



Dear Ladies and Gentlemen

The past year has been overshadowed by many different events that have frightened us and have given constant cause for thought. The on-going conflicts in the Middle East and several African countries are still forcing hundreds of thousands to flee. Interbiblio's member libraries were in great demand because of the array of foreign-language media they offer and their commitment to people from other linguistic and cultural areas. The librarians experienced a lot of joy and appreciation from the migrants when they found their own language used in media and projects.

There were other sunny moments last year:

The *A TOUS LIVRES* library in Monthey, which started very small, looked back over the last 10 years in which it has developed into an important point of contact in the Canton Valais where it offers books and other media in many languages. At the end of the year they founded, together with *L'Ardoise* in Sion, a federation of the intercultural libraries of the Valais. "InterVal" aims, among other things, to provide books to all inhabitants of the canton in their languages. We wish "InterVal" a good start and much success. ([www.atouslivres.ch](http://www.atouslivres.ch))

The first intercultural library in German-speaking Switzerland, *JUKIBU* in Basel, celebrated its 25th anniversary with a joyous festival and the publication of a jubilee brochure, which collected highlights from its origin to the present day. ([www.jukibu.ch](http://www.jukibu.ch))

Two new members have joined Interbiblio with their intercultural divisions: the *Gemeindebibliothek Neuhausen* and the library *Agnesenschütte* both in Schaffhausen. Public and intercultural libraries can benefit from each other when they have a good collaboration, which in turn, benefits all Interbiblio members. ([www.bibliotheken-schaffhausen.ch](http://www.bibliotheken-schaffhausen.ch))

The exhibition "Schriften der Welt - Ecritures du monde - Scrittura del mondo" was shown for the 27th (and last) time in Biel, first in the city library and then in the *Gymnasium am See*.

The success of the exhibition can be seen in the visitors' book, in which the many visitors wrote their positive impressions:

- „Dass Schriftzeichen so schön sind, habe ich erst jetzt bewusst entdeckt. Danke vielmals!
- „Cette idée de boîtes à ouvrir pour découvrir la langue au milieu de quelques objets est géniale. Un grand merci pour cette belle expo.“
- „Coole Schriften!“
- „J’aime la musique quand on ouvre la porte :-!“
- „Die Schülerinnen und Schüler sind völlig fasziniert und entdecken die verschiedenen Schriften. Besonders stolz sind sie auf ihre Namen, die ihnen in griechischer Schrift auf das Buchzeichen geschrieben wurden.“
- „Très belle exposition – variée tout pour l’oral que l’écrit.“
- „Quelle découverte ! Merci“
- „Köszí nagyon ! Nagyön jó!“
- „Muchisimas gracias, ha sido muy interesante“
- „Mostra – esposizione interessante e variata. I bambini possono interagire e scoprire in modo ludico le varie lingue del mondo. Brava, complimenti!“
- „Ogni lingua è un modo di raccontare, sognare, disegnare il mondo“
- „Большое спасибо за интересную выставку“

We wish to take this opportunity to thank the Landis & Gyr Foundation, which made this large and sustainable project possible by awarding us the *Prize for Language and Book Culture* in 2010.

Interbiblio was able to present itself and its member intercultural libraries at various events during the year where it attracted great interest. The events included the BIS congress in Lucerne, the SIKJM anniversary and the conference of the OFCOM, and others.

Since spring 2016, Interbiblio has been working with intercultural member libraries in Federal Asylum Centres. Depending on the needs of the centres, Kamishibai stories are narrated and the members sing, play and do handicrafts with the children; workshops were conducted with young people and adults; reference libraries were set up and stocked with media in different languages as well as materials for learning the local language. These activities are supported by the State Secretariat for Migration. Meanwhile, intercultural libraries regularly visit the Juch asylum centre in Zurich-Altstetten, the asylum centre in Losone (TI) and the reception and processing centre in Basel. Starting in February 2017, the project will start in the centre of Perreux in Boudry (NE), in collaboration with *Bibliomonde* and the experienced animators of the PIP (prévention de l'illettrisme au préscolaire).

The activities are appreciated equally by small children and their parents as well as by unaccompanied young people and adults, as they offer a welcome change, the opportunity to actively participate in projects (for example in the construction and design of the manual library) and much appreciated reading matter in their native languages, as well as sought after first materials for learning German, Italian, and French.

It is also important - wherever possible - to make contact with intercultural libraries where they are staying. There is always great joy when visitors discover media in their own languages.

An important offer for refugees and asylum seekers in the libraries is the use of the internet; for many it is invaluable to be in touch with relatives back home. This task is new to some intercultural libraries that do not yet have this infrastructure. The *ProjekteNetzwerk Thun* with the intercultural library *biblios* has responded to this in an exemplary fashion and has welcomed asylum-seeking young men of the temporary Federal Centre in Thun to a new cyber café (<http://www.projektenetzwerkthun.ch>).

Of course, all intercultural libraries will be offering exciting encounters, interesting events, animations and media in many languages in the coming year. The “BUCH” logo at the beginning of this editorial, so beautifully coloured by the children at the *JUKIBU*, is a testimony to it!

We invite you to take a look at the websites of the member libraries and at [www.interbiblio.ch](http://www.interbiblio.ch). Perhaps you would like to attend an event in a library near you. Everybody is always welcome.

We wish everyone more peace, openness for new situations, happiness and satisfaction in this New Year!

"Some people build too many walls and too few bridges." So wrote Isaac Newton (1642-1726) almost 300 years ago. He could not be more up to date! Let us take this quote as a guiding principle for the year ahead.

With best wishes,

Helene Schär, President

Basel, January 2017