in the Africa department in Frankfurt and other places (presentations in social anthropology undergraduate seminars, in political science seminars, for Ph.D. students in "Normative Orders", and papers at Leipzig and Gießen Universities on libraries as a vocational field).
27  <http://wiki.studiumdigitale.uni-frankfurt.de/UB_AFRICA_LIB/index.php?title= Quick_Links_to_Key_Resources_for_African_Studies>.
28  "LernBar" e-learning tool: <http://lernbar.uni-frankfurt.de/courses/327/272/lern bar/index.html>.
29  <http://www.loc.gov/acq/ovop/nairobi/>.

eleven, and material on human rights issues as well as material in local African languages from nineteen countries in sub-Saharan Africa are now delivered on a regular basis. Reliable vendors based in francophone West Africa were found. Beyond that, since May 2009, the tables of contents of all acquired foreign books have begun to be scanned and added to the library catalogue to allow users a quick preview. Certain parts of the collections are highlighted by placing them in the "Virtuelle Afrika Vitrine", e.g. "100 Years of Kwame Nkrumah", "African Music", and "70 Years and Still Decolonising the Minds".[30]

The acquisition of electronic documents has also improved. Since 2008, a librarian at GIGA Hamburg and a student assistant in Frankfurt have been collecting free online publications from African websites. One of their tasks is to win the consent of copyright holders so as to make publications available as full-text documents on ilissAfrica and the repositories of the two above-mentioned institutions.[31] Acquiring copyrights is tedious and time-consuming work – however, it is the only way to guarantee long-term accessibility of research material often not published elsewhere.[32] Reorganisations of universities, budget cuts, and/or political turmoil often threaten online content within Africa. The (admittedly) highly selective acquisition of electronic documents and copyrights converges with similar ventures by the NAI and the ASC.

Access to e-journals via interlibrary loans has, to date, often not been possible. It is therefore noteworthy that, since October 2009, articles from 18 South African e-journals hosted by Sabinet can be ordered in Germany via interlibrary loan from Frankfurt University Library. Before, these journals were not accessible in Germany (not even in print).[33]

By jointly organising the acquisition and licensing of so-called "German National Licences" for digital publications, the Frankfurt University Library improved direct digital access to e-journals, document collections, and other

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30   <http://www.ub.uni-frankfurt.de/afrika/vav_archiv.html>. The "Virtuelle Afrika Vitrine" is sometimes accompanied by physical exhibitions in the third floor of Frankfurt University Library, e.g. on the FIFA World Cup 2010 or on the birthdays of Nelson Mandela and Janheinz Jahn.

31   <http://edocs.ub.uni-frankfurt.de/631/ASS.htm>.

32   Examples are "Botswana History: Bibliography for Local Studies" by Neil Parsons, "Bibliographie des langues du Gabon revisitée" by Pither Medjo Mvé, and the National Bibliography of Mauritius.

33   *Indilinga* (Indigenous Knowledge Systems), the *Research Review of the Institute of African Studies*, the University of Ghana, *Southern African Humanities*, the *Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa*, the *Journal for Contemporary History*, *Politeia*, *SAHARA*, and *South African Music Studies* are examples of the journals included. See <http://info. ub.uni-frankfurt.de/info.html?db_id=969>.

databases. The Human Relations Area Files (HRAF) are of particular interest for social anthropologists. Of particular interest for historians[34] are the British collection "Empire Online" and the US collection "The Digital National Security Archive", the latter of which offers a sub-collection called "South Africa: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1962–1989". The "Corpus de la littérature francophone de l'Afrique noire, écrite et orale, des origines aux indépendances" (a collection of 11,000 texts of all genres) is of particular interest for literary scholars, as is the EIU Country Reports Archive and Columbia International Affairs Online for social scientists. Some journal backfiles[35] and particularly the "Afrikanisches Biographisches Archiv" as part of the World Biographical Information System (WBIS) are of interest to all African Studies disciplines, as they are effective means of retrieving reliable biographical information.[36]

However, there have been some setbacks. A funding initiative for a German National Licence for the Heinemann African Writers Series was not approved. A Frankfurt University Library project proposal to digitise the colonial library starting with the material of the German Colonial Society (Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft) was dismissed as well, though the project was judged by other reviewers to be both an innovative and a necessary addition to ilissAfrica. The compartmentalisation of the different funding activities in the DFG (special collections, virtual libraries, national licences, digitisation projects) sometimes hinders the development of integrated services for African Studies.

## Conclusion

Since 2006, new projects, services, and collaborations have no doubt brought African Studies a big step forward on the web. By and large, information services have kept pace with technological progress. More resources are available via the Internet – more content, more references, and more types of media can be accessed directly. However, a fully integrated service at a European level is not yet available. At least the dialogue between libraries, archivists, and researchers has improved.

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34   The Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO) includes travel accounts of François LeVaillant and Mungo Park. The Making of the Modern World contains books on Liberia.

35   For example, of the publishing house Brill with the *Journal of Religion in Africa* and a Walter de Gruyter package with the *Journal of African Languages and Linguistics* and the African Book Publishing Record.

36   <http://www.nationallizenzen.de>.

We believe intra-European cooperation should be further intensified. To that end, utilising one common subject gateway would be of help, as would adopting a more coordinated approach in acquiring publications (cf. the British "SCOLMA Area Specialisation Scheme"[37]), collecting free electronic documents in order to avoid duplicate efforts, and building a common expert database of African Studies. Regarding that last point, national peculiarities and the lack of common norms of metadata schemes hinder the merging of expert databases such as IDASS, Connecting Africa, and Africa Desk to this day. Why not combine these databases? At the ELIAS conferences, the first steps were taken. A discussion group was started on a common metadata scheme which might enable a future fusion or at least a cross search. This group just might become a starting point from which to combine the limited forces of African Studies in Europe and to develop project proposals on a European level in the medium term.

Information services for African Studies remain a work in progress. Technological progress and changes in the way researchers behave must be closely observed in order to quickly adapt to changing demands and developments. New forms of publications enriched with primary material, as well as the cross-linking of primary material, secondary studies, and bibliographical references are conceivable. In view of recent online developments, librarians are called upon to make their contribution towards e-science in the web 2.0.

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37    <http://www2.lse.ac.uk/library/scolma/events.htm#specialization>.

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**Integrierte Informationsdienstleistungen für die Afrikaforschung: Neuere Entwicklungen in Deutschland und Europa**

**Zusammenfassung:** Neue Projekte, Dienstleistungen und Kooperationen haben die Informationsversorgung der Afrikastudien einen großen Schritt vorangebracht. In diesem Bericht werden neue Fachportale und Digitalisierungsprojekte präsentiert; die in den vergangenen Jahren intensivierte europäische Zusammenarbeit der Afrika-Bibliotheken wird nachgezeichnet. Schließlich werden neue Dienstleistungen der Afrika-Sammlung der Frankfurter Universitätsbibliothek vorgestellt, die veränderten Bedürfnissen der Wissenschaftlerinnen und Wissenschaftler Rechnung tragen und es erlauben, die Informationsflut besser zu bewältigen und gleichzeitig den Überblick über aktuelle Entwicklungen zu behalten. Gleichwohl ist die Fragmentierung unterschiedlicher Dienstleistungsangebote noch nicht überwunden.

**Schlagwörter:** Deutschland, Europa, Afrikanistik/Afrikaforschung, Informationsdienstleistungen, Bibliothek, Virtuelle Bibliothek