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Cataloguing-in-publication a brief study of some international experiments

By Dr. Shaban A. Khalifa

Cataloguing-in-publication intends to print a catalogue card in the book itself, containing all the data which enables the librarians to copy them on cards of their own and file them in their catalogues. This procedure saves time, money and effort and makes the catalogue more sound. Cataloguing in publication was preceded by various forms of cataloguing for the same purpose such as centralized cataloguing, cooperative cataloguing and shared cataloguing.

This study deals with the experiments undertaken in the U.S.A., the U.S.S.R. and Brazil, to see how can we utilize from them.

The U.S. experiment was begun in June 1958 to Feb. 1959, when the Library of Congress invited some 160 publishers to share in the experiment by sending the proof-sheets of the books under publishing. The proofs were catalogued within 24 hours and were returned to the publisher with a complete catalogue card to be printed in the books. This experiment which was known as cataloguing-in-source failed to satisfy the three parts sharing in it i.e. publishers, Library of Congress and librarians for the following reasons : —

1 — it delayed book publishing for some time.

2 — it raised the cost of book publishing by 15$ per book i.e. about 500,000$ for all books publisherd in the U.S.A.

3 — it needed about 300.000$ per annum on the part of L.C. to carry it out effectively.

4 — it needed more staff to carry it out quickly..

5 — when analysed by the librarians, the analysis revealed many msitakes and differences between the printed card and the data of the books.

More than 50% of the cards were mistaken especially in the collation and imprint. These mistakes ment that librarians must correct the data before copying them.

It was recommended then to stop the experiment.

Because of the great explosion of book production, it was necessary to resume the project on a new bases. It began in June 1971 under the name Cataloguing-in-publication» and gave only the following data : Entry, short title, series, notes, tracings, L.C. classification number, L.C. card number, D.D. classification number, international standard book number. The main of the new project was to provide librarians with data they cna not find in the book.

Similar procedures were undertaken in the U.S.S.R. since 1959 but in a different way. The publishers themselves carry out cataloguing their publications. Cataloguing differ from a publisher to another: but the essentials are: the classification number, the author number and the entry. The continuity of the project indicates that it has succeded to a great extent.

Similar to the experiment of the U.S. is the experiment undertaken in Brazil by the Brazilian Institute for Bibliography and Documentation in the sixities. About 1972 a center for cataloguing the books published in San Paulo (half of the Brazilian Book production) was established to do the same work done by the Library of Congress for the American books.

At the end of the study the writer recommends undertaking a similar project in the Arab States for the benefit of the Arabic culture, Arabic book and the Arabic libraries and foreign libraries acquiring the Arabic book.