

The Library of the Former University at Frankfurt on the Oder (1566-1811): Indexing and Digitising the Remaining Collections Housed in the Polish City of Wrocław

In 1811, the Viadrina University in the province of Brandenburg was moved from the city of Frankfurt an der Oder to Breslau (today the Polish city of Wrocław). The university library was part of the move: approximately 25,000 volumes were transferred to Breslau. Until recently it was not known how many of these 25,000 volumes remained preserved in the Wrocław university library. With the initiation of this project we determined the existence of more than 5,000 of these volumes in that library's stacks. At the same time, in Frankfurt an der Oder the old catalogues were inputted into a database, yielding an inventory of the Frankfurt University's holdings shortly before the transfer in 1811. Copies of the title pages of the books located in Wrocław were, in a next step, linked to the datasets held in the new Frankfurt database. A subset of these matches will now be fully digitised and indexed according to library standards.

With the help of archival material we have been able to reconstruct a three-dimensional version of the Viadrina historic library building in Frankfurt an der Oder. For each of the former books a digital spine of the book in question, complete with the author and title information, is displayed on shelf. For the books that have survived across the generations, a click on the lower corner of the screen produces a digital copy of the title page. Our intention is to integrate the available data in a way that allows users to open the books per mouse click and to turn the pages on screen. The website also features a search function that allows visitors to query the database by title or author.

This virtual library will soon be available to the public via the homepage of the university library at the European University, Viadrina. We also plan to install a user terminal in the university library's reading room.

Internet: <http://www.ub.euw-frankfurt-o.de>

