

Stephanie Kurschus

European Book Cultures

Diversity as a Challenge



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Frankfurt, Deutschland

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Preface

With regard to the field of book studies, the present work addresses two topics which have previously not often been discussed. For instance, it applies the transnational approach to book studies; an approach that is frequently used in the context of economics. The present work attempted to dissolve the established national perspectives, that are often the basis for studying the book, and to follow the example of recent studies, such as *Reading Beyond the Book*¹, which focused on the UK, USA and Canada. Secondly, the combination of theoretical and statistical analyses is new to books studies: statistical methods to understand and to analyse book culture have never been applied before, especially since there has been no common concept of book culture.

Since the completion of this work in the February of 2013, two major developments have taken place, which would have had an impact on the results of the analyses. The special status awarded to books within the European Unions member states has recently been illustrated by developments in France. As its second largest book store chain Chapitre had to declare bankruptcy, the French government decided to augment the already comprehensive programs for the promotion of books and the book industry: Within 2014, it has announced to additionally reduce the value added tax on books and to endow the program offering loans to book stores with more funds.

Furthermore, in 2013, Croatia has joined the European Union as a full member. In consequence, any future analyses of European book cultures will have to include the new member state. Other developments could only be explored on the surface due to the limited scope of this work, for example the consequences of the financial crises, especially in the Southern European states, and their impact on the programs for book promotion as well as on the book industry in general. However, these points serve to stress the importance of a continued monitoring of the development of the different factors of book culture.

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1 Danielle Fuller and DeNel Rehberg Sedo (2013): *Reading Beyond the Book. The Social Practices of Contemporary Literary Culture*. Routledge Chapman & Hall.

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List of Abbreviations

ACTA	Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement
ADLEC	French Association for the Promotion of Booksellers
AIE	Italian Publishers Association
APBAD	Portuguese Association of Librarians, Archivists and Document Professionals
BIEF	International Office of the French Edition
BGN	Bulgarian Lev
BMF	German Ministry of Finance
CDCC	Council for Cultural Co-operation (of the European Union)
CDCULT	Former Steering Committee for Culture (of the European Union)
COBISS	Library Information Systems and Research Information Systems Network
DRM	Digital Rights Management
EC	European Commission
ECJ	European Court of Justice
ERICarts	European Institute for Comparative Cultural Research
ETHZ	Swiss Federal Institute for Technology
EU	European Union
EUR	Euro
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IBBY	International Board on Books for Young People
ICORN	International Cities of Refuge Network
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
i.e.	that is
IFLA	International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions
IP	Intellectual Property
ISBN	International Standard Book Number
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
LEG	European Leadership Group
LR	Public Lending Remuneration
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PMV	Flanders Participation Company

PLR	Public Lending Remuneration
RPM	Resale Price Maintenance
RNBP	Portuguese National Reading Plan
SAT	Scholastic Assessment Test
SFr	Swiss Franc
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TEU	Treaty on the European Union
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UPS	Uninterrupted Power Supply
VAT	Value Added Tax
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization

Country Abbreviations

BE	Belgium
BG	Bulgaria
CZ	Czech Republic
DK	Denmark
DE	Germany
EE	Estonia
IE	Ireland
EL	Greece
ES	Spain
FR	France
IT	Italy
CY	Cyprus
LV	Latvia
LT	Lithuania
LU	Luxembourg
HU	Hungary
MT	Malta
NL	Netherlands
AT	Austria
PL	Poland
PT	Portugal
RO	Romania
SI	Slovenia
SK	Slovakia
FI	Finland
SE	Sweden
UK	United Kingdom
CH	Switzerland