

MEXICAN LIBRARIES, ARCHIVES AND MUSEUMS: A SNAPSHOT

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ABSTRACT

This paper offers a general introduction to the different types of Mexican libraries, museums and archives, with an emphasis on libraries and related subjects such as serials, book production, and library schools. Literature was consulted and direct data was gathered from websites and through telephone interviews of knowledgeable library professionals. Data used in this essay is not all recent. Therefore it is used mainly as an indicator of the general status of Mexican information development.

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GENERAL BACKGROUND

Mexico is a large country, whose official name is Mexican United States, a federal constitutional republic. It is politically divided into 31 states and a Federal District (Mexico City). Its government is presidential with a constitutionally strong Congress and a supreme court. The president is elected for a non-renewable six-year term and appoints the cabinet. The country's legislature is based on a bicameral Congress: 128-member Senate, and a 500-member Chamber of Deputies, elected for a three-year term.(1). States provide some funding for education and libraries, as well as setting some of the educational requirements, but policy-making is generally centralized by the federal government. For example, the Ministry of Public Education provides funding and direction, in different levels, to all types of libraries, except special ones. Mexico, as a country, has more than a hundred million inhabitants, it is certainly the most populated nation in the Spanish-speaking world. Covering a territory a quarter of the size of the United States of America (US), its economy ranks number 14, according to its Gross National Income (GNI), and it ranks number seven in terms of tourism (2) (3). Mexico is the second largest economy in Latin America. It is a country in an intermediate advanced stage of development with a positive economic performance that is closely linked to the American economy. The official concern in dealing with poverty persists and the per capita income has gone up, although poverty and inequality rates continue to be elevated (2). Libraries are a crucial service to enhance information development of the country, whether at schools or in the workplace. Therefore they are assumed to be a means to bridge the socio-economic gaps in Mexican society. This essay provides a general description of the libraries, providing a historical introduction, a brief account by type of library, and a description of related subjects, such as book and serial publishing, among other library and information subjects. Museums and archives are also included as repositories for the collection and preservation of culture whose roles complement that of the libraries. The general goal is to give the international reader a general picture of the range of library institutions, stressing their contemporary developments.

HISTORY

Locations for the reproduction, transmission and promotion of information existed in Mexico well before the Spaniards arrived in 1519. The Aztecs had library-like institutions called Amoxcalli, the house of the Amoxtli, the pictographic codices that recorded economic, social and political life in this central Mexican Kingdom. This was also the case of other indigenous cultures with urban centers, such as the Maya. Some of the existing codices are preserved, mainly in European institutions, since few Amoxtli works escaped the burning and destruction of the Spanish missionaries in their quest to convert locals to the Catholic Church. The most famous existing codex is the Borgia. It originally included five parts (4) that are now scattered in different European libraries and museums. Libraries in the sense of the western world developed in Mexico after the Spanish Conquest. The first

Spanish settlers founded some of the earliest libraries in temples and seminaries, where collections had basically religious books. One of the first books brought to the American continent was a breviary *Libros de Horas* by Jerónimo de Aguilar, the interpreter of the leading conqueror Hernán Cortés. Cortés's party was shipwrecked but managed to save the book in 1511 (4). It is estimated that two decades later there were more books in Mexico because by 1534, the cathedral had officially a library and its own printing press. The first printing press was brought to Mexico from Seville by Jacobo Cromberg, along with the printer Juan Pablos, in 1539. It also became the first printing press in all of the Americas. An early newspaper was published that consisted of loose sheets with news of New Spain and was distributed at the beginning of the 16th century by Sigüenza y Góngora. The first book to be printed, on the other hand, a religious book, was the *Brief and more compendious Christian doctrine...* (Breve y más compendiosa doctrina Cristiana...) by Zumárraga that is now lost but is recorded in the *Acts of Indias* (Actas de Indias) in the General Archive of Indias in Seville, Spain. These two works made Mexico the first country to publish in the Americas (5).

The key political position of colonial Mexico, as the crown colony of New Spain, offered the opportunity to import recently edited books from Spain by transatlantic Spanish travelers. Mexico, for example, was one, if not the first, to receive a copy of *Don Quixote* by Miguel de Cervantes, the equivalent of Shakespeare in the Spanish-speaking world. Members of religious groups played an important role in creating libraries, such as Eguíara y Eguren, a religious scholar and author of the first national bibliography on the continent (1755). These groups founded libraries primarily in Mexico and also in colonial America. The colonial libraries were basically for Spaniards and not for Indians or *Mestizos* (inter-racial people with one Spanish and one Indian parent), who were deprived of education or any formal school training. This library/educational discrimination began to change after Mexico's independence (1810) movement (5) when public institutions were decreed to be for the entire population. Mexico was in turmoil during the first half of 19th century, with constants revolts and conflicts with European countries and the US, resulting in the US gaining more than half of Mexico's territory. Other than the creation of the National Library (1867) and the legal deposit (1812), this was a period of minor library development. Later, when the Republic was consolidated during the Porfirio Díaz regime (1876-1910), libraries were officially open to anyone, but illiteracy was high--only 10% of the population could read. This limited access to written culture continued up to the Mexican Revolution, 1910-1919. After this long internal conflict, libraries began to evolve, and had some initial success with the Vasconcelos public library program that started in 1921 (6), discussed in the public libraries' section of this essay. The decades from 1920 to 1960 were a formational period, with some additional basic library institutions being created, such as the first library school and the library association. The significant library development that occurred after 1970 is described in the following sections of the paper (See Appendix 1).

ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Mexico has, basically, four types of academic libraries: state university libraries, technological institution libraries, teacher's institutions libraries, and private university libraries. The first three groups, as may be expected, are financed by government, either federal or state, and seldom by municipalities (counties). The total number of universities varies according to the consulted source. The National Association of Universities and Higher Education Institutions, or ANUIES (Asociación Nacional de Universidades e Instituciones de Educación Superior) that includes mainly state universities, and some technological institutes and a few private ones, reports 127 public and 263 private higher education institutions (7). However, the total for all types of institutions, small and large, is 1,482 according to statistics from the National Institute of Statistics and Geography, or INEGI (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía) (8) (9).

State University Libraries

This first group includes the best academic libraries. They belong to the 45 state higher education institutions that are normally the largest in every state and in the Federal District, i.e., Mexico City (7). There is one state university per state, except in seven, where there are two higher education institutions, and Mexico City, which has several (7). All of them are autonomous: they can take their own academic and organizational decisions, unlike other higher education institutions in the other categories. State universities provide undergraduate education to 2,528,664, i.e., 36.9% (7) (8) of the national student population. Libraries in these institutions are affiliated under the National Council for Library Matters of Higher Education Institutions, or CONPAB (Consejo Nacional para Asuntos Bibliotecarios de Instituciones de Educación Superior) that includes, as full members, 41 members and eight guest academic libraries whose parent organizations cannot be fully defined as universities (10). The academic libraries of Mexico City, such as the Autonomous National University of Mexico, or UNAM (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México) and the Metropolitan University, or UAM (Universidad Metropolitana) are not included, apparently because of their overpoweringly large size and overwhelming influence. Most state universities have a library system that includes a main library, and one per faculty or cluster of faculties or research centers with a director general. This is reflected in the large number of CONPAB libraries, with 713 units. Few universities have fully centralized services. Those that do are newer, i.e., founded after the 1970's. Generally, CONPAB libraries have centralized acquisitions, collection development, and technical services. The larger academic libraries usually belong to the older and larger universities, such as UNAM, regarded as a special case because of its enormous size. (See figure 1) It is the oldest university in Mexico and one of the oldest in continental America with nearly one third of a million students, 299,723. Slightly more than half are undergraduate, 167,891; one third is high school, 107,482; and the rest are postgraduate students (11). The research output is strikingly higher than any other institution in the country, with 35% of the scientific output, as measured by the

number of refereed journal articles. This academic performance makes UNAM number 150 among the 200 best research universities, according to the British newspaper *The Times Higher Education Supplement* assessment of 2008 (12). UNAM's research activities are dependent on a good library and information service. Including special libraries, UNAM has 142 libraries, with over six million volumes and has the largest library budget for serials, monographs and electronic resources in the nation. This amount is probably the equivalent of 50% of the total national budget of academic libraries in Mexico. After the National University, the two other large universities are the Universidad de Guadalajara with 195,116 students and 162 libraries (13), and the Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León, with an enrollment of 126,000 students and 80 libraries (14), both located in the two other major cities. Their library systems are also well-funded and well-organized. The rest of the state universities have, in general, large library collections, and hold--like the metropolitan universities of the three major cities--important rare, special, and historical collections; they usually have more professional librarians than other type of libraries.



Figure 1. UNAM Central Library, Mexico City. By Adolfo Rodriguez

Besides their own institutional budgets, state university libraries are generally financed through the Integral Program for Institutional Support, or PIFI (Programa Integral de Fortalecimiento Institucional), in addition to their own institutional budgets (15). PIFI is managed by the General Directorate of Higher Education under the Ministry of Public Education, or SEP (Secretaría de Educación Pública), which uses the funds to set university policies and determine priorities for state-financed higher education. It provides funds on competitive bases to different academic functions, but it has a special fund for academic libraries. Since its inception under a different name in 1980, PIFI has played a decisive role in increasing library collections; acquiring electronic resources, computer equipment, and information technology; training personnel, and furnishing libraries. The challenge that libraries have with these funds is that there is an annual competition for their projects and the money may or may not be awarded, making funding

erratic. Librarians do not know if they can count on the funds for the following year. Some changes have been planned to make tri-annual allocations, but, so far, these have not been fully implemented. State University Libraries that have been able to attract the most funds, either from PIFI, or from their parent organizations, are UNAM (most successful), and those from the universities in the states of Colima, Jalisco, Ciudad Juárez, Veracruz, Quintana Roo and the Yucatán. In addition there are about 20 other State University library systems whose organization, funding and services are very good. The best accredited universities, included in the previous figures, are grouped in the Mexican Consortium of Universities, or CUMex (Consortio de Universidades Mexicanas), a body created by SEP, that includes 17 institutions. The library systems of CUMex members generally match the academic excellence of the universities in which they are found, and receive some special funding as a reward for their accreditation achievements. (See figure 2)



Figure 2. Universidad Veracruzana Library, Boca del Rio, Veracruz. By Ulises Buendía

Technological Institute Libraries

Technological institutes total 242, the first having been founded in 1949, plus the large National Polytechnic, or IPN (Instituto Politécnico Nacional) (16), located in Mexico City. IPN is to technological institutes as UNAM is to universities; it was the first and is the largest technological higher education organization in Mexico with 142,861 students. It has 72 libraries, including specialized ones that serve faculties and research centers in its different campuses. IPN library and information services are larger and better than those of any other technological institution in Mexico, but certainly of a smaller library size when compared against those of UNAM, its State University Library counterpart. Technological institutes, on the other hand, as their name implies, cater mainly to science and technology disciplines, basically engineering, and, to a lesser extent, to management subjects. Technological institutes, originally modeled on the IPN structure, but in an independent network, are run by a centralized directorate in Mexico City under the umbrella of the Ministry of Public Education that provides all the funding and generates library policies at the national level. The network includes engineering, marine, forestry

and agricultural institutes. Their libraries, or information centers, as they are called, have similar information services, including the same type of buildings across the country. Their library development is fairly good, but their budgets are low and their information technology lags behind that of the state university libraries.

There are, in addition, two types of technological universities: technological and polytechnic. Both are newcomers on the Mexican education scene. The first technological universities were founded in 1991 (17). Each of them receives joint funding from the state where it is located and from the federal government. Degrees are of the two-year college level, called “Técnico Superior Universitario.” The current number 65 centrally coordinated from their headquarters in Mexico City. Their total enrollment was 66,660 students nation-wide in 2006 (18), and several had fewer than a thousand learners. The academic structure is a hybrid because they aim to provide, at least by name, technological training with university-based education to support the productive and service sectors. In most states they are located in cities with no traditional universities--only 30% are in state capitals. The polytechnic universities, on the other hand, are an even newer development within the national education system. They were created to complement the technological universities, so that college students could pursue higher education following two years of college. To date, they number 22 and their funding is awarded in similar proportion by federal and state governments. Libraries at these universities are in the process of basic development with small spaces, usually a classroom-type accommodation, limited budgets and few professional staff. However, there are some exceptions, such as the polytechnic university libraries of Santa Catarina in Nuevo León and in Aguascalientes, with excellent facilities.

Teachers’ Institution Libraries

There are 457 teacher’s Institutions, usually called *Normales* (19). In addition, pedagogical and education studies are offered at state and private universities, but their library resources are included under the corresponding type of institution. There are four types-- the oldest date from the 1800’s. The first one was founded in 1823, and a handful more was created in the following decades, but the rest was founded in the 20th century. They are in most state capital cities and tend to be well-established. The second type or generation of pedagogical *normales* is from the previous century, when several were founded outside the state capitals, and even in the rural areas. The third type is the higher education *Normales*, whose studies are equivalent to undergraduate degrees. The fourth group is comprised of a fairly new network of 76 state pedagogical universities (Universidades Pedagógicas) with 206 sub-sites in major urban centers. The universities were started in 1978 when the National Pedagogical University, or UPN (Universidad Pedagógica Nacional) the primary leading institution, was created in Mexico City. Library services at the generally older teachers training institutions range from good to fairly good, while second-generation *normales* and pedagogical university libraries have poorer development, with smaller collections and less organization. The state UPN’s libraries are normally housed in classroom-like facilities with basic

information services, except the one in Mexico City that has good library premises and good services (20). The Pedagogical University sub-sites do not have libraries as such, except for some minor book collections. Teacher's Institution Libraries do not, in general, subscribe to electronic information sources, nor have access to information technology, except for computer and Internet access. In addition, there are more pedagogical and education studies at state and private universities, but they are included under their corresponding type of institutions.

Private University Libraries

Private university libraries vary dramatically according to the size of their parent institutions. According to the Ministry of Public Education, there are 667 institutions of this type. There are a handful of large private universities, over one hundred medium-sized, private universities; and over 500 small ones (21). The large private institutions are, in general, excellent. Their libraries are well-funded and provide excellent information services. An example is the Technological Institute of Higher Education Studies in Monterrey, or ITESM (Instituto Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey). ITESM is the largest private university with a national network of 33 campuses, each with a library. The largest are in Monterrey, Mexico City, and Guadalajara. Other large private universities with excellent libraries include Anahuac with 10 campuses, University of Monterrey (Universidad de Monterrey), Ibero-American University (Universidad Iberoamericana) with 5 campuses outside the national capital, plus other universities with outstanding library services, such as University of the Americas (Universidad de las Americas, Puebla), Valle de México, Technological Autonomous Institute of Mexico (Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México), and Panamerican, among others. The private institutions in the second tier are mid-sized. They are normally affiliated with the Federation of Private Mexican Institutions of Higher Education, or FIMPES (Federación de Instituciones Mexicanas Particulares de Educación Superior) (22), a national association that includes 114 institutions. That is about 17% of the private universities, according to the FIMPES website. The rest of the private institutions range from the common one-school centered program to the more than two-faculty larger programs. These smaller and newer private universities struggle to have and maintain library services. Their collections and services tend to be minimal and the institutions seldom hire a librarian for their libraries. The Ministry of Public Education regulates their creation and their awarding of university degrees but fails to regulate minimum library standards. The focus of the small institutions, as it is also true for the majority of private universities, is teaching. The faculty members at the small institutions seldom do research, so libraries are not a priority.

In total, academic institutions comprise 1,482 libraries, out of the more than 2,000 estimated learning centers of all types. State university and large private universities provide the largest library budgets, the fastest growing information collections and offer the most innovative provision of services. They are also the main customers of international vendors, the leaders in acquisition of technological equipment, and the libraries with the best Internet infrastructure among all types of academic libraries.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

After the Mexican Revolution of 1910-1919, Jose Vasconcelos, the first minister of public education (1921-1924), created a nationwide public library program. His dream was to take books to every town in Mexico, and his administration created around 2,500 libraries with small holdings that included classic works of literature and technical books (23). Following his service as minister of public education, he became the first director of the central public library, Biblioteca Mexico, in Mexico City. Many of Vasconcelos' public libraries unfortunately disappeared, in part due to the limited education system and the high illiteracy rate in the country. Five decades later, public libraries entered their second golden period, from the late 1970's up to the present. A strong well-financed federal government strategy to organize public libraries began in 1978, under Guadalupe Carrión, as public libraries' director. In addition to a national plan to develop a library system, the first five years focused on reorganizing libraries at a national level, including a study conducted to assess public libraries, and developing indicators and parameters for building, equipping and creating library collections, as well as completion of a national plan to develop a library system. Additionally, a major achievement was the training of about 500 public library staff members, with a well organized and intensive full time three-month library program offered in three regional centers in the country: Durango, Mérida and Querétaro. (See Figure 3).



Figure 3. Municipal Public Library, Tlaltetela, Veracruz. By Edna Zamora

In 1983, based on the seminal planning work of the previous five years, the National Program of Public Libraries was officially announced by the current President and the Minister of Public Education in turn, who appointed Ana María

Magaloni as director general. Under the auspices of this program, a strong national public network was created in the next five years (24). The department became the General Directorate of Public Libraries, or DGB (Dirección General de Bibliotecas), currently managed by the National Council for Culture and the Arts, or CONACULTA (Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes) of the Ministry of Public Education. The Directorate finances and manages 7,211 public libraries with 36.5 million books. The library system is the largest in Latin America, even larger than that of Brazil, whose population is double that of Mexico. The network has a central public catalog for all holdings of public libraries in the country, using the Dewey Decimal System and the Anglo American Cataloging Rules. The library staff of the public library network includes 10,485 people, whose library training is, unfortunately rather limited. Only 43 have library technical training, 111 have undergraduate degrees, and only two have master's degrees in library science (5). However, the general directorate has had library professionals on its staff since its inception in 1978. Perhaps this fact has been crucial to achieving the current success of the public library network.

Public libraries are grouped into three types: state, regional and municipal libraries. Their size and services are closely related to their network status. There is a public library in every town with more than five thousand inhabitants. Libraries also vary in size and services from those in the urban centers, which are better equipped, to those in rural towns and villages, where Internet access is almost non-existent. (See Figure 4).



Figure 4. Municipal Public Library, Tlacotalpan, Veracruz. By Edna Zamora

Public libraries are set up by a joint agreement among the three-government tiers. The federal government central office, in Mexico City, is in charge of creating library policies, collection development, acquisitions and technical services. State governments pay for the construction or adaptation of buildings, and the

municipal/county authorities, in turn, hire staff and pay for staff salaries. The program has been successful, especially in those states where their governments invest more in the library network, such as is the case in Veracruz and Chiapas. All 31 states and the Federal District have a central public library that is generally large and well-equipped, with good information services. In most cases, these libraries are in charge of the state public library networks, house the state directors, and provide centralized technical services.

Providing Internet access in public libraries has been a major task for most governments at all levels. In 2002, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation donated 30 million dollars to Mexican public libraries. The funds were to equip 1, 500 public libraries with one to 10 computers, train personnel, and introduce the Internet. This grant was the second given outside the US, after Chile, by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The Mexican federal government matched the gift with 40 million dollars. Additionally, more libraries were equipped with computers and Internet access with more federal and state funds, and now 38% of the libraries have computers. Some states provide extra funds to promote Internet access, such as the State of Veracruz, with the recent launch of an ambitious program to provide computers to public libraries and to build regional central public libraries, whose constructions showcase modern architecture. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation gave their annual 2008 Access to Learning Award to Veracruz for its innovative efforts to connect people from rural and remote communities with the services provided by 20 all-terrain buses converted into mobile-classroom units. They provide information services, free access to computers, and satellite Internet. Veracruz also provides free access to some commercial information databases in their public libraries. The state of Chiapas does this as well, and offers the additional benefit of making the databases open to any remote user within its geographical limits.

The federal CONACULTA Directorate of Libraries is housed in the large, beautiful, 17th century historic premises of the Ciudadela, along with the Biblioteca Mexico main public library, as it was originally called, later renamed Biblioteca Vasconcelos. It hosts public library network services and a collection of 250,000 volumes and will soon have additional new premises. A new state-of-the-art building will soon re-open (it opened for a few months, then closed for further construction) at the former Buenavista railroad station in Mexico City (25). The building, more than 475 thousand square feet, has a striking modern architectural design, with glass, steel and concrete playing key roles to create a building that will either be adored or despised, depending on people's artistic perception. A special feature is a botanical garden that gives a natural touch to the building. The design was the result of an international contest with over 592 architects' proposals from all over the world (25). The library has an auditorium, meeting places, a bookstore, cafeteria, and plenty of room for stacks and services. It is certainly the largest public library in Mexico and in Latin America. User demand is expected to be high, because it is conveniently located next to the new suburban train station, designed to serve most citizens living North of Mexico City. The Universidad de Guadalajara in the western part of the country has also broken ground on a larger public state

library. Since 1861, the University has managed the state public library Juan Jose Arreola. It holds a rich collection of 400,000 historical books and documents. The current building in downtown Guadalajara dates from 1959. However, the collections have outgrown the facility and the new library (43,000 sq. meters / 462,848 sq. ft.) will have room for more collections and newer services. The library will be the central unit of a large grand cultural complex that will also include convention facilities. It is planned to open in 2010. (See Figure 5).



Figure 5. Municipal Public Library, Monterrey, Nuevo León

SCHOOL LIBRARIES

School library policies are generally managed by the Sub-Ministry of Basic Education (Subsecretaría de Educación Básica) (26) of the federal Ministry of Public Education, its 31 state counterparts, and the Federal District. Most, if not all pre-elementary, elementary, junior high, and high schools, have some sort of book collections, even those in remote rural schools. The books may be in a bookcase or in wooden or cardboard boxes, or whatever container is available in the less well-equipped institutions (25). The Ministry of Public Education has created different programs in the past to provide complementary reading materials to schools. Two of the latest are *The books of the corner* (Los Libros del Rincón), a program that provided between 150 to 300 titles of selected literary materials to every school over four years beginning in 1986 (27). This program was superseded by another one that started in 2002, as part of a general reading plan called *Towards a country of readers* (Hacia un país de lectores) that included the *Classroom library* (Biblioteca de aula) program. Its aim is to stock every kindergarten and elementary school classroom with books at the beginning of each school term. In the last five years, a staggering figure of over 200 million volumes

was given to libraries and classroom collections, making almost nine volumes available to each school child, for the 23 million pupils who attend school. The book stocks include about 50% literary works, and the rest of the books provide general information to support school teaching programs. The titles distributed varied from 218 provided to pre-elementary schools, (that received a total of 57 million volumes), to 514 titles provided to elementary schools, (that received 78 million volumes), and 488 titles given to junior high schools, who, in turn, (that got almost 30 million volumes). These figures also include 51 bilingual titles in Spanish and local indigenous languages.

The book stocks were selected with the participation of teacher focus groups from most states. The program also includes a library training program with a manual on how to organize library materials, how to create library activities and promote reading, plus a set of posters, flyers, and television and radio programs. The teaching staff who runs the program number more than 6,000, and include some who work in libraries (28). As a general comment, book budgets are seldom available for libraries or schools themselves. Material acquisition is centralized in SEP headquarters. Public libraries, on the other hand, support schools' information demand with their open role as community information centers, where buildings and services are more broadly and better structured. Public libraries, in general, tailor their information services to better serve students rather than the average citizen, defining themselves as places for those studying in the elementary education system.

Another library-related action is the federal government's free textbooks program for children that gives a set of books to schools, including those in private institutions, since 1958, although, in the beginning, it did not cover every school and the number of book titles was limited (29). The total number of volumes distributed in 2007 was a staggering 54,279,051 volumes (30). A subsidized and free textbook program also exists for high schools (Libros de Texto Gratuitos para Secundaria 149.480.757) (29). The aim is to help students have and/or acquire their required readings. These book programs complement library services, although, as some critics say, it limits information literacy, because kids do not have to search for additional information beyond the compulsory textbook readings. However this challenge is more due to the prevalent teacher-oriented pedagogical approach than to the free textbook programs. Teachers normally lack extensive reading habits themselves, which sometimes limit the potential academic impact of their classroom book collections and school libraries.

The reading programs in schools and libraries must overcome the limited reading habits of children, and, as stated, of teachers themselves, because basic education tends to be based on rote repetition, where the only source of information is usually the teacher. Teachers who fail to promote reading habits at the time when children learn to read and write waste part of the economic resources devoted to the school library sector. As a result, pupils finish school with limited or no information skills, posing a challenge at subsequent educational levels, where teachers or professors ought to be filling the information competencies gap. School information literacy

challenges are reflected in the reading habits of society if one takes as a reading indicator the low number of bookstores, that only total around 1,452 in the whole country (30).

SPECIAL LIBRARIES

Most of these libraries can be grouped into four clusters: 1) science and technology libraries, financed by the National Council of Science and Technology, or CONACYT (Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología); 2) research institute libraries, part of university research centers; 3) government libraries, mostly part of the ministries; and 4) special libraries that are part of private sector industries, service corporations, and/or museums, among other organizations. In the national directory of libraries published by CONACYT in 1976 special libraries were well-documented. Unfortunately this directory has not been updated, in part because these libraries lack an association or a central organization that could promote a directory. Current special libraries can be estimated at between 500 and 600, including academic specialized collections attached to universities. According to García (31), Mexico ranks second in the total number of special libraries, after Brazil in Latin America. According to Carrión (32), special libraries have had excellent development in recent decades. Their collections, funding and professional staff are among the best. However, libraries, in the traditional sense of holding large printed collections and having purpose built buildings, have been decreasing in the last decade to give room to special information services that rely heavily on electronic sources and require fewer staff.

CONACYT has played an important role in special libraries expansion. The Council was founded in 1970 to foster, among other roles, the national research system, with the corresponding goal of creating a national information network. With such a mandate, the 1970s were a decade of increased special libraries creation. CONACYT intensively promoted library training, extending the benefit to university libraries. A special program was set up to send graduate students to study library and information science abroad, especially in the United States. The program lasted five years, and achieved the goal of training around 60 MLS professionals (1974-1979). Those who accepted positions in libraries pioneered a period of organization of special and academic libraries, especially outside Mexico City, where professional librarians were in great demand. In conjunction with the graduate program, a library technical staff program operated from 1973 to 1979. The training, involving a two-semester full-time study scheme, was excellent because it included all the subjects required to organize and provide library services. Participants from every state were invited, with the aid of a student CONACYT grant, to attend the program, mainly hosted by the National School of Librarianship and Archives, with a summer version offered once in Ciudad Juárez and Puebla. About 200 library staff personnel participated in the program. A contribution of the trained staff was the implementation of the first basis for a library organization outside Mexico City, where there were virtually no professional

librarians, becoming the backbone of library development in those areas. The following sections include more information on special libraries by sub-type.

Science and Technology Libraries

This group of special libraries is closely related to the National Council of Science and Technology. The Council funds 26 basic science and science and technology research centers and their libraries, plus two social sciences institutions: El Colegio de México, and the Mexican unit of Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences, or FLACSO (Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales). This nation-wide science and technology library network subscribes jointly to electronic sources, and organizes an annual library meeting. The larger libraries are those of the Center for Scientific Research and Graduate Education of Ensenada, or CICESE (Centro de Información Científica y Educación Superior de Ensenada), the Research Center of Applied Chemistry, or CIQA (Centro de Investigación en Química Aplicada), and El Colegio de México, a social science think tank that has the largest bibliographic collection in Latin America. Some of these research centers have postgraduate programs focused on research training. Similar social sciences institutions focusing on local studies are replicated in some states. These institutions generally have good libraries not necessarily supported by CONACYT funding.

Research Institute Libraries

Research institute libraries that serve research communities/centers are also outstanding. UNAM, the national university, produces a great proportion of the national research output, an activity that relies on important specialized collections. Its special libraries number 52, of the total of 142 libraries (33). Their collections are in paper and in electronic format, and their library staff also number among the best. Additionally, most of the state universities also have special libraries, although fewer than UNAM. The better research institute libraries belong to the five larger universities from Guadalajara, Nuevo León, Puebla, Veracruz, and Universidad Metropolitana in Mexico City. As stated, the IPN, as discussed above, is the largest technological institute. It has 12 special libraries that support different areas of research. Another center with an excellent library is the Center of Advanced Studies and Research, or CINVESTAV, (Centro de Investigaciones y de Estudios Avanzados), a center that was formerly part of the National Polytechnic Institute. At a national level, it probably has the largest science and technology collection housed under one roof, and includes some branch libraries in the regional research centers. The Postgraduate College of Chapingo (Colegio de Posgraduados de Chapingo), a specialized agricultural institution that networks with related institutions from other states, has the largest library in its field in Mexico. Private universities do not normally have special libraries, except for ITESM in business information, because, as mentioned, they are mainly teaching institutions with no research or minimal research output.

Government Libraries

Government libraries are, as might be expected, part of ministries, larger government official organizations, and part of federal and state departments. Many of the libraries have leading collections in their fields, such as those in the Foreign Relations Ministry (Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores), and at the Treasury Ministry Library (Secretaría de Hacienda). The Mexican Congress Library, with legal deposit status, also has a good collection. Another is the National Institute of Anthropology and History, housing an outstanding collection, the largest in this field. Some of the government energy companies have research centers, normally with independent legal status, such as the Mexican Petroleum Institute, or IMP (Instituto Mexicano del Petróleo) that holds the major collection in the country on petroleum-related subjects, and the Institute of Electrical Research Institute (Instituto de Investigaciones Eléctricas) also an excellent information center with the best collection, resources and services in electricity, and secondarily in other energy subjects. A third library on atomic energy is the Institute of Nuclear Research (Instituto de Investigaciones Nucleares) (34). Government statistics on population (census), geography, and macro statistics are provided by the INEGI, originally founded in 1925. It recently received independent legal status from the government to ensure objectivity in its data gathering. It is in charge of the national census and with collecting most types of socio-economic data. INEGI has a network of 46 information centers, plus 560 deposit libraries. Health science libraries are well-developed, thanks to the Mexican Social Security Institute, or IMSS (Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social). The IMSS has the largest public health network, serving employees and workers from the private sector. It has some of the largest hospitals, clinics and health care facilities, and its 57 libraries are often the only sources of medical information in the smaller cities. The Institute subscribes on a nation-wide basis electronic sources, so that each center has similar access to information sources. The Ministry of Public Health has about 15 good libraries that serve the specialized research institutes, (mostly based in Mexico City), conducting medical science research in fields such as oncology, genomics, nutrition, and children's health, among other fields. The judiciary system also has special library units in the different states, in the so-called Culture House (Casa de Cultura), along with the Supreme Court library in the national capital.

Private Libraries

The private sector, i.e., industry, service corporations, and businesses, among others, has fewer special libraries. Data about these libraries is difficult to obtain, but it can be said that some, not all, of the large corporate companies have libraries at their headquarters. The Mexican economy is dependent on foreign corporations, mainly from the United States, and secondarily from European nations. Therefore, the branches located on Mexican soil seldom have information centers or libraries because these services are provided from the headquarters located outside Mexico. Additionally, the advent of electronic services has helped companies to reduce the number of private special libraries because it is now easier to transfer information across borders using seamless Internet and world wide web services. Those companies with libraries are mainly in the three largest cities, and, to a lesser extent, in the rest of the country. Some of the best examples

are the libraries of the capital's newspapers: *Reforma*, *Excélsior*, *El Financiero*, and *La Jornada*; those in consulting firms, such as Mackenzie; in large law firms and major banks, and in companies like Grupo Condumex, which has a rich collection of historic Mexican publications.

NATIONAL LIBRARY INSTITUTIONS

The national duty of preserving the country's intellectual and cultural heritage is divided among several institutions. The main ones include the National Library that was founded in 1867, although the first law that unsuccessfully attempted to create it dates back to 1846. The first legal deposit decree to help the National Library to collect publications is from 1812, with successive updates since then up to the most recent one in 1991 (35). The National Library was a government run institution up to 1929, when responsibility for it was turned over to the National University (UNAM) that manages and houses it in the main campus. The National Library also became part of the Institute of Bibliographic Research, or IIB (Instituto de Investigaciones Bibliográficas) in 1967. The IIB is divided into two departments, one for the National Library itself, devoted mainly to monographs, and the second for the National Serials Collection (Hemeroteca Nacional de México). The Institute has 26 researchers who are in charge of the national bibliography and other research programs. The two collections are housed in separate units within the same building. They were originally in a former Agustin temple in the historical center of Mexico City until 1979, when a new building was constructed to house them. The Library and the serials collection have the richest bibliographic jewels of the nation: incunabula from Mexico and Europe, unique Mexican monograph copies, and archives and manuscripts from Mexico's colonial period, i.e., 15th century, to publications of the 20th century. These rare and special collections are probably the most important in the former New Spain viceroy cities of Latin America. The National Library collection numbers over 2,286,292 books and documents, including music records, videos, plus the reserved collections. The Library has, as it may be expected, closed stacks, but the study rooms are open to researchers and to the general public. It also offers source cataloguing to editors and publishes the national bibliography *Mexican Bibliography* (Bibliografía Mexicana), and allows the public to search their online catalog, called Nautilo. The serials library has two collections: the oldest, including titles from 1722 to 1916, and the contemporary titles. In recent years it has been converting newspapers from several Mexican cities into digital format. The current digital collection has nine million images to date. This will be a major news source for researchers who live outside the national capital. Both institutions, unfortunately, lack the authority and resources that would be needed to guide acquisitions, technical and library service development for the rest of the libraries at the national level, as is the case in similar institutions in other countries. Their role is mainly to safeguard the national printed materials.

Other libraries use the term "National," such as the central library of the National Polytechnic Institute (Instituto Politécnico Nacional) that specializes in science and technology materials, as well as the library of the National Institute of Anthropology

(Instituto Nacional de Antropología). However the term does not really comply with their institutional roles, because they, again, lack a national library leadership or coordination role in their subjects of interest. The Library of the Mexican Congress (Biblioteca del Congreso, 1935) is also a legal deposit center. Its collection covers all subjects and includes rare books from 1511 to 1930, plus 66 manuscripts. In addition, Mexico also has similar organizations that preserve and collect movie reels at the Filmoteca (Films House), and government official archives at the General Archives of the Nation, described in the Archives section. Some Mexican states also have similar institutions.

VIRTUAL/DIGITAL LIBRARIES

Most, if not all, of the virtual libraries have been developed at universities. Only a few libraries include all four elements of the virtual library concept: electronic resources, digitization of materials, software infrastructure and virtual library services. Most state university libraries and private university libraries subscribe to electronic databases but not all have federated search capabilities. Digitization of collections, mainly historical materials or non-copyrighted materials, is conducted at perhaps 25 to 30 institutions, including universities and research centers. The principal collections are UNAM's nearly 40,000 digitized theses, Universidad de las Americas (Puebla)'s historical collections, Universidad Veracruzana's historical archives and institutional journals, and the rare archives being digitized at the Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez, among other collections. In addition, the National Library and the National Serials Collection are undertaking, as stated, the digital conversion of microfilmed national newspapers to digital formats. In terms of software, the first institution to acquire a federated search engine in Mexico and Latin America was the Universidad Veracruzana, in 2003. They also purchased virtual reference software (QuestionPoint) (36), again making it the first library in the Latin American region to do so. Currently about 20 institutions have a search engine and fewer than that offer virtual reference services. The Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) has worked on the development of an in-house meta search engine, called Hermes, that so far, is just for institutional use.

Repository management software, Personal Digital Libraries (PDLIB) has been developed by the Tecnológico de Monterrey, but its use seems to be losing ground with the increased adoption of Dspace, the program created by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Another repository management software that is also used, but to a lesser degree, is Greenstone, developed by the New Zealand Digital Library Project at the University of Waikato, using UNESCO funding. A related open access journal repository, the Network of Scientific Magazines from Latin America, the Caribbean, Spain and Portugal, or REDALyC (Red de Revistas Científicas de América Latina, el Caribe, España y Portugal), started in 2003, was created by the Autonomous University of the State of Mexico, UAEM (Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México). The system includes journals from Latin America, the Caribbean Region, Spain and Portugal. It currently hosts more than 550 titles in all social and scientific areas with electronic holdings of one hundred

thousand peer-reviewed articles in Spanish, Portuguese and English. According to REDALyC's official statistics, 70,000 articles are downloaded daily, a good indicator of success.

LIBRARY EDUCATION

Mexican library schools have graduated around 4,500 librarians: 4,300 with undergraduate degrees, 270 with Master's degrees and 15 with doctorates. This means that most professionals working in libraries do not hold a library degree. Those with library degrees work mainly at university and special libraries, because, as stated, school and public libraries seldom have professionals on their staff. There are 11 library and information science programs (See Appendix 2). The first school was founded as early as 1924, but it had its difficulties and closed. Later on, in 1945 was founded what is now the oldest running library School in Mexico City: the National School of Librarianship and Archives (Escuela Nacional de Biblioteconomía y Archivonomía) under the sponsorship of the Ministry of Public Education (37). The second oldest library school is at the National University (UNAM), also located in Mexico City (1956). These two were the only library schools until 1970, when new library schools were created in the succeeding years. Most institutions offer undergraduate programs, only three offer the master's degree, and just one, UNAM, offers a doctoral program (since 1998), the first one in Spanish-speaking Latin America. Among the programs, four offer distance education degrees, three undergraduate, and one offers a master's degree. Library schools and programs are basically located in the three major cities, except for four programs located in the rest of the country (See Appendix 2). Most schools include the name "library science", except for three that include the terms "documentation", "information science" and "knowledge management and information". Dissertations are required at some of the institutions. Several of the library schools lack a full-time faculty or have a minimum number of professors, except for UNAM, ENBA, SLP and Toluca that have more consolidated faculty. There are also library technical programs at the high school and college level in Mexico City. The newest at the college level, Técnico Superior Universitario, started in 2008 and is offered by the Universidad Veracruzana. Students in this program earn a library technical training certificate in two years. Continuing education is a common way to train professional staff. Courses are offered by library associations, the University Library Research Center, or CUIB (Centro Universitario de Investigaciones Bibliotecológicas) at UNAM, and some major libraries.

CUIB is the largest library research center in Latin America, founded in 1981, with a publishing output of 127 books, and the leading library journal in Mexico, as well as the best and largest library collection, and 25 full time researchers, most of them with a doctorate and recognized by the National System of Researchers of the National Council of Science and Technology. Universities offer in-house "diplomados," informal training programs for their staff, which cover basic library subjects and run for some months.

ACCREDITATION - CROSS-BORDER HIRING OF LIBRARIANS

Although there are few librarians in Mexico, there are a number of librarians who cross the border to work in US libraries. Their degrees are unfortunately not recognized by US libraries because they do not come from library schools with American Library Association accreditation. Librarians who come from the US and Mexicans who have graduated from library schools in America face the same challenge in Mexico. Their degrees are not fully recognized. Mexicans have the option of undergoing a long process to get government certification that includes complicated paper work from the Mexican Foreign Relations and the Public Education Ministry, and the National University's curriculum review. Most professionals avoid the process -- even those who work at academic institutions, where the recognition of foreign library degrees is important for tenure. Librarians who immigrate to the US normally have to complete a Master's degree in the library school field if they want to have the appropriate credentials required by the American library profession. This means that there is an international opportunity to create a library school accreditation agreement between Mexico, the US and Canada. It would certainly benefit Mexican library school graduates, who could work on either side of the border with an accredited degree. Obviously this task is not easy, because library school programs may need to be aligned and recognized as comparable, that is, they may need to be similar, at least in the basic subjects that are the essence of library schools and information science. The North American countries, Canada, the US and Mexico, could follow the pattern of the European Bologna process, which is unifying library school education programs across Europe. Another alternative would be to recognize the accreditation process used in each of the countries.

Accreditation in Mexico is fairly new. The official external evaluation body, the Inter-institutional Committees for the Evaluation of Higher Education, or CIEES (Comités Inter-Institucionales de Evaluación de la Educación Superior) was created in 1991, and the Council for the Accreditation of Higher Education, or COPAES (Consejo Nacional de Educación Superior) dates from 2001. COPAES relies on professional associations, i.e. guilds, or what we call "College of Professionals" to conduct the whole process. Institutions whose programs undergo the evaluation can receive more federal funding and other benefits from the Ministry of Public Education. Library schools and the Mexican Library Association have been slow in pushing for a full accreditation program beyond the evaluation review that they currently undergo. The body that could potentially play the role of accrediting agency for library schools is the National Librarians Guild or CNB (Colegio Nacional de Bibliotecarios), the professional librarian guild in the country. Unfortunately, it is a small organization, currently without the means to fully undertake this role, crucial to increasing the quality of library education in Mexico. There is an accredited library school, the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México. However, it received its certification from a social sciences organization; therefore it is not a library body. In conjunction with our library associations, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) provides the opportunity to create an accreditation system for the three countries, the US, Mexico and Canada, or at

least to establish some type of recognition for North American cross-border degrees.

THE US PATTERN

Library science and its practice in Mexico are based on US library principles. For example, university libraries in Mexico use the U.S. Library of Congress Classification system, while public libraries use the Dewey Decimal System, and all libraries that have a bibliographic organization use Anglo-American cataloguing rules. There are reasons for these facts: the first librarians to get training went to the US to get their degrees in the early 1920's, and into the seventies, when Mexico established an ambitious library program for academic librarians that launched library development. There were, as mentioned earlier (See Special Libraries section), several tens of scholarships being granted to students to go to the US to obtain a Master's degree in library science or information science. The main library schools that received these students were the University of Texas at Austin, and later the universities of Syracuse, Cleveland and Denver. The last major group, 23 people, to get a library master's degree at a US library school (University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee), was financed by the ITESM. In addition to these programs, the US has also granted scholarships to several students through the Fulbright program. An institution that additionally has played a key role in promoting library principles is the Benjamin Franklin Library, the official information center of the United States Embassy in Mexico City. Inaugurated in 1942, this was the first public library created by the American government outside the US, and of the few full-sized libraries to remain after recent government downsizing. Many professionals, mainly from Mexico City, had their first library experiences at this library, either as reference assistants or student assistants. Some later became professional librarians, by getting scholarships to obtain a degree in the United States. Between the 1960's and the 1970's, the Franklin Library was one of the best public libraries in Mexico City, and thus a model followed by other institutions in the capital of the country.

SERIALS

The text of this section is an extract from a paper devoted to serials by the author (38). The oldest circulating serials in Mexico date back to the 1800s, such as *Bulletin, Mexican Society of Geography and Statistics* (Boletín, Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística) (1839, ISSN 0188-1442), *Medical Newspaper of Mexico* (Gaceta Médica de México) (1864, ISSN 0016-3813), and *Yearbook of the National Astronomic Observatory* (Anuario del Observatorio Astronómico Nacional) (1881). However, the first serials appeared in Mexico in the 1700's, such as *Literary newspaper of Mexico* (Diario Literario de México) (1766), *Mercury Flyer* (Mercurio Volante, the first medical magazine in America) (1772-73), and *Varied issues on Science and Arts* (Asuntos Varios sobre Ciencias y Artes) (1772-73). These serials were the first in the American continent (39). The International

Standard Serial Number Agency (ISSN) reports 3,431 Mexican periodicals (40), although it is estimated that there are at least twice as many, due to the fact that many periodicals lack ISSN registration (41). Journals are, in general, published by state universities and by national research centers financed by the government, (usually the federal government). Subject coverage of journals is wide, covering most disciplines and subjects. However the strength is in the social sciences and the humanities, where 60% of the production is published (41). There is also a significant number of cultural periodicals, like those from other countries. Mexican serials are the best sources for updated academic and scientific information because they publish the best output of researchers and writers. Electronic journals are emerging in good numbers; with some now only published in electronic versions. Library serials number about 10 depending on how one classifies them; several titles have appeared only for short time spans (See Appendix 3).

In terms of comics and magazines, Mexico has a significant number of these, with large audiences. Some of the most popular titles can reach nearly a million copies per week (42). These periodicals play an important role in fostering reading habits among those who have only a few years of schooling, and even among those who did not have the chance to attend school. Comics are also a huge export to the US, where Hispanic communities also love to read cowboy and soap opera style stories. As it may be assumed, these serials are the business of private companies who publish numerous titles covering a variety of topics.

Newspapers, on the other hand, have a market usually divided into four tiers according to the geographical locations where the papers are published, a fact that correlates with the importance of the newspapers. First are the dailies from Mexico City. They dominate the market, because of their broader coverage and a good nation-wide distribution system, in addition to being the news agencies for smaller papers. Second in importance are the dailies from the two other major cities, Guadalajara and Monterrey. Both locations have succeeded in distributing their papers to the rest of the major cities. Third are the papers from the medium sized cities, usually state capitals. They tend to have a distribution limited to the state borders and normally have good publishing facilities. Finally, the fourth tier of newspapers consists of the local community dailies. These periodicals are simple and modest, covering political subjects and local topics relevant to their communities. Many of them struggle to survive with limited resources. Some of the local papers are part of national editing companies, relying on their editorials for in-depth articles. Editing of newspapers from the first three tiers has improved over time. Currently, titles from the largest cities are edited electronically and posted on the web, some publishing full articles and others putting out only summaries of their main news in their Internet versions.

BOOK PUBLISHING

As stated in the first section of the paper, Mexico was the first country in America to have a printing press in the 16th century. This means that Mexico probably has

the greatest number of American incunabula that is found at the national library and at some university libraries. Nowadays publishing is an important economic activity, and it is one of the most important in the Latin American region. The other countries that also have a good production are Colombia and Argentina that compete in production. The Mexican book trade is mainly based in Mexico City, where most of the big American and European publishing houses have subsidiaries, plus national companies. After the Spanish civil war several editors migrated to Mexico and contributed to strengthen this industry. Mexican book production covers most subjects but the main output is devoted to basic education, where most of the volumes are printed, according to the statistics of the National Chamber of the Mexican Publishing Industry, CANIEM (Cámara Nacional de la Industria Editorial Mexicana). The country produced 18,682 titles in 2006 according to CANIEM. The production is devoted mainly to basic education (22%), literature (14%), science and technology (12%), and the rest to other subjects, including children books that stand out with 10% of the total publishing output. In terms of copies, basic education gets almost half of the total output with 47.3%, and children books get 20% of all the copies printed. The rest of the production is scattered in the several subjects, such as literature, languages, and philosophy and psychology. Most of the printing production is, on the other hand, represented by reprintings of titles with 58.6%, new titles by 32.4%, and reeditions with 9%. This amounts 109 million copies (30). The main costumer for publishers is the Mexican government with the free text book program, and the acquisition of books for school libraries that was described in the section in earlier sections of this paper.

INFORMATION VENDORS

The proximity to the US has made Mexico an attractive place for some American and other information vendors to set up offices. For some vendors, like EBSCO and OCLC, after Brazil, Mexico is the second largest library and information market. Companies that have established regional offices, in addition to the two corporations just mentioned, are Swets, Aleph and Cengage. Other major international companies have local offices to cover the national market. The local information industry has steadily evolved in the last two decades. Business information is a thriving sector, growing faster than information services to the academic community. Information aggregators tend to focus on business information. Some were originally Mexican start-up companies that were later acquired by major overseas companies, such as Infolatina, that was bought by an American information aggregator. Some important information companies in the country are Mercamétrica (directories), IBCON (directories), El Financiero (financial information), and Reforma (syndicated news). Information services are also provided by chambers of commerce. Several of these organizations offer information services to companies and the government. Computer integrated library systems, on the other hand, probably represent the larger segment in Spanish-speaking Latin America. The most popular one continues to be the Automated System for the Integration of Libraries of the University of Colima, or

SIABUC (Sistema Integral Automatizado de Bibliotecas de la Universidad de Colima) created by the University of Colima, which has given away 1,500 copies of the software in Latin America, according to a report provided by the institution. This software is nearly free; it requires just a minimum fee of fewer than 2,000 U.S. Dollars for the original acquisition. Additionally, there are at least four companies that have created integral library systems for sale and distribution in Mexico and throughout the region, such as Altair, and Janium. (43), (44).

LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS

Library associations date back to 1924, when the first one was founded. The first library conferences were organized in 1927 and 1928. This early association experienced difficulties, not becoming a formal association until 1954, then gaining legal recognition two years later, when it adopted the official name of the Mexican Association of Librarians, or AMBAC (Asociación Mexicana de Bibliotecarios, Acción Civil). AMBAC is recognized as the national library association and is headquartered in Mexico City. Since 1956, it has runs the largest library conference, an event that became annual in 1977. The conference includes a major vendor exhibition, and its proceedings have been an important source of library literature for many years. It also publishes a quarterly newsletter *News from AMBAC* (Noticiero de AMBAC) that is the oldest continuously published library serial in the country (See Appendix 3). The association has subject sections, with current ones in arts, reading, national information policies, public libraries, school libraries, and information literacy. AMBAC formerly had geographical sections in some of the Mexican states, but they became independent associations when a tax reform affected the fiscal management of AMBAC. The states with associations are Baja California, Chihuahua, Jalisco, Michoacán, and Yucatán. In recent years AMBAC has been trying to create geographical sections again, but Nuevo León is the only one in existence so far, although three more are in the process of formation. AMBAC does provide some support to the local library associations who continue to view it as their parent organization. The split with state associations has meant that AMBAC membership has not grown and still numbers about 500.

The second most important professional association, although small, is the CNB founded in 1979 in Mexico City. This body only includes librarians who have obtained a university degree. The CNB has, by law, the right to advice government and to conduct evaluation and accreditation processes in library schools because guilds are officially bodies that represent their professional discipline. In addition to CNB, there is the National Council of Library Affairs of Higher Education Institutions, or CONPAB-IES (Consejo Nacional para Asuntos Bibliotecarios de Instituciones de Educación Superior), described in the University Libraries section. Some other associations have existed previously, like the Association of Libraries and Institutions of Higher Education and Research, or ABIESI (Asociación de Bibliotecas e Instituciones de Educación Superior y de Investigación), created in 1967, and disbanded in the 1990's. This association's main contribution was the publication of the interlibrary loan code and a set of library standards that are still

quoted in the literature. Other short-lived associations, in existence for fewer than two decades have been in the fields of agriculture: the National Association of Agricultural Librarians ANBAGRO (Asociación Nacional de Bibliotecarios Agrícolas), government: Association of Librarians of Governmental Institutions of Mexico, or ABIGMAC (Asociación de Bibliotecarios de Instituciones Gubernamentales de México), and in the field of biomedicine: the Association of Librarians in Biomedicine, or BIBAC (Asociación de Bibliotecarios en Biomedicina), among other bodies. The life and activity of state associations is linked to the size of the library profession in the Mexican provinces, where, unlike in Mexico City, professional librarians are just a handful. The arrival of new library schools in some of the states may foster a local library association development. Generally, library associations and some leading library systems host annual library conferences on general and specialized subjects. These programs are probably the second, if not the premiere, conference offerings in Latin America (See Appendix 4).

INTERNATIONAL LIBRARY COOPERATION

With the most visible international activities, academic libraries lead in collaboration. The most extensive cooperation activity is with US organizations, and to a lesser degree with Latin American and European countries. Mexican border universities often have strong collaborative ties with their counterparts on the other side of the border. For example, the Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez has borrowing agreements with New Mexico State University and with El Paso Community College, and the CICESE in Ensenada, Baja California, has cooperative agreements with the La Jolla Scripps Research Institute in San Diego. In addition to the academic institutions, the Mexican Library Association has strong links with its international counterparts from Latin American, under the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), as well as the principal US library associations that include the American Library Association (ALA), the Special Libraries Association (SLA), and REFORMA (who have opened paths for cooperation), as well as some state organizations. Cooperation takes the form of visiting speakers attending annual conferences, facilitation of workshops, staff exchanges, and materials exchange. Robert Seal produced an excellent paper documenting US-Mexico collaboration (45). The best communication venue for US-Mexico cooperation is the FORO, Transborder Library Forum, where some Canadians have also participated, the meeting that began as an annual event in 1991 became, after a decade, a bi-annual conference (46). It alternates between Mexico and the US. The FORO was originally organized as a reaction to the NAFTA agreement to strengthen the relationships among border libraries. One of the FORO's byproducts is the multilateral interlibrary loan project between US universities and central Mexican institutions, with the Franklin Library playing a key role facilitating the shipment of bibliographic materials by diplomatic pouch.

ARCHIVES

Like libraries, archives began, in the western sense, after the Spanish conquest of Mexico. Archives were formed during the colonial era in monasteries and churches where registration births, deaths and property transactions took place. Civic life was directed, in many ways, by the Catholic Church until the 19th century. The best source of Mexico's colonial history is the Archives of Indies in Seville, Spain, where the most important records of colonial life are stored. The government had split from the Catholic Church in 1855, creating the national birth registry, when Benito Juárez, then president and a great political reformer, opened the registry office in Veracruz, and the first birth certificate was issued to his daughter in 1859. Several archives of churches and religious groups passed to other government organizations or to especially created archival institutions. The main archive is the General Archives of the Nation, or AGN (Archivos Generales de la Nación), located at the former Lecumberri Prison in Mexico City, where cells now hold different sections of the file collection. The AGN is the leading organization in archives policies and filing standards, with its own organization scheme followed by several archives in the country. Most states have an archive system or structure that coordinates those in the municipalities. Among them are the property offices in each city. They make copies of their documentation to be sent to the state capital's general archives. A similar pattern is followed by birth registries. The new law on information transparency is improving, and will continue to improve, archives, because all government ministries, departments and official bodies, including public universities, have to include organized archives and make them available to the public via the web. The body in charge of implementing policies and supervising the legal implementations is the Federal Institute of Information Access, IFAI.

There are several historical archives located in the large urban centers, mainly those with a colonial past. A survey conducted in 2007 by the Association to Support the Development of Archives and Libraries, or ADABI (Asociación de Apoyo al Desarrollo de Archivos y Bibliotecas en México, AC) identified 142 archives, but this number only corresponds to those that have printed inventory catalogues. The survey classified them in the following categories: 75 parochial archives, mainly from the Catholic Church; 53 state and county archives (included historical and administrative archives); and 14 historical archives covering colonial, independence and revolution materials (47). The twelve most important private archives are in Campeche, Mexico City, Oaxaca, Puebla, Tamaulipas and Yucatán. One diocesan archive was reported in the State of Guerrero, in the Southwestern part of the country. Presumably, the archives reported in this study are well-managed, if it is assumed that those who answered have organized archives. However, the total number of historical archives throughout the country may be three times this figure. Another study attempting to identify how modern archives were in terms of their organization and storage estimated that 67% of them have a budget that is lower than \$25,000 dollars and 10% have budgets of fewer than \$100,000 dollars annually. Additional findings were that 85% of the archives have internal regulations and security measures, and 29% have temperature and humidity control systems, and 85% have computers. Most of the archives, 85%, are open to the public. The results of the study are, in general,

positive (48). There are three archive associations, included the one mentioned above, ADABI. This association organizes conferences and meetings and is probably the largest. Two other are the Mexican Association of Libraries and Institutions with Old Collections, AMBIFA, (Asociación Mexicana de Bibliotecas e Instituciones de Fondos Antiguos), and the Mexican Association of Private Archives and Libraries, AMABPAC (Asociación Mexicana de Archivos y Bibliotecas Privados, AC). All of these associations have websites with membership information. Only two academic institutions offer undergraduate archives studies, they are the National School of Librarianship and Archival Science, or ENBA (Escuela Nacional de Biblioteconomía y Archivonomía) and the Universidad de San Luis Potosí. The first is the older one and has 862 graduates, while the second has just started awarding baccalaureate degrees in archives or records management.

MUSEUMS

Like other institutions discussed in this essay, the organization, collections and economic resources of the 1,137 Mexican museums are closely related to the size of the city where they are located. Mexico City ranks number one, with the largest number of museums and with most of the best collections, followed by Guadalajara and Monterrey. The rest of the state capitals have an average of four museums, plus those in the rest of each state outside these capitals. Museums have increased substantially since the beginning of the last century (1907) when there were 38, according to the Mexican Association of Museum Professionals, or AMProm (Asociación Mexicana de Profesionales de Museos) (49). It is also estimated that 60% of the museums are devoted to anthropology and history, 25% to fine arts, and 10% to science and technology, plus other subjects, including children's museums, accounting for about 1%. Along with the classical 20th century concept of museums, there are also zoos, aquariums, and natural reserves that are not discussed in this paper.

Museums are created and managed by different bodies, including the federal, state, and municipal governments, communities, the private sector, and companies or individuals. The National Institute of Anthropology and History, or INAH (Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia) (50), is probably the largest organization that manages museums, 244. It groups museums into 6 main categories:

- a. National museums have country-wide collections and are located in Mexico City. The largest and the best INAH museum is the Anthropology museum that holds some of the most valuable collections of Mexican indigenous cultures.
- b. Regional museums cover more than one state and are located in different parts of the country. A good example is the Museum of Cultures (Museo de las Culturas) in Oaxaca.
- c. Local museums that are in historical buildings or that hold different collections, such as the Customs House of Ciudad Juárez (Ex-Aduana).

- d. Community center museums, such as the outstanding Convent of Tepoztlan (Ex-Convento de Tepoztlán).
- e. Community museums hold collections, usually of archeological artifacts, valued by communities.
- f. In situ museums whose collections are in archeological sites, where artifacts and information are derived from the same grounds. The most outstanding ones are Chichen-Itza, the Teotihuacan Pyramids, and Uxmal.

The states with the largest numbers of museums, outside Mexico City, include Jalisco with 54 (where Guadalajara is the capital), Veracruz with 18, and Chiapas has the largest number of community museums, 35.

The second organization managing museums is the CONACULTA. This federal governmental body manages 132 museums and galleries. The best are in the Palace of Fine Arts (Palacio de Bellas Artes). Another federal organization that takes care of museums and art galleries is the National Institute of Fine Arts, or INBA (Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes) (52). It has some excellent museums like National Museum of San Carlos; the Museum of Modern Art and the Tamayo Collection. Private museums run by individuals, companies and foundations are generally small, however, there are some fine examples of good sized collections and notable buildings, such as the bank BANAMEX, and the Franz Mayer Museum.

Some of the best museums in Mexico City for the general tourist, regardless of the body that manages them, are the mentioned National Museum of Anthropology, Modern Art, Tamayo, National Museum of Fine Arts (Museo Nacional de Arte), and the Papalote (a children's inter-active science museum). Smaller thriving museums of interest in the capital include the Frida Kahlo, the Dolores Olmedo Museum that houses Riveras' works and the largest collection of Kahlo's paintings, and the private Franz Mayer Museum for the decorative arts. Guadalajara, the second largest city, also offers some good museums of interest to the outside visitor such as the Regional Museum of Guadalajara, and the Popular Arts Museum (Museo de Artes Populares). Guadalajara has undertaken a project to build a Guggenheim museum. A group of private investors paid for a two million dollar feasibility study and the state government financed a call for an architectural building design contest. The planned premises are in a beautiful canyon rim in the outskirts of the city. This initiative may have behind it the idea of competing with Monterrey, located in Northern Mexico, where a cultural corridor has been created in the heart of the city flanked by first class museums, making it the second cultural capital in the country. Its most outstanding museums and galleries are the Contemporary Art Museum, or MARCO (Museo de Arte Contemporáneo), the Museum of Mexican History (Museo de Historia Mexicana) and the Glass Museum (Museo del Vidrio), each housing excellent collections. The rest of the state capitals have fewer collections of smaller size and less financial support. Although there are some that are outstanding, such as the described archeological museums of Oaxaca and Veracruz. (See figure 6)



Figure 6. Museum of Anthropology, Xalapa, Veracruz. By Héctor Nava

Additionally, Mexican archeological sites number in the thousands, and they are certainly living museums. If the sites are lumped together with historical places, the number is 110,442. The challenges of cataloguing them are great: 60% are catalogued or are in process, and 173 of them are open to the public, with nearly ten million visitors per year (50). The top archeological sites are Mayan--Tulum, and Palenque in addition to those listed--plus the Zapotecan Monte Alban and Mitla in Oaxaca, the Totonaca site Tajin in Veracruz, and the Aztecan Templo Mayor in Mexico City, and finally, the Olmec culture, the earliest known Mexican civilization, that dates back to 3,000 years ago with the Tres Zapotes site.

A great feature of Mexican art is the muralist plastic movement that took place after the Mexican Revolution (1921), a time when Mexican identity was redefined. It was basically a nationalistic movement that focused on the indigenous people and on criticism of Spanish and foreign influences. The best-known include David Alfaro Siqueiros, Diego Rivera, José Clemente Orozco, and Juan O'Gorman, among others. Locations with murals in Mexico City by these muralists and those of their followers include the National Palace (Palacio Nacional), the Palace of Fine Arts (Palacio de Bellas Artes), the Central Library at UNAM, and the San Ildelfonso Museum (Museo de San Ildelfonso), among others. There are also murals in the rest of states.

The best, normally the larger museums, have libraries, such as the National Museum of Art, or MUNAL (Museo Nacional de Arte), Interactive Museum of Economy, or MIDE (Museo Interactivo de Economía), the Museum of Light (Museo de la Luz), and the National Museum of Anthropology (Museo Nacional de Antropología) in Mexico City, and the Museum of Mexican History (Museo de Historia Mexicana) in Monterrey. It is estimated that about 50 museums have libraries. The most outstanding is the large National Library of Anthropology and History attached to the museum of the same name, mentioned in the Special Libraries section of this essay. (53).

Professionals working in museums have degrees in other fields, because there are very few options to get a university degree in this specific subject. The only public university that has a related program for museum professionals at Baccalaureate, Master and Doctorate is UNAM. The studies are in history of art. Additionally, one private university offers a program in the same field and two more on cultural promotion. None of these programs are specifically designed for museum management, but do give the basic background in art. Another option for museum staff is training through courses and workshops organized by the museums themselves and universities and are mainly held in Mexico City.

CONCLUSIONS

This overview of libraries, museums and archives is just a snapshot because it is difficult to portray the country that is large and there are great differences between big and small cities, as well as between urban and rural regions. In conclusion, Mexico has some of the best libraries in Latin America; however, their development is uneven. In terms of growth and quality of library services, state university libraries and large private higher education institutions are in the leaders. However, at the bottom are several smaller public and private academic institutions that lag behind. Special libraries are also among the best libraries with good budgets, collections, and professional staff, but several companies fail to provide information services as part of their organizational structure. The public library system is the largest in Latin America and its growth and improvement has been indeed, a major achievement in the last 25 years. Its collection development is centralized in Mexico City but buildings and staff are the responsibility of the states and the municipalities. School libraries on the other hand, are few, considering the large number of primary and secondary education schools in Mexico, but the government has invested heavily in creating classroom collections, distributing more than two hundred million volumes in the last seven years. Because the number of librarians is inadequate, the country would benefit from more library school graduates. The national information institutions, such as the national library, and the national serials collection have good bibliographic treasures of colonial and contemporary Mexico, but their leading role is limited. There are many museums in Mexico, most of them are devoted to anthropology due to the great interest in pre-Columbian history. The largest number of museums is concentrated in Mexico City and the two other major cities of Guadalajara and Monterrey, and there are some good museums in smaller cities. Archives are probably more evenly distributed throughout the country. Their development varies from very well organized and preserved ones, to small not well-preserved or well-organized archives with scarce resources.

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Appendix 1 Library Chronology

Year	Event
1400	Amoxcalli-Aztec codex (Amoxltli) libraries
1511	First book to arrive in Mexico from Europe
1539	First printing press
1555	First book to be printed in Mexico- Alonso de Molina <i>Vocabulario en lengua castellana y mexicana</i>
1788	Opening of the first public library – Turriana Library
1790	First copyright law
1790	Foundation of the first Museum of Natural History
1790	Foundation of the National Archives – Archivo General de la Nación (Original name: Archivo General de la Nueva España)
1825	Foundation of the Mexican National Museum
1867	First decree to create the National Library – Biblioteca Nacional
1882	National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics (Originally as Dirección, Geografía y Estadística, DGE) – Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática
1910	Opening of the National Museum of Archeology, History and Ethnography (Formerly known as the Mexican National Museum)
1921	First Department of Public Libraries, Ministry of Public Education – Dirección de Bibliotecas Populares
1922	First public library building – Biblioteca Pública Cervantes
1924/1954	Mexican Association of Librarians – Asociación Mexicana de Bibliotecarios, AC
1939	Foundation of the National Institute of Anthropology and History
1940	The National Museum of Archeology, History and Ethnography changed its name to National Museum of Anthropology
1945	National School of Library and Archive Sciences – Escuela Nacional de Biblioteconomía y Archivonomía
1956	Opening of the UNAM Central Library Building- Biblioteca Central UNAM
1957	First national library conference - Jornadas Mexicanas de Biblioteconomía, organized annually since 1974
1970	Foundation of the National Council of Science and Technology (An early funding body for special and university libraries)- Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología
1970's	Labour unions take power at academic libraries, and at universities in general
1972	First library science master's degree- UNAM
1975	First academic library building of a technological institute – IT Saltillo
1978	First Mexican integral (mainframe) library system – LIBRUNAM, UNAM
1983	First release of the library software SIABUC (Most popular free library software) - Universidad de Colima
1984	Foundation of the National Council for Academic Libraries –CONPAB-IES, Consejo Nacional de Asuntos Bibliotecarios de Instituciones de Educación Superior
1988	First librarian to get a Ph.D. (From the US) – Jaime Pontigo
1999	UNAM Ph.D. program started – UNAM
2003	Mexican Information Literacy Standards are approved for higher education

Appendix 2 Library Science Schools

School	Address	Phone / Fax
El Colegio de México, AC. Maestría en Bibliotecología	Camino al Ajusco 20, Pedregal de Santa Teresa, Del. Magdalena Contreras, 10740 México, DF www.colmex.mx/	(55)5449-9909 5449-3000 X 2113 Fax 5645-4584
ENBA - Escuela Nacional de Biblioteconomía y Archivonomía Licenciatura en Biblioteconomía	Calz. Ticomán 645, Col Santa María Ticomán, Del. Gustavo A. Madero, 07330 México, DF www.enba.sep.gob.mx/	(55)5329-7176 5329-7181
ITESM - Instituto Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey Maestría en Ciencias de la Información y Administración del conocimiento	Eugenio Garza Sada 2501, Col. Tecnológico, Edif. CEDES, Semisótano 1 64849 Monterrey, NL www.ruv.itesm.mx/portal/promocion/oe/m/mik/	01800 112-2832
UACH - Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua Licenciatura en Ciencias de la Información	Av. Universidad S/N, Cd. Universitaria, Apartado Postal 744, 31240 Chihuahua, Chih. www.ffyluach.mx	(614)413-3449 Fax 414-4932
UANL - Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León Lic. en Bibliotecología y Ciencias de la Información	Av. Alfonso Reyes s/n, Ciudad Universitaria, 66450 San Nicolás de los Garza, NL www.dsi.uanl.mx	(81)8376-0620 8376-0780 Fax 8352-5690
UASLP - Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí Licenciatura en Bibliotecología e Información	Álvaro Obregón 64, Col. Centro, 78000 San Luis Potosí, SLP www.uaslp.mx	(444)818-2522 818-9025 Fax 818-2521
UNACH - Universidad Autónoma de Chiapas Licenciatura en Bibliotecología	Calle Canarios y Av. Central S/N, Col. Buenos Aires, Delegación Terán, San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chis. www.unach.mx	(961)615-1101
UNAM - Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México Licenciatura en Bibliotecología y Estudios de la Información Maestría y doctorado en Bibliotecología y Estudios de la Información	Circuito Interior, Ciudad Universitaria, Delegación Coyoacán 04510 México, DF www.unam.mx www.filos.unam.mx/POSGRADO/bibli o1.htm	College degree (55)5622-1881 Master degree & Doctorate (55)5616 -6823
UAG - Universidad Autónoma de Guadalajara Lic. en Ciencias de la Información	Av. Patria 1201, Lomas del Valle, 3ª. Sección, 45110 Zapopan, Jal. www.uag.mx	(33)3648-8767
UAEM - Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México Licenciatura en Ciencias de la información Documental	Av. Universidad Esq. Paseo Tollocan s/n , Cerro de Coatepec, Ciudad Universitaria, 50110 Toluca, Estado de México www.uaemex.mx/	(722)213-1407 Fax 213-1533

Appendix 3 Library Science Serials

Title	Editor	Frequency	Address
Biblioteca Universitaria: Boletín Informativo de la Dirección General de Bibliotecas ISSN 0187-750X	Dirección General de Bibliotecas - Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM)	Semestral	Biblioteca Central Circuito Interior, Ciudad Universitaria, Coyoacán, 04510. México, DF informa@panoramx.dgbiblio.unam.mx http://www.dgbiblio.unam.mx/
Bibliotecas y Archivos ISSN 0185-0083	Escuela Nacional de Biblioteconomía y Archivonomía	Every 4 months	Calz. Ticomán 645, Col. Santa María Ticomán, Gustavo A. Madero, 07330. México, DF biblarch@enba.sep.gob.mx http://www.enba.sep.gob.mx/
Boletín Informativo de ASAR	ASAR, A. C,	Every 4 months	Calle 66, No. 3204, 31410. Chihuahua, Chih. Tel. (614) 411-3672
Hemera – Revista de Ciencias Bibliotecológicas y de la Información ISSN 1665-5834	Hemera	Semestral	Apartado Postal 23-098 BO. San Juan 16001. México, D.F. Tel. (55) 1509-0554/044 55 2695-8002 http://hemera.galeon.com/
Infobila (Database)	Centro Universitario de Investigaciones Bibliotecológicas, UNAM		Torre II de Humanidades, pisos 12 y 13, Ciudad Universitaria, Coyoacán, 04100. México, DF http://www.cuib.unam.mx
Información, Producción, Comunicación y Servicios ISSN 0188-5847	Infoconsultores, S. C.	Quarterly	Michoacán 30, Desp. 6, Col. Hipódromo, Cuauhtémoc, 06100. México, DF infoconsult@spin.com.mx
Investigación Bibliotecológica: archivonomía, bibliotecología e información ISSN 0187-358X	Centro Universitario de Investigaciones Bibliotecológicas, UNAM	Semestral	Torre II de Humanidades, pisos 12 y 13 Ciudad Universitaria, Coyoacán, 04100. México, DF http://www.cuib.unam.mx
LIBER: Revista de Bibliotecología. ISSN 0188-5847	AMBAC, A. C.	Quarterly	Ángel Urraza 817-A, Colonia del Valle, Benito Juárez 03100. México, DF liber@servidor.unam.mx http://www.ambac.org.mx
Memorias-Jornadas Mexicanas de biblioteconomía	AMBAC, A. C.	Quarterly	Ángel Urraza 817-A, Colonia del Valle, Juárez 03100. México, DF Tel. y fax: 1152 (5) 5575-3396 http://www.ambac.org.mx
Noticiero de la AMBAC ISSN 0001-186X	AMBAC, A. C.	Quarterly	Ángel Urraza 817-A, Colonia del Valle, Benito Juárez, 03100. México, DF Tel. y fax: 1152 (5) 5575-33-96 ambac@solar.sar.net http://www.ambac.org.mx

Appendix 4

Library Science Conferences

Conference Name	Place	Date	Organizing Institution
Amigos www.udla.mx/amigos	Puebla, Pue.	February (Biannual)	Dirección de Bibliotecas, Universidad de las Américas
Coloquio Internacional de Bibliotecarios www.fil.com.mx/cultura/prog04/rub_prof.htm	Guadalajara, Jal.	November/ December (First and last week)	Coordinación de Bibliotecas, Universidad de Guadalajara
Coloquio sobre Administración y Liderazgo en Información www.uv.mx/bvirtual/coloquio/	Veracruz, Ver.	September (Third week)	Unidad de Servicios Bibliotecarios y de Información, Universidad Veracruzana
Conferencia Internacional sobre Bibliotecas Universitarias www.dgb.unam.mx/conf2004.html	Mexico, DF	October (First two weeks)	Dirección General de Bibliotecas, UNAM
CUIB Coloquio Internacional de Investigación Bibliotecológica y de Información cuib.unam.mx/eventos.htm	Mexico, DF	September	Centro Universitario de Investigaciones Bibliotecológicas, UNAM
Congreso Nacional Bibliotecas Públicas http://dgb.conaculta.gob.mx	Site varies	August- September	Dirección General de Bibliotecas, CONACULTA
Encuentro sobre Desarrollo de Habilidades Informativas www.uacj.mx/bibliotecas/	Juarez, Chih.	October (Second week)	Dirección General de información y Acreditación, Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez
Enline@2000 enlinea.mty.itesm.mx/	Monterrey, NL	October	Instituto Tecnológico de Monterrey, Campus Eugenio Garza Sada
Foro Transfronterizo de Bibliotecas www.uach.mx/foro/es/	USA/Mexico Site varies	March	Organizing institution varies
Interf@ces www.ucol.mx/interfaces/	Colima, Col.	November	Universidad de Colima
Jornadas Mexicanas de Biblioteconomía www.ambac.org.mx/	Site varies	May	Asociación Mexicana de Bibliotecarios, A.C.
Foro Social de Información, Documentación y Bibliotecas http://www.fsidyb2006.inforosocial.org/	Site varies	September (Biannual)	Círculo de Estudios sobre Bibliotecología Política y Social (México) y el Grupo de Estudios Sociales en Bibliotecología y Documentación (Argentina)
Reunión Anual CONPAB www.conpab.uaslp.mx/default1.htm	Site varies	Site varies	Consejo Nacional para Asuntos Bibliotecarios de las Instituciones de Educación Superior
Reunión Biblioteca de Ciencia y Tecnología IPN	Mexico, DF	August	Instituto Politécnico Nacional
Reunión de Bibliotecarios de la Península de Yucatán www.uady.mx/	Merida, Yuc.	October	Dirección de Bibliotecas, Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán