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THE STATE OF BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONTROL IN LATIN AMERICA

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Abstract:

 Latin American countries, like others worldwide, have carried out endeavors to achieve national bibliographic control, and in this way to contribute to universal bibliographic control. Nevertheless, there are few reports about Latin American bibliographic control in LIS literatures, so it was considered important to show an overview about this theme. Then, the objective of this paper is to expose the situation of bibliographic control in several Latin American countries.

The main purpose of bibliographic control is to identify all material published in the world, regardless their format (paper, audiovisual, electronic, and whatever) and to make accessible this information to everyone. To achieve universal bibliographic control it is necessary that all the countries around the world carry out national bibliographic control to register all the materials published in them. The basic instrument to gather and to identify materials produced in a particular country is its legislation on legal deposit, which has specific features in diverse local settings. Likewise, it is indispensable to register these materials in national bibliographies, using international standards, usually generated by the national library or other entity with similar responsibilities.

Latin American countries, like others worldwide, have carried out endeavors to achieve national bibliographic control, and in this way to contribute to universal bibliographic control. Nevertheless, there are few reports about Latin American bibliographic control in LIS literatures, so it was considered important to show an overview about this theme. Then,

the objective of this paper is to expose the situation of bibliographic control in several Latin American countries.

An important meeting that approached bibliographic control issues was held on September 21-23, 1998, in Mexico City. The meeting was entitled "Bibliographic Control in Latinamerica and the Caribbean on the eve of the Third Millennium" and it was organized by the University Center for Library Science Research [Centro Universitario de Investigaciones Bibliotecológicas, CUIB] of the National Autonomous University of Mexico [Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, UNAM]. This meeting was sponsored by the IFLA Core Programme on Universal Bibliographic Control and International MARC (UBCIM), the IFLA Core Activity for the Advancement of Librarianship (ALP), the IFLA Latin America and the Caribbean Section, the UNAM General Directorate for Academic Interchange, and the Mexican Librarians Association. (Ramírez Leyva y Garduño Vera, Roberto, 1999).

Specialists participated in this meeting from Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Cuba, Chile, Guatemala, Panama, Perú, Uruguay, Venezuela, and México. Since the main objective of this paper is to show the situation of bibliographic control in Latin American countries, part of the content of this paper is founded on the proceedings of that meeting, published in Spanish by the CUIB. Additionally, information has been included from the National Libraries websites of some Latin American countries. Then, it is recommended that people interested in looking for further information about bibliographic control in Latin American and Caribbean countries read the whole CUIB publication (Garduño Vera, 1999) and other references included in this paper.

Argentina
The National Library of Argentina, like many others in the world, has among its goals to preserve bibliographic wealth dealing with the national publishing production. Its collection has been formed with important and worthy donations from important Argentine intellectuals. It includes bibliographic treasures, incunabula, a "voices library" (a collection of Argentine authors reading their works), and special materials such as maps, engravings, urban maps, scores, and serials. Its holdings are accessible through an online catalog (http://www.bibnal.edu.ar/paginas/reser.htm) that includes four sections: books, maps, serials, and treasure collections. National Library of Argentina supports the National Program of Colonial Bibliography that has as its main objective to form a unified national catalog for books and facsimiles published before 1800 that exist in the Argentine territory (Biblioteca Nacional de la República Argentina, 2004).

Certainly, important endeavors have been done in Argentina to achieve bibliographic control of its national printed production; however, there are several challenges that librarians have to face to achieve it. One of those challenges is the use of the same international standards. Although most of the Argentine libraries use AACR2, there are a few ones that utilize other ones yet. Likewise, it is necessary to unify the use of subject headings lists and bibliographic formats for automation of catalog records since libraries use a diversity of them. Moreover, the most important challenge is the necessity to create a National Bibliographic Agency that carry out the technical process of the Argentine

publishing production to form union catalogs and bibliographies (Barber, Tripaldi, and Pisano, 1999).

Brazil

Brazil has an outdated legal deposit law, since it dates from 1907. It states publishers should give one copy of only printed material, including maps, scores and photographs; however, agreements between editors and the National Library permits coverage of other material types. Posing insignificant penalties for those who do not comply with this law is the main problem to getting materials. A new Legal Deposit Law was proposed to the Congress. This proposal included new types of materials and taxation for no compliance.

The National Library of Brazil has developed web catalogs (http://catalogos.bn.br/) that include (Ribeiro Zaher, 1999):

- Monographs – Include monographs registered from 1982. It has 250,000 bibliographic records in USMARC format, with an annual increase of 50,000 records
- Theses – It contains 54,400 bibliographic records from 1982 to 1994
- Rare books – with 18,800 bibliographic records including 15th to 16th centuries and part of 17th to 18th centuries
- Manuscripts – with 26,000 records
- Music – with 26,000 records including scores and sound music associated with MIDI (Music Instruments Digital Interface)
- Iconography – including monographs with 6000 bibliographic records and photos with MARC format records to 5000 photos

Development of electronic catalogs by the National Library opened the creation of the "*Consórcio Eletrônico de Bibliotecas*" [Electronic Consortium of Libraries] entitled Rede BNMARC. Constituted in 1999, the "*Consórcio Eletrônico de Bibliotecas*" facilitates participant libraries to copy or download bibliographic records from its databases via the Internet. Through this consortium, the National Library fosters sharing of catalog records among Brazilian libraries to develop local and regional databases. Consortium participants utilize Z39.50 protocol to transfer bibliographic records, and MARC format for computer representation and electronic communication. Likewise, there are authority databases for names and subjects. This last one has been developed using Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH). Additionally, the consortium uses AACR2 (Fundação Biblioteca Nacional, 2003).

Costa Rica

Bibliographic control in Costa Rica is supported by several laws and decrees, and it is managed by the National Library. Legal Deposit Law, modified in 1983, states that publishers should deposit six items to be distributed in the following libraries: National Library, Costa Rica University Library, General Direction for Public Libraries, Legislative Assembly, Public Education Ministry, and Penitentiary Center "La Reforma." The ISBN Decree also supports bibliographic control. The ISBN verification digit is assigned by the ISBN National Agency. To obtain it, publishers must present two cataloging records, one

of them to be printed in the work and the other one to add to the ISBN catalog. The ISBN Agency received in 1998 an average of two thousand titles. Cataloging in publication is mandatory in Costa Rica. According to the decree 11749-C of August 25, 1980, authors and publishers have to present a catalog record to register their work. Despite this ample legislation, publishers and authors do not comply with legal deposit. Regarding standards, the Costa Rica National Library uses AACR2, Dewey classification, and MARC format. There are also authority files for authors and subjects (Miranda, 1999).

The Ministry of Culture, Youth, and Sports rules the National System of Libraries [Sistema Nacional de Bibliotecas (SINABI)], integrated by the National Library "Miguel Obregón Lizano", official and semi-official public libraries, and municipal and community libraries that have subscribed agreements with the Ministry. The ISBN Agency is also part of SINABI. One objective of SINABI is to safeguard and appreciate the documental patrimony. Some SINABI publications are: Index of Costa Rica Journals (biannual), Index of Costa Rica dailies and weeklies (semestral), Costa Rican bibliography (annual), specialized and research bibliographies (this includes 13 bibliographies on national culture personalities and 6 research bibliographies on diverse subjects) (Sistema...2004).

Cuba

Legal deposit of Cuban publications is ruled by a law-decree promulgated on March 17, 1964. It states that publishers should send to the National Library five copies of all books brochures, journals, newspapers tabloids, and any other kind of public publications. Nevertheless, there is a reiterative unfulfillment from publishers. The National Library of Cuba has the responsibility to compile the national bibliography as well as to advise and oversee compilation of provincial ones. The Cuban national bibliography includes a wide variety of materials: books and brochures, serials, visual items, sound recordings, maps, exhibition catalogs, and spectacle programs. National bibliography automation began in 1995 with the creation of a database that included records since 1992. Regarding standards, there is a wide use of AACR and Dewey Decimal Classification. ISBN and ISSN are conferred by the *Cámara Cubana del Libro* [Cuban Book Chamber] and the *Instituto de Documentacion Cientifica* [Scientific Documentation Institute], respectively. Use of MARC has been also adopted. One action to support bibliographic control started in 1998. That was the creation of the *Oficina del Patrimonio* [Patrimony Office] that among its functions has to oversee fulfillment of publication law and to oversee the stay of national patrimony in the country (León Ortiz, 1999).

Chile

Bibliographic control in Chile is carried out by the National Library, which acquires its holdings by means of legal deposit. However, acquisition and preservation of Chilean materials are affected by unfulfillment of the Legal Deposit Law in addition to its limitations since it does not include noncommercial publications nor nonprinted materials. On 1983, the National Library of Chile included in its organization the National Center for Technical Services that carries out selection, acquisition, cataloging, and automation activities to develop the national bibliography. The National Library of Chile has created its own catalog but also has promoted cooperative cataloging through the establishment of the *Red Nacional de Información Bibliográfica* (RENIB) [National Network of Bibliographic Information]. (Iglesias Maturana and Fernández-Corugedo Espíndola, 1999)

Regarding this bibliographic network, Steinhagen (1998) has the following remarks. Headquartered since 1984 at the National Library of Chile, RENIB began with a membership of nine institutions, among them, the National Library, the Chilean Congress Library, and the National Archive. At the present time, it also includes all major academic libraries in Chile, who cooperate in the creation and maintenance of online bibliographic databases.

Among RENIB goals are the following:

- To integrate all national bibliographic resources from Chilean libraries into an online database to provide access to these materials to all citizen around the country.
- To develop national databases and union catalogs based on participating library collections so as to provide location and holdings information.
- To contribute to the creation of a national bibliography.
- To participate in other national, regional and international networks.

Among the standards that RENIB has adopted are:

- Machine-readable records using the appropriate MARC formats and including the prescribed minimum data for monographic, serial, and authority records.
- Anglo-American Cataloging Rules, 2nd ed., and its later updates, including the Library of Congress Rule Interpretations.
- ANSI standard Z39.44-1986, at level 4 for detailed holdings of serial publications.
- Authority records following all standards and practices jointly agreed upon by participants involved in the creation of the authority database being developed at RENIB, as they are applicable to subjects, name, series, and uniform title headings.

The network supports five separate online bibliographic databases (http://www.dibam.cl/), which can be accessed independently:

- A union catalog of about 400,000 bibliographic records, which contain monographs, theses, serials, maps, music, and analytics held by member libraries.
- A serials union catalog of about 12,000 titles, which lists the holdings of the 24 institutions of higher education in Chile.
- The catalog of the manuscripts collection of approximately 29,000 records located in the National Library.
- The catalog of government documents, about 25,000 records, located at the National Archives.
- An analytics catalog of about 3,000 records, which includes selected articles from Chilean periodical publications.
- An authorities database, which contains about 170,000 records created by members under the leadership of staff at RENIB.

Guatemala
There is no Legal Deposit Law in Guatemala; however, the "Ley de Emisión del Pensamiento" [Thought Issue Law] of 1976 states that all owners of typographic and lithographic establishments must send a copy of works they produce to the following entities: the Government Ministry, the Government Federal Archive, the Republic Congress Library, the National Library, and the National Typography Archive. The National Library has sent calls to authors, editors, and publishers to deposit a copy of works they produce to preserve documental patrimony. The National Library of Guatemala collections are: the Ancient Collection that includes 32,000 volumes, where the earliest came from 1494; the National Collection that integrated by about 20,000 works of national authors that were sent by publishers and authors. The National Library of Guatemala also includes a Main Public Library that holds 350,000 volumes (Biblioteca Nacional de Guatemala, 2004).

In 1997, the National Library started the automation process of its catalog. Although Guatemala National Library now uses AACR2, Dewey Decimal Classification, and the Subject Headings List created by the ICFES of Colombia, one of the problems that bibliographic control has faced in Guatemala is an insufficient use of standards. A reason that explains this fact is the scarce number of professional librarians. To support bibliographic control, an independent ISBN agency was established in 1998 by the "Gremial de Libreros" [Booksellers Union] in the publishing house "Piedra Santa." Publishers must send their data to be integrated in a database, and they get records that have started to be used as cataloging in publication. (Aguilar Pellicer, 1999).

México
Legal Deposit Law, promulgated in 1991, states that all the publishers and producers of bibliographic and documental material have to deliver 2 items of their works to the National Library and to the Union Congress Library. This is one of the main sources to increase the National Library of México holdings. However, not all publishers and producers yet comply with legal deposit law. In 2002, the National Library of México only received 10,414 titles by legal deposit, of which 9227 were books and the remaining ones, other kinds of material. In spite of this fact, documental resources that the National Library of México owns are over one million and two hundred fifty thousand volumes that include printed, magnetic, audiovisual, optic, and electronic materials, as well as microforms. Its holdings are organized in four rooms: the General collection that includes contemporary monographs; Reference with typical reference sources such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, yearbooks, etc.; the Reserved collection that owns Mexican archives, manuscripts, incunabula, and materials from the 16th to the 19th century; and Special materials that holds printed music and sound recordings, compact discs, videotapes, Braille publications, maps, and didactic games (UNAM...2004).

Similar to other national libraries, bibliographic control and dissemination of Mexican publications has been for a long time of great interest to the National Library of México and for its researchers and librarians. In January/February 1967, the library started the task of compiling the Mexican Contemporary bibliography, with the intention of publishing it bimonthly and including in it monographs published in México. Since then, fascicles were published every two months until its publication was delayed in 1978 (Escamilla González,

1980). At the present time, National Library of México holdings are accessible through its online catalog at http://biblional.bibliog.unam.mx/bib/biblioteca.html.

Perú
Bibliographic control in Perú is supported by a recent Legal Deposit Law (26905), approved on 1997, that allows application of penalties directly by the *Centro Bibliografico Nacional* [National Bibliographic Center] to publishers that do not observe its compliance (Ochoa de Di Franco, 1999).

The *Centro Bibliografico Nacional* is an entity of the National Library of Peru that, in addition to administering legal deposit actions, takes care of national materials processing and their dissemination by electronic means (Biblioteca Nacional de Perú, 2002). Some of its objectives are:

- To select, incorporate, and register all bibliographic materials in the National Library.

- To carry out technical processing for Peruvian materials according to international standards and technological developments.

- To create records for and to publish the annual Peruvian bibliography.

- To prepare bibliographies of Peruvian authors that have international recognition for their work.

- To establish technical standards and processes to disseminate them at the national level.

Although the National Library uses international standards such as AACR2, MARC format, LCSH, and Dewey Decimal Classification, there is an insufficiency of tools to facilitate technical processing. Some of them are a lack of an author national file and a more updated LCSH Spanish translation (Ochoa de Di Franco, 1999).

Records produced by the *Centro Bibliografico Nacional* integrate the National Library of Perú catalogs that are available at http://www.binape.gob.pe/. Its main OPAC includes sections for books, video recordings, photographs, and special materials. In addition to the main OPAC, there are catalogs for particular Peruvian authors of the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries, and for Peruvian serials from 1995 to 2001.

Uruguay
In Uruguay, bibliographic control is carried out by the National Library. The Legal Deposit Law states that publishers should give eight copies of their publications, two of them stay in the National Library, another one is sent to the Legislative Authority Library, and the remaining ones are sent to the Education and Culture Ministry where they are evaluated to be awarded as a way to encourage legal deposit since there is a lack of fulfillment of it. (Castro González, 1999).

Some objectives of the National Library of Uruguay are:

- To preserve the bibliographic and documental patrimony that constitutes its holdings.
- To increase that patrimony through a strict control to fulfill the Legal Deposit Law.
- To compile and to publish retrospective and current National Bibliography.
- To technically process materials to preserve them using international library standards, updating its files, catalogs, and inventories.
- To publish the "*Revista de la Biblioteca Nacional*" [National Library Journal] and the "*Anuario Bibliográfico Uruguayo*" [Uruguayan Bibliographic Yearbook] and other specialized publications.
- To act as the ISBN National Agency.

Holdings of this institution are integrated by over 900,000 volumes and 20,000 serial titles, audio-visual materials, microforms, maps, scores, engravings, water-color paintings, photographs, and manuscripts. Regarding the library technical processing, the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules* were adopted in 1978 to develop the *Anuario Bibliográfico*. Currently, the institution has adopted MICRO CDS/ISIS to process and retrieve bibliographic information (Uruguay, 2004).

VenezuelaThe entity that takes care of bibliographic control in Venezuela is the National Library. The main objectives of bibliographic control in Venezuela are the updating and maintenance of the National Library and the Public Libraries Network automated catalog, as well as the organization of bibliographic, serial and audio-visual holdings (Hernández de Alvarez, 1999).

The National Library's mission is to coordinate, assist, and develop the National System of Libraries; to compile, organize, preserve, and disseminate the bibliographic, non-bibliographic, and audio-visual holdings that register national memory and relevant information to facilitate all the population's universal access to information, and to support research and knowledge generation (Biblioteca Nacional, Venezuela, 2004).

Likewise, some of its functions are:

- To function as deposit center for bibliographic, serial, and audio-visual holdings, current and retrospective.

- As a normalization entity to develop and to oversee application of technical standards and procedures for the functioning of diverse libraries that integrate the National System of Public Libraries.

- To oversee fulfillment of legal deposit legislation.

- To support national editorial production acting as the ISBN National Agency and ISSN National Center, assigning international and standardized numbers for monographs and serials.

The main objective of bibliographic control is achieved through cataloging, classification, and automation of bibliographic, serial and audio-visual materials, as the priority Venezuelan materials to include in the Venezuelan Bibliography. To carry out cataloging processes, AARC2, ISBD, and MARC format are used. Authority files for names and subjects have also been developed (Hernández de Alvarez, 1999).

The *Sistema Automatizado de Información de la Biblioteca Nacional* (**SAIBIN**) [National Library Automated System of Information] includes 2.5 million records available in several databases. The OPAC constitutes the SAIBIN backbone, and it currently includes two interfaces for accessing it, via **Web** or via **Telnet.** It has also been divided in two catalogs to facilitate its use:

Catálogo Referencial Nacional [National Reference Catalog]

Catálogo de Bases de Datos Especializadas [Specialized Databases Catalog]

The first one contains complete descriptive information for books, encyclopedias, brochures, leaflets, serials, manuscripts, photographs, videos, audio-cassettes, movies, maps, and posters from diverse institutional and academic databases. The second one includes information from specialized databases (Biblioteca Nacional, Venezuela, 2004).

Final considerations
This paper has shown an overview of the current situation of bibliographic control in Latin America. As it can be noticed, most of the Latin American countries have made important endeavors to achieve bibliographic control of their publishing production; however, there are also a set of problems they have to overcome to achieve it. Universal Bibliographic Control involves that every country identifies, acquires, and registers its national bibliographic production using international standards. National libraries of Latin American countries have created online catalogs that include an important part of their national publishing production, particularly that dealing with older materials; however, a significant part of their current publishing production is absent due to unfulfillment of legal deposit legislation, the main source to get their holdings. Thus, the main challenge that Latin American libraries face to achieve bibliographic control is to look for ways for publishers to fulfill legal deposit. Likewise, if legal deposit is increased, the next challenge is to think about ways to quickly process these materials to avoid cataloging and classification backlogs. Although many Latin American libraries use international standards to register their materials such as AACR2 and MARC, it remains necessary for catalogers to strive for better interpretation of those standards. One of the major problems for organizing bibliographic materials has been the lack of a subject headings list to cover local language features and other local needs. Therefore, another challenge for Latin American libraries is the generation of national subject headings lists. Finally, it is important to promote the dissemination of national catalogs

and bibliographies that have been created. To accomplish this task, automation and information technologies offer many advantages and opportunities that should be used.

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