Open Access in Romance Literary Studies



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1. Me, as a User of Open Access Formats



- easiest way to get information on my research topics
- Post-Doc; Department of Romance Studies; research in Hispanic and Francophone literature and media
- access to articles, book sections or monographs; lists and databases of primary sources
 - Project on Wargames: Board Game Geek; Project on disabled characters: full-text search (e.g., Frantext, not OA!)
 - other aspects: e.g., repository for corpus data
- not socialized with OS/OA:
 - "Although Romance Studies highly values access to digital publications,
 Open Access is rather underrepresented here compared to other disciplines." (cf. Hornung 2017, s.p.)



- first real and active encounter with OA: Editor of Journal via the Open Journal Systems (OJS) of our university library
- funders are insisting on OA (e.g., DFG)
- not familiar with OA in 2019, when I published my thesis; but familiar with traditions of our discipline → specialized publisher in "closed access format"; financial aspects!
- vs. 2021: new insights on OA; change of publication status?
 Financial aspects!
 - Articles in OA Journals





2. Romance Literary Studies History, Tradition and Specialized Publishers



- reasons for the obvious lack of OA acceptation, information, missing infrastructure?
 - certain nostalgia for printed texts; book format
 - Authority of monographs and collective volumes
- tradition of specialized publishers
 - uneasiness about the quality of the sources; reputation of publishers
 - OA publications: reputation of being less reliable, or just less relevant
 - vs. 'impact' as the most important factor



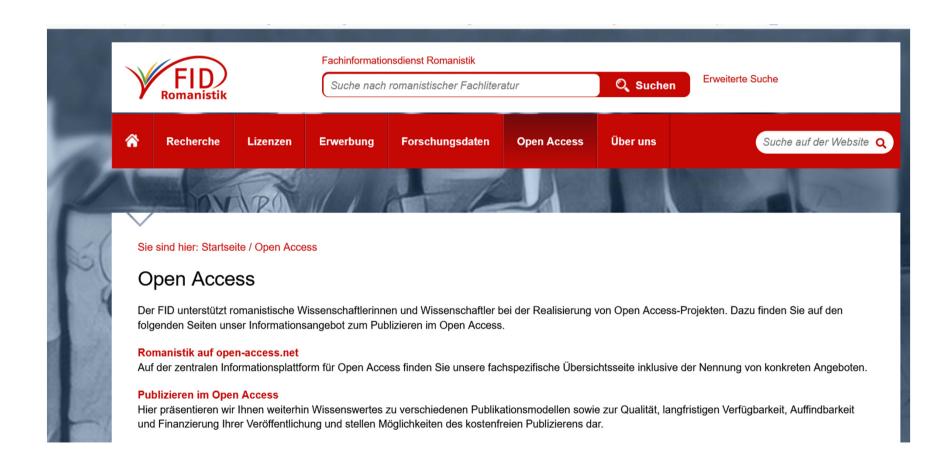
- publishing open access in traditional contexts is possible but expensive
 - Transcript: about 7.500€
 - "Romanische Forschungen" (1883, one of the oldest journals of the German Romance Studies): 1.500€ for "gold"
 - "green option" possible:

"The publisher allows all journal authors (not only those privileged by UrhG § 38 para. 4) to place their contributions in the accepted manuscript version - but not in the publisher's formatting - on their personal website and in their institution's repository after twelve months have elapsed since the first publication. Authors are requested to cite the journal as the source of the first publication." (Homepage Romanische Forschungen)



- plurality of countries and cultures with their respective models and status quo of Open Access
- specific problems:
 - What if a German scholar first publishes a text with a publisher based in a Romance country and then wants to publish it again in Germany in Open Access or vice versa?
 - What if a foreign researcher first publishes abroad and is then requested to publish the text a second time in Germany in an open access journal?
- FID Romanistik (= special information service)





3. FID, AG Digitale Romanistik and the Dawn of 'Open Science'



- Christof Schöch, professor at the University of Trier and codirector of the Trier Center of Digital Humanities
 - "We must not be content with open access in the sense of free access to digitally available publications. The free, even the freely licensed PDF, are only half the story. Rather, we need to consider two other things: First, publications must also use open and standardised file formats for content and metadata, so that the publications are machine-readable and thus automatically analysable. Secondly, we need to consider the institutional and financial structures so that OA does not become another 'service' of the large commercial conglomerates, but rather that the publication system gets back into the hands of science and can be further developed in a science-led way." (Interview, 13.05.21)





- in 2017: Evaluation of the situation of OA within the whole discipline
 - → position paper with the following recommendations (cf. position paper, 58-59):
 - (1) Romance Studies should actively promote OA to enhance science-oriented publishing
 - in the whole Romance-Speaking community "to promote scientific communication and the visibility [of the discipline]" (position paper, 58)
 - importance of quality control mechanisms and visibility

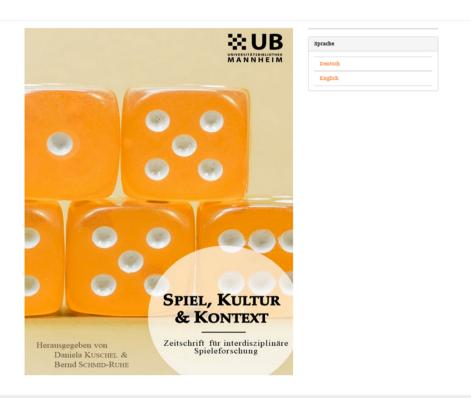


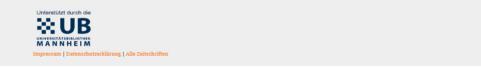
(2) Romance Studies should invest in a sustainable use of research data

- expansion of cooperation with the FID Romanistik and other organs
- expansion of the infrastructure for research; specific Romance studies requirements
- compatibility with international infrastructures
- Workshop for best practice examples and survey
 - biggest obstacles: lack of information and the tradition of closed access publishing











Challenges:

- technically understand OJS
- generating content (a constant one)
- organization of a Peer-Review procedure
- responsibility for the whole production process

Advantages:

- "homebase" for our research; visibility & longevity
- Workload problem and lack of resources to support OA

Conlusion





Sources



- "Opening to Open Access: 10 Fragen an Christof Schöch". Interview von Larissa Saar, in: *Operas-GER Blog*, 13 Mai 2021, https://operas-ger.hypotheses.org/768.
- Hornung, Christian: "Open Access in der Romanistik", in: Open-access.net, https://open-access.net/informationen-fuer-verschiedene-faecher/romanistik.
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- "Open Access", in: FID-Romanistik, https://fid-romanistik.de/open-access.

(Last access: 21.09.21)

Thank you for Listening!



