

Is there a need for a national information system?

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Difficulties faced by Argentina regarding documentation policies are countless. The basic conception of a national information system which comprises all the information protection services (libraries, files and museums), has not experienced any improvement since a promising starting point encouraged by Domingo F. Sarmiento in the XIX century. The reasons are unknown.

From the early XX century, the implementation of documentation tasks has been tainted by a very typical argentine domestic outlook. This negative aspect has been reinforced by a considerable absence of professional training which was only pointed out by rare and specific efforts during the 1970's and 1980's.

It is difficult to impose a national information system within the political sphere since a homogeneous level for the information services cannot be proved. Thus, libraries have always been a burden for the budgets and in more than one occasion, they were neglected in favour of "urgent" academic and political needs. Nor is it possible to determine the reasons for the permanent argentine political isolation concerning the institutions which represent the foundation of the so called information society.

The study of the implementation of national information system processes and to imagine its advantages may be a fascinating task. Likewise, it is very interesting to learn about the recent efforts of pioneers who announced a more promising future in terms of information methods. A greater awareness

could be achieved, first among librarians, file and museum experts, as well as politicians and the entire argentine society. To this end, the isolated aspects of this issue should be united and its promotion should be undertaken.

We do not intend to make politics appear as the only responsible for the deterioration. It is not aware of the values of libraries because their strength (that of repositories) is inferior and weak. Though we strongly believe that it is highly impaired by the inadequate practices of those low in the scale (the librarians) and those above (the politicians).

The electronic symposium may generate a larval process, the contents of which are published in this issue of the REVISTA and are based on historical data and present ideas. This process represents the foundations which we consider as the starting point for the renovation of this issue.