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96 National Libraries

Cultural cooperation in Latin America and Caribbean

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The impact of globalization has created the need for cooperation among nations and people. Certain areas are more receptive and permeate more freely the idea of working together and it culminates in projects for the production of cultural goods and on activities towards cultural exchange and collaboration in the areas of information.

The cultural role of national libraries have been debated over and over again and there is no doubt in everyone's mind today that the cultural center role of national libraries is not debatable anymore and has been ascertained.

Erland Nielsen from Denmark stated in the end of 90's that "the cultural duties of the National Libraries must be seen against its background of their collections, defined as cultural heritage" and also that "National Libraries as bearers of the nation's collective, cultural and scholarly memory and cultural heritage, must expand their activities and to some extent change priorities. We are both information centers and cultural museums, not just the one, like most of the other research libraries, or the other, like the other museums".

The priorities have changed in the last decade and the work defined above is based on the following key words for libraries – globalization and cooperation. The communication highway and all that entails have changed also our perspectives and procedures and the ones that have not followed these trends will be in danger of lagging behind and becoming obsolete institutions and people.

For an analysis of this trend in the Region, I have evaluated certain experiences that bring this tendency into focus – virtual libraries, as well as cases of collaboration projects that embarked in the virtual world of information.

The experiences described are all based on the Virtual Library concept, which is more than a system; it is a network of networks where management plays an important part second to the technology innovations. The entire projects use principles of collaboration, networking and globalization where every item adds to the next and become a whole of cultural exchange products and manifestations.

The National Libraries have started some projects, which bring them to the forefront of the new environment of cultural exchange mainly the project of the Miguel de Cervantes Virtual Library. This project was launched by the Universidade de Alicante, Spain, to encompass information on one website concerning the literary collection of Spanish speaking countries of Latin America.

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Portales

Catálogos
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Portales institucionales (ordenados por fecha de inauguración)



Portal institucional «Clásicos en la Biblioteca Nacional»

Se trata de un portal conjunto de la Biblioteca Nacional y la Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes creado con el fin de difundir, a través de las nuevas tecnologías, el patrimonio cultural de España para ponerlo a disposición de todos. Ofrece una muestra de la valiosísima colección que albergan los fondos de la [Biblioteca Nacional](#), presentando verdaderas joyas bibliográficas de los autores españoles más representativos.



Portal Fundación Santander Central Hispano

Portal Institucional Fundación Santander Central Hispano. Portal divulgativo que recupera una galería de escritores contemporáneos en lengua española y edita otras colecciones propias como Maestros Complutenses del Derecho, la revista *Moneda y Crédito*, además de ciclos de conferencias o los Cuadernos de Sostenibilidad y los Manuales de Medio Ambiente. Todo ello con la finalidad de acercar la cultura y el humanismo a todos los públicos.



Portal Institucional Biblioteca Abadía de Montserrat

Fondos valiosos de una gran biblioteca histórica. La Biblioteca de Montserrat aparece ya documentada en el siglo XI y, desde entonces, se encuentra en continuo desarrollo.



Portal Fundação Biblioteca Nacional

El Portal Fundação Biblioteca Nacional (Brasil) presenta una selección de obras pertenecientes a la literatura y la historia brasileña de los siglos XIX y XX. Incluye también reseñas bio-bibliográficas de los autores más representativos y un acervo sonoro con archivos musicales de los más importantes compositores brasileños.



Manuscritos de América en las Colecciones Reales

Realizado en colaboración con la Real Biblioteca de Patrimonio Nacional. Se considera un medio de difusión de gran riqueza, pues contiene ediciones facsimilares de inestimable valor relativas a la memoria hispanoamericana. Destaca la sección dedicada al archivo de Palafox y Mendoza por la documentación oficial que muestra relativa al Obispado de Puebla de los Ángeles (México) entre los años 1639 y 1649.



Real Academia Española

Reproducción facsímil de importantes obras y ejemplares valiosos de la Biblioteca de la Real Academia Española: desde reproducciones digitales de ediciones confeccionadas por la Academia hasta obras que ven por primera vez la luz y que se conservan en ejemplares únicos.



Academia Argentina de Letras

Surge como fruto de la colaboración con la AAL (Academia Argentina de Letras). Este portal alberga diversas secciones relativas a la literatura argentina: literatura gauchesca, nativista, clásicos de la literatura argentina, la Colección Pedro de Angelis (la más importante en cuanto a documentación relativa al Río de la Plata editada en el siglo XIX), viajes y viajeros, revistas culturales argentinas, epistolario...



Colección Austral

Portal elaborado con el objetivo de apoyar la labor de la Colección Austral de Espasa-Calpe mediante la edición digital de una parte de su fondo y la publicidad de las novedades que se vayan incorporando al mismo.



Biblioteca Nacional de Argentina

Se trata de una recopilación de materiales, obras y documentos de gran riqueza. En este portal podemos tener acceso al catálogo de incunables, a manuscritos en edición digital (por ejemplo el de *Don Segundo Sombra*), a las obras más representativas de la literatura argentina, a entrevistas a diversos escritores y críticos argentinos y a las Bibliotecas de Autor de Art, Alfonsina Storni y Oliverio Girondo.



Biblioteca Nacional de Chile

Este portal dispone de obras de gran valor en la literatura chilena y de otros materiales. Destaca una selección de libros del Fondo José Toribio Medina, el fondo bibliográfico más importante de Chile. También se pueden acceder a manuscritos de Gabriela Mistral, Rubén Darío, Vicente Huidobro y Pablo Neruda, además de una Biblioteca de Autor dedicada al chileno Gonzalo Rojas, poemas de Neruda signados, entrevistas, hemeroteca...



El Colegio de México

Portal institucional en colaboración con El Colegio de México, una de las principales instituciones culturales del país. Este portal pretende poner al alcance de los usuarios una amplio catálogo con importantes y valiosas obras de la Historia y la literatura mexicanas, así como de la influencia de la cultura española en México.



Instituto de Literatura y Lingüística José A. Portuondo Valdor (Cuba)

Portal realizado en colaboración con esta prestigiosa institución cubana que intenta dar a conocer una parte de sus objetivos académicos en el campo de la investigación acerca de la literatura cubana en diversas épocas, tanto en

su devenir nacional a través de procesos histórico-literarios, obras y autores específicos, como en su contexto iberoamericano y caribeño, así como del estudio del español en Cuba.



Biblioteca de Catalunya

Fruto del convenio de colaboración entre la Biblioteca de Cataluña y la Universidad de Alicante, su objetivo consiste en digitalizar unos 1000 documentos de alto valor bibliográfico pertenecientes al fondo de la Biblioteca de Catalunya y de otras bibliotecas catalanas. Los documentos proceden de las secciones Unidad Bibliográfica, Unidad Gráfica, Hemeroteca y Fonoteca.



Institut Joan Lluís Vives

La Biblioteca Virtual Joan Lluís Vives es el resultado de un convenio establecido entre la Universidad de Alicante y la Red de Universidades que componen el Institut Joan Lluís Vives. Con este acuerdo se pretende, por una parte, aprovechar, potenciar y difundir al máximo los fondos digitalizados existentes en la Red, y, por otra, proponer y realizar la edición digital de las obras más representativas de la cultura catalana, valenciana y balear.

Portales institucionales actualmente en trámite

[Biblioteca Nacional de México](#) | [Universidad Iberoamericana \(Ciudad de México\)](#)



Página mantenida por el [Taller Digital](#)

[Accesibilidad](#) [Marco legal](#)

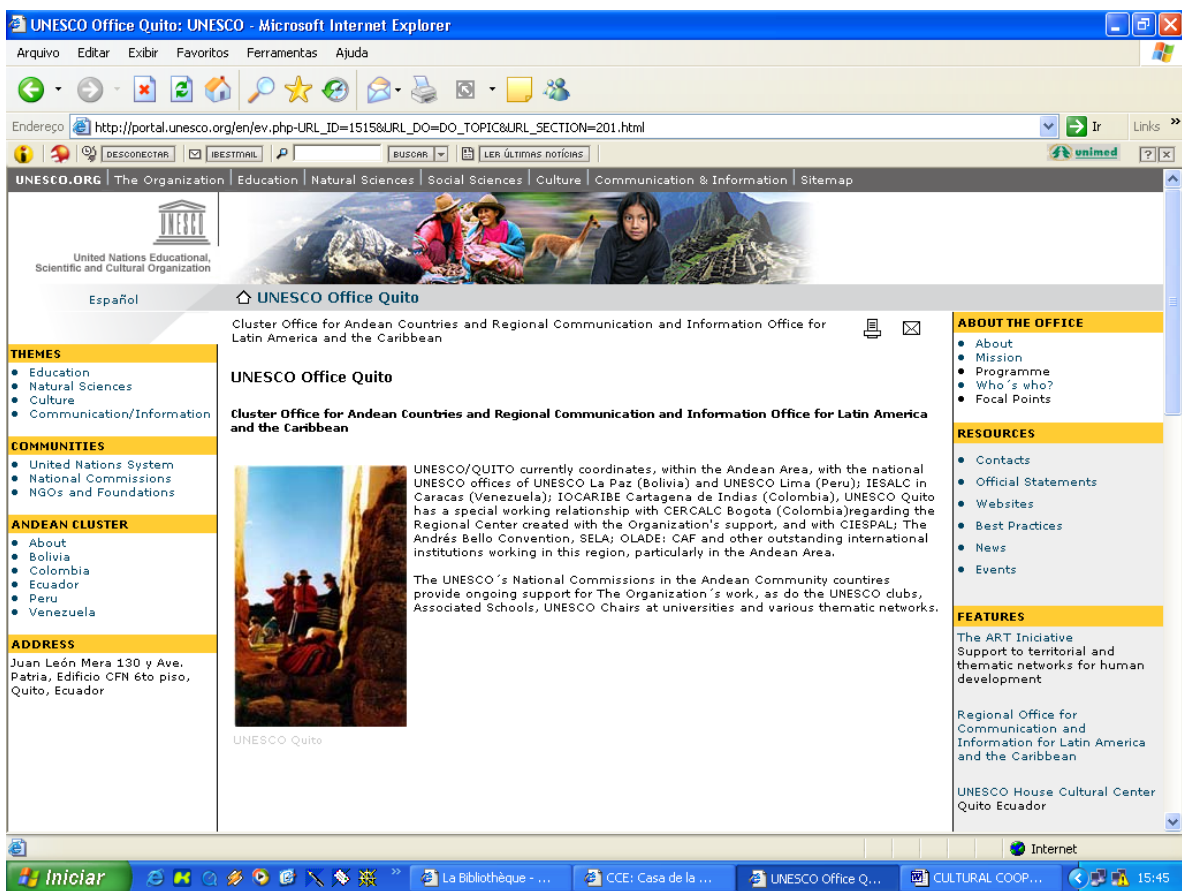


This agreement was signed within the cooperation schemes of ABINIA (Asociación de Estados Iberoamericanos para el Desarrollo de las Bibliotecas Nacionales de los Países de Iberoamérica), which endorsed it and later enlarged it to include also Portuguese speaking countries literature. This project introduced for the first time the digitizing of literature on public domain and made available scanning equipment and expertise to countries that had no experience in this field. Nowadays, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Venezuela have their collection in full text and available in the website of the Virtual Library Miguel de Cervantes, which is an instrument of teaching literature at the University of Alicante, but also serve many others cities in Spain and abroad.

This cooperation gave good results since all libraries involved acquired experience and was able to copy the digital files for their own websites.

UNESCO and ABINIA launched a larger experience of virtual libraries among National Libraries as the Digital Iberoamerican and Caribbean Library in 1999. In 2001, the General Assembly of ABINIA approved an agreement to be signed with UNESCO to launch this project including all National Libraries members of ABINIA.

Each country followed the model of virtual libraries and a pattern established by a group of experts from the University of Colima in Mexico, which worked under contract with UNESCO, and which was also responsible for developing the methodology and providing training capabilities, as well as remote access kits.



This project was also expanded to cooperate with Miguel de Cervantes Virtual Library to encompass the collaboration with the Andean countries such as: Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, Venezuela and Equator and obtain the merging of the two efforts.

Another project, which involved a large number of national libraries in close collaboration, is the Slave Trade Project, which is developed within the framework of the UNESCO Memory of the World.

UNESCO Memory of the world is a worldwide project with renown all over the world and represents one of the finest projects of UNESCO to preserve and safeguard documentary heritage. The slavery trade project aimed at developing its activities within the boundaries of the Memory of the World for safeguarding and safekeeping of cultural heritage.

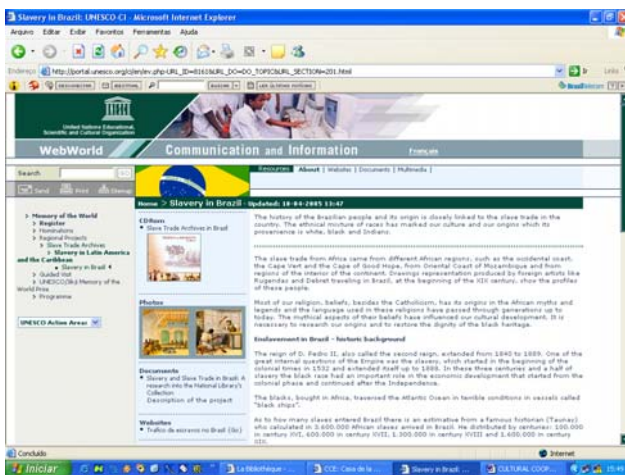
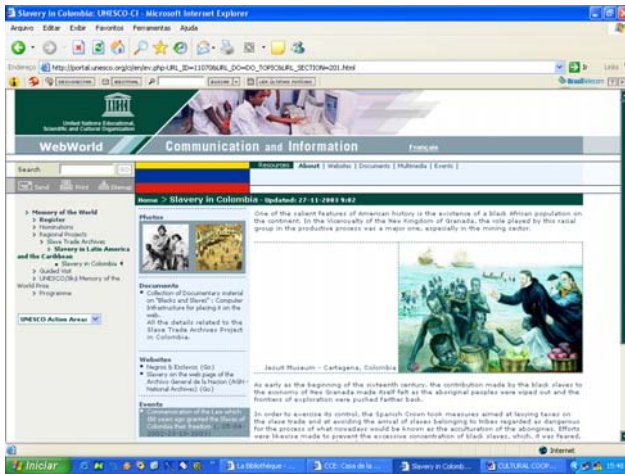
This project received financing from Norway, which permitted institutions to develop a research methodology to identify material in existence, in one or more institutions at national level, and develop a database and digitize the material pertaining to the slave trade in those institutions.

UNESCO approved the research methodology for each case and a specific project was proposed with an analysis of the material available, its timetable for the research and the creation of a database in CD-ROM and a WEB site.

This project is worldwide and in Latin American and Caribbean it has covered Argentina, Colombia, Cuba, Brazil and Haiti. Each project researched, evaluated and digitized documents up to them unknown to the public and made them available through means of communication through Internet. This project showed through those different bibliographies the material in abundance that exist in each institution and which will be connected through a portal, which will be launched soon.

The project is very successful for the Region and shows an array of multicultural information and essential for any important research on themes of slavery since it brings out the different forms of slavery that occurred in the Region conducted by Portuguese, Spaniards, British and Americans.

The Portal foreseen intends to create an environment encompassing all material gathered by the different institutions, in order to permit one access uniformed for all the countries databases already established. The UNESCO Memory of the World secretariat at UNESCO Paris will develop this project



Another format of cooperation is the union catalog coordinated by Spain's National Library and assembles all material in existence in National Libraries, which is considered rare works. This Union Catalog of libraries represents a great coordination effort among all members of ABINIA and has been an on

going process in the last decade. An initial catalog was published in CD-ROM, which did not represent a large majority of contributions, since then an extra effort was made and this catalog is now online in the Web site of the National Library of Spain and is considered the largest database on the subject.

This database is entitled **Novum Regestrum: Catálogo Colectivo de Fondo Antiguo, siglos XV-XIX, de la Asociación de Bibliotecas Nacionales de Iberoamérica (ABINIA)** and it is published by the Biblioteca Nacional de España and the Asociación de Bibliotecas Nacionales de Iberoamérica. It is the largest union catalogue in Latin America containing 100,000 records of books published before 1850, held in 23 national libraries of Iberoamerica, and which include those of Spain, Portugal, and three major Latin American university libraries. Books in Spanish and Portuguese in any subject area are included as are books on the history of Iberoamerica regardless of language, and pamphlets of interest. It is the largest and most complete database on the holdings of the national libraries of Iberoamerica.<http://www.chadwyck.co.uk/>

http://www.bne.es/ingles/internacional/abinia_proyec.htm

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the website of the Biblioteca Nacional de España. The address bar shows the URL: <http://www.bne.es/eng/libcoabinia.htm>. The page title is "Biblioteca Nacional de España - The library".

The main navigation menu includes: [Functional diagram](#), [Contact](#), [Site Map](#), [Site Evaluation test](#), [Our web](#), and [Privacy](#). Below this, a secondary menu lists: [USING THE LIBRARY](#), [COLLECTIONS](#), [CATALOGUES](#), [SERVICES](#), [THE DIGITAL LIBRARY](#), [THE LIBRARY](#), [EXHIBITIONS](#), and [NEWS AND AGENDA](#).

The breadcrumb trail reads: [The Library](#) > [Cooperation](#) > [International cooperation](#) > [Latin America](#) > [ABINIA](#).

The page content is divided into several sections:

- Left sidebar:** Contains a list of links: [History](#), [Functions](#), [Government structure](#), [Development of the collection](#), [Use statistics](#), [Cooperation](#), [Publications](#), [Seat Alcalá de Henares](#), and [Information for professionals](#). There is also a print button with the text "(or click on the print button at the top of your browser)".
- Main content area:**
 - Image:** A graphic with the text "The library Cooperation".
 - Section Header:** **ABINIA** Association of Latin American States for the development of National Libraries in Latin American countries.
 - Text:** "The Association of Latin American States for the development of National Libraries in Latin American countries is the former **Association of National Libraries of Latin America (ABINIA)**, constituted in Mexico D.F. on 14 December 1989. Nowadays, it is an international organisation although it keeps its former acronym ABINIA is made up of 22 National Libraries of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Spain, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Uruguay y Venezuela. Puerto Rico was admitted in May 1990, represented by the Library system of Recinto de Río Piedras at the University of Puerto Rico, which functions as a Biblioteca Nacional.
 - Text:** "There fore, ABINIA is formed by the National Libraries of Latin American countries, constituting a cultural community which shares two languages: Spanish and Portuguese, a common interest to defend their cultural inheritance and the need to integrate their efforts to achieve common aims."
 - Text:** **The headquarters of the Secretary of the intergovernmental organisation is located a the following address:**
Casa Teresa de la Parra
Foro Libertador. Caracas. Venezuela
Telephone: 58 212 8630442
- Right sidebar:**
 - Section Header:** **ABINIA**
 - List:**
 - [1. Directory of National Libraries of ABINIA](#)
 - [2. Objets](#)
 - [3. Proiects](#)
 - [4. Publications](#)
 - Section Header:** **INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION:**
 - European Cooperation:** [CENL](#), [CERL](#)
 - European Professinal O rganisations:** [EBLIDA](#), [ECPA](#), [LIBER](#), [SCEENA](#)
 - Latin America:** [ABINIA](#), [REDIAL](#), [AECI](#)
 - International Projects:** [Bibliotheca](#)

The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the "Iniciar" button, several application icons, and the system tray with the date and time (16:28).

The present brief report gives examples of cultural cooperation among nations in the Region and shows that much is accomplished by the organization of different institutions through regional organization like ABINIA, which is the regional branch of CDNL and can carry on work, which is relevant to all partners. Other examples could have been given of automation efforts but which do not qualify as an overall regional cultural cooperation project.