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# Cultural heritage in France

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## Introduction

By creating the first Ministry of Cultural Affairs in 1959, André Malraux knew that this ministry could not be a ministry like the others. That its vocation would not only be to design and conduct “cultural actions”. That its primary function would be to promote the manifestation of the values of civilisation that make up the culture of a people, while taking inspiration from these same values to add meaning to the collective life. The question of heritage is, more than others, central to this vision: legacy of our history, cultural heritage is one of the traces left by this tireless and endless quest for the true civilisations in the making. This trace is not just a frozen vestige of the past. It is taking shape every day (Collinet & Metzger, 2005)..

As cultural heritage is taking shape every day, it is hard to define its boundaries and many definitions prevail in literature. Cultural heritage is defined as a set of tangible and intangible elements of a cultural nature, charged with multiple meanings, with a collective dimension and transmitted from generation to generation (vie-publique.fr, 2014a).

For (Benhamou, Thesmar, & Mongin, 2011), Heritage refers to what a nation intends to conserve for future generations; it includes both a relationship to history and to the future, made up of continuity (with the passing of time, which brings new monuments into the field of heritage almost naturally) and discontinuities (with the arrival of new objects and concepts that broaden the field of heritage, gardens, cafés, landscapes, industrial sites, various places of memory, but also elements of the intangible heritage, which contribute to the elaboration of what could be described as “national novel”).

According to (Basilico, 2005), the definition of heritage evolves and changes over time. Each generation redefines the boundaries that characterise the living and evolving heritage object. The heritage has always and permanently been open and extended to the contemporary social, economic and cultural reality. We are talking about architectural, archaeological, rural, religious, maritime, industrial, urban, scientific, linguistic heritage... In all these contexts, it has always been a question of transmitting heritage, from one generation to another, that is valued at each stage.

In the Heritage Code (“Code du patrimoine,” 2019), they specified: for the purposes of this Code, heritage means all property, whether real or personal, belonging to public or private ownership, which is of historical, artistic, archaeological, aesthetic, scientific or technical interest. It also includes elements of intangible cultural heritage, within the meaning of Article 2 of the International Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, adopted in Paris on 17 October 2003.

Many other French institutions use UNESCO's definitions, but within UNESCO itself, several definitions prevail:

In The [Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict](#), article 1 (UNESCO, 1954) the term “cultural property” is defined as follows:

“The term 'cultural property' shall cover, irrespective of origin or ownership:

1. movable or immovable property of great importance to the cultural heritage of every people, such as monuments of architecture, art or history, whether religious or secular; archaeological

- sites; groups of buildings which, as a whole, are of historical or artistic interest; works of art; manuscripts, books and other objects of artistic, historical or archaeological interest; as well as scientific collections and important collections of books or archives or of reproductions of the property defined above;
2. buildings whose main and effective purpose is to preserve or exhibit the movable cultural property defined in sub-paragraph (a) such as museums, large libraries and depositories of archives, and refuges intended to shelter, in the event of armed conflict, the movable cultural property defined in sub-paragraph (a);
  3. centres containing a large amount of cultural property as defined in sub-paragraphs (a) and (b), to be known as 'centres containing monuments'."

In another context "Cultural heritage is, in its broadest sense, both a product and a process, which provides societies with a wealth of resources that are inherited from the past, created in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations. Most importantly, it includes not only tangible, but also natural and intangible heritage" (UNESCO, 2014).

Always according to UNESCO (UNESCO, [1970]), "The term cultural heritage encompasses several main categories of heritage:

- Cultural heritage
  - Tangible cultural heritage:
    - movable cultural heritage (paintings, sculptures, coins, manuscripts)
    - immovable cultural heritage (monuments, archaeological sites, and so on)
    - underwater cultural heritage (shipwrecks, underwater ruins and cities)
  - Intangible cultural heritage: oral traditions, performing arts, rituals
- **Natural heritage:** natural sites with cultural aspects such as cultural landscapes, physical, biological or geological formations
- Heritage in the event of armed conflict

Defining cultural heritage is therefore not an easy task. The long [list of expressions](#) used in literature to designate its different aspects show this complexity.

In France, no clear definition for cultural heritage has ever really been given in legal terms. The definition given in the Heritage Code remains vague, and its second part refers to the UNESCO definition.

In the first part of this report, we will present the chronology of French policy towards heritage in general, from the time of the French Revolution until today. In the second part, we will deal more specifically with written and graphic heritage policy. And in the last part, we will make a review of the best practices in the field.

## Cultural Heritage Policy in France<sup>1</sup>

State policy is most often translated into legal texts. In France, laws and regulations have long been concerned with cultural heritage, but not always to its advantage. In France, each heritage sector has its own legislation. In general, the objective of heritage policy is threefold, **to preserve**, i.e., to conserve, maintain, restore and transmit, **to manage** and **to enhance** through openness to the public, animation and dissemination, in order to meet cultural, economic, tourism, educational and social challenges. According to (vie-publique.fr, 2014b), five periods characterise the history of cultural heritage in France.

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<sup>1</sup> This part is an adaptation, with deletion and additions, of the "Heritage Policy: Chronology" published on the "Vie-publique" website <https://www.vie-publique.fr/politiques-publiques/politique-patrimoine/chronologie/>.

### 1789 - 1830: creation of the heritage notion

The 1789 Revolution damaged heritage, particularly in terms of monarchy and religion. The decree of November 2, 1789, transferred the church's property to the Nation. At that time, many voices raised to protect heritage. The following years several laws were adopted in favour of heritage: In 1790 the decree of September 7 created the National archives; on October 13, the Assembly set up the Monuments Committee to study the situation of the "monuments of art and science"; on November 22, an instruction was published concerning the conservation of manuscripts, monuments, statues, paintings, drawings and other pieces of furniture from ecclesiastical houses, which are part of national property. On September 16, 1792, the assembly voted to preserve the "masterpieces of the arts" threatened by the revolutionary movement. The years 1793 and 1794 saw the adoption of several texts to penalise heritage degradation. On October 26, 1796, a law created an archive service in each French department. The first Inventory of Monuments has been published on July 22, 1816.

### 1830 - 1930: birth of the heritage policy

On October 23, 1830, the General inspection of historical monuments has been created. The first inspector, Ludovic Vitet, defined his mission as follows: "To list and make a critical description of all the buildings of the kingdom which, either by their date, or the nature of their architecture, or the events they had been witnesses, deserve the attention of the archaeologist, the historian, such is the first purpose of the functions entrusted to me; secondly, I must ensure the conservation of these buildings by indicating to the Government and local authorities the means either to prevent or to stop their deterioration"<sup>2</sup>.

The Commission of historical monuments, created in 1837, is at the origin of the first list of protected monuments made in 1840, although the law for the conservation of monuments and art works of historical and artistic interest was only voted on March 30, 1887. However, its scope was limited, as it only concerned monuments belonging to public persons (the consent of private owners being required for classification). Because of the defects of this law, and as a consequence of the law on the separation of the Church and State in December 1905, a new law on Historic Monuments was signed on December 31, 1913. This law complements and improves the provisions of the Historic Monuments Law of March 30, 1887, by establishing the classification body and defining the framework and status of historic monuments. It also provides a new protection measure by replacing the notion of national interest with that of public interest and infringes for the first time on the right of ownership by extending the classification to private property. This law is one of the oldest in the world in this field and often taken as a model. It was little transformed until it was incorporated into the heritage code in February 2004 and the ordinance of September 8, 2005, on historic monuments and protected areas<sup>3</sup>.

### 1930 - 1960: extension of heritage protection

On May 2, 1930, a new law was adopted broadening the notion of cultural heritage to include the protection of natural monuments and sites of artistic, historical, scientific, legendary or picturesque nature, which extended the protection of natural heritage; the law established a list of protected sites and provided, like for historical monuments, for a double level of protection, classification and inscription. An additional clause, adopted in 1957, allowed the creation of natural reserves.

On July 21, 1936, a new decree established that all the papers of the ministries and the administrations that depended on them were to be deposited in the State Archives.

On September 27, 1941, a new law set the conditions for the exploitation of archaeological excavation sites and the safeguarding of objects and monuments discovered there.

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<sup>2</sup> Ministère de la Culture. Monuments historiques. Retrieved from <http://www.culture.gouv.fr/Thematiques/Monuments-historiques-Sites-patrimoniaux-remarquables/Presentation/Monuments-historiques>

<sup>3</sup> Ministère de la Culture. Centenaire de la loi de 1913. Retrieved from <http://www.culture.gouv.fr/Thematiques/Monuments-historiques-Sites-patrimoniaux-remarquables/Presentation/Focus/Centenaire-de-la-loi-de-1913>

### 1960 - 2003: a new notion of heritage

The 1960s were rich in laws related to cultural heritage:

- the act No. 60-708 on July 22, 1960, created the national natural parks, which represents a decisive step in the protection of natural heritage;
- the law No. 62-880, voted on July 31, 1962, established a programme for the restoration of major historical monuments for the period 1962-1966;
- the law No. 62-903 on August 4, 1962 (known as the Malraux Law) in safeguarded sectors, extended the notion of heritage to historic urban areas and made it possible to manage them by means of a “safeguarding and enhancement plan”;
- the decree No. 63-973 on September 17, 1963, created a body for the conservation of museums in France and established its status;
- On January 29, 1964, the *Bureau des fouilles et antiquités* (Office of Excavations and Antiquities) was established. It is responsible for dealing with all administrative, financial and technical problems relating to the application of legislation and regulations on archaeological excavations and discoveries;
- the law No. 67-1174 on December 28, 1967, established the second programme on the restoration of historical monuments and the protection of sites;
- the law No. 67-1174 on December 31, 1968, aimed to promote the conservation of national artistic heritage. The donation of works of art in the form of inheritance tax payments and exemptions from transfer duties and ancillary taxes in the interest of the beneficiaries enrich national heritage.

Even if the 1970s were less prolific, several laws were adopted.

- November 16, 1972: the UNESCO General Conference in Paris adopted the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage;
- October 12, 1977: Decree on impact studies: the code of urban planning subjects the obtaining or the refusal of the building permit to the observation of special rules if the construction risks compromising the conservation or the enhancement of site or archaeological remains.
- July 11, 1978: promulgation of the program law n ° 78-727 on the museums, for the period 1978-1982.
- On August 9, 1978: The Council of Ministers declares the year 1980 Heritage Year.
- January 3, 1979: promulgation of the law n ° 79-18 on the archives.
- March 6, 1979: publication of Decree No. 79-180 instituting the Departmental Services of Architecture and Heritage (SDAP).

We have to wait until the 1980s, 15 July, to have a law on the protection of public collections against malicious acts, providing sanctions for anyone who attacks monuments or public collections, including land containing archaeological remains.

On December 15, 1982, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) registered the Florence Charter for the Safeguarding of Historic gardens.

On January 7, 1983, the Law No. 83-8 on the distribution of powers between municipalities, departments, regions and the State recalls that “the French territory is the common heritage of the Nation”;

On January 1, 1986, the departmental archives pass under the authority of the presidents of the general councils and the corresponding external services disappear, while the following year, on July 23, 1987, a new law (No. 87-571) is passed on the development of patronage.

On May 9, 1989, a bylaw established the *National Scientific Council for the Heritage of Public Libraries* (CNSPB). This council was responsible for issuing opinions on questions relating to the preservation and enhancement of heritage collections of public libraries. The CNSPB included a Technical Committee on Restoration to provide input on projects related to the restoration of cultural funds in territorial public libraries. On December 22, 2005, the Decree No. 225-1686, simplifying the

administration, abolished the CNSPB. Since then, the opinion of the regional governor has replaced that of the Minister of Culture for restoration projects presented by libraries belonging to local authorities. Of the CNSPB, only the Technical Committee on Restoration, which has become the current Technical Committee on the Restoration of Public Library Heritage, has remained active. This committee, known by its abbreviation CTR, evaluates the quality of restoration projects submitted by territorial public libraries and provides input to the regional governor responsible for issuing opinions on these restoration projects.

In 1990, the State and the Regional Council of Brittany decided to join their financial efforts to help libraries in the region to enrich their heritage collections with “old, rare or precious” documents: the first Regional Acquisition Fund for Libraries (FRAB), financed equally by the state and the region, was created. Since then, many more FRABs have been established and the mission has been enlarged to include restoration of heritage collections. As a result, this support fund, which still exists, has changed its name to the Regional Restoration and Acquisition Fund for Libraries (FRRAB).

On May 16, 1990, a decree gave special status to the bodies of general curators and curators of heritage. It created the National School of Heritage. In 2001, this school integrated the French Institute for the Restoration of Works of Art (IFROA), created in 1977. These regrouped institutions became the [National Heritage Institute](#) (INP), which is still active. Its mission is to recruit by competition and provides initial training for curators and restorers authorised to work on public heritage collections.

The year 1994 is a milestone as far as written heritage is concerned. On January 3, the Decree No. 94-3 established the National Library of France. As we saw previously, the National Library already existed, but in 1994, its name was changed and “France” was added to it, and it was moved to a new building, the current site. Just a few months later, on August 4, the Parliament promulgated a law relating to the use of the French language (law n ° 94-665). In its article 1, the law recalls that “language of the Republic under the Constitution, the French language is a fundamental element of the personality and heritage of France”.

In the following years, some actions concerning mostly historical buildings and monuments were taken, as well as towards the democratisation of cultural practices, for example, free access, one Sunday per month, to monuments managed by the National Fund for Historic Monuments (effective from October 1999) and free access, for young people under 18, to state-owned monuments (in force from January 2000).

### [2003 -: Heritage in the era of decentralisation and globalisation](#)

On September 17, 2003, due to the fact that nearly 20% of the listed monuments (about 2,800 out of 15,000) were at risk, the Ministry of Culture decided to launch a National Action Plan for heritage. It included 5 axes: 1. a sustainable budget effort by the State in favour of historic monuments; 2. legal and tax incentives to promote the action of private owners and associations; 3. a simplification effort by the State of procedures for the protection and work on historic monuments; 4. decentralisation measures to encourage the intervention of local authorities in favour of heritage, and to refocus the State’s action; 5. promotion of a better culture of their heritage among French citizens.

Another milestone in the protection of Cultural Heritage is the year 2004. In February, an ordinance created the Heritage Code, which brings together a number of scattered texts on the protection of heritage, defined as all property, whether immovable or movable, belonging to public or private property, which is of historical, artistic, archaeological, aesthetic, scientific or technical interest.

On July 5, 2006, Law No. 2006-791 adopted the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The year 2009 was prolific for cultural heritage in France. The State allocated an additional €100 million to the budget of the Ministry of Culture. The three priorities selected by the ministry through 252 projects concern historical monuments, cultural facilities in the regions and major national projects. In addition, three financing agreements were signed with the National Library of France, the Louvre and

the Versailles palace as part of the Heritage component of the Recovery Plan<sup>4</sup> launched in December 2008.

On January 13, 2010, the General Directorate of Heritage was created from the departments of the museums of France (DMF), the Archives of France (DAF) and the Department of Architecture and Heritage (DAPA). Today, it is one of the four main entities of the Ministry of Culture and Communication with the Secretariat General, the Department of Artistic Creation and the Department of Media and Cultural Industries.

Also, in 2010, the French Ministry of Culture and Communication published the Information Guide for Public and Private Owners concerning the security of cultural heritage, from theft prevention to the return of stolen objects (Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, 2010).

On January 26, 2011, the Senate tabled a bill that aimed to frame the terms of transfer of national heritage, so far inalienable, for the benefit of cities and departments.

In December 2017, a draft amending finance law was adopted creating the “*loto du patrimoine*” (Heritage Lotto). This lotto aims to collect money for the Heritage Foundation in France to ensure the maintenance of monuments considered to be in danger, whether or not they are historical monuments. Among these monuments are libraries that are in danger, such as the [Fesh Library in Corsica](#).

The Prime Minister's circular on July 24, 2018, on the territorial organisation of public services cites the preservation of heritage among the missions for which the role of the State must be reaffirmed, if necessary, reinforcing its means (Bélaival, 2018).

As demonstrated in this section, great importance is given to cultural heritage in France. There is a succession of laws and initiatives, but is this enough to enhance this heritage? In the field, there is often a lack of human and financial resources despite state subsidies. This aid remains insufficient and often associations and volunteers, which cannot be mentioned in this state of the art, contribute to the preservation and enhancement of this heritage.

## Written and Graphic Heritage Policy

Cultural heritage held in French libraries is called “*patrimoine écrit*” or “*written heritage*”. This expression goes back to 1982. It was used for the first time in the report of Louis Desgraves (general inspector of libraries from 1970 to 1983). This report was an important step in raising awareness of written heritage as an object of national interest (Cohen & Yvon, 2004).

As defined by the Ministry of Culture, “The national written and graphic heritage includes a wide variety of documents held in both private and public collections: printed books, manuscripts, prints, photographs, films, musical scores, maps and plans, coins and medals, archives, etc.”<sup>5</sup>.

The heritage collections that French libraries hold are estimated at 65 million items<sup>6</sup>.

Written heritage in France is tightly related to the history of France. Until the French Revolution, heritage funds developed in four areas: the royal domain, of which the *BnF - Bibliothèque nationale de France* (National Library of France) is today the heiress; the ecclesiastical domain, of which universities and colleges were also part; the municipal domain with the constitution of public libraries resulting from donations or private bequests; the private domain around great noble heritages or rich

<sup>4</sup> The 2008-2009 French Economic Recovery Plan is a programme set up by the French government to revive the French economy following the 2008-2010 economic crisis, which affects, among other things, the French labour market

<sup>5</sup> Ministère de la Culture. Patrimoine écrit. Retrieved from <http://www.culture.gouv.fr/Thematiques/Livre-et-Lecture/Bibliotheques/Patrimoine-ecrit>

<sup>6</sup> Ministère de la Culture. Collections et acquisitions patrimoniales des bibliothèques françaises. Retrieved from <http://www.culture.gouv.fr/Thematiques/Livre-et-Lecture/Patrimoine-des-bibliotheques/Politiques-patrimoniales-de-l-Etat/Collections-et-acquisitions-patrimoniales-des-bibliotheques-francaises>

individuals (Cohen, 2017). Officially, French public libraries were created between 1789 and 1803. More often, these libraries remained at the project stage or, at the best, some rather shapeless deposits. They only became a reality in the 19th century.

Three major episodes in French history contribute to the enrichment of heritage funds in these libraries:

1. The Revolutionary decree of November 2, 1789, which declared that all possessions of the Clergy, including their libraries, was national property.
2. The law of 1 July 1901 on associations, Title III, Art. 18, dissolved unauthorised or recognised religious congregations and ordered the confiscation of their property.
3. The law of December 9, 1905, on the separation of the Church and State mainly organized the recovery of revolutionary confiscations.

The funds confiscated during these three episodes were entrusted to public libraries in different French departments. At this time, the librarians throughout France had neither the skills nor the means to process and preserve around 4,168,439 printed books and 25,973 manuscripts. Many documents from this period have been lost or sold out to pay the librarians.

The decentralised funds constitute a French specificity in Europe. France is one of the few countries having a multiplicity of old collections scattered in several hundred public libraries, mainly owned by local authorities. This fact is a direct legacy of the French Revolution (Varry, 1989). According to (Robichon, 1995) nearly 300 local libraries in France hold heritage collections. Only 54 of these are classified libraries<sup>7</sup>, benefiting from special state support through the provision of curators assigned to the management of heritage collections or the management of digital projects. There are therefore about 250 libraries not covered by this system.

## Written Heritage Actors

Written heritage in French libraries consists of three partially overlapping groups of documents: State funds, antique book collections and heritage collections or documents in the broad sense. **State funds** come from two confiscations, that of 1789 and that of 1901-1906; they also include ministerial concessions consisting of works acquired by legal deposit as well as a large number of copies of scientific quality or literary works granted by the State to libraries from 1809 onwards. **Antique book collections** are pre-1811 printed matter. **Heritage funds** refer to rare and precious documents or sets of documents, old or contemporary, to which a final conservation decision is attached (Cohen & Yvon, 2004).

As mentioned above, French public libraries are under the responsibility of local authorities in a decentralised context. The Ministry of Culture is the one who defines the legislative and regulatory framework, the statistical evaluation of the activity of public libraries, the technical control provided by the [Heritage Code](#), and the technical and financial support through various mechanisms. To implement its policy, it relies heavily on actors in the field assuring the liaison.

### [SLL - Service du livre et de la lecture \(Books and reading service\)](#)

On November 11, 2009, the [Decree No. 2009-1393](#) on the tasks and organisation of the central administration of the Ministry of Culture and Communication abolishes the *DLL - Direction du livre et de la lecture* (Directorate of Books and Reading). Its missions are taken over by the [DGMIC - Direction générale des médias et des industries culturelles](#) (Directorate General for the Media and Cultural Industries), with an assistant responsible for books and reading. The SLL inherited the missions of the Directorate of Books and Reading created in 1975, initially without any heritage mission. Its mission

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<sup>7</sup> Between 1931 and 1972, the State classified 54 public libraries, mainly because they hold a notable collection considered as a cultural heritage which is a national property. These libraries do not have any particular mission, but the State made available to them a library curator free of charge. In France, a library curator is an executive of the French civil service, responsible for the direction and supervision of state or territorial public libraries.



has evolved over time: it is responsible for ensuring the preservation and enrichment of the heritage of libraries, and it exercises state supervision over the BnF. The Directorate of Book and Reading becomes a department of the new General Management, under the name of “Book and Reading Service”.

Several missions fall within the prerogatives of the SLL. Among others, it has to develop, coordinate and evaluate the action of the Ministry of Culture and Communication in the field of books and reading; to promote the development of reading and to evaluate policies in the field of public reading. It contributes to the modernisation of libraries, including the strengthening of cooperation networks and services. It ensures the conservation, enrichment and enhancement of their heritage; and helps to exercise the State's technical control over libraries of local authorities<sup>8</sup>.

Since March 2012, this service includes a [library department](#) composed of four offices: The Public Reading Office, the Heritage Office, the European and international library mission. Below, an overview of the missions of the Library Department as defined by the Ministry of Culture:

- supervising the *BnF* and *BPI – Bibliothèque public d’information* (Public Information Library) and coordinating the network policy conducted by these two public institutions on behalf of the State;
- exercising the State's technical control over libraries belonging to local authorities;
- preparing and publishing national statistics on the activity of public libraries;
- ensuring the preservation and enhancement of the heritage collections of public libraries, including the 54 classified public libraries. It advises librarians, particularly on heritage acquisitions by searching sales and bookseller catalogues and informing libraries of documents that may be of interest to them. It may represent the establishment at Parisian auctions, and possibly exercise the right of pre-emption for them;
- designing and coordinating the *Action Plan for Written Heritage* ([See below](#)), supporting and evaluating research and development activities;
- participating in the coordination of digitisation policies on a national level;
- monitoring the circulation of cultural property in the field of books (manuscripts, books, prints, photographs, numismatic collections, maps, etc.).
- monitoring issues relating to state aid for investment by territorial libraries (municipal libraries and departmental lending libraries) within the general decentralisation allocation (DGD): construction projects, institutional modernisation, development of computers and digital equipment (“digital contract”, “digital reference libraries”, etc.), in coordination with the Ministry of Local Government.

Working alongside the BnF in an active policy of supporting the cataloguing of public library heritage holdings (Regional Catalogues of Incunabula, Regional Music Heritage, Reporting of Manuscript and Archival Holdings), the Book and Reading Service launched in 2017 a national survey to assess the volumes of heritage printed materials, manuscripts and archives still to be catalogued, as well as the catalogues of these holdings still to be retrofitted.

### [The Regional Directorate for Cultural Affairs \(DRAC\)](#)

DRAC is a decentralised service of the Ministry of Culture located in each region. They have been created in 1963 by André Malraux, Minister of Culture at that time. They are responsible for the implementation, on a regional level, of the priorities defined by the Ministry of Culture and Communication. Since 1977, the Ministry of Culture has been present in each region through the DRAC. The law of 6 February 1992 organizing the territorial administration of the Republic made DRACs decentralised services under the authority of the regional commissioner.

Several missions fall within the prerogatives of the DRAC. Among others, DRAC is involved in the fields of knowledge, protection, conservation and enhancement of heritage, promotion of architecture,

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<sup>8</sup> Ministère de la culture. Service du livre et de la Lecture. Retrieved from: <http://www.culture.gouv.fr/Thematiques/Livre-et-Lecture/Service-du-Livre-et-de-la-Lecture>

support for artistic creation and dissemination of all their components, development of books and reading, artistic and cultural education and transmission of knowledge, promotion of cultural diversity and expansion of audiences, development of the economy of culture and cultural industries, promotion of the French language and the languages of France. It contributes to scientific research in the areas within its competence. It also contributes to the dissemination of public data on culture in French regions and its constituent departments (Décret n° 2010-633 du 8 juin 2010 relatif à l'organisation et aux missions des directions régionales des affaires culturelles, 2010).

Within the DRAC, the book and reading advisers also provide expertise and advice to the various local authorities and local cultural partners. Their missions cover all the Ministry's sectors of activity including cultural heritage.

### The Bibliothèque National Library of France (BnF)

The BnF does an outstanding work in showcasing the heritage collections it holds. It is an essential player in the field of written heritage. The BnF's heritage action is focused primarily on the collections in its possession. At the end of 2017, the BnF had more than 15 million printed documents, 370,000 manuscripts, 390,000 periodicals, 15 million prints and photographs, 900,000 maps and plans, 2 million music scores, 1.5 million audio documents, 260,000 videos, 260,000 multimedia documents, 590,000 coins and medals, 31 billion files collected (URLs) or 940 terabytes for web archives, and 5.1 million digitised documents, including 4.3 million that can be consulted freely at a distance<sup>9</sup>.

The decree n°94-3 of January 3, 1994, establishing the BnF specifies its mission, which is to collect, catalogue, preserve, enrich and communicate the national documentary heritage. It also has to ensure that as many people as possible have access to the collections. For that purpose:

- it conducts research programmes in relation to the heritage for which it is responsible, particularly in library science;
- it cooperates with other French or foreign libraries and research and documentation centres, in particular within the framework of documentary networks;
- it participates, within the framework of the policy defined by the State, in the pooling of the documentary resources of French libraries;
- it allows remote consultation using the most modern data transmission technologies.

As part of this cooperation, the BnF has many partners in the French regions and on an international level. This is clearly specified on its website: on a national level, the Library's cooperation policy is based on the network of "associated centres"<sup>10</sup> for the printing and documentary legal deposit, the French Union Catalogue (CCFr), which is a cooperation tool for reporting collections and networking, and Gallica (See below), which now provides access to digitised documents of more than 300 partner libraries and constitutes a real digital library in France. In the BnF 2018<sup>11</sup> annual report, the approach of the BnF is explained. It covers the entire spectrum of the creation of a digital library: identification of documentary deposits; selection of corpora, digitisation, editorial and scientific enhancements; multiplication of access, on a local (library sites and catalogues), regional (regional portals), national (Gallica), European (Europeana) and international level. To carry out these actions, an ecosystem of 393 digital partners has been created around the BnF, acting with the shared objectives of free and open dissemination of knowledge: libraries of local authorities and higher education and research, libraries dependent on ministries and constituted bodies, archives and museums, libraries of various status (associations, foundations, etc.).

<sup>9</sup> Bibliothèque nationale de France. La BnF en chiffres: Répartitions des collections au 31 décembre 2017. Retrieved from <https://www.bnf.fr/fr/la-bnf-en-chiffres>

<sup>10</sup> The purpose of the Regional Associated Centres of the BnF is to promote the heritage of libraries through concerted reporting and digital enhancement programmes.

<sup>11</sup> Bibliothèque nationale de France. Rapport d'activité 2018 – BnF. Retrieved from [https://www.bnf.fr/sites/default/files/2019-06/rapport\\_2018\\_0.pdf](https://www.bnf.fr/sites/default/files/2019-06/rapport_2018_0.pdf)

The BnF makes its expertise available to all, both in the traditional fields of libraries and heritage (bibliographic data, restoration of works, security and conservation of collections) and in the innovation sector (excavation of texts and data, digital mediation, etc.) or in the scientific and educational support of cultural projects. The BnF supports the digitisation of the heritage collections of French libraries, with a view to the rational enrichment of online corpora and a policy of documentary completeness with digitised heritage resources from the BnF collections. The digital corpora thus created are freely distributed on Gallica and any other digital library that can be interoperable with Gallica<sup>12</sup>.

On an international level, the BnF has many cooperation agreements. This is reflected, among other things, in bibliographic achievements and the enhancement of libraries from other countries. This is the case of [Bibliothèques d'Orient](#) (libraries from the Middle East). Launched in 2017, Bibliothèques d'Orient is the result of the cooperation of the BnF and [eight](#) heritage and research libraries partners from the Middle East. These libraries website is part of the “shared heritage” collection, which illustrates the links between France, through the collections of its national library, and the whole world. Consisting of complementary thematic sets, the collection's sites provide access to documents scattered among the various partner countries and institutions. This shared heritage also exists for another region, the map could be found at <http://heritage.bnf.fr>

Another example is [France and England: Medieval manuscripts between 700 and 1200](#), created by the BnF, brings together all the 800 manuscripts, half of which are kept at the BnF and half at the British Library. [The Medieval England and France 700-1200](#) site, created by the British Library, offer a selection of manuscripts to explore.

As can be seen, the BnF is the central pivot in the conservation and enhancement of heritage not only with regard to its collections, but also with regard to the collections of regional libraries in France. This contribution is not limited to France, but also operates abroad.

### [Fondation du patrimoine \(Heritage Foundation\)](#)

The Heritage Foundation works to safeguard and enhance the value of French heritage. Through label, public subscription and corporate sponsorship, it supports individuals, local authorities and associations in restoration projects<sup>13</sup>. It has financed more than 20,500 public and private projects. It also manages the Heritage Lotto whose [mission](#) is entrusted to [Stephane Bern](#) which is a French journalist, radio host and television presenter specialist in nobility and royalty, and who gives great visibility to heritage.

### [Research centres](#)

Many research teams work on cultural heritage and several of them have a partnership agreement with the Ministry of Culture and they are called for advice both upon and during the study and conservation-restoration phases.

- [ARC-Nucléart](#) - *Atelier de Recherche et de Conservation* (Research and Conservation Laboratory). It works on the conservation and restoration of archaeological, historical or ethnographic cultural objects made of organic materials, and does research on degraded materials to develop new treatment techniques.
- [Arc'Antique](#) is a player in heritage conservation and restoration through the study, management and restoration of archaeological and historical heritage objects. It also does research to better understand and treat different materials.
- [C2RMF](#) - *Centre de recherche et de restauration des musées de France* (French museums Research and restoration centre). Depending on the Ministry of Culture, and with national competence, it

<sup>12</sup> Bibliothèque nationale de France. Les partenaires de Gallica. Retrieved from <https://gallica.bnf.fr/edit/und/decouvrir-nos-partenaires>

<sup>13</sup> Fondation du patrimoine. Qui sommes-nous ? Retrieved from <https://www.fondation-patrimoine.org/fondation-du-patrimoine/qui-sommes-nous>

works on the preservation and the study of cultural heritage preserved in French museums. The activities of the C2RMF are structured around two main axes, that of scientific research, particularly concerning knowledge of the materials that constitute the works, and that of the implementation of strategies for the conservation and restoration of museum heritage on a national level.

- [CICRP](#) - *Centre Interdisciplinaire de conservation et de restauration du patrimoine* (Interdisciplinary Centre for Heritage Conservation and Restoration). The CICRP intervenes in the fields of preventive conservation, curative conservation, and the restoration of cultural heritage in the public or private domain protected as Historic Monuments. It was created in 1999. The CICRP is managed by a public interest group of a cultural nature made up of the State (Ministry of Culture), the City of Marseille, the Conseil Régional de Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur and the Conseil Général des Bouches-du-Rhône (Service interministériel des archives de France, 2015).
- [CRC](#) - *Centre de recherche sur la conservation* (Conservation Research Centre). The CRC is a service and research unit associating the Muséum national d'histoire naturelle (National Museum of Natural History), the CNRS and the Ministry of Culture. It carries out research with the objective of conserving cultural property. The CRC is organized into [scientific poles](#) and transversal thematic actions (ATT): Stone, Biodegradation and environment, Ornamented cave, Paper and cellulose, etc. [Many theses](#) have been or are currently being done at this research centre.
- [Laboratoire scientifique et technique de la Bibliothèque nationale de France](#) (Scientific and technical laboratory of the Bibliothèque nationale de France). The BnF actively cooperates with many national and international institutions with expertise in heritage conservation research and thus participates in joint conservation research programmes.
- [LAM – Laboratoire d'archéologie des métaux](#) (Metal Archaeology Laboratory). The LAM is dedicated to the conservation and restoration of archaeological art objects and ethnological metals from public collections and archaeological sites.
- [LMM – Laboratoire du musée de la Musique](#) (Music Laboratory Museum). Based on the study of the Museum's collections, research activities focus mainly on musicology, organology and fine arts (musical iconography, instrument decoration).
- [LRMH – Laboratoire de Recherche des Monuments Historiques](#) (Historical Monuments Research Laboratory). This research centre is a department of the Ministry of Culture and Communication (Directorate General of Heritage) with national competence. Its mission is to provide scientific and technical assistance for the conservation and restoration of historic monuments, whether they are buildings, large ornamental complexes or movable objects.

### [Network and Association](#)

Associations at the local and national levels are of great importance. The Ministry of Culture provides the opportunity for professionals in the field of cultural heritage to work together towards common goals of improvement of practices.

On a national level

#### [Bibliopat](#)

This association was created in May 2006. Its name is the concatenation of two French words: **B**ibliothèque and **P**atrimoine, which stand for Library and Heritage. As specified on their [webpages](#), the association purposes are

- promoting the dissemination of information relating to the management of heritage collections in libraries and to provide library staff involved in the management of these collections with a permanent platform for discussion and exchange on the exercise of their profession;
- creating opportunities for regular exchanges by organizing study and reflection days.
- more generally, undertaking collective actions likely to develop the skills of its members in the fields of conservation, treatment and enhancement of heritage funds.

BiblioPat association aims to create an active and friendly network of all persons involved in the management of heritage funds, whatever their rank or guardianship, to promote contacts and professional solidarity.

*Fill - Fédération interrégionale du livre et de la lecture (Interregional Federation for Books and Reading)*  
Fill was created in 1985 under the title of *FFCB - Fédération française pour la coopération des bibliothèques* (French Federation for Library Cooperation). It is an association that gathers within a national network that works on a daily basis to support professionals in the field of books, reading and documentation: regional structures for books (regional book agencies and centres), local authorities, national institutions and associations, qualified people.

#### On a Regional Level

Regional structures for books carry out actions in favour of all actors in the book chain (authors, publishers, booksellers, libraries, etc.). They are privileged interlocutors of the DRAC with regard to issues related to book trades. These structures carry out cooperation, information, scientific and technical support, book promotion and reading development activities. These structures are subsidised by the DRACs and local authorities.

#### *ARL - Agence du livre et de la lecture (The book and Reading Agency)*

On August 7, 2015, Law No. 2015-991 on the new territorial organisation of the Republic. As a result, at the end of 2017 and the beginning of 2018, *ARL - Agence régionale du livre* (Regional Book Agency), *CRL - Centre régional du livre* (Regional Book Center) and other cultural structures located in the concerned regions have also had to merge.

- [ALCA - Agence Livre, Cinéma & Audiovisuel en Nouvelle-Aquitaine](#) (Book, Film & Audiovisual Agency in New Aquitaine). Born of the merger of [Écla](#), [Limousin CRL](#) and the [Poitou-Charentes CRL](#). This agency supports professionals through a territorial policy of support for books and reading, cinema and audiovisual, artistic and cultural education.
- [Auvergne Rhône-Alpes livre et lecture](#)  
These cooperation agencies aim to promote books and reading, to be a platform for exchanges between book professionals, to encourage networking between professional book actors, to be a resource centre and an observatory for book, reading and writing professions, to reflect and implement, alongside the Region and the DRAC, the policy of developing books, reading and writing throughout the territory.
- [Agence Livre & Lecture Bourgogne-Franche-Comté](#) (Book & Reading Agency Burgundy-Franche-County). Born from the merger of ACCOLAD (Agence Comtoise de Coopération pour la Lecture, l'Audiovisuel et la Documentation), [Bourgogne CRL](#) and Franche-Comté CRL.
- [Livre et lecture en Bretagne](#) (Books and reading in Brittany). A mechanism for cooperation between book and reading stakeholders, but also between local authorities and the State in order to put in place concerted policies in favour of the book and reading sector.
- [Ciclic Centre Val de Loire](#). According to their website, the Centre-Val de Loire Region and the State have entrusted Ciclic, the Centre-Val de Loire regional agency for books, images and digital culture, with the implementation of a dynamic policy to support the cinema and audiovisual sector in order to promote its diversity and emergence. This policy is committed to the creation and production of films to their distribution to all audiences as close as possible to the territories. Since 2006, among others, it is in charge to collect, save, digitise, index and promote the regional film and audiovisual heritage, in order to create regional film archives.
- **CORDIAL - COOPération Régionale pour la Documentation et l'Information en Alsace** (Regional Cooperation for Documentation and Information in Alsace). It is an association created in 1987 at the initiative of documentation and information professionals working in Alsace. The purpose is to exchange information on their practices, coordinate transversal actions, promote mutual knowledge of neighbouring professions and bring the objectives of the sector to institutional decision makers (Regional Council, local authorities, DRAC, SLL) or major operators (CNL, BnF) with one voice in relation to cooperation projects. CORDIAL carries out inter-professional actions aimed

at broadening the public (cultural programming), heritage (identification, safeguarding and enhancement), training and information for professionals (study days and training). The association sets up thematic working groups and scientific committees to improve, promote, structure and lead a reflection process. Among others, CORDIAL concentrates its actions: on the coordination of heritage actions: digitisation and continuous updating of [Les Guides des fonds patrimoniaux](#)<sup>14</sup> (Guide of heritage collections of Alsace libraries); enhancement of this heritage on the [Route du patrimoine écrit](#) (Written Heritage Route portal).

- [Interbibly](#) which is the professional association for regional cooperation between actors in the field of books, documentation and written heritage. It is the Champagne-Ardenne agency that brings together some sixty institutions in urban and rural areas. The aim is to participate in their development and optimise their resources. The cooperation includes conservation, enhancement of written heritage, staff training, audience development.
- [AR2L - Agence régionale du livre et de la lecture Hauts-de-France](#) (Regional Agency of Book and Reading, Hauts-de-France). Its mission is to support and assist all professionals in the book chain in the region.
- [Normandie livre et lecture](#) (Normandy Book & Reading)
- [ArL - Agence régionale du livre PACA](#) (Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Regional Book Agency)
- [Occitanie Livre & Lecture](#) (Occitania Book and Reading)
- [Mobilis](#) - Pôle régional de coopération des acteurs du livre et de la lecture en Pays de la Loire (Regional cooperation centre for book and reading stakeholders in Pays de la Loire)
- [ARLL Mayotte – Agence régionale pour le livre et la lecture de Mayotte](#) (Regional Agency for Books and Reading in Mayotte)
- [Maison du livre de la Nouvelle-Calédonie](#) (New Caledonia Book House)
- [La Réunion des livres](#) (Reunion Island book)

As we have seen with this list of actors, the Ministry of Culture in France has meshed the territory of agencies mandated to help libraries, archives and book stakeholders. As part of the enhancement of written heritage, the DRAC and Regions support the policy of enriching the heritage funds of the libraries of local authorities. They thus contribute to completing the collections of old, rare or precious documents and to ensure their entry into the collections of contemporary documents of a heritage nature. In particular, they support the creation and enrichment of local or regional funds. In some cases, DRACs and Regions also provide grants to the restoration of old, rare or precious documents. They can also assist valuation operations involving old, rare funds or precious.

## The most significant actions in favour of written heritage

State policy is reflected on the ground in actions in favour of the heritage.

### [The action plan for written heritage \(PAPE\)](#)

Within “cultural heritage”, the concept of “written heritage” is the subject of all attention. The *PAPE* has been initiated on a national level at the request of the Minister of Culture and Communication in 2004 and still active until now. It aims to better understand and improve the conditions for the conservation, reporting and enhancement of written heritage in French regions. It is developed around two aspects: a survey and a regional plan led by the DRAC’s. The survey aims to identify the collections and heritage items as well as the problems they raise and prepare action projects.

This Action Plan has been widely disseminated by the *Service du Livre et de la Lecture* (SLL) and the *Direction régionale des affaires culturelles* (DRAC), and presents the State's proposals for written

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<sup>14</sup> In Alsace, which was one of the cradles of printing in the 15th century and where the written and graphic heritage has suffered the vicissitudes of an eventful history, it was interesting to carry out a study on the number and characteristics of the collections of ancient books preserved, from incunabula to books by contemporary artists. The guide published in 1995, is the result of these investigations conducted in partnership with BNU and CORDIAL. It presents 202 heritage collections of more than 250 pages.

heritage in libraries: it is based on a synthesis of reflections carried out over many years, both on the central administration level and in the regional directorates of cultural affairs and many partners. It does not claim to constitute the entire policy conducted in France in terms of written heritage: it specifies the orientations of the State, an essential but not unique actor in a landscape where architects and craftsmen are present at many levels. SLL and DRAC implement the means to bring out initiatives and facilitate connections, which, while being in line with the reality of local collections and policies, will ensure the national success of this plan.

This plan has five priorities:

1. conservation and enrichment of heritage collections;
2. the constitution of information resources: it focuses on the completion of the major catalogues in progress (in particular incunabula, music collections dating back to the 19th century) and on the extension of union catalogues, in particular the French Union Catalogue (CCFr), including the project currently undergoing retroconversion of the General Catalogue of Manuscripts in French Public Libraries;
3. enhancement of collections: the online publication of their catalogues by libraries, the creation of virtual libraries and innovation in exhibition and distribution are the three main axes;
4. the expansion of readers and audiences, based on more systematic studies and evaluations initiated by the Book and Reading Service;
5. training of staff, with the objective of reinvesting heritage issues in the field of initial and continuing training.

These priorities are reflected on the field through various actions in the form of annual events, reviews, books, articles, colloquia, conference cycles, blogs. i.e. Written Heritage Days ([Les journées du patrimoine écrit](#)).

In 2008, within this action plan the [Observatoire du patrimoine écrit en région](#) (The Written Heritage Regional Observatory) was created. It is a tool for the presentation and analysis of public policies on a regional level in the field of written heritage. The mission of this observatory is to identify in each region the actors, policies, means and achievements in the field of written heritage. It also identifies priorities to improve the preventive conservation, to report and enhance the heritage collections belonging to local authorities. The analysed information comes from data collected by the Book and Reading Service or communicated by DRACs, BnF, regional structures for books and local authorities (municipal libraries in particular).

### [Call for Projects & Research Projects](#)

The number of projects related to cultural heritage is important to be listed in this state of the art. We will give some examples to illustrate.

Since 2007, the Ministry of Culture has issued several calls for written heritage projects. They are jointly organized by SLL and DRACs as part of the action plan for written heritage. The [last call](#) was published on December 18, 2018. Like the previous calls, it aims to support projects concerning the heritage collections of libraries belonging to local authorities and public institutions for intercommunal cooperation. In the call for projects, it was pointed out that they represent one of the funding methods used for cataloguing and retroconversion operations as part of the national plan for reporting the heritage holdings of territorial libraries.

The [Heritage Sciences Foundation](#) is under the high patronage of the Ministry of Culture. Its ambition is to structure and finance research around tangible cultural heritage, with three main lines of action: an intimate knowledge of heritage; improvement of conservation and restoration processes; and improvement of knowledge dissemination techniques. On their [homepage](#), they mention that they already financed 140 research projects, and 62 theses have been defended or are in progress.

- In 2008, the BnF with the University of La Rochelle and other European partners launched [NewsEye](#): “funded by the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, it is a research project advancing the state of the art and introducing new concepts, methods and tools for digital humanities by providing enhanced access to historical newspapers for a wide range of users. With the tools and methods created by NewsEye, crucial user groups will be able to investigate views and perspectives on historical events and development and, as a consequence, the project will change the way European digital heritage data is (re)searched, accessed, used and analysed.
- Memoloi ([Mémoloi : programme de recherche sur la mémoire des grandes lois patrimoniales](#)). This blog documents the progress of “Mémoloi”, a research programme devoted to the study of the “great laws” that have impacted cultural heritage law in France. Launched by CÉCOJI, Mémoloi is now coordinated by the Institut des sciences sociales du politique (CNRS / ENS Cachan / Université Paris-Ouest), in close collaboration with many French cultural and scientific institutions.

### [The General Inventory of Cultural Heritage](#)

In 2015, all cultural heritage in France was not identified, although a “General Inventory of Cultural Heritage” has been founded in 1964 by André Malraux, at that time Minister of Cultural Affairs. According to (Battesti, Renaud-Bouleix, & Meyer-Lerecureur, 2015) despite constant efforts to develop lighter investigative methods (since 1975) and their strategic reorientation (since 1985) in order to meet the urban and spatial planning objectives of local authorities, these objectives have not been achieved. In August 13, 2004, the law n° 2004-809, art. 95 transferred the competence of the Inventory to the local authorities. The same law defined the fundamental missions of this Inventory: to identify, study and make known heritage elements that are of cultural, historical or scientific interest. But until now, many problems slow down the completion of the inventory and more specifically problems related to budget and software incompatibility. After the decentralisation of the general inventory. Together, 25 regions have set up a project identified by the acronym GERTRUDE - Groupe d'Etude, de Recherche Technique, de Réalisation et d'utilisation du Dossier Électronique (Study Group, Technical Research, Implementation and Use of the Electronic File). The objectives of this project are to define, develop and implement a solution for the production, management and dissemination of the digital inventory record of Cultural Heritage. Many regions have already their portal: [Alsace](#), [Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes](#), [Bourgogne-Franche-Comté](#), [Bretagne](#), [Centre-Val de Loire](#), [Champagne-Ardenne](#), [Ile-de-France](#), [Lorraine](#), [Pays de la Loire](#), [Normandie](#), [Poitou-Charentes](#), [Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur](#), [Pays d'art et d'histoire de la Provence verte](#). This inventory is an ongoing process, which means that France's written and graphic cultural heritage is not fully recorded yet.

### [Digitisation of Written Heritage](#)

Digitisation, which appeared in the late 1990s as a reproduction project, is now a key component of the preservation and the enhancement of written cultural heritage. It can improve accessibility and lower the cost of accessing resources.

A national digitisation plan was initially launched in 1996. This plan, led by the central administration of the Ministry of Culture, focused on the digitisation of iconographic and sound collections belonging to the State (national archives, libraries, archaeological services, historical monuments, museums, etc.). From 2000 onwards, it has also covered funds belonging to local authorities, foundations and associations. Since 2010, he has been open to contemporary creation. In 2018, as part of the strengthening of resources devoted to cultural democratisation and artistic and cultural education policies, the Ministry wished to reaffirm its support for digitisation through a new mechanism entitled National Programme for the Digitisation and Promotion of Cultural Content (PNV). The first stage of this programme, which is part of a devolution process adapted to the geographical and organisational context of the new regions, is intended in particular to support the territorial policy of digitising cultural content. In 2019 the first 6 DRAC partners of the PNV are: [Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes](#), [Grand Est](#), [Hauts-de-France](#), [Nouvelle Aquitaine](#), [Pays de la Loire](#), [Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur](#).



A significant number of digital collections are accessible on the web. A non-exhaustive list could be found by following [this link](#).

## Best Practices

Citing all the best practices in libraries to promote heritage is an almost impossible task given their number. Therefore, we will mention these practices and then illustrate with some examples.

### [National Events](#)

Heritage and written heritage are promoted through national events such as “La nuit de la lecture” (the night of reading), “La nuit des musées” (the Night of Museums) or “La journée européenne du patrimoine” (European Heritage Days), “Levez les yeux” (Raise your eyes).

#### [La nuit de la lecture](#) (The Night of Reading)

Created by the Ministry of Culture, the first edition took place on January 14, 2017. All day and all evening, French people are invited to come and discover musical readings, theatre performances, readings in pyjamas, under the duvet or with a flashlight, exhibitions, film screenings, games around books and reading (quizzes, surveys, treasure hunts or other escape games), writing workshops or book discoveries, conferences, literary tastings. This national holiday involves booksellers and librarians in a collective celebration of writing and the pleasure of reading. Since then, this event has taken place every year and the next edition is scheduled for [January 18, 2020](#). Libraries contribute to this event and it is an opportunity to promote heritage, among other things.

#### [La nuit des Musées](#) (The Night of the Museums)

Initiated by the Ministry of Culture, the “Night of the Museums” event, which has succeeded the “Museums Spring” since 2005, takes place every year on a Saturday in May, at the same time as ICOM’s “the International Museum Day”.

For one night, between sunset and 1 am, the public is invited to discover for free, in an unusual, festive and entertaining way, the treasures of French museums, as well as those of about thirty European countries.

#### [Journées européennes du patrimoine](#) (The European Heritage Days)

The European Heritage Days is an annual national event. These local events, which run from late August to early November, allow the public to discover many buildings and other places that are often only exceptionally open to the public, or museums whose access then becomes exceptionally free or at reduced prices.

#### [Levez les yeux!](#) (Raise your eyes)

Launched by the Minister of Culture and the Minister of National Education and Youth, this operation aims to introduce students, accompanied by their teachers, to heritage sites to learn to read architecture, decipher the landscape or decipher the city or countryside.

This year this operation will take place over 2 days, one on Friday 20 September before the weekend of the European Heritage Days, the other on 18 October on the eve of the National Architecture Days.

#### [Les enfants du patrimoine](#) (Children of the heritage)

On the eve of the European Heritage Days, the Councils of Architecture, Urban Planning and Environment (CAUE)<sup>15</sup> offers students and their teachers, from nursery to high school, a programme of free activities adapted to young people. Many heritage libraries participate in this event. An interactive [agenda](#) gives access to all needed information. The topics of the visits are: Heritage, State and Power; Culture and Society; Fine and decorative arts; Parks and Gardens; Heritage and memory;

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<sup>15</sup> Conseils d'Architecture, d'Urbanisme et de l'Environnement (CAUE). Created in 1977 and deployed throughout France, the CAUEs are responsible for promoting architectural, urban, landscape and environmental quality within the departments.

Reading the City; Landscape and Biodiversity; Archaeology; Image, Photography and Cinema; Water and Heritage; Places of Art & Culture; Heritage and Literature; References of Architectural and Urban History; and Industrial, Scientific and Technical Heritage.

### [C'est mon patrimoine \(It Is My Heritage\)](#)

This event is organized jointly by the Ministry of Culture and the *Commissariat général à l'égalité des territoires* (General Commissariat for Territorial Equality). In the call for projects they explain: this operation, which is available in all regions, intends to introduce the diversity of French heritage to the populations furthest from its access. This event is aimed at young people aged from 6 to 18, in particular adolescents - at least 60% of the beneficiaries come from priority areas of urban policy -, parents and families within the framework of social centres and, in partnership with reception structures, young people placed under the supervision of the courts, people with disabilities, as well as refugees and migrants. The activities take place during extracurricular time. The overall project consists of at least seven days of activity with participation either by day or in the form of a several-day internship. Parents and families are involved in the implementation of the project, particularly during the restitution phase, which is open to all audiences, for example during the European Heritage Days. An "Ambassador Pass" (free for two people) is offered to each young person to encourage them to return to the heritage establishment with their family.

### [Local Events](#)

Some regions may create a specific promotional action around written heritage. For example, the event "[Written heritage in Burgundy-Franche-Comté](#)" takes place from July 6 to November 2, 2019. It concerns 50 institutions (libraries, museums, archives, ...) in 8 departments. On the program there are visits, exhibitions, and activities around cultural heritage.

### [Library initiative on place](#)

#### Guided visits

Many libraries organize free visits explaining the history of the library, its architecture and its collections. To illustrate, we can cite:

[Bibliothèque Mazarine](#). The visit explains the origins of the Mazarine Library which are linked to the personal collections of Cardinal Mazarin (1602-1661), Richelieu's successor and principal Minister of the Minority of Louis XIV between 1643 and 1661. Opened to scholars in 1643 in the private mansion of Mazarin (which later became the historical site of the National Library of France), it is the oldest public library in France<sup>16</sup>.

[L'heure de la découverte](#) (The time of discovery). Lyon's Libraries (16) offer a visit to discover written heritage. On the agenda of these meetings proposed by the librarians: presentations of illuminated manuscripts, photographs, rare and precious collections, visits to the silo, binding workshops...

#### Exhibitions

Library exhibitions have always been used to promote collections and engage communities. Although virtual exhibitions are increasingly used, they have not replaced on-site events.

For example, the National Library of France organizes many exhibitions. A [special portal](#) is dedicated to that purpose. The [agenda](#) is also accessible online. As an example, we can mention the exhibition [Science for all \(1850-1900\)](#) opened in January 2018. This exhibition is accompanied by a web series of [14 videos](#). Each episode focuses on different themes that trace the history of popular science in the second half of the 19th century, from medicine to chemistry, hygiene and aeronautics.

Some libraries set up permanent exhibitions highlighting written heritage, e.g. [Mille ans de livres à Troyes](#). This permanent exhibition presents the history of the collections held today at the

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<sup>16</sup> Bibliothèque Mazarine. Histoire. Retrieved from <https://www.bibliotheque-mazarine.fr/fr/connaitre-la-bibliotheque-mazarine/histoire>

Médiathèque de Troyes Champagne Métropole. It starts from the virtual library of the 21st century going back almost a thousand years, to the time of the monks of Clairvaux. This exhibition invites visitors to meet generations of men and women who, through their passion for books, have succeeded in constantly transmitting and enriching what is considered as the foundation of the common culture today.

### Mobile Libraries

For several years, the Blois Library has been setting up “Les bibliothèques mobiles”, which is a nomadic digital heritage library. It is intended to travel to schools, colleges, high schools, retirement homes, associations, etc., all the places where people may be interested by cultural heritage. Moving outside the library walls, the heritage becomes accessible to all. Digital presentations can also be accompanied by original documents.

Beyond these few examples, there are other ways of valuing heritage that we have not illustrated. There are games that are aimed at young people in order to make them aware of the importance of heritage at an early age. The BnF has also signed an agreement with a publisher who can print heritage documents [on demand](#), making them more easily accessible.

### Conferences or Study Days

Many scientific events are organized. They aim to address a given heritage issue.

- Les journées des pôles associés et de la coopération de la BnF (Days of associated and cooperation centres of BnF). They meet each year for 3 days around a topic. The meeting of 2018, which was the 17<sup>th</sup>, addressed the theme of [Sharing, enriching, contributing](#).
- Journées du patrimoine écrit (Written heritage days). Since 2005, the SLL has organized annual study days on written heritage in the regions, in partnership with local authorities. These days are intended to bring together specialists in written and graphic heritage around scientific issues specific to library heritage collections, with the following objectives: to compare the views of specialists, give a national voice to local experiences, disseminate the latest research findings to professionals interested in preservation, encourage the development of a dynamic of exchange and networks, and make elected officials aware of heritage issues in libraries. The [2019 edition](#), the 15<sup>th</sup>, took place in Compiègne, on Wednesday 26 and Thursday 27 June on the topic of “Rules and customs”.
- An example of punctual study day on “[The security of heritage collections in archives and libraries](#)”. This study day took place on July 5, 2019. It was proposed by the Burgundy-Franche-Comté Book & Reading Agency and the Association of French Archivists, in partnership with the Côte-d'Or Departmental Archives and the Dijon Municipal Archives.

### Library Friend's Association

Heritage libraries are helped by people that consider themselves library friends and help in different ways. For example

- [ABC Mines: L'association des Amis de la Bibliothèque et des Collections de l'École des mines de Paris](#) (ABC Mines : Library and Collections of Mines ParisTech School Friends Association). This association wants to contribute to the training of the public on scientific culture; participate in the enrichment of the Collections and the Library; increase the means of the library; promote all activities that may enhance the reputation and attendance of the Museum and Library.
- [Association des amis de la BnF](#) (BnF Friends Association). As explained on their website, it is an association of book and culture lovers who show their support for the work of the National Library of France through donations or simple membership.

### Library Initiatives on the Web

Sharing culture and making heritage accessible to as many people as possible is an objective that seems to be a consensus within the professional community. Librarians in France use a number of

communications mechanisms to promote their cultural heritage. Their numbers are so important that it is impossible to list all the initiatives in this report.

#### Online Catalogues, Databases and Digital Libraries

Below we list some of the resources referencing heritage collections. This list is not exhaustive due to the number of existing resources in France.

**Gallica** opened in 1997 and made cultural heritage collections accessible to the greatest number of people. Managed by the BnF, it offers 3,115,189 newspapers and magazines, 1,354,465 images, 50,063 music scores, 163,238 maps, 1,517 video, 126,257 manuscripts, 51,076 sound recordings, 607,610 books, and 361,422 objects<sup>17</sup>.

**French Union catalogue** locates some 30 million documents held in French libraries. Created at the end of the 1990s as part of a joint project between the Ministries of Culture and National Education, the CCFr is managed by the BnF, in partnership with the Book and Reading Service of the Ministry of Culture. It federates 20 library catalogues: BnF General catalogue as well as BnF Archives and Manuscripts catalogue, Academic library catalogues (Sudoc and Calames), Public Library catalogues, etc. Databases allowing access to cultural heritage funds are identified separately, which enhances these funds:

- “*Base patrimoine*” gives access to more than 6.9 million documents preserved in more than 200 establishments representing one hundred heritage funds from local or specialised libraries.
- “*Manuscripts*” is a catalogue of three databases dedicated to manuscripts: The General Catalogue of Manuscripts (CGM), [BnF Archives and Manuscripts](#) and the Directory of French Literature Manuscripts of the 20th century (Palme).
- [RISM-France](#) which is an interface dedicated to texted music search. It allows a search on old music scores reported both in *Patrimoine database* and in the general catalogue of the BnF (Music Department).

In January 2018, CCFr data are put under the Open Licence Ouverte (Etalab).

**Mandragore, base des manuscrits enluminés de la BnF** (Mandragore, database of the BnF's illuminated manuscripts). Mandragore now has more than 170,000 records analysing works held in the Manuscript Department and the Arsenal Library, the oldest dating back to Pharaonic Egypt and the most recent to the present day. Their indexing is based on a vocabulary of more than 18,000 descriptors. Each record contains extensive data relating to the decor, including the textual environment, and the conditions of production, place and date, artist name when known. Currently, more than 80,000 of these records are accompanied by a digitised image.

**CALAMES** is an online catalogue describing archives and manuscripts held by French universities and research libraries and institutions (Institut de France, Muséum d'histoire naturelle, Bibliothèque Littéraire Jacques Doucet...). A part of Calames records come from two former catalogues: the national directory of 20th century French literary manuscripts (Palme: Répertoire national des manuscrits littéraires français du vingtième siècle); and the General Catalogue of Manuscripts held by French public libraries (Catalogue général des manuscrits des bibliothèques publiques de France, a printed publication started in the 1830s).

**Enluminures** (illuminated manuscripts) offers free consultation of more than 120,000 images, in the form of thumbnails and full screens, digital reproductions of illuminations and decorative elements of more than 5,000 medieval manuscripts kept in some 100 French public libraries.

**Bibliothèque virtuelle des manuscrits médiévaux** (BVMM) The Virtual Library of medieval manuscripts is developed by the Institute for Research and History of Texts (IRHT-CNRS). It provides access to a wide selection of manuscripts from the Middle Ages to the 16th century. The IRHT carries out

<sup>17</sup> <https://gallica.bnf.fr/GallicaEnChiffres>

photographic campaigns to digitise heritage collections scattered throughout France, except those of the BnF.

[INITIALE](#) is an online catalogue of illuminated manuscripts from the Middle Ages, mainly those kept in public libraries in France, excluding the French National Libraries (BnF).

[The Heritage of the Printed Book Database \(HPB\)](#). French Academic Libraries contribute to this database which “is a steadily growing collection of files of catalogue records from major European and North American research libraries covering items of European printing of the hand-press period (c.1455-c.1830) integrated into one file. This makes it possible for information to be retrieved in one single search across all files” (CERL, 2018).

[Joconde database](#) is the grouping of several catalogues of collections from French museums. It is the result of a partnership between the French museum service and the participating museums. With nearly 600,000 records of objects of all kinds (archaeology, fine arts, ethnology, history, science and technology, etc.), this catalogue is accessible to everyone. Thematic tours, zooms and virtual exhibitions enhance this ensemble.

[Patrimoine numérique](#) (digital heritage) is a portal created by the Ministry of Culture. It is a national union catalogue, a tool for steering digitisation policies. This heritage portal aims to promote France's digitised collections and promote access to digitised resources. The collections identified are the result of all the initiatives, whether they come from the State (national digitisation plan of the Ministry of Culture, programmes of major institutions, etc.), local authorities, associations or foundations. The catalogue is the national component of the European [Michael project](#), which is a Multilingual Inventory of Cultural Heritage in Europe.

[Public libraries in Paris](#) have a prestigious collection of several million documents (manuscripts, belonging to cultural heritage accessible to all through an [online catalogue](#). Around 50 000 of this collection has been digitised and are also accessible [online](#). Many [exhibitions](#) are regularly organized to promote the cultural heritage collections of these libraries.

[Diplomatic Digital Library](#) (Bibliothèque diplomatique numérique). As part of cooperation between the BnF and the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE), the Digital Diplomatic Library was inaugurated on Mars 2018. Consisting of a collection of several thousand digitised documents from the Ministry and documents from Gallica, selected for their heritage interest (diplomatic history, treaties, agreements and conventions, French protectorates and mandates, foreign and intergovernmental official publications).

#### Virtual Exhibitions

[Exhibitions: the virtual galleries of the Bibliothèque nationale de France](#). On this portal we can find all BnF virtual exhibitions. The exhibitions are grouped thematically: Gallery of books and writing, Gallery of writers and storytellers, Gallery of History of representations, Gallery of the arts and architecture; Gallery of photography, gallery of maps and globes. Each topic present at least 4 exhibitions.

Such a large number of libraries (public or academic) in France offer virtual exhibitions that it is quite impossible to identify all of them. As an example, we can mention the exhibitions at [Bibliothèque Mazarine](#), which is an academic library, and [Lyon's libraries](#).

#### Portals or websites

Some of the selected portals include a digital library, but as they enclose other information, we classified them in portals.

[Lectura+ portal](#) results from the collaboration between eight communities in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region. This portal has been online since May 2017 and allows individuals and professionals to access heritage funds: old regional newspaper pages, images, portraits, old maps, archives, etc. More than 60 organisations (Libraries, Archives, Bookshops, Association, Schools, ...) are contributing to the

enrichment of this portal. Each month, one of the partners publishes a [booktube](#)<sup>18</sup> which highlights an item from the heritage funds of a library in the region. They also publish [flashbacks](#) from heritage. For each flashback, a youth illustrator visits the heritage funds of a library. From his discoveries, they create a drawing echoing them. It then becomes a digital album enriched with the [Whisperies](#) tool.

[Biblissima](#). This portal invites to discover the history of some of the texts and books that have been written, translated, illuminated, collected or inventoried from Antiquity to the 18th century. It brings together the digital resources of Gallica (BnF), the Virtual Library of Medieval Manuscripts (IRHT-CNRS) and many other digital libraries around the world to build a very rich database of this period in the West.

[The treasures of higher education libraries](#).<sup>19</sup> This portal presents an overview of the remarkable documents held in the libraries of French higher education institutions. It allows to discover, in images, a selection of books, maps, photographs, rare, precious and historical objects from the documentation services. Higher education in France is rich in more than 500 libraries, which make more than 47 million printed collections available to the public, including 6 million heritage documents, as well as several million electronic resources online.

[NORMANNIA le patrimoine écrit de Normandie](#) (Normannia the written heritage of Normandia). This site was created in 2016 with the support of Europe, the State and the Normandy Region. It is administered by Normandie Livre et Lecture. As specified on the homepage of the website, for many years, librarians and archivists in Normandy have taken particular care to collect and classify books and journals relating to the culture, history and heritage of their region and communicate the findings to their users. From the first prints to the most recent publications, all the region's memory is concentrated in their collections. The Normannia site gathers and collects bibliographic references from libraries in Normandy. It is gradually building a digital library on the heritage, history and culture of Normandy at different times. It offers all types of documents: old books, periodicals, graphic documents, editions and local printing.

Blogs, Journals, Booklets

[Droit, patrimoine & culture](#) (Law, heritage & culture). This blog presents the work of a group of researchers specialising in art and culture law on a national and international level and in a comparative law perspective.

[Participer à l'inventaire](#) (Participate in the inventory). The inventory of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) has been going on in France since 2008 under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture. This blog responds to the need not only to provide the collected data but also to reflect on their social meanings, uses, contexts and challenges. Idemec is the name of the research unit welcoming this project together with the Sound Archive of the MMSH.

This booklet responds to the need not only to provide the data collected but also to reflect on their social meanings, uses, contexts and challenges.

[Patrimoines du Sud](#) (Heritage of South). Created in 2015, the objective of this journal is to contribute to the dissemination of research on the heritage of the South of France in universities, research laboratories and more generally to all Internet users.

[IN SITU](#) "Published by the Ministry of Culture since 2004, In Situ offers all heritage professionals a means to distribute the results of their research into heritage knowledge, conservation and promotion."

[La lettre de l'OCIM](#)<sup>20</sup> (The Letter of the Museum Office for Cooperation and Information). This publication "is a professional journal published by the Museum Office for Cooperation and Information

<sup>18</sup> BookTube is a specific subset of the YouTube community that focuses on the topic of books.

<sup>19</sup> Les trésors des bibliothèques de l'enseignement supérieur

<sup>20</sup> Office de coopération et d'information muséographiques (OCIM)

which, for over 20 years, has offered a mouthpiece for the whole museum sector. Every two months, it presents the current state of affairs in museums and cultural, academic and technical institutions, publishing articles written by specialists of museology, museography and conservation.”

**[La revue de la BNU<sup>21</sup>](#)** (The review of the National and University Library of Strasbourg). The objective of this publication “is to showcase, in conjunction with exhibitions, conferences or symposia, written and graphic heritage in an original way, by going beyond the context of libraries and the book industry to explore broader scientific, cultural and social questions. Its coverage is international in scope. The BNU’s content is both artistic and scientific, concerned with both past and future. Drawing upon the uniqueness of the BNU’s collections, it aims to provide the world of French libraries with a unique forum for reflection.”

**[CEROART](#)** “is a web journal and platform for multidisciplinary approaches into the issues of conservation, exhibition and restoration of art objects. It is also a forum for historians and art historians, philosophers and museologists, heritage scientists, curators, restorers, representatives of the museum and students in any one of these disciplines to share ideas and interact.”

**[Documentation et Patrimoine](#)** (Documentation and heritage). Created by DRAC Alsace, the purpose of this booklet is to provide partner structures (universities, archives, museums, associations, etc.) on issues related to regional heritage and its documentation, taking as a starting point the collections of the Heritage Service. It presents news and papers related to Alsatian heritage and its documentation, as well as a reflection on methods for classifying, inventorying and indexing unpublished sources in relation to heritage.

**[Fondation des Sciences du Patrimoine](#)** (Foundation for Cultural Heritage Sciences). “This blog presents the results of research projects led by the Foundation for Cultural Heritage Sciences. These works, mainly PhDs and postdoctoral projects, explore cultural heritage from diverse points of view, from physico-chemical composition to historical and socio-cultural significance. They also deal with conservation-restoration issues, as well as diffusion of knowledge on cultural heritage.”

**[Les carnets de la sonothèque](#)** (The notebooks of the sound library). The MMSH<sup>22</sup> sound library gathers sound heritage recordings from the Mediterranean area with ethnological, linguistic, historical, musicological or literary value. To develop access to these archives, which document fields not very well covered by conventional sources, the sound library team is actively monitoring the Digital Humanities field and shares it with its public through this booklet. Some of the records are accessible on the Ganoub database (South in Arabic), on Calames, Isidore, the oral heritage portal, Europeana and CLARIN.

**[Epitomé](#)** is the official blog of the History and Heritage Collections of Nancy Public Library. It informs about research projects or random finds in the librarians and researchers work, enlightening the history of libraries in Nancy through the ages.

**[Manuscrits juridiques du Midi](#)**. This booklet has been created to share contents, especially publications, news, events and discoveries, related to the academic study of the production and illumination of legal manuscripts in southern France (13th-15th centuries).

**[Libraria](#)**. For the history of ancient libraries. “Libraria is a blog dedicated to library history, from the Early Middle Ages up to the Modern Period, and the provenance of medieval manuscripts. It is a direct successor of (parts of) the website [www.libraria.fr](http://www.libraria.fr), launched in 2009. It is part of the scholarly watch of the team “Codicologie, histoire des bibliothèques et héraldique” of the IRHT”.

**[Bibliomab : le monde autour des livres anciens et des bibliothèques](#)** (Bibliomab: the world around ancient books and libraries). It is a librarian’s personal blog. About this blog, he explained that, since 2008, the BiblioMab blog has been featuring articles on old books and libraries, drawing on the

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<sup>21</sup> Bibliothèque nationale et universitaire de Strasbourg

<sup>22</sup> Maison méditerranéenne des sciences de l’homme (Mediterranean House of Human Sciences)

heritage resources available online and elsewhere, with a desire to share and be curious. This is a simple way of promoting and mediating the documentary heritage that is presented to you here.

### [Search Engine Collections](#)

The Ministry of Culture has created a semantic search engine that gives access to its digitised cultural heritage. It indexes all databases and resources internal to the Ministry of Culture but also those of local authorities, associations or other institutions that wish to be referenced in the engine. In total, more than 60 databases can be searched. It provides free access to more than 7.4 million documents and more than 5.6 million images. All artistic and cultural fields are covered.

### [Open Heritage Platform \(POP\)](#)

Developed by the Ministry of Culture, the POP platform brings together the digital content of French heritage in order to make it accessible and available to the greatest number of people. It is still in beta version and allows exploring more than 3 million documents. It regroups many databases: [Joconde](#), [Palissy](#), Mérimée, Mémoire, MNR Rose-Valland, Enluminures and MUSEO.

### Wikipedia

Several heritage libraries have used Wikipedia to promote themselves and their collections. This idea is clever given the popularity of Wikipedia and its omnipresence in search engine results. For example [Bibliothèque de l'hôtel de ville de Paris](#), [Bibliothèque de Rouen](#), [Bibliothèque historique de la ville de Paris](#), [Bibliothèque littéraire Jacques Doucet](#), [Bibliothèque Mazarine](#), [Bibliothèque municipale de Chambéry](#), [Bibliothèque municipale de Versailles](#), [Bibliothèque municipale du Havre](#), [Bibliothèque patrimoniale et d'étude](#), [Fonds patrimoniaux des bibliothèques de l'université de Bordeaux](#), [Les Dominicains de Colmar](#).

Libraries are also using Wikimedia Commons as well as archives and museums. For that purpose, we can look at [GLAM in France](#).

### Short Videos

These video aims to enhance written cultural heritage. For some of them, they are part of the action plan for written heritage.

- Video presenting the history of the library, the collections and the services.  
[Bibliothèque Mazarine](#), [La bibliothèque musée de l'opéra Garnier](#), [La bibliothèque historique de Paris](#), [La bibliothèque de l' Arsenal de Paris](#), ...
- Video presenting the collections of a Library  
[Fonds patrimoniaux médiathèque de Poitiers](#) (Heritage funds Poitiers Library)
- Video exploring a historical topic based on heritage in libraries or archives  
[Archives départementales de Charente-Maritime](#)  
[Médiathèque de la Rochelle. Presentation of the heritage collections of Michel-Crépeau multimedia library in the agglomeration of La Rochelle \(17\)](#)
- A specific subject concerning written heritage.  
[The place of cartoons in the press](#) and [Literary serials in the 19th century](#) by [Occitania Book and Reading](#)
- A material to accompany an exhibition  
Webserie [Sciences pour tous](#) (Sciences for all)

When we examine the number of hits for each video, it will be interesting to promote these videos to reach their aim.

### [Library initiatives on social media](#)

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest are used by many libraries. These communication channels are used to promote cultural heritage funds. They also announce exhibitions or special events related



to their library. Social media offer direct interaction with the followers, and which allows libraries to enlarge their public and gain in visibility.

### Tools

Many tools are developed to enhance or work with cultural heritage. We can cite:

[Aioli](#). “This tool, which is anchored in the development of citizen science, aims to create new methodologies for multidisciplinary work, and put forward new scenarios of comparative and cooperative analysis of heritage objects”. This platform is developed in the [MAP](#) laboratory (Models and simulations for Architecture and Cultural Heritage), a joint research unit of the [CNRS](#) (National Centre for Scientific Research) and the Ministry of Culture.

[Docexplorer](#) which is a free, open-source, cross-platform software suite enabling anyone to create rich interactive digital books. This software, intended for archivists, librarians, and historians, is the result of an academic project initiated by computer science laboratories [LITIS](#) and EDA [EDA](#) (University of Kent, the U.K.) in 2009.

[Gallica studio](#). Opened in 2017, Gallica Studio is part of the school's public policy. It aims to promote the appropriation of Gallica by its users. The objective is to encourage the emergence of new uses of common heritage online and to create tools for them.

### Conclusion

Through this state of the art we have traced the evolution of the State's policy in favour of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage. As we noticed, the concept of cultural heritage spans many fields and it is difficult to trace all the aspects. In the French law, there is no precise definition of cultural heritage and more often the UNESCO definition is used. Since the 1960s, several efforts have been made to preserve and enhance cultural heritage, the most recent being the lotto for heritage.

Written and graphic heritage, which is the main focus of this report, is decentralised throughout French regions, and the libraries managing these collections are under the responsibility of local authorities, themselves under the surveillance of the State and, more specifically, the Ministry of Culture. Many actors come into play to ensure that the State's policy and strategy are relayed, like the Directorate of Regional Cultural Affairs (DRAC), the BnF and the book and reading agencies. In addition to managing the nation's heritage, the BnF provides expertise to regional libraries and archives in the field of heritage preservation and digitisation. The Gallica digital library is one of the most important in Europe and, with other European libraries, the BnF is one of the main sources for the European library, Europeana.

The action plan, introduced in 2004 and still active, has made it possible to finance several projects to digitise heritage holdings by libraries and institutions in the French regions, which has resulted in a significant number of digital libraries. It has also made it possible to finance projects to enhance heritage, like the many videos that highlight or present different aspects of heritage. Unfortunately, these videos, though interesting, are not very much visualised. It is important to set up a communication strategy around these productions in order to make them more visible, otherwise this will be all wasted money.

All these, plus many initiatives and events on a national and local level, help bring cultural heritage available to the general public. As it is known, written heritage is a common good and must be shared. The ability to access knowledge is a human right and the large number of heritage collections accessible online via the Internet promotes this right. Despite all these efforts and despite the establishment of the general inventory to identify cultural heritage, part of it remains unknown.

Many research centres are active with cultural heritage as their main focus. Nine of them are under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture. Their research is in line with innovation for the restoration and preservation of objects belonging to the cultural heritage. Several calls for research projects, both

French and European, contribute to the dynamization of this research and several theses are being prepared in this field. Moreover, this is reflected by a large number of journals, blogs and research notebooks accessible online covering a majority of topics related to heritage. It is also the case with conferences and study days.

Heritage, of a global or local historical interest, makes it possible to bring audiences closer together around significant objects from the history of their territory and thus to be a vector of social cohesion. “It is by taking heritage out of its reserves and transmitting it to the public that we will avoid it being perceived as an impedimentum, a financial pit or a cash cow” (Balley, 2008).

Report compiled by Joumana Boustany

## Expressions related to cultural heritage.

Bien culturel	Cultural property
Patrimoine agricole	Agricultural heritage
Patrimoine archéologique	Archaeological heritage
Patrimoine architectural	Architectural heritage
Patrimoine artistique	Artistic heritage
Patrimoine bâti	Built heritage
Patrimoine balnéaire	Seaside heritage
Patrimoine biologique	Biological heritage
Patrimoine culturel écrit	Written heritage
Patrimoine culturel ou Héritage culturel	Cultural heritage
Patrimoine ethnographique	Ethnographical heritage
Patrimoine ethnologique	Ethnological heritage
Patrimoine faunistique et floristique	Fauna and flora heritage
Patrimoine graphique	Graphic heritage
Patrimoine géologique	Geological heritage
Patrimoine historique	Historical heritage
Patrimoine immatériel	Intangible heritage
Patrimoine immobilier	Heritage property
Patrimoine intellectuel	Intellectual heritage
Patrimoine industriel et technique	Industrial and technical heritage
Patrimoine livresque	Book heritage
Patrimoine logiciel	Software heritage
Patrimoine maritime	Maritime heritage
Patrimoine matériel	Tangible heritage
Patrimoine minéralogique	Mineralogical heritage
Patrimoine mobilier	Movable heritage
Patrimoine national	National heritage
Patrimoine naturel	Natural heritage
Patrimoine paysager	Landscape heritage
Patrimoine piscicole et des milieux aquatiques	Fish and aquatic environment heritage
Patrimoine religieux	Religious heritage
Patrimoine rural	Rural heritage
Patrimoine vivant (EPV)	Living heritage

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