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zu Berlin**
Preußischer Kulturbesitz



Press Release

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Hits of the Renaissance to the 20th Century

A new online portal collects 14,000 historical song pamphlets and makes them available to a broad public

The University of Freiburg's Center for Popular Culture and Music (ZPKM), the Austrian folk song archive of the Österreichisches Volksliedwerk, and the Berlin State Library have completed the project "VDLied – Das Verzeichnis der deutschsprachigen Liedflugdrucke," involving the creation of a central online portal for 14,000 historical German song pamphlets. The platform makes a musical and cultural repertoire extending from the 16th to the 20th century available to a broad public for the first time ever. The portal is designed to provide researchers worldwide with an comprehensive database. Users can search for songs by opening line, refrain, melodic references, and by the number of verses or lines. In addition, it is possible to conduct full-text searches of all data indexed in the course of the project. Music lovers and scholars conducting research on historical music now have unlimited access to all of the material free of charge.

Long before there were printed scores and record players, popular songs were circulated on pamphlets sold on street corners or at fairs. Sometimes the songs were played on a hurdy-gurdy, a barrel organ, or a harp as a means of drawing attention to the pamphlets and selling more of them. "The songs covered the entire range of topics from private and public life: Sex, crime, and action are represented, as are political and religious songs," says Dr. Dr. **Michael Fischer**, managing director of the ZPKM. However, the historical significance of the digitalized song pamphlets is not limited to the insight the song texts provide into the imagination and mentality of bygone eras, but also extends to the media used to present the songs. The producers decorated the song prints with pictures and ornamental borders to increase their value. Some later pamphlets even include notation for the songs, allowing readers to sing along.

The repertoire now freely available on the Internet includes many prints of which only a single copy has survived. "The digitalization of these holdings makes a European cultural heritage from the early modern period to modernism available to the public," emphasizes **Barbara Schneider-Kempf**, director general of the Berlin State Library. The cooperation between the State Library and the former

German Folk Song Archive – what is now the ZPKM – began in the 1930s and is now being continued on a new technical basis and with new content.

Also included in the project are holdings from the folk song archive of the Österreichisches Volksliedwerk in Vienna. “They form an outstanding complement to the Berlin and Freiburg holdings, because they cover the Southern German–Austrian cultural area, including the crown lands of the former Habsburg monarchy,” explains **Irene Egger**, managing director of the Österreichisches Volksliedwerk.

The portal was developed by the Berlin State Library in cooperation with the head office of the GBV Common Library Network. The partners plan to expand it and are open to adding content from other relevant collections. Now that the content-based indexing of the song pamphlets has been completed, it already offers access to around 30,000 songs today.

Freely Available Images:

www.vd-lied.de

<http://resolver.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/SBB0000E00400000005>

<http://resolver.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/SBB0000EEC600000005>

<http://resolver.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/SBB0000933500000009>

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http://archiv.onb.ac.at:1801/webclient/DeliveryManager?pid=2645691&custom_att_2=simple_viewer

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