

Western Europe

Jacqueline Sanson*

The Experience of the Bibliothèque nationale de France

<https://doi.org/10.1515/bfp-2024-0049>

Abstract: The article is based on the experiences of the author, who worked for 42 years in various positions at the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF), most recently as Director-General. The transformational changes at the library are described: the new building, the process of modernisation, the opening to data processing, the redesign of the historic buildings for new focal points of work, and the changes in user attitudes.

Keywords: BnF new building; BnF digital; BnF renovation

Die Erfahrungen der Französischen Nationalbibliothek (BNF)

Zusammenfassung: Der Beitrag beruht auf den Erfahrungen der Autorin, die 42 Jahre in verschiedenen Positionen an der Französischen Nationalbibliothek gearbeitet hat, zuletzt als Generaldirektorin. Die Veränderungen der Bibliothek werden dargestellt, das neue Gebäude, der Prozess der Modernisierung, die Öffnung zur Datenverarbeitung, die Umgestaltung der historischen Gebäude für neue Schwerpunkte der Arbeit, aber auch die Veränderungen der Einstellungen der Benutzer.

Schlüsselwörter: BNF-Neubau; BNF digital; BNF-Renovierung

In 2024, the Bibliothèque nationale de France celebrates its 30th anniversary. The BnF, born out of the merger of the Bibliothèque nationale (BN) and the Établissement public constructeur de la Bibliothèque de France (EPBF), was created in January 1994.¹ A revolution in the history of the Royal Imperial and National Library!

The librarians of my generation (who started their posts in the early 1970s) could never have imagined such huge changes. At the BN in 1972, we were acutely aware of

the lack of resources and automation talks occasionally occurred, but nothing concrete came of it. The BN functioned as a research library, overrun by an increase of researchers and especially students, whose numbers exploded in the late 1960s, due to the lack of university libraries. When you start your career, you are far from having a broad vision of the profession, and you modestly endeavour to do your best with the tasks assigned. You learn the job (training courses at the time were few!) and when you work, as I did, in a specialised department, your priority is to become familiar with the collections, so that you can be able to study them and provide readers with the best possible information. This apprenticeship is fascinating and can last for years.

The 1970s and 1980s were a period of great tension between growing public demand and conservation needs. At the end of the decade, the NL launched two conservation plans, focusing on printed works and prints. The next decade presented a different picture following the election of François Mitterrand as President of the French Republic in May 1981, bringing a more favourable outlook for libraries.

The BN, previously attached to the Ministry of Higher Education, was transferred to the Ministry of Culture² when Jack Lang³ was appointed. However, the changes within the BN were not immediate, despite the launching of an IT grand plan in 1981–82, including the creation of its own bibliographic database. The automation of the legal deposit service was completed at the beginning of 1988. The legal deposit services (books and periodicals) then operated on screen, while the BN Opale database was finally accessible to readers from 22 February 1988. The first computer workstations appeared in the catalogue room. Readers were getting accustomed to searching for references for newly-acquired works on screen, during printed catalogues and multiple drawers of index cards. This small ‘revolution’ came at a time when the BN was going through a crisis caused by a change of chief executive (administrateur général). In

1 Decree of 3 January 1994.

2 5 June 1981.

*Corresponding author: Jacqueline Sanson,
jacqueline.sanson@icloud.com

3 Ministers of Culture: Jack Lang 1981–1986 and 1988–1993, Philippe Léotard 1986–1988, Jacques Toubon 1993–1995, Philippe Douste-Blazy 1995–1997, Catherine Trautmann 1997–2000.

October 1987, the historian Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie took over from André Miquel, who resigned abruptly after denouncing in an article published in *Le Monde* the lack of resources and the conclusions expressed by Francis Beck, a senior civil servant, in his report on the BN. Commissioned by the Minister for Culture, François Léotard in early 1987, the report highlighted institutional weaknesses and advocated refocusing on printed works. Paradoxically, this extremely critical report had a positive effect on the entire institution, which felt wrongly criticised and embarked on a process of reflection regarding its own future, encouraged by the new general administrator. This reflection led to the "BN bis" project, presented by François Léotard before the re-election of François Mitterrand and the change of government. Against this backdrop, François Mitterrand, just re-elected as President of the French Republic, made his earth-shattering announcement.

1 The 1988–1993 "Project" and the Last Years of the BN

My career trajectory intersected with that of the library. After leaving the Department of Prints and Photography to head the photographic service, the new Chief Librarian wanted me to lead the Department of Printed Books after the incumbent's retirement. When I started my post on 24 November 1988, despite receiving the Joint Committee's approval in June that year, I was aware that the Department of Printed Books, one of the founding departments of the library, would face a turbulent future. This helped me to cope with this new situation right from the outset.

On 14 July 1988, the French President announced the "construction of one of the largest and most modern libraries in the world". At the time, the Bibliothèque Nationale (its administrator had not been informed of the announcement) did not understand whether the project primarily concerned it or not. The report commissioned by Prime Minister Michel Rocard from Patrice Cahart, Director of La Monnaie, and Michel Melot, Director of the Bibliothèque Publique d'Information, cleared up any ambiguity. Indeed, it stands as a future national library. Their report, submitted on 30 November, proposed a "large, freely accessible, 2 000-seat room equipped with 500 000 volumes and a 1 600-seat room for researchers". The report authors proposed the transfer of part of the collections of the Department of Printed Books and the expansion of the documentary policy, with a strong emphasis on audiovisuals and new technologies. While the choice of the site for the building, in the Tolbiac district of Paris, was unanimously accepted, the

separation of the collections (from 1945 onwards) gave rise to much controversy until, on 21 August 1989, the Minister of Culture announced that all printed and audiovisual collections would be transferred to the new site. Following an international competition, the winning design by a young 36-year-old architect, Dominique Perrault was unveiled: the chosen building consisted of a base with a hollowed-out central section laid out as a vast garden; in the four corners were to be towers of storage and offices housing 15 million books and 5 000 reading spaces.

The Etablissement Public de la Bibliothèque de France was created by decree on 13 October 1989 and placed under the supervision of Emile Biasini, the Minister responsible for major works. The journalist Dominique Jamet was appointed Chairperson, assisted by a Managing Director, Serge Goldberg, and a researcher delegate, Jean Gattegno. The new institution was responsible for the construction and fitting out of buildings and for proposing an organisational and operational plan, as well as being authorised to acquire works. This represented a departure from the usual model for major works, as seen at the Grand Louvre, where the Louvre's scientific staff remained at the heart of the operation.

In addition, the Bibliothèque de France set up a small team and launched several "librarianship" projects. Working groups were quickly established on various themes: documentary policy, cataloguing, national union catalogue, public reception, operational plan, digitisation policy, heritage policy, conservation, reserves, sound documentation, etc. The BN teams were consistently involved. Responsibility for the groups was entrusted to recognised professionals, two of whom were BN librarians for cataloguing and conservation. At the BN, other projects were underway: retrospective conversion, cataloguing, acquisitions, conservation and soon, preparations for the move would begin. Aware of the stakes involved, the BN was seizing the opportunity and putting all its energy into bringing these major projects to a successful conclusion, for which it was receiving considerable additional resources.

While the architecture was the main target of the project's opponents, public reaction was particularly important. The President of the Republic decided to refocus the project: "This library is built for two equally interesting and very distinct audiences, the researchers and all the readers who will come to this library to find information, documentation and culture". While the EPBF teams had exclusive responsibility for designing the future National Library, the BN continued to fulfil its existing tasks (welcoming the public, increasing legal deposit, conducting conservation actions). The years 1988–1993 were characterised by particularly intense activity. In addition to the projects linked to the EPBF initiative, the BN embarked on reforms,

tightened up its organisation and established, under the authority of a managing director, four major departments: administrative, research (cataloguing services), and technical (conservation services) and development, which coordinated the work of ten departments (printed matter, periodicals, prints, manuscripts, and so on).

The number of visitors to the BN continued to rise, as if, on the eve of a major change, *we had to make the most of it* (to take advantage of the situation). The Printed Books Department by itself welcomed 175 000 readers in 1993 and 1994 and received 47 000 books in 1994 (compared with 40 000 in 1989). As far as the opening of the library was concerned, the change became visible quite quickly. The BN set up some fine exhibitions: *Le patrimoine libéré*, celebrating the bicentenary of the Revolution in 1989; *En français dans le texte* in 1990; and *Quand la peinture était dans les livres* in 1993. The quadrilatère Richelieu was opened to the public for the first time, on the 6th edition of the "Journées du patrimoine" in September 1989, followed by the "Fureur de Lire", the next month allowing the public to admire the two large rooms and their imposing decor. A few weeks later, the reading room for printed books, a 19th-century architectural masterpiece, served as the setting for Bernard Pivot's "television dictation". Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie put his reputation to good use for the institution. For the teams at the BN, the period of the Beck Report and its share of criticism was fading. By the early 1990s, the BN had regained its dynamism and pride.

2 The Merger, the BnF, the Openings 1993–1999

The year 1993 marked a major turning point. The Bibliothèque de France drew up a document setting out the broad outlines of the project and the spatial organisation of the future library, which was to undergo few changes. The Right's victory in the legislative elections in March 1993 led to a new "cohabitation". The new Minister of Culture, Jacques Toubon, who was also Mayor of the XIIIth arrondissement, where the future library was to be located, appointed Philippe Bélaval (Conseil d'État) to a twofold mission, one the Bibliothèque de France programme and the other on the future of the Richelieu site. His report was submitted to the Minister on 30 June 1993, confirming certain options, in particular the two separate levels, and advocating the unity of the library. Jacques Toubon approved this unity, announced it on 21 July and entrusted Philippe Bélaval with a new mission to prepare the merger of the teams, the status, and the organisation of the new entity.

The Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BnF) was officially created in January 1994. Its remit was to collect, preserve, and enrich the national heritage in its care in all fields of knowledge, in particular the heritage of the French language or relating to French civilisation, and to ensure access to the public. The Minister of Culture chose Jean Favier, the former Director-General of the Archives of France, as the first President of the BnF. Philippe Bélaval, who efficiently prepared the merger, became General Director, and built his team⁴ from the BN, EPBF, and externally.

The year 1994 saw a quantum leap in construction. The towers rose rapidly. The building took shape: the esplanade was covered in Ipe wood, trees were planted in the garden, and the squirrel-red carpet chosen by the President of the Republic combined harmoniously with the concrete, wood, and metal mesh. The delivery of the building to the BnF and its inauguration by the President of the Republic on 30 March 1995, followed by its opening to the public, constituted the first stage.

The general opinion was that the merger of the teams from both establishments took place in a calm atmosphere. The project mobilised staff to a significant extent. The research projects continued, as did the acquisitions (90 000 volumes and 7 000 subscriptions per year) and digitisation (PLAO, the computer-aided workstation had been abandoned). But IT was lagging. Even before the merger, an audit had denounced the building as a "gigantic gas factory". The public institution relaunched the project on a new basis, simplifying the automation system and staggering the operations. The Call for Tenders was launched in December 1993, but was declared unsuccessful, forcing BnF to resort to a negotiated contract, which was approved by the financial controller after a long delay. In July 1995, the new Minister, Philippe Douste-Blazy, acknowledged the delay and announced that the library would be opened to the public in two stages: the upper garden by the end of 1996, and the ground floor in October 1998.

BnF was developing its cooperation policies by creating a network of partner libraries (pôles associés) with funds to purchase material in specific fields to complement its collections. This cooperative policy would bear fruit: the number of partner libraries has grown steadily over the years. With the focus on the opening of the *haut-de-jardin*, priority is given to open access acquisitions. At the time of the library opening, the *haut-de-jardin* provided readers aged 18 and over (reduced to 16 at the end of 1997) with 1 600 reading spaces, a collection of newspapers and magazines, supplemented by microforms, CD-ROMs, audiovisual

⁴ Alix Chevallier, Daniel Renoult, Jacqueline Sanson, Roland Schaer, Christophe Vallet.

and multimedia material, as well as a collection of digitised images and texts. A new feature was the large amount of audiovisual material on offer, with a reading room devoted exclusively to it. The automated catalogue could be consulted using CD-ROMs in each room, equipped with a single Internet access point. This was just the starting point: the collection was only waiting to expand and for computer access to develop. Although the opening exhibition, *Tous les savoirs du monde* ("All the World's Knowledge"), a true manifesto of the library's encyclopaedic approach, was remarkably successful, the number of visitors to the exhibition rooms was lower than expected (2 000 readers instead of 4 000) due to access issues.

In January 1997, Jean-Pierre Angrémy, a member of the Académie française, succeeded Jean Favier, who had reached retirement. Now that the *haut-de-jardin* had been opened, most of the teams were focused on the research library, which everyone knew would be more challenging to open. Acquisitions had to continue, the information system development, essential for the functioning of the research library, had to be accelerated, the *Gallica* digital library had to be launched (October 1997), retrospective conversion had to be completed, and the relocation operations had to be started. At the same time, the BnF embarked on a review of its organisational structure, streamlining it into three departments (Collections, Services and Networks, Administration and Personnel), and four delegations, one of which was responsible for International Affairs. The years 1997 and 1998 were devoted to preparing for the Opening, with various tests of all kinds and weeks of dry runs. On D-Day, 9 October 1998, the inauguration by the Prime Minister, Lionel Jospin, was marred by a strike by some of the staff, reinforced by angry archaeologists.

As soon as it opened, the library had to close due to a series of malfunctions and a strike widely supported by staff. The mobilisation of teams heavily invested in the "project" for the two successive openings undoubtedly concealed a different reality. Not all the teams perceived the "project" in the same way. The massive influx of staff to the site from Richelieu, many of whom had arrived to start their first post a month before the opening, did not give everyone enough time to settle in. The change was brutal, between the old NL at Richelieu – where some had worked for a long time – and the new building.

Management was heavily criticised, with many managers having a difficult time of it. There was a need to rework the organisation, procedures, and staff relations. The Minister for Culture, Catherine Trautmann, appointed an Inspector-General of Libraries, who summarised the proposals made during the industrial action. The BnF immediately took on board some of these proposals, in particular

those relating to information for staff, who experienced a feeling of being far removed from everything: an overhaul of the in-house newsletter, the development of an information intranet, etc. Internal communication now played an important role. In autumn 1999, the BnF launched a strategic approach through the concerted development of an institutional project. There were also improvements in the communication chain. Gradually, technical problems were resolving, and the research library was serving the public more efficiently. It took more than two years to get back to normal. It was an unavoidable running-in period. During this period, in May 1999, the BN Opale Plus Library Catalogue was launched on the web, and in July 1999, the retrospective conversion project was completed. Readers now had online access to the main BnF Catalogue, a growing digital collection and, in 2001, the ability to reserve seats and materials in advance. Readers were finally realising the benefits of the Grande Bibliothèque, the many advantages of which they had been promised.

3 2000–2020: Cruising Speed and the Development of the Remote Library

From the 2000s onwards, after Jean-Pierre Angrémy completed his term in March 2002, the Presidency of the BnF was successively entrusted to Jean-Noël Jeanneney from 2002 to 2007 and to Bruno Racine from 2007 to 2016. Laurence Engel, the first woman to head the BnF and currently President, succeeded Bruno Racine in April 2016.

With the initial running-in period after opening seemingly over, the BnF was intensively developing new projects. The 2000s marked the explosion of digital technology. The BnF involved its teams in the digital adventure, which took many forms. After its launch in 1997, the *Gallica* digital library (2 500 works and 10 000 images) continued to expand. It had grown to 35 000 books and 45 000 images in 2000 and, a few years later, in 2008, to 350 000 documents (250 000 books and 100 000 images).

Google's stated ambition to create a digital library of 10 million works through partnerships with all the world's major libraries would, paradoxically, have a positive effect. Jean-Noël Jeanneney protested Google's imperialist intentions and called for a European response in the form of a European digital library. With the support of the public authorities, the BnF was able to embark on a so-called "mass" digitisation programme for books, supported by the press, leading to the creation of the *Europeana* portal. Over a ten-

year period, thanks to additional resources provided by the Centre national du livre, the digitisation programme expanded from 6 000 volumes to 100 000 volumes per year. This unprecedented effort also benefitted other French libraries. *Gallica* was becoming a collective library by incorporating the collections of partner libraries. Alongside the mass digitisation of books, magazines and newspapers, Bruno Racine was developing the digitisation of special collections. The range of the BnF's heritage collections was spectacular: maps, prints, manuscripts, photographs, medals, etc. In 2010, the total reached 1 312 718 items and, in 2014, more than 3 000 000 items.

After a first prototype was presented at the Paris Fair Book in March 2007, with collections from three national libraries (France, Hungary, and Portugal), the *Europeana* project was officially launched by the European Commission in November 2008. Many research libraries joined the *Europeana* project, which gave access to more than 55 million multilingual documents in 2020. This was a considerable step forward, *Europeana* would not have existed without the opening of Europe in 1989 and the following years.

Digital goes beyond the digital library, important though that is. The BnF was gradually moving entirely into the digital mode. Faced with the prospect of an increasing number of digital documents, the BnF was equipping itself with a system for preserving its new data (born digital, digital products, etc.). Initial work on developing a digital preservation and archiving system began in 2005. In 2006, the DAVDSI law (copyright and related rights in the information society) was passed, instituting legal deposit for the French Internet. Robot would collect websites once or twice a year, and soon much more often, even daily for news websites. Consultation of the Web's legal deposit became possible in the reading room (April 2008), remote access to paid for electronic resources became possible (May 2009) and the BnF moved to displaying its data on the Internet by creating data.fr (2011). Internally, reflecting services to the public, everything was moving towards digital, including the switch to digital for all reproduction workshops, the creation of an extranet to facilitate publishers with legal deposit and soon investment in social networks.

The power achieved by the BnF, thanks to its many programmes, often conducted in partnership with private partners (BnF-Partenariats) has produced figures that would have been unimaginable a decade ago. The number of remote connections from all over the world puts the drop in onsite visits into perspective: 3 000 onsite readers and almost 60 000 remote readers in 2020.

We should also focus on the digital revolution, which has left a profound and lasting impact on the library,

without forgetting to mention its more traditional missions, which remain at the heart of its activity, such as enriching its collections. While a large part of the staff participates in digital development (including cataloguing services) the enrichment policy continues. In addition to its allocated resources, the BnF engages in patronage operations and, following the example of museums, is appealing to public generosity. There have been some magnificent additions to the collection during this period: alongside the *Livre d'Heures de Jeanne de France*, which was the subject of the first public appeal by the BnF in 2012, we can also mention the following authors' manuscripts: Chateaubriand's *Mémoires d'Outre-tombe* (2000), Céline's *Le Voyage au bout de la nuit* (2001), Verlaine's *Sagesse* (2008), Casanova's *Histoire de ma vie* (2010), and Julien Gracq's bequest (2008) as well as the archives of intellectual figures: Claude Lévi-Strauss (2007), Guy Debord (2011) and Michel Foucault (2012). The use of exhibitions and digital technology help to highlight masterpieces of recently acquired written heritage, such as Casanova or Debord, and quickly bring them to the public's attention.

4 Richelieu: A Long and Patient Project 2006–2022

The decision taken in August 1989 to transfer the entire printed collections (books and periodicals) raised questions about the very future of the Richelieu site. The prospect of seeing so much space freed up in the heart of the capital did not fail to arouse envy. It was quickly decided that the Richelieu site should be devoted to the history of the arts, an area where France had long been lagging the scientific community. As early as 1990, the idea emerged of housing the collections of Jacques Doucet's art and archaeology library and allocating the Galerie Colbert building on the other side of the rue Vivienne, which the BN had to vacate, to an art history institute. After the departure of Richelieu's printed works, what place would the specialised departments of the BNF – maps and plans, prints, manuscripts, coins, and medals – occupy within the site? Their collections extended beyond art history. Studies were commissioned from academics and submitted in autumn 1992. One focused on the National Institute of the Arts recommending the merger of the Institute and the National Library of the Arts into a single institution, another was on the National Library of the Arts, proposing two libraries, one at Richelieu and the other at Tolbiac, with shared services under the name "réunion des bibliothèques nationales", which would be chaired alternately by the president of each institution. The

following year, there was a change of government. A new report (Bélaval) recommended merging the EPBF and the BN into a single institution, as mentioned above. The BnF definitively confirmed its unity and that of its collections. The fate of the specialised departments was now sealed: they would be strengthened by the arrival of the performing arts department, which would leave the Arsenal, and by the Bibliothèque d'art and the arrival of the Ecole des chartes from the Sorbonne.

As you may have noticed, 1994 was a momentous year in the history of the BN, which became the BnF, but that was just the beginning. It was then necessary to divide the historic site between three institutions. An initial inter-ministerial arbitration in March 1998 allocated the large workroom (Labrouste) to the INHA Library, and the Oval Room to the BnF. However, the BnF complained of a lack of storage space. In 2002, Minister Jean-Jacques Aillagon reopened the debate on the distribution of storage space and even the allocation of the two large rooms. The BnF was unable to present a convincing proposal for a new room allocation, but it did win the argument on surface areas and regained 3 500 m², essential for displaying its collections.

In 2004, the adopted scenario for the works comprised two phases: the site was divided in two along its longitudinal axis. The first phase covered the area along rue de Richelieu, while the second focused on the area along rue Vivienne. Despite repeated requests from President Jean-Noël Jeanneney, the launch of the studies and works was delayed. The Ministry finally gave permission two years later, on 13 November 2006. In July 2007, the Bruno Gaudin agency was chosen to propose an architectural project that met the BnF's requirements, while adding new ideas, particularly for welcoming the public and highlighting heritage areas. For instance, he imagined a route enabling the public to discover the historical areas, the reading rooms and even the stacks.

Replacing the monumental main staircase with a more compact, aerial spiral staircase would extend the main hall all the way to rue Vivienne and link the two large reading rooms. Now that the project has been approved by all the partners, the studies were getting underway even if financing problems persisted. Work finally got underway in 2009. Preparatory work began. Solutions were found so that we could continue serving readers, for example, manuscripts and the performing arts in the Galerie Mazarine. As with any historic building renovation project, the project inevitably gave rise to debate. After an in-depth visit and two meetings, the Commission nationale des monuments historiques approved Bruno Gaudin's project. Despite this favourable opinion, the dispute over the staircase continued, and it was not until two successive ministers had given a favourable

opinion after their visits, in 2012 and December 2013, that the project was definitively approved.

Major renovation projects on old buildings have their share of setbacks. The chantier de Richelieu was no exception. The discovery of traces of asbestos, followed by problems with lead, led to protective measures being taken and the work delayed. The BnF reviewed the layout of its spaces, reintegrating into the site the music department, which occupied a building on the opposite side of the rue de Richelieu. This would bring together all the specialist departments on the same site: performing arts, maps and plans, prints and photography, manuscripts, coins and medals, and music.

The first area was to be delivered in 2016 and opened to the public in January 2017. The second phase of the works would run from 2017 to 2022. In February 2016, the BnF updated its research and cultural project, which emphasised the dual identity of the future site, as both a library and a museum: the three libraries, the Oval Room, which would be freely accessible to the public, the museum areas designed as a vast whole, including the Mazarine Gallery, which would showcase major works from all the departments, and the former cabinet des médailles, the Salon Louis XV, etc.

The renovation process on the Richelieu site was particularly long and difficult, as we have seen, but we can be pleased that the Ministry of Culture supported the renovation of the site right to the end. The full re-opening of the site in September 2022, following an exemplary renovation, has been an extraordinary success and continues to be so.

5 What Does the Future Hold?

As a librarian from 1972 to 2014, I was lucky enough to take part in the successive adventures of the Bibliothèque nationale, to be involved in the preparation of the inventory and the transfer of the collections, which was exceptional in terms of scale, the planning of a new building and the renovation of a heritage site, the merger of two institutions, the organisation of the BnF, the public opening, the advent of digital technology and the development of patronage. I enjoyed leading teams from different backgrounds, those who threw themselves wholeheartedly into projects and those who dreaded any change. Our generation has been confronted with changes in method, scale, and mentality, as well as technological advances. I have experienced this, and I see it as an advantage. I also enjoyed meeting the heads of foreign libraries involved in similar projects, in particular those from the British Library.

There are reasons to be satisfied with these fine collective achievements, but also reasons for concern. While the starting point for these changes was a cruel lack of storage space and places for readers, we have ended up with the paradoxical situation of the declining use of reading rooms. At the BnF, as in other libraries, the issue of visitor numbers is one of concern. The physical library has been overtaken by the virtual library. The research library, which forms the very heart of the library, its justification through its heritage collections (by legal deposit, purchase, donation) is becoming just a part of it. What does the future hold? The gap between the physical and the virtual will undoubtedly widen further. The research library is now virtually online, or so today's readers imagine. And because everything is moving so fast, it is hard to convince them that they need to spend their time in the library when they believe they have all the knowledge at their fingertips at home. So, all we can do is put our trust in future generations. They will be able to adapt and, if necessary, reinvent the library of tomorrow.

References

Alix, Yves (2013): *Bibliothèques en France, 1998–2013*. Paris: Éditions du Cercle de la Librairie.

Blasselle, Bruno; Toscano, Gennaro (2021): *Histoire de la Bibliothèque nationale de France*. Paris: BnF éditions.

Renoult, Daniel; Melet-Sanson, Jacqueline (2001): *La Bibliothèque nationale de France, collections, services, publics*. Paris: Éditions du Cercle de la Librairie.

Jacqueline Sanson
9 rue de Monceau
F-75008 Paris
France
jacqueline.sanson@icloud.com

