



## World Library and Information Congress: 69th IFLA General Conference and Council

1-9 August 2003, Berlin

---

**Code Number:** 026-E  
**Meeting:** 66. Acquisition and Collection Development  
**Simultaneous Interpretation:** -

### **Donations and gifts to the Central Library of the Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar**

**Boubacar GUEYE**

*Central Library  
Cheikh Anta Diop University  
Dakar, Senegal*

---

### **Introduction**

Just like other libraries, the Central Library at the Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar<sup>1</sup> receives gifts that significantly contribute to the growth of its documentary holdings. These gifts have different values, depending on the donor, and come from diverse horizons, including international organizations, associations, embassies, foreign universities, private individuals, etc.

The director of the library noted in his 1996 report that “gifts constitute the only source of growth for the collection.” This observation, far from being exceptional, is very commonplace in our context. The budget for acquisitions, if it exists at all, is so weak that it does not allow for the renewal of our collections. We must note, however, that starting in 1996 -- the year that the PAES<sup>2</sup> took effect, and after two years (1987-88 and 1991-92) of absolutely no budget – the

---

<sup>1</sup>1729 carrels; 23,214 registered members, and about 500,000 volumes as of 10 May 2003.

<sup>2</sup>*Projet pour L'Amelioration de l'Enseignement Superieur* [Project for the Improvement of Higher Education], cost 30.9 USD for a duration of 6 years starting from 3 October 1996. This Project stems from the *Concentration Nationale sur L'Enseignement Superieur* [National Concentration on Higher Education].

budget for acquisitions was significantly raised. Unfortunately—and this is the reason why we will put the emphasis on this period of time—with the end of the project forecast in the first semester of this year (2003), gifts and donations risk becoming once again what they were for decades, namely, the “only source of growth.”

Moreover, new technologies for information and communication revolutionized the world of editing and publishing. Periodicals and databases are increasingly finding a place on the internet. And so the library receives a considerable number of periodicals and databases on-line thanks to international cooperation. Many of these on-line sources are in English, which has allowed the Library to decide to reduce to a bare minimum or abandon altogether their subscriptions to periodicals published in English. The savings realized [from this strategy] are redirected to the most deficient sections of our collection.

In this situation of weak acquisition budgets and predominance of donations, the problem of the management of the donations arises. The respect for criteria of pertinence, decreed by the policies for the development of the collections, become more difficult. Consequently, the adoption of a policy for collection development (and by extension, of a codified Charter for the donation of books) seems to us to be the best ally of the librarian against the “temptation of filling in the holes.”

### **The Donation of Works.**

The Cheikh Anta Dop University was considered the 18<sup>th</sup> French university before the independence of Senegal in 1960. As such, it was held in the same regard as other metropolitan universities. It is thus well after the independence that the problems of the renewal of the collection began to be noticed. In effect, with less than 2% of the university budget given to collection renewal (and note that UNESCO recommends 5%), the Library is no longer able to renew its collections. For example, in 1990, of the 1828 new volumes acquired, 612 (or 33.5% of the total) were donated. In reality, if we considered that the 1107 documents purchased were acquired thanks to a subvention from the *Mission Française de Coopération et d'Action Culturelle* [The French Mission for Cooperation and Cultural Action], then we can see that in the end, not one of the works was acquired by the Library's own budget. But this annual subvention of 5,000,000 FCFA must be used only to purchase works in the French language (a condition imposed by the donating institution).

The PAES project that allowed for the enlargement, renovation, and equipping of the library had also foreseen a subsequent budget destined for the renewal of the collection. And so, for the year 2002-2003, the anticipated acquisition budget was estimated at 101,768,295 FCFA, a level never previously attained in the history of the Library.

<b>year</b>	<b>purchases</b>	<b>donations</b>	<b>exchanges</b>	<b>total</b>
1990	1,116	<b>612</b>	99	1,827
1992	1,073	<b>661</b>	65	1,799
1996	14	<b>1,257</b>	31	1,301
total	2,203	<b>2,529</b>	195	4,927
<b>total in %</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>4</b>	

What stands out in this table is that 51% of the works registered by the Library in the period considered were gifts. We must notice the exceptionally low number of documents purchased in 1996. This situation is explained by the fact that the orders for this year were not delivered because of the slowness of the appeals process for supplies from the World Bank.

Exchanges represent 4% of the acquisitions. But with the difficulties currently suffered by university publishers, it is becoming more and more difficult for the Library to have publications to exchange with its partners.

We note, before the end of this chapter, that some remarkable legacies have also contributed to improving the Library's holdings. These legacies include, among others, the Arsonwal holdings, the Birago Dop holdings, the Dubois holdings, and the Rene Ndiaye holdings.

### **The Donation of Periodicals.**

The presence of donations is also very notable in the periodical received by the Library. Periodicals acquired by donation represent almost 50% of our current periodicals, in both paper and electronic format. For paper periodicals, of the 598 current titles in 2002, 276 of them (46%) were donations.

Additionally, the Library receives more than 10,000 periodical titles on-line, of which 2,139 are free, and 8,000 are subscriptions. Donations come to us from the HINARI program,<sup>3</sup> which is an initiative of the OMS in cooperation with six of the biggest publishers in the biomedical field: Blackwell, Elsevier Science, The Harcourt Worldwide STM group, Wolters Kluwer International Health & Science, Springer Verlag, and John Wiley.

### **Donations and the Development of the Collections.**

Librarians in the south are confronted with a nearly unsolvable problem: respecting the spirit of the policies of collection development while also essentially relying on donations and gifts to develop their documentary holdings. Yet whoever speaks of a policy of collection development

---

<sup>3</sup>The Health Internet Network Access to Research Initiative

means, in fact, choice and elimination. But how to choose in the context of a library like ours where around 50% or more of new acquisitions are from donations? Moreover, how to weed out the collections in conformity with the principles of collection development if one must then live with the shame of empty shelves?

Despite these constraints, the librarians of the south must remain demanding with regard to the pertinence of the documents to be integrated in their collections, because it is preferable to have a few documents chosen with pertinence and professionalism rather than having shelves crammed with obsolete and inadequate documents.

### **The Necessity of a Charter for the Donation of Books.**

We must observe right away that donations are the poor relatives in the professional literature. But this situation is understandable to the extent that librarians of the south, who are the most concerned by the problems posed by donations, still have a long way to go in order to pass from a civilization based in an oral tradition to one based in writing. The work procedures are very rarely codified here, which favors divers approaches and appreciations in the treatment of problems within the same institution.

However, one is happy today to note that our northern partners seem more and more aware of the problems linked to the treatment of donations. In this framework, we salute the contributions of associations like “Culture and Development,”<sup>4</sup> which through actions like the publication of a charter for the donation of books, help achieve a better apprehension of the problems linked to donations. The adoption of such a charter by all the partners seems to us to be a necessity. The treatment of donations and the presentation of the objectives of collections are clearly expressed there. This will have as its principle merit helping donors reflect on possible gifts and will avoid the waste linked to the problems of collection, stockage, and transportation.. The adoption of such a charter will likewise avoid a useless loss of energy and time on the part of the recipient.

We will note here that the necessary implication of the recipients is increasingly taken into account by donors. Even if the practice is not yet systematic, the donors try now more than ever to implicate their southern partners in the process of the selection of documents destined for donation. The preliminary shipment of lists of titles from amongst which the recipient will make his choices—insofar as one can speak of choices—is more frequently in use.

### **Conclusion.**

Donations will still continue to occupy a place of choice in the life of souther librarians for a long time. It is also established that their value is still good beyond the good will that animates the initiators of gifts. This reality is just as strongly affirmed in the context of a university library, and

---

<sup>4</sup>Culture et Développement, a French non-governmental organization that seeks to promote cultural partnership with Africa.

thus in the pedagogical vocations, as in any other. In effect, with globalization and the development of NTIC, there is hardly any lag between the North and the South concerning information. Obsolete information in a northern library will also likely be obsolete in a southern library. The information needs of students and teachers, whether they be in the North or the South, remain largely the same.

If we affirm with Lisa Pagnot that “there is no ideal donation, but rather an ideal *of* donation,”<sup>5</sup> then we would add that this “ideal of donation” would be, in our view, a possibility for the donor to mobilize credit with respect to his own means and to make it available to the partner-library in order to order works that are consistent with the needs of readers.

Finally we will end with this very appropriate reflection by Hamadou Hapathe Ba,<sup>6</sup> who said “if not, what you will do without us will be like clothing that you have not made to fit us. The result will be that you will have lost the stuff, while we at least are dressed.”

### **Bibliographic References:**

Reports of the Central Library of the Cheikh Anta Diop University (1990, 1992, 1996)

*ABF: Le metier de bibliothecaire [The Librarian's Profession]*, ed. Françoise Hecquard, with Françoise Froissart (Editions du Cercle de la Librairie, 1996).

Almeida, Francisco, “A propos du don des livres” [“Concerning the Donation of Books”], *Notre Librairie* (April-June 2003)

Calange, Bertrand, *Les politiques d'acquisition [Acquisition Policies]* (Editions du Cercle de la Librairie, 1994).

### **Internet Sources**

[www.healthinternetnetwork.org](http://www.healthinternetnetwork.org) (HINARI)

[www.culture-developpement.asso.fr](http://www.culture-developpement.asso.fr)

[www.bu.ucad.sn](http://www.bu.ucad.sn) (Central Library for the Cheikh Anta Diop University)

[www.paes.sn](http://www.paes.sn) (Project for the improvement of higher education)

---

<sup>5</sup>Lisa Pignot, “Le don de livres en question(s)” [“The donation of books in question(s)”], in *Medianes Livre et Lecture*, volume 20 (January 2001).

<sup>6</sup>Writer from Mali (1901-1991).