

BOLIVIA NATIONAL REPORT

BIBLIOTECA NACIONAL DE BOLIVIA
(NATIONAL BOLIVIAN LIBRARY)
SUCRE, BOLIVIA

Sucre, July 21st. 1999
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MRS
ANA MARIA PERUCHENA ZIMMERMANN
CHAIRMAN OF THE GRADUATED LIBRARIANS ASSOCIATION
Buenos Aires

Dear Madam:

I return the Guide for the National Report, which you requested.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Hugo Poppe Entrambasaguas
DIRECTOR

BOLIVIA NATIONAL REPORT

Ladies and gentlemen:

I have not brought any news on innovations that could compare to anything that countries in the van of library technology progress might report. On this occasion, with your permission and straying from the agenda, I would rather inform this audience about the National Library of Bolivia, which, who knows after how many years, is honored to assist a meeting of experts of the main bibliographic centers of America.

Bolivia must be one of the few countries in the world whose National Library and National Archive function together, in the same premises and under the same Management for both institutions. For a long time both institutions functioned separately, independently. However, experience and specific requirements led to the unification of both repositories. The more than seventy years of experience under this system have shown the convenience of this arrangement.

The National Archive of Bolivia has a certain amount of fame owing, mainly, to the significance of its colonial document collection, corresponding to the colonial courts or “Audiencia de Charcas”, although many of the documents date back to times prior to the establishment of this high court. Up till the present, the oldest document is a Royal provision dating back to 1546. In the pipeline is a very important project to digitize all documents pertaining to the colonial period, a project that is very dear to our hearts and which we trust will become a reality.

The National Library of Bolivia has pre-republican origins, dating back to the days in which the liberating armies under the Great Marshall of Ayacucho reached Potosí and Chuquisaca in April 1825.

At that time Antonio José Sucre appointed Marshall Andrés de Santa Cruz Prefect of Chuquisaca who, like all the military of those times, was convinced about the significance of culture for the progress of peoples and the consolidation of freedom. They encouraged the creation of newspapers, of literary centers and above all of libraries.

In July 1825 Santa Cruz proposed to Marshall Ayacucho the creation of a Public Library in this Capital, for which purpose he had appointed Dr. Agustín Fernández de Córdova, Director and first librarian, to receive voluntary subscriptions, “volumes or in money”, from all gentlemen who, inspired by public spirit, wish to contribute to the Library. In a report of the 23rd July 1825, he informed Marshall Ayacucho that in order to establish the public Library in Chuquisaca he appointed Fernández de Córdova as director and first librarian and more than three clerks; such staff was to attend to the population of the four parishes and therefore he requested the adoption of these provisions. The project was immediately adopted and due to the staff appointed to the library it was, from its inception, an important institution as three of the first officials were outstanding people.

Later governments fostered the establishment and the work of libraries and in particular the National Library of Bolivia. In 1844 a Decree provided for the Library's obligation of subscribing to literary, political, industrial and commercial journals from abroad, as well as the obligation of building collections of official journals of the Republic, official publications such as manifestos, annual reports, addresses, etc. as well as from other South American states. It also established that there should be rooms for depositing rare products of natural history and some pieces of art work that due to their antique nature and other circumstances must have a place "like in a museum". At the same time "a separate room for arts and crafts shall be set up, where works of different kind which have been awarded prizes shall be deposited as well as samples of works submitted for obtaining invention privileges." Added to this "a catalog for machine models, newly invented oratory instruments, and others that facilitate rural operations and for the arts, shall be drawn up. Also a chemical laboratory shall be created".

This confirms that the vision of rulers of those times was to turn libraries into true palaces of culture with multiple functions, in any case all very commendable. That was the illusion that Enlightenment was the basis of progress and the happiness of nations. Already in years prior to the Decree another government provision established the "Legal Deposit", by which private printing presses and the official printing press must hand over to the National Library a copy of all journals, booklets, books and other documents they produced. That regulation, which was later amended several times, has been kept up until the present, and has allowed the National Library to preserve the country's bibliographic output. Lately, the legal deposit regulations have been extended to other means of cultural expression.

As we have mentioned the "legal deposit", I will add that the National Library of Bolivia also receives the deposit of the official publications of the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS), and at the same time is the recipient of publications and materials distributed by the Regional Council of the Information and Computer Science Division for Latin America and the Caribbean of the UNESCO.

The National Library preserves some collections, which are of special significance for the country, such as those that belonged to writers, Bolivian literati; as an example we can mention Adolfo Costa du Rels library.

But the most outstanding is the "Biblioteca Boliviana de Gabriel René Moreno" (Gabriel René Moreno's Bolivian Library) (1834-1908). It contains books, booklets, journals, newspapers, and magazines. This Collection of printed matter, unique in the world, is the most solid foundation of all bibliographic material preserved in the country up till the beginning of the twentieth century. Gabriel René Moreno has published the following about this bibliographic collection.

- a) **The Biblioteca Boliviana. (Bolivian Library). The Books and Booklets section Catalog.** Santiago de Chile, Guttenberg Press, 1879. With titles in alphabetical order, comments of expert, and index of names. It registers 3,529 pieces up till the year 1878.
- b) **The Primer Suplemento a la Biblioteca Boliviana de Gabriel René-Moreno. Epítome de un Catálogo de Libros y Folletos 1879-1899,** (First Supplement to the

- Gabriel René-Moreno's Bolivian Library. Compendium of a Books and Booklets Catalog 1879-1899), with chronological order and index of names. Santiago de Chile, Imprenta Litográfica y Encuadernación Barcelona, 1900.
- c) The **Segundo Suplemento a la Biblioteca Boliviana de Gabriel René-Moreno. Libros y Folletos 1900-1908**, (Second Supplement to Gabriel René-Moreno's Bolivian Library. Books and Booklets 1900-1908), with authors in alphabetical order. Santiago de Chile, Imprenta y Encuadernación Universitaria, 1908.
 - d) As a supplement to these catalogs, René Moreno published in Santiago de Chile the **Adiciones a la Biblioteca Boliviana de Gabriel René-Moreno** (Additions to Gabriel René-Moreno's Bolivian Library), drawn up by Valentín Abecía in 1899. Santiago de Chile, Imprenta Litografía y Encuadernación Barcelona. In this edition, René Moreno participated as co-author with his typical notes and with the "Appendix to Abecías Additions".
 - e) The **Ensayo General de los Periódicos de Bolivia, 1825-1905** (General Essay of Bolivian Periodicals). Santiago de Chile, Imprenta Universitaria, 1905, with 1,264 cards of Bolivian periodicals, in chronological order, plus 88 pertaining to Peru and Argentina. Bolivian periodicals of the years 1906-1908 were catalogued by René-Moreno in an appendix of the **Segundo Suplemento** already mentioned".

Other sections that should be mentioned are:

Bolivian Section of Books and Booklets (B) (sixteenth century up till the present). It includes all kinds of printed matter on different subjects relative to Bolivia. There is a catalog on this material in the National Library of Bolivia (Dewey classification) on cards with entries by author, title, subject and year of publication.

Bolivian Periodicals (PB). (1823 up till the present). Including newspapers, weekly publications and other occasional publications. The catalog of cards drafted based on this material in the Bolivian National Library registers entries: alphabetical (by title), geographical (by district-department) and chronological (by year of publication).

Bolivian Journals (RB) (1840 till the present). It includes all type of journals of fundamental interest for Bolivia. The catalog of cards developed in the Bolivian National Library has entries: alphabetical (by title), geographical (by district-department) and chronological (by year of publication).

Official Publications of the Bolivian State (PO) (1825 till the present). It includes printed matter pertaining to the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches of government. It contains parliamentary session minutes, reports, projects, presidential addresses, ministers' reports, etc.

Antique, Rare and Curious Books (ARC) (1493 till the present). It includes a variety of printed material with subjects of great importance for Bolivia.

Among other important bibliographic collections that are safeguarded in the National Library of Bolivia are: Pedro Meleán Diez de Medina's Collection on the Chaco War with Paraguay.

The “Vildoso” Collection is very important for it contains very old books.

The Newspaper archive is a section, which has important collections. It preserves many national periodicals and journals and some from abroad, especially from neighboring countries. It has a complete collection of the first Bolivian periodical, “El Condor”, founded by the Great Marshall of Ayacucho, which helped him to rule when he was President of the country. This collection, plus another in the University of Sucre, seem to be the only ones of that time that exist.

Regarding technology, for some years catalogs have been drawn up on the computer. But in order to avoid losses or risks the old system of cards is kept on, for according to expert advice it is suitable to do so.

The Isis program and its Microisis version are used. We are also using the Windows CDS/ISIS system in its two versions. Before the CEPAL program was also used.

Catalogs are drawn up by author, title, descriptive factor order. We still need to learn a lot and we constantly need to incorporate new technologies, above all to exchange information with similar document centers.

Users are assisted by means of catalogs, card-indexes, and computer terminals.

As to other activities, the National Library of Bolivia also sponsors seminars, symposiums, lectures and different cultural events. It also regularly edits its Annual Report. Soon the Annual Report for 1999 will be in circulation. The 2000 issue will be devoted mainly to publishing catalogs.

We have material and economic limitations but gradually we are overcoming them.

An Act of February 1986 established that the Library and National Archive be assisted in their budget needs by the Central Bank of Bolivia. This measure was a great step forward and later the Bank created a Cultural Foundation to administrate four cultural centers, among them the National Library and Archives. The council members are History Scholars who are encouraging the life of such centers.

A new functional building is being built for the Library and Archive which will have 8,200 m² , and it will allow this institution to successfully carry out its remit.

Finally I will say that the National Library of Bolivia is linked to the main association of its kind such as ABINIA and is involved in the respective projects and Programs. It will attend the X Meeting that will take place in Lima from the 12th – 14th October, where it will join the Constituent Convention that will turn ABINIA into an “Association of Latin-American States for the Development of National Libraries of the Latin-American Countries.”

I haven't talked about any professional organization in Bolivia nor have I broached any subject related to this matter. My intention is to only provide a little information about the

National Library of Bolivia. I have come to this event with the purpose of learning from the experience of other participants in order to report back to my superior authorities, who conferred on me the duty of representing them. Thank you.

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NATIONAL REPORT GUIDE

a) Size and state of the publishing industry.

b) Relation between demand/need of national users/supply. Is it necessary to import published material or is the country self-sufficient?

The National Library of Bolivia, is a cultural center for preserving the bibliographic, newspaper and audiovisual heritage of Bolivia. Material of special interest is kept here and is available for the promotion of Bolivian studies, considering that the domestic published output does not meet all users' needs, published material is also imported. .

c) Current state of bibliographic control in the country.

Bibliographic control in our country is in the hands of the National Repository, Legal Deposit /La Paz and the Single Legal Deposit, which functions in each district in our country.

d) State of the bookselling trade in the country.

e) ¿Who maintains the national archive of published materials and how effective is it?

See: c)

f) Current state of the legal deposit.

It is updated and has few omissions.

g) What are the national acquisition policies, if there are any? Acquisitions are achieved through the legal deposit. .

Do the university libraries cooperate in collection enhancement? Yes.

What is the relation between the libraries of different sectors (university, public, research, national? There is no structured system. Each institution makes its contribution. .

h) Has the country libraries which benefit from the legal deposit? If there are any how useful are they?

The National Library is one of the beneficiary libraries of the legal deposit. It is considered, nowadays, one of the most complete libraries.

i) ¿What are the preservation and retention policies? ¿Are they organized?

The National Library of Bolivia preserves all material acquired, which is catalogued and offered for the benefit of users.

j) ¿What is the current state of interlibrary loan/exchange of bibliography? ¿Is there a system in place, if not, why not? Is one necessary?

The National Library of Bolivia does not use the interlibrary loan system because the implementation of this service would need more cataloguers to computerize collections and to offer this important service. For the moment it is not essential.

k) Which libraries are better equipped in terms of collections and technology to provide an interlibrary loan system?

In our country there is no institutionalized and permanent interlibrary loan system.

l) Who is responsible for handling international requests for interlibrary loans?

The National Library of Bolivia does not provide this service.

m) Are there collective catalogs? How efficient are they?

There are no collective catalogs in our country. Each institution has its own small catalog. .

n) Which are the libraries with effective national collections and how well do they fulfill their role?

The National Library of Bolivia has very important catalogued collections, which are in manual catalogues. Since the end of 1995, the process of automation was implemented in the National Library of Bolivia and it continues up till the present; the system used is the MICRO-ISIS v.3.6. The retrospective computerization has not yet been completed, it is scheduled for the future.

Sucre, 21st July

Dr. Hugo Poppe Entrambasguas
DIRECTOR