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IN THE
POLITICAL SCENE

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LIBRARIES IN THE POLITICAL SCENE

Marta L. Dosa

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To the memory of Joseph Dosa, whose interest
in the thoughts of Georg Leyh served as a
source of inspiration

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of Michigan has been deeply appreciated. I wish to acknowledge with special thanks the assistance of Judith M. Prevratil, Barbara J. Rogers, and Robert M. Ross. The understanding, patience, and skill of Betty W. Rothschild were invaluable in the preparation of the manuscript.

Introduction

Georg Leyh's dream was to remain a detached and serene scholar in spite of the turmoil of his age. Instead, he became a political activist. Similarly, the separation of scholarship from politics was once a focal principle of the humanistic strain of German librarianship. Instead, the critical decades encompassing the National Socialist era, World War II, and the political and ideological division of the country after 1945, swept the libraries into the forefront of political life. This book is an attempt to document some of the developments which affected the political role of German librarianship, as seen through the involvements, activities, and correspondence of one of its leaders, Georg Leyh. It is neither a comprehensive biography¹ nor an analysis of the recent history of German libraries; rather, it traces the interconnections of an individual's behavior, inner conflicts, and actions and the political and psychological climate in which he lived and worked.

Georg Leyh (1877–1968) attained distinction in German and international librarianship as author, editor, historian, administrator, and leader in professional activities. During the first half of the twentieth century his works and opinions helped shape theoretical thinking and organizational patterns in the profession. His life spanned five phases of German history: the Bismarck era, the reign of Emperor William II, the Weimar Republic, the years of National Socialism, and the division following World War II. Acute political crisis, however, did not enter German librarianship and Leyh's professional and personal life until the mid-1930s.

For most of his life Georg Leyh identified himself with the German research library. His correspondence and his activities mirror the fluctuating trends and influences which affected the availability, dissemination, and use of information in twentieth-

century Germany. Leyh had a vision of free scholarship in a culturally united and tradition-based Germany and refused to compromise this vision. This book, then, is a record of strength and weakness and the humanity of a man in the dual bind of professional and individual commitments. It is also the record of an age in which deportations, censorship, suspicion, and fear, followed by political division, zonal fragmentation, and ideological alienation sundered the German library profession.

This study undertakes to document the process and the thinking that led Leyh to his controversial professional-political activities and his widely criticized writings in his later years. Every effort has been made to present the documentary material and to analyze Leyh's reactions to political and psychological pressures without favoring any particular position. Neither a justification nor a critique of Leyh's actions is intended.

This study is based mainly on an analysis of Leyh's extensive correspondence and, to a lesser extent, on printed materials and personal interviews with Leyh and persons who knew him. The most important documentary resources were found in the Leyh Archives in the Manuscript Division, State Library of the Foundation for Prussian Cultural Property (*Handschriftenabteilung, Staatsbibliothek, Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz*) in West Berlin. The Leyh collection represents "the largest and most important library science collection in Germany, with a richness in material on library organization and history that is unequalled."² In addition to original manuscripts, photographs, and other documentary material, it encompasses several thousand letters written by more than 250 librarians from all over the world, accompanied by copies of Leyh's answers to these letters.³ The collection documents not only the professional life of Leyh, but also an historical epoch of German librarianship.

A smaller, but not less important, part of Leyh's unpublished correspondence and private papers was located, in 1968, in the Leyh home in Tübingen, but has been moved since that time to Lübeck where it forms the family archive in the possession of Dr. Frowine Leyh and Miss Uta Leyh. Useful documentary sources were also located at the German State Library (*Deutsche Staatsbibliothek*) in East Berlin.

Notes

1. This is not the place to give a comprehensive review of Leyh's works and other accomplishments. His books, papers, theoretical reflections, and influences have already been systematically inventoried in Marta Leszlei Dosa, "Scholarship, Libraries, Politics in the Life and Work of Georg Leyh," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, School of Library Science, 1971. 3 vols.

2. Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz, *Jahrbuch*, 1964-1965 (Berlin: Grote, 1966), pp. 200-201.

3. The collection has not yet been inventoried and cataloged; therefore, the extent of the Leyh correspondence included therein may only be estimated.

Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Symbols

BRD	Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Federal Republic of Germany)
DAF	Deutsche Arbeitsfront (German Labor Front)
DDR	Deutsche Demokratische Republik (German Democratic Republic)
<i>HdB</i>	<i>Handbuch der Bibliothekswissenschaft</i>
IFLA	International Federation of Library Associations
NSDAP	Nationalsozialistische deutsche Arbeiterpartei (National Socialistic German Workers' party)
SMAD	Sowjetische Militäradministration in Deutschland (Soviet Military Administration in Germany)
VDB	Verein Deutscher Bibliothekare (Association of German Librarians)
<i>ZfB</i>	<i>Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen</i>
<i>ZfBB</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Bibliothekswesen und Bibliographie</i>

Location Symbols Referring to Manuscript Collections

The citation without a location symbol of an unpublished letter or document in the chapter notes always refers to the Leyh Archives in the Manuscript Division of the State Library of the Foundation for Prussian Cultural Property in West Berlin. References to other manuscript collections are indicated by the following symbols:

DtB	Deutsche Bücherei, Leipzig
DtS	Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Manuscript Division, East Berlin
L	Leyh Family Archives, Lübeck

Socio-Cultural Roots of a Catalyst:

The Pre-1933 Years

In 1877, the year Georg Leyh was born, the German national state was only six years old. The memory of the Franco-Prussian wars was receding, and Prussia was prospering economically and culturally. This was a transitional age in many respects. Bismarck steered the new Reich from the summit of his triumphant achievements. Feudal aristocracy flourished in spite of social advances. Public life was dominated by the pedantic spirit of the bourgeoisie, a class that was growing increasingly nervous about the socialist unrest in the background. The concentration of political power in Berlin began. In educational and cultural affairs, however, the states (*Länder*) preserved their autonomy.

The *Gründer Jahre* of the 1870s and 1880s were marked by intensive industrial production and Germany's struggle for an international market. National publishing flourished, and the German book became well known all over the world. The educational system experienced remarkable advances. Countrywide consolidation of educational policies and high intellectual standards characterized the period. All these trends demanded a high degree of organization at all levels. The reforms in the library field had, to some extent, already changed the face of research libraries. The time of the early reformers was over. The situation called for sustained efficiency, consolidation, the preservation of accomplishments, and increased cooperation. It was in this somber and undramatic era that Georg Leyh was born on June 6, 1877, in the small Bavarian town of Ansbach.

Bavaria (*Bayern*), with its strong rural and Catholic tradition and baroque taste, entered the North Germany Confederacy in 1870, becoming a part of the German empire. But in character and attitudes, Bavaria remained closer to the Latin temperament than

2

The Era of National Socialism:

1933 to 1945

Traditionally, the majority of professional librarians in Germany were humanistic in orientation and interests, believing in the separation of power and intellect, politics and scholarship. National Socialism, however, involved all phases of national and individual life in the course of its rise and decline, including the cultural, educational, and information-handling activities. The library as a cultural institution became an instrument of politics. Professional standards clashed with norms created by the totalitarian state and the party. The confrontation of the individual librarian with political and moral decisions in his everyday life grew into an agonizing problem, symbolic of an epoch in which practically all values were subverted. The problem of understanding the actions of the individual in a totalitarian state was expressed by Karl Barth: "On one side the German actions, the system, the machinery we know—on the other the German individual whom we actually don't know any more, who might be what his actions show him to be and who might be completely different."¹

The Psychological Background

Born in the chaos of a lost war and the fall of the imperial regime, the Weimar Republic proved to be an interlude. Filled with economic and social crises, unrest, and false hopes, it became the breeding ground of militant political elements of either leftist or rightist persuasion. The dissatisfaction, lingering for more than a decade in the German psyche, turned either against the Republic as the source of all problems or against outside powers—whether capitalist or communist—or retreated into a futile passivity that

3

Time of Increasing Darkness:

1933 to 1945

In the early years of the National Socialist experience, the service given by libraries, strained by the drastic institutional changes that took place in society, scholarship, education, communications, and the book trade, had arrived at a crucial juncture. But more than that, the very principles on which the profession had operated were shattered. While the strain at the institutional level undermined the functioning of libraries, the destruction of the value system affected each individual involved.

Leyh chose to remain in Germany under the shadow of the totalitarian regime. As a scholar and a leader in the library profession, he was not only dedicated to the concept of independent scholarship and to professional ethics, but he acted as spokesman for them. He was raised in the tradition of idealistic nationalism that revered Frederick the Great and Bismarck, a tradition that, according to many cultural historians, had led to Hitler. He considered himself a citizen of the world, however, and wished to live according to the free and humanistic spirit of Jacob Burckhardt. How did he deal with the realities of an age that was perverting German nationalism and had rejected Burckhardt? "Moral earthquake" and "barbarism" were his words for that age. But daily administration of the university library, editing of the leading professional journal and of the *Handbuch der Bibliothekswissenschaft*, and participation in professional meetings had to be carried on. Karl Jaspers said after World War II: "Each of us Germans, even if in different ways, has reason for self-examination based on moral insight. The highest court to be recognized is one's own conscience."¹ Leyh's correspondence and the record of his professional activities in these critical years mirror not only his self-analysis but also the psychological environment in which a day-by-

Reconstruction in the Face of New Problems:

1945 and After

In 1945, spring came slowly to Germany. On the morning of May 2, light snow blanketed the fields and slopes in some of the Southern states. This was the day when the Russian Army captured Berlin, and the British Second Army, having occupied Bremen, seized Hamburg and Lübeck in the North. In Tübingen and other Southern towns, however, people knew little about the military developments, except by hearsay and rumors. All means of transportation and all communications were at a standstill. In many areas, lack of electricity disabled the radios and telephone service was out of order.

By April 21, four weeks after crossing the Rhine, the Allies had conquered a large part of Western Germany. Tübingen was occupied on April 19, and Stuttgart on April 22 by the French. On May 7, Germany unconditionally surrendered, and at 12:01 A.M. on May 9, all guns were silenced.

After several days, electricity and telephone connections were restored, local stores opened, and life began to crawl out from under the ruins. The people of Germany found a changed world around them. The span of activities typical of a normal society narrowed down to the individual's immediate surroundings. Trains, commercial traffic, and most other means of transportation were crippled. The roads and highways of the country were covered by people—ex-soldiers, refugees, foreign workers released from forced labor—enormous masses of people hiking, bicycling, trying to find their families or friends, to reach their homes, or in search of a new home, a place, any place to live, to survive. They found that crossing from one military occupation zone into another constituted a major problem. An identification card became the symbol of a new life and of a place to belong. Severe shortages existed in

Final Conflicts:

National Library Issues

"In each phase [of their history which led them] toward political unification the Germans felt the absence of a national library." In these words Georg Leyh once echoed a historical source, in fact an entire tradition.¹ The reasons why a single national library, acknowledged as such officially, professionally, and publicly by the whole of Germany, could never evolve may be understood only from a political perspective. Three sets of institutional and cultural correlations made the development impossible: the relationship of a central German governmental authority to the German states; the relationship of German governments, whether central or state, to the book trade; and the relationship of the book trade to German research libraries.

The development of the leading national institutions, their services, and cooperative national bibliographic systems will be examined briefly to create a framework for the understanding of their role and interfaces during the period under study. Georg Leyh, whose strong opinions on the German national library problem were reflected throughout his professional life and climaxed in his controversial last works, was a product as well as a symbol of political and cultural turmoil. Toward the end of his life, consumed by an unfathomable obsession to uncover direct documentation revealing the influence of these institutions on German librarianship as well as on his own professional career, Leyh could no longer separate the fate of the Prussian State Library from the defeats and frustrations of his own past. When he finally mastered his historical material, he became the victim of his own vision. What follows is a record—without any attempt at judgment—of these final conflicts.

In Memoriam

In January 1968 I spent several days in the spacious study of the Leyh home in Tübingen, listening to Georg Leyh's reminiscences. Although his figure seemed small and frail against the enormous desk, his features were energetic and his gestures intense. He showed little evidence of his ninety years. His jagged, still powerful profile was sharply outlined against the window. The winter evenings came early, spreading shadows on the half empty book shelves. Only the favorite volumes of Leyh's private library were left behind in his study as he had sold his collection to the Syracuse University Library in 1965. He spoke about how he selected these cherished items, slowly and thoughtfully, some for their scholarly and others for their personal value. His twilight years brought a dimension of contemplation into his feverishly active life. He kept reflecting on the past; he was sifting and sorting until he arrived at what seemed to him absolutely essential and basic in thought, memory, and reading material.

During these conversations Leyh enunciated with great care and clarity those intellectual affinities that had been the most significant in his life: his empathy with the era of the Enlightenment and the Göttingen University Library; his dedication to the works of Goethe, Jacob Burckhardt, and Wilhelm Dilthey; his friendship with scholars who left an indelible mark on librarianship—William Warner Bishop, Swend Dahl, Fritz Milkau, Wilhelm Munthe. With a sheet of paper placed in front of him, he was making notes as he talked. Suddenly, as if he wanted to bring himself back from the world of memories, he jotted down the word "Praxis" and underlined it heavily. I remembered his statement by which he had characterized his works: "My viewpoints and convictions have originated in the practice [of librarianship] and their publication

Appendix

Writings of Georg Leyh

1957-1967

A comprehensive bibliography of Georg Leyh's writings from 1903 to 1957, including books, journal articles, broadcast addresses, and unpublished manuscripts, was compiled by Viktor Burr, commemorating Georg Leyh's eightieth birthday: *Georg Leyh, Verzeichnis seiner Schriften zum 80. Geburtstag am 6. Juni 1957*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1957. Arranged in chronological order, the bibliography listed 368 references, and superseded two earlier bibliographies of Leyh's works: (1) Hermann Raff. "Bibliographie 1903-1937." *Festschrift Georg Leyh dargebracht zum 60. Geburtstage am 6. Juni 1937 von Freunden und Fachgenossen*. Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1937, pp. xii-xxvi; (2) Paul Schmid. "Bibliographie, 1937-1950." *Aus der Welt des Buches, Festgabe zum 70. Geburtstag von Georg Leyh dargebracht von Freunden und Fachgenossen*. Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1950, pp. 7-12. (*Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen*, Beiheft 75.) The only translation of a work of Leyh, by A. C. Geroud, appeared as "The Education of the Librarian," *College and Research Libraries*, 15 (1954): 140-147.

The bibliography given on the following pages in chronological order lists Georg Leyh's works from 1957 to 1967.

"Nachwort" [Autobiographical notes]. *Georg Leyh, Verzeichnis seiner Schriften*. Edited by Viktor Burr. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1957, pp. 41-47.

"Die historischen Hauptwerke Jacob Burckhardts." *Nordisk Tidsskrift för Bok- och Biblioteksväsen*, 15 (1958): 49-60.

"Bibliothek und Bibliothekar" [Broadcast address]. November 21, 1958. (Typewritten copy in the Leyh Family Archives, Lübeck.)

"Edgar Lehmann, Die Bibliotheksräume der deutschen Klöster im Mittelalter, Berlin, 1957" [Review]. *ZfB*, 73 (1959): 386-389.

- Die Wirksamkeit des Internationalen Verbandes der Bibliothekarvereine in den letzten Jahren." *Nordisk Tidskrift för Bok- och Biblioteksväsen*, 46 (1959): 103–110.
- "Der Bibliothekar und sein Beruf," *HdB*, 2. 2d ed.; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1961, pp. 1–112. (First published in unbound issue of *HdB*, 1958.)
- "Aufstellung und Signaturen." *HdB*, 2. 2d ed.; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1961, pp. 684–734. (First published in unbound issue of *HdB*, 1959.)
- "Statistik." *HdB*, 2. 2d ed.; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1961, pp. 735–761. (First published in unbound issue of *HdB*, 1959.)
- "Das Haus und seine Einrichtung." *HdB*, 2. 2d ed.; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1961, pp. 845–1025. (First published in unbound issue of *HdB*, 1960.)
- "Vorwort." *HdB*, 2. 2d ed.; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1961, pp. vi–vii.
- "Das Handbuch der Bibliothekswissenschaft." *Libri*, 11 (1961): 101–114.
- "Die Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen" [Lecture]. Göttingen, June 20, 1961. (Typewritten, unpublished manuscript in the Leyh Family Archives, Lübeck.)
- "Jacob Burckhardts Briefe. Bd. 4. 1961." [Review]. *Nordisk Tidskrift för Bok- och Biblioteksväsen*, 48 (1961): 164–166.
- "Die Deutsche Staatsbibliothek 1661–1961. Eine unbewältigte Vergangenheit." *Libri*, 12 (1962): 175–190.
- "Jacob Burckhardts europäischen Horizonte." *Nordisk Tidskrift för Bok- och Biblioteksväsen*, 49 (1962): 136–139.
- "Jacob Burckhardt als Briefschreiber. Briefe. Bd. 5. 1963" [Review]. *Nordisk Tidskrift för Bok- och Biblioteksväsen*, 51 (1964): 24–26.
- "Zur Geschichte der Deutschen Bücherei in Leipzig." *ZfBB*, 12 (1965): 149–167.
- "Eugen Paunel, Die Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Ihre Geschichte und Organisation, 1661–1871, Berlin, 1965" [Review]. *Nordisk Tidskrift för Bok- och Biblioteksväsen*, 53 (1966): 125–126.
- "Zu dem 6. Band der Briefe von Jacob Burckhardt" [Review]. February 1, 1967. (Typewritten unpublished manuscript in the Leyh Family Archives, Lübeck.)

Selected References

Personal Interviews and Letters

I had the privilege of holding a series of interviews and informal conversations with Georg Leyh in his home in Tübingen from January 17 to January 22, 1968. Letters written to me by Leyh on July 16, 1967, August 1, 1967, November 21, 1967, December 30, 1967, and April 3, 1968, contained important data. Leyh's daughter, Uta Leyh, furnished me with valuable information during the periods January 17 to January 22, and August 10 to September 2, 1968. Leyh's other daughter, Frowine Leyh, kindly supplied pertinent information by letter dated August 11, 1970. Other persons who gave information by personal interview or by letter are included in the following list.

- Bellman, Renate. Law Librarian, University of Tübingen. August 21, 1968.
- Blum, Rudolf. Director, Deutsche Bibliothek, Frankfurt am Main. June 29, 1968.
- Busse, Gisela von. Retired Chief, Bibliotheksausschuss, Deutsche Forschungs-Gesellschaft, Bad Godesberg. July 19, and September 23, 1968.
- Cremer, Martin. Director, Institut für Dokumentationswesen, Frankfurt am Main, June 28, 1968.
- Gebhardt, Walther. Director, Tübingen University Library. January 19, 1968.
- Kettig, Konrad. Director, Free University, Berlin. January 26, 1968.
- Kunze, Horst. Director, Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, and Professor of Library Science, Berlin. July 16, 1968.

Thompson, Lawrence S. Professor, University of Kentucky, Lexington. September 18, 1968.

Widmann, Hans. Professor, University of Mainz. February 15, July 10, October 16, and October 30, 1968.

Manuscript Collections

The Leyh Papers in the Manuscript Division of the State Library, under the auspices of the Foundation for Prussian Cultural Property (*Handschriftenabteilung der Staatsbibliothek, Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz*), West Berlin and the Leyh Family Archives in Lübeck, formerly in Tübingen, provided the principal resources for this study. Other manuscript sources, used to a lesser extent, are also indicated in the list which follows.

Deutsche Bücherei, Manuscript Division (Handschriftenabteilung), Leipzig. The collection includes unpublished correspondence between Georg Leyh and Heinrich Uhlendahl, General Director of the Deutsche Bücherei from 1924 to 1954.

Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Manuscript Division (Handschriftenabteilung), East Berlin. These files contain correspondence between Georg Leyh and Karl Christ, former head of the Manuscript Division and co-author of the *Handbuch der Bibliothekswissenschaft*.

Leyh Archives, Manuscript Division of the State Library, Foundation for Prussian Cultural Property (Handschriftenabteilung der Staatsbibliothek, Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz), West Berlin. This extensive collection includes unpublished manuscripts, letters addressed to Georg Leyh, and typewritten copies of letters written by Leyh, photographs, newspaper clippings, and other documentary materials pertinent to the professional life of Leyh and to German librarianship generally.

Leyh Family Archives, Lübeck. Frowine and Uta Leyh, Lübeck, own substantial files of personal and professional correspondence between Georg Leyh and his friends and colleagues. These files were located in the Leyh family home in Tübingen until 1969 when they were moved to Lübeck where Dr. Frowine Leyh resides.

Syracuse University, George Arents Research Library, Syracuse,

New York. This is a small collection of manuscripts, letters, newspaper clippings, photostats, typed and handwritten transcripts, mainly reflecting Georg Leyh's interest in the work of Jacob Burckhardt.

Serials

The following files of serial publications have been especially useful in providing basic information for this book. Some of them include papers, articles, book reviews and short notices published by Georg Leyh; others have contributed information about the intellectual environment in which he lived and worked. Specific references to these serials are included in the chapter notes.

Bibliothek und Wissenschaft, Jahrbuch Heidelberger Bibliothekare. Edited by Siegfried Jost. Vols. 1-4, 1964-1967. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1965-1967.

Börsenblatt für den deutschen Buchhandel, Vols. 1-112, 1834-1945. Leipzig: Verlag des Börsenvereins der deutschen Buchhändler, 1834-1945.

Börsenblatt für den deutschen Buchhandel, Frankfurter Ausgabe. Vols. 1-22, 1945-1966. Frankfurt am Main: Buchhändler-Vereinigung, 1945-1966.

Börsenblatt für den deutschen Buchhandel, Leipziger Ausgabe. Vols. 113-133, 1946-1966. Leipzig: Börsenverein der deutschen Buchhändler, 1946-1966.

Deutsche Bücherei, Leipzig. *Jahrbuch*, Vols. 1-2, 1965-1966. Leipzig, 1965-1966.

Deutsche Bücherei, Leipzig. *Jahresbericht über die Verwaltung der Deutschen Bücherei*, Vols. 1-25, 1913-1937/1938. Leipzig: Börsenverein der deutschen Buchhändler, 1914-1938.

Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, Bad Godesberg. *Bericht*, Vols. 1-10, 1949/1950-1959/1960. Bad Godesberg, 1950-1960. (Volumes for 1949/1950 and 1950/1951 issued under the organization's earlier name: Notgemeinschaft der deutschen Wissenschaft, q.v.)

Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Berlin. *Jahresbericht*. Vols. 1-12, 1946-1966. Berlin, 1956-1967. (Vol. 1, 1946/1955 was entitled *Zehnjahresbericht*.)

- Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Berlin. *Nachrichten aus dem wissenschaftlichen Bibliothekswesen der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik*, Vols. 1–8, 1955–1962. Berlin, 1955–1962. (Superseded by *Mitteilungen aus dem wissenschaftlichen Bibliothekswesen der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik*.)
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- Minerva-Zeitschrift, Nachrichten für die gelehrte Welt*, Vols. 1–9, 1924–1933. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1924–1933. (Supplement to *Minerva. Jahrbuch der gelehrten Welt*.)
- Nordisk Tidskrift för Bok- och Biblioteksväsen*, Vols. 1–58, 1914–1968. Upsala: Almqvist and Wiksells, 1914–1968.
- Notgemeinschaft der deutschen Wissenschaft. *Bericht*, Vols. 1–12, 1921/1922–1932/1933. Berlin, 1922–1933. (Superseded by Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, *Bericht*, q.v.)
- Preussische Staatsbibliothek, Berlin. *Jahresbericht*, 1905/1906–1938. Berlin, 1906–1939. (1905/1906–1916/1920 entitled *Jahresbericht der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin*.)
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