

Morbid Libraries and Digital Access to Copyright Content: A Comparative Study of Germany and Sri Lanka

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*“The libraries of the future will be morbid, or it will cease to be”
(Eric Steinhauer, 2021)*

The idea of the digital library is sweeping through the public discourse around the world which has resulted in building cemeteries for books on the library’s shelf. The essence of a physical book is more than knowledge in which the copyright of an author is respected and protected. Significantly, it is a secret place where readers connect with the thoughts of authors that cannot be experienced in the digital world and it has built a tradition which enables economically deprived people to become rich in knowledge and wisdom. Although the digitalized library is yet to become a real threat to legal depository rights of physical books, readers are now compelled to access the content of digital libraries which are more convenient in terms of time and accessibility. Consequently, it has created a pathway for plagiarism that violates the author’s copyright while turning live physical libraries into morbid libraries. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to determine whether there is a legal depository right for online publications, similar to the legal depository right for physical books in the Sri Lankan context. Additionally, this research explores the possibility of connecting morbid libraries and copyright by considering the copyright as a more personal right, such as in Germany while inquiring who should be responsible for the development of digital cultural memory as a solution for the death of libraries. The research dwells within the black letter legal research coupled with comparative legal analysis. This research reveals that the concept of digital libraries has the potential of creating morbid libraries that will enable copyright violation of authors and sheds light on crucial legal questions pertaining to digital libraries that need to be answered in an era of the Internet.

Keywords: *Morbid Library, Copyright, Access to Digital Library*