

Claudia Dillmann:

**"How audio-visual archives can contribute to the European Digital Library process",
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First let me introduce ourselves.

The "Association des Cinémathèques Européennes (ACE)" is an affiliation of 38 national and regional film archives from all over Europe. Its joint role is to protect the European audiovisual heritage and to ensure this heritage survives to be visible, enjoyed and studied for generations to come.

Recognising that film is essentially trans-national in character and that its problems of survival and visibility through all forms of access cannot be solved at national level alone, the founder members of ACE came together in the late 1980s to seek co-operative ways of saving, restoring, promoting the European film heritage.

With the support of the European Commission, ACE and its member archives successfully have undertaken several joint projects which aimed and aim at finding solutions, for example in the field of classical analogue restoration, training and education, building up a Joint European Filmography, defining recommendations for the digitisation of films and other audiovisual content, creating national catalogues online including streaming videos (as filmportal.de in Germany), designing an Internet gateway that facilitates access to information about existence, location and copyright of documentary material or working on standardisation processes (CEN) on metadata for cataloguing and indexation in the cinematographic environment.

Therefore European film archives have assembled precious expertise in almost every aspect of the digital challenge. Now we are capable and willing to play our part in the fields of preserving and promoting the European film heritage by using new technologies for access, use and re-use of audiovisual works. And we are going to support the "European Digital Library" with valuable, highly attractive so called content. As far as we can.

Creating a European digital library giving access to the wealth of our cultural heritage is not only a political desire: It is an enormous opportunity to get presence in a world dominated by visibility. And it mirrors the general expectation and attitude of the society:

The promise of the internet to provide all information at immediate mouse-click,

The fundamental interest in moving images – be it from private sector or industry –

while at the same time there is a growing demand for orientation, single access points, proved quality of content.

The audio visual or better: public funded film archives in Europe are willing to meet these challenges, again: as far as we can.

Because the possibilities of film and audiovisual archives are still rather limited.

When ACE responded to the online consultation "i2010 digital libraries" launched by the European Commission in September 2005, we emphasized the fact that with regard to digitisation, online accessibility and (long term) preservation of digitised material we have to solve more severe problems than non audiovisual archives:

1. Digitisation: the digitization of audiovisual material is much more labour intensive and costly than the digitisation of books. We are talking about 200.000.- € for digitising 100 hours of film in High Definition or about 700.000.- € for the same 100 hours if we do a 2 K Digitization, means 2 kilobyte per frame, 24 times per second.

Also it requires significant consequential costs for storage and migration. Therefore not only a financial support given by the European Commission is needed but also a joint effort of the stakeholders involved in the process, which means archives, copyright owners, and their representatives in how to proceed in digitisation.

2. Access: There is an overall consensus on the fact that access to and re-use of moving images and archival materials in Europe is far from being fully developed. Public funded archives are facing the fact that public funded films (the majority of all productions) can be a heavily restricted area. Without

the permission of the copyright owners, archives often are not allowed to copy even a print at risk for preservation purposes, to show a preserved and thanks to public money restored film even in the own premises or to circulate it within the non-profit European archival institutions. Not to speak about the presentation in the www.

Which leads to

3. Copyright: as we are dealing with a relatively young medium and art form, born in 1895, the question HOW to avoid the 20th century black hole (Horst Forster mentioned) in presenting moving images within the EDL is a crucial one. Only few works are already in public domain, the vast majority is long out of distribution, a significant number has to be regarded as orphan works, where the right holders are unknown and/or not locatable. How to deal with these facts?

4. Other problems, some home made:

Further barriers for the access to the European film heritage are the lack of standards, facilitating the interoperability of the different databases, the lack of registries and clear identification mechanisms when it comes to European co-productions, plus the language problems.

In describing these issues at stake, I am referring to the state of the art in September 2005.

2 years and 3 months later we thankfully acknowledge an ongoing progress in finding solutions, initiated and stimulated by the European Commission. Before describing how audio visual archives can contribute to the EDL I have to state that the sole prospect of the EDL has already contributed a lot to our work and perspectives.

1. Digitization: Encouraged by the Commission's recommendations of August 24 in 2006 digitization projects are initiated or forthcoming at Member States level, in the Netherlands, in Norway, Great Britain, for example.

2. Accessibility and copyright questions: based on the online consultation for the EDL some fields for action were filtered by the Commission, and a High Level Expert Group (HLEG) was established in February 2006 as an advisory board for Commissioner Viviane Reding.

The problem of orphan works has been pointed out as one of the barriers for the access to the European cultural heritage. Besides the archives, museums and libraries the audio visual archives are concerned in a special way. Within the HLEG subgroup "copyright" the members, representing stakeholders' interests, have committed themselves to some Key Principles and a certain approach for recommendations. We are trying to find balances, believe in negotiations, contractual arrangements, cooperation. A model license for the digitization and accessibility of "Out of print works" has been designed in order to facilitate the negotiations between publishers and users; hopefully the film archives will benefit from these negotiations in order to adapt the results to their work.

We concluded that Databases and Rights Clearance Centres must be part of the solution both for Orphan Works and Out-of-Print Works. Aiming to ensure interoperability, enhance co-ordination efforts and facilitate the multilingual access points, the Copyright Subgroup developed a set of Key Principles for Databases and Rights Clearance Centres for Orphan Works as well as Out-of-Print Works.

One of the foreseen conditions to handle a presumed orphan work is to undertake and prove a diligent, reasonable search for the copyright owner/holder and in case the owner/holder cannot be identified or located, to apply for a license to use the work. Now, sector specific work groups are trying to define guidelines for such a search.

Tackling the other problems: Furthermore film archives are now in the process of developing metadata standards for film description aiming at facilitating the interoperability of their data bases. MIDAS, a project funded by the MEDIAplus program, for the first time is offering an overview of the holdings, 16 European cinematheques never have published before.

And in looking forward to Europeana we are going to establish the "European Film Gateway", a sector specific aggregator of valuable historical and also attractive content – OUR contribution to the visibility and online accessibility of the European cultural heritage. 23 partners from 16 European member states have joined in this project.

Just a few days ago, the project was approved by the Commission and will be launched as a Best Practice Network under the eContentplus programme. Running from 2008 until 2011, the "European Film Gateway" is scheduled to launch its public service by early 2010.

When I am referring to the collections of film archives and cinematheques I have not only the moving images in mind. Most of these European cultural institutions assemble a mixture of film and so called

non film collections, all are running cinemas and libraries, some are also hosting film museums and public mediatheks. The institutions in themselves are in a way cross domain sector, dealing with photographs and printed material, autographs and production files, original sketches for set design or posters, 3-D objects like apparatus, costumes and models, functioning in a combination of museum, archive and library.

We gratefully take the opportunity to contribute to Europeana bringing in our experiences and so far digitized collection items, to build bridges to the other domains and their resources and – not to forget – to benefit from the expertise Europeana is going to assemble.

With the European Film Gateway as a sector specific aggregator for Europeana some hundred thousands of digitised documents from the European film archives and cinémathèques will be made accessible, many of them to become available online for the first time at all. The largest part of this corpus will consist of non-textual content: Films and footage, film stills and set photographs, posters and drawings etc.

In view of the current state of IT-based indexing and search technologies for visual and audiovisual material, this content is essentially undiscoverable without proper metadata about works of film: We call this type of metadata “Filmographies”. These filmographies already exist among the European film institutions, and huge efforts are being invested every day to improve them and keep them up to date. The “European Film Gateway” will aim at joining these highly valuable and reliable sources of filmographic metadata in what could be called “the nucleus of a Common European Filmography”. As a result of these efforts, the Common European Filmography will serve as the backbone for organising, finding and accessing digital content from Europe’s film institutions. We – the film archives – have always stressed the fact that proper access to digitised content is not possible without these catalogues. I would really like to thank the Commission for recognising this fact and supporting a project that explicitly deals with this issue.

The European film archives still have a long way to go. In contrast to the libraries’ long tradition of standardisation activities, transnational co-operations and online union catalogues, the film institutions have only recently embarked on efforts at harmonising standards and specifications. The “European Film Gateway” project will review, select and implement common standards, enabling for the first time interoperability of content across the different domains.

The European Digital Library initiative’s aim to give access to Europe’s cultural heritage across the various domains depends not only on support from the national cultural communities. It also depends on strong support from European domain-specific organisations such as the CENL for the national libraries or ACE for the film archives. On behalf of the European Association of Cinémathèques, I would like to assure you that the “European Film Gateway” will be a tool for achieving this common goal, and that it will hopefully not be the last contribution from the European film archives to the European Digital Library.

Again, as far as we can. Preparing the presentation of the maquette, making all the promises and wonders of Europeana to become visible, tomorrow, the EDLnet office asked us to provide them with some moving images out of Walther Ruttmanns “Berlin – die Sinfonie der Großstadt”, produced in 1927, a masterpiece of cinematographic “collage” at the twilight of the Weimar Republic, an immortal song about THE big city – and one of the themes, Europeana is going to concentrate on first. Well, we didn’t dare to give online access – even for a few seconds, just a kind of citation – without the consent of the right holder we know very well, an old charming lady, yet ill, suffering, and therefore not attainable – while her husband felt in a way helpless regarding our request.

Yes, the film is available on Youtube.

And yes, we respect copyright. Nevertheless we, the European film archives, will try our very best to enrich Europeana.

Thank you for your attention.