

# BIBLIOTHEQUE NATIONALE DE FRANCE

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## Annual Report for CENL

July 2003 / June 2004

### Key facts

- the collections were enriched by over 1.5 million documents including 1.2 million serial issues;
- outstanding documents were acquired including valuable items from the André Breton auction, a 16<sup>th</sup> century Italian portulan atlas and the Paul Verlaine manuscript "Sagesse";
- 7 235 volumes, representing around 2 million pages, were added to Gallica;
- 1 048 979 readers used the reading rooms;
- 70 million pages of the website [<http://www.bnf.fr>] were seen by 6.7 million visitors;
- on-site exhibitions were seen by over 300 000 visitors, 50% up on 2002.

*(figures for 2003)*

### Management of the Library

The three-year strategic plan, which was launched in 2001, was completed. An overall assessment was carried out in December 2003 in association with the management board and based on the three-monthly progress reports enabling the evaluation of indicators and a better preparation of the next, "objectives and means" contract which is currently under discussion with the Ministry of Culture.

This contract sets out the priorities for the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF) and the means to achieve them for the next three years.

3 orientations were selected:

- strengthen the core missions of the institution,
- work towards a stronger presence for the BnF within the national and international cultural and scientific community and also with regard to its users,
- improve management and achieve greater autonomy under the overall control of the Ministry of Culture.

### Staffing matters

The Bibliothèque nationale de France regained its appeal among all professions. There were more applications to join the library than departures; this can be explained on the one hand by the return in force of the BnF at the heart of the technological advances in the profession after the teething problems encountered during the opening of the new site and on the other hand, by the implementation of extensive-professional training programmes aimed at validating vocational skills and experience and thus career prospects.

## **Funding**

The 2004 budget amounts to 142.9 million euros (M€): 104.4 M€ for operating expenses (+ 1.5 %) and 38.5 M€ for investment (+ 15.3 %). The main State grant amounts to 99,8 M€ (+ 0,4 %) for operating expenses and 25 M€ (+ 26 %) for investment. The institution's own resources account for 12 %.

With regard to operating expenses, the new measures mainly concerned the acquisitions of "general collections" and the scientific processing of "specialised collections" whereas the investment budget was used for financing the renewal of technical installations on the Tolbiac site, the development of the IT systems for the Richelieu site and the provision of additional security for buildings on the Richelieu, Arsenal and Sablé-sur-Sarthe sites.

## **Buildings**

A detailed schedule, representing an essential stage in the renovation project of the Richelieu site, was completed, notably the definition of the project for one main reference room to serve all the specialised departments. This additional reading room, which aims at promoting cultural heritage documents as well as being a useful starting point for researchers will provide printed and electronic collections on multidisciplinary themes: genealogy, arts, geography and travels, music and performing arts and literature for a wide public.

## **Information System and Bibliographic Issues**

In October 2003, the integrated (open and multimedia) system was completed after about 10 years of development and now consists in:

- - User applications: general information for the public, reader registration, seat reservation, catalogue consultation, remote and on-site requests for items, access to a network of 200 CD-ROMs and to the Internet as well as access to BnF digital collections.
- - Internal applications: catalogue production, legal deposit and acquisitions management, provision of bibliographic products, document delivery management, human resource management, office and ICT (information and communication technology) systems.

In addition to this integrated system, 3 specific systems were developed: automatic document delivery system, self-service ticket machine and security gate control and, above all, a system for the consultation of audiovisual and multimedia material.

The BnF has ceased joint publication of its bibliographic products on CD-ROMs and now offers a wide range online. The records can be displayed and downloaded free of charge, either via the online French National Bibliography [for Books and Periodicals from 2002 and for Music from 2003] [<http://bibliographienationale.bnf.fr>] or via the catalogue BN-OPALE PLUS. Records can be downloaded either via Z 39.50 or via ftp after registration. There is still a charge for delivering records for current or retrospective products, and this can be done via ftp or CD-ROMs after registration. All these records are provided in ISO 2709.

A specific focus was on the bibliographic policy in order to improve the quality and coherence of the catalogue and bibliographic products. The implementation of this policy is led by a Catalogue committee, coordinated by the French National Agency which was totally restructured in 2003 and is now split into 2 sections: the first is responsible for coordinating

internal bibliographic issues and the second is dedicated to bibliographic and standard activities, mainly for the benefit of the professional community as a whole.

### **The Digital Library**

A new digital documentary policy on Gallica has been submitted to the Scientific Council and the Governing Board. This policy is based on the digitisation of representative corpuses, covering all areas, focusing on rare documents or those which are not easily consultable. A summary is now available online.

A new thematic corpus "Travels in Italy" [<http://gallica.bnf.fr/VoyagesenItalie/>] was added to Gallica. This collection presents a subtle selection of Italian landscapes ; these range from the artistic, cultural and historical, including both famous and little-known landscapes and covering the North and South, from the Middle Ages to the beginning of the 20th century. The accounts of French-speaking travellers provide a unique and multi-faceted view of Italy.

In addition to the digitisation of documents, the BnF has also been carrying out research and development programmes on collecting, harvesting, access and long-term preservation of electronic documents such as:

- - structuring literary manuscripts in XML to allow annotations and critical analysis by researchers,
- - experiments of the Open Archive Initiative (OAI) protocol.

### **Legal Deposit of Materials**

The proposed reform of the 1993 legal deposit decree will reduce the number of copies required from publishers and printers which will lead to changes in the BnF exchange policy.

A law concerning the legal deposit of electronic publications will be debated by the French Parliament next autumn within the framework of the transposition of the "European Directive on the harmonisation of certain aspects of copyright and related rights in the information society".

In recognition of the importance of international collaboration for preserving Internet content, eleven libraries decided to sign the "International Internet Preservation Consortium" (IIPC) [<http://www.netpreserve.org>] in July 2003. Led by the National Library of France, this Consortium also comprises the Biblioteca nazionale centrale Firenze (Italy), the British Library, the National Library of Denmark, the National and University Library of Finland, the National Library of Sweden, the National Library of Iceland, the Library and Archives of Canada, the Library of Congress, the National Library of Australia, the National Library of Norway and the American Foundation Internet Archive. Its objective is to identify, develop and facilitate the implementation of solutions for selecting, harvesting, collecting, preserving and providing access to Internet content.

### **Acquisitions**

A slightly increased budget allocation was unable to offset the rising cost of materials, especially serial subscriptions which has a worrying impact on library funding. This trend has led to the cancellation of 800 subscriptions out of a total of about 11,300. For the record 62,000 monographs were purchased in 2003.

## Preservation and Conservation of Collections

***The Department of Conservation was restructured in order to optimise its management; the department's activities were split into cultural heritage and commercial activities.***

The on-demand reproduction service was set up as a separate department and with the ability to manage productivity, resources and delivery periods.

Concerning the conservation of the collections, the BnF chose to concentrate internal human resources on specific and unique works (regular maintenance, restoration of rare and valuable documents, microreproduction for storage) and to subcontract large-scale processing operations. Digitisation activities were integrated into the new Department of Conservation.

In Spring 2004, the BnF launched an online service called "The Picture Collection" [<http://images.bnf.fr/>] which comprises the color negatives produced in response to user requests for reproductions. Over 60 000 images in the public domain can now be consulted and purchased online. The site is regularly enriched by each new reproduction requested.

The issue of collection security was high on the agenda this year with the implementation of a three-year inventory and the organisation of a conference within the framework of LIBER in May 2004, which was attended by libraries as well as by other organisations (museums, police forces, Customs, Interpol...).

## Services to Readers

The BnF has continued its action in favour of disabled users. For the benefit of visually disabled users, a software package was acquired to allow the consultation of three daily newspapers by vocal synthesis and the BnF website was adapted for these users in collaboration with the Braillet Association.

Researchers have been able to consult the archives of the Bibliothèque nationale de France in the reading rooms of the library since April 2004. This service is available within the framework of the Mission for the Management of Documentary Production and Archives which was recently created in order to reorganise the archives of the institution.

## Cultural Events, Exhibitions and Publishing

2003 saw the creation of an exhibition area at the Richelieu site dedicated to photographic collections with the support of a sponsor, namely the firm Champagne Roederer.

Two of the exhibitions featured were *Portraits-Visages, 1853-2003* and the photographic albums offered to the Emperor Napoleon III, *Des photographes pour l'Empereur*.

2003 also saw a significant rise in visitor numbers to on-site exhibitions. The photographs of Cartier Bresson and an exhibition on the actor Gérard Philipe attracted large crowds. The exhibition of original drawings used for the making of the film "The Lord of the Rings: the Return of the King" drew large numbers of young visitors. This exhibition was organised to tie in with the release of the film in Paris and was accompanied by a donation of some of the drawings to the BnF.

Some exhibitions were organised to accompany national celebrations: an exhibition was dedicated to Berlioz on the occasion of the bicentenary of this birth; the exhibition *Les Goncourt, du Journal à l'Académie* celebrated the creation of the Prix Goncourt; two major arts of Chinese culture, calligraphy and drawing, were presented in the exhibition *Chine, l'Empire du trait, calligraphies et dessins des fonds de la BnF* during the Year of China celebrations in France. Finally, the exhibition *Souvenirs, souvenirs* offers visitors a voyage through one hundred years of French songs.

Some exhibitions were also organised outside the BnF: *Dessins de la Renaissance*, presented in Barcelona in partnership with the Foundation Caixa Catalunya, was seen by more than 110 000 visitors.

Online exhibitions are also produced. [<http://expositions.bnf.fr/>]

Other cultural events are also organised on various subjects for both specialists and the general public:

- - colloquia and conferences to tie in with current exhibitions,
- - thematic series, in the form of "Lessons on ..." on science, politics as well as literature,
- - meetings with cultural personalities,
- - regular lectures on the Book : "Workshops on the history of the book", "My own library" or on audiovisual themes: "Writing/Filming",
- - literary events such as "Lundis de l'Arsenal".

*Concerning multimedia publications, the BnF decided to cease publication of CD-ROMS in favour of online editions.*

### **Co-operation between libraries**

In order to better manage the coordination and follow-up of cooperation with its national partners and to facilitate the emergence of new partnerships, the BnF created the Department of Cooperation within the Services and Networks direction. This department is in charge of coordinating the associated centres network, the French union catalogue as well as managing research programmes, the documentary policy of Gallica and projects on digitisation and shared conservation with national partners.

**At an international scale**, two key actions stand out:

- - a new international welcome programme for young foreign professionals and academics was set up. The aim of this programme, launched by the French Ministry of Culture, is to share experience on cultural practices. For the first session, 5 people from all over the world were welcomed;
- - at the beginning of 2004, the BnF decided to join The European Library Consortium, an action which will further strengthen its commitment to European cooperation.