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Universal Bibliographic Control at the crossroads: the challenges of unifying IFLA bibliographic standards

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Nélida Piñon Personal Collection:

Cataloguing Documents from the Nélida Piñon Library at Cervantes Institute Rio de Janeiro:
A Case Study

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Source: Arquivo Nélida Piñon. Photo: Naná Moraes

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Introduction

- In recent decades, the incorporation of writers' libraries into public and state library collections has occurred very frequently.

- In relation to this movement, Krtalic, Dinneen, Liew, Goulding consider that:

  - People of cultural significance sometimes keep extensive personal collections that attest to their life's work and their influence on society and even capture the social and political milieu of their time. Sometimes such collections are donated to organizations that preserve and make those 150 library trends/fall 2021 collections accessible to others, like national memory or heritage institutions (KRTALIC, DINNEEN; LIEW; GOULDING, 2021, p. 148-149).

Objective

- This work aims to present some of the characteristics of the cataloguing process of Nélida Piñon's Personal Collection and the cataloguer's skills profile to deal with personal collections.

Cervantes Institute

- Spanish public institution created in 1991 with the mission of promoting and disseminating the Spanish language and Hispanic cultures around the world.

- To achieve its mission and objectives, the institute has three pillars of action:

    1) The **Academic Area** which offers Spanish courses for foreigners, proficiency exams (DELE and SIELE) and didactic updating of Spanish teachers.

    2) The **Cultural Area**, responsible for carrying out cultural activities by means of musical presentations, art exhibitions, film, shows etc.

    3) The **Library and Documentation Area**, through Cervantes Institute Libraries Network, whose collection constitutes an essential instrument to discover and learn about the Hispanic Culture, besides offering documental and bibliographical support to research and academic production on the Spanish and Hispanic American Cultures.

Red de Bibliotecas del Instituto Cervantes – RBIC
The Instituto Cervantes Libraries Network – RBIC

- The largest international network of Spanish libraries in the world.

- It forms part of the Spanish State library system.

- It is a fundamental and indispensable piece for the organisation to successfully achieve its objectives.

- There are currently 60 libraries spread over five continents in multicultural and multilingual spaces.

- The Nélida Piñon Library in Rio de Janeiro is one of its eight information units in Brazil.

Nélida Piñon Library

- The RBIC libraries are usually named after a representative author of the Hispanic culture.

- As Cervantes Institute is a meeting point between Spanish cultures and those of the countries where it is present, exceptionally the library in Rio de Janeiro was named after the Galician-Brazilian writer Nélida Piñon.

- In gratitude, the writer donated her personal library to Cervantes Institute Rio de Janeiro.

Nélida Piñon (1937-2022)

- Galician-Brazilian novelist and short-story writer.

- Her literary work has been translated and published in over 30 countries.

- First woman to chair the Brazilian Academy of Letters (1996-1997).

- First Brazilian and first woman to receive the **Juan Rulfo Prize for Literature for Latin America and the Caribbean** 1995.

- In 2003 received the **International Prize Menéndez Pelayo.**

- In 2005 Spain's **Prince of Asturias Prize for Literature.**

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The Personal Collection Nélida Piñon

- Nélida Piñon's Personal Library is a legacy that brings together facets of the writer that bear witness to her experience in different spheres (personal, professional, historical, literary, cultural and social).

- It also testifies to Nélida Piñon's relationships and connections with the Ibero-American universe during the 20th and 21st centuries.

- It contains around 8,000 documents from the most diverse areas of knowledge, with emphasis on the Humanities and in several languages.

Source: Nélida Piñon Collection

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The Personal Collection Nélida Piñon: Cataloguing Project

Because of these aspects, the Department of Libraries and Documentation of Cervantes Institute established:

- The guidelines for the technical processing.

- The professional profile:

    a) Knowledge of the Spanish library management system AbsysNet;

    b) Fluency in Spanish;

    c) Knowledge of other languages (English, French, German, Galician, Catalan and Basque, among others);

    d) Experience in cataloguing (ISBD, MARC21 and RDA);

    e) Experience in classification (UDC);

    f) General knowledge of Hispanic and universal culture and literature.

Source: Nélida Piñon Collection

The Personal Collection Nélida Piñon

- It was observed that this personal collection presents particularities that require a more detailed descriptive representation so that the informational richness of each document is reflected in the cataloguing form and, consequently, in the collective catalogue.

- Some of these particularities are presented below.

- The data shown are partial, as the Cataloguing Project is ongoing.

Source: Nélida Piñon Collection

1) Diversity of Knowledge Areas and Fields

- Nélida Piñon Collection shows the author's different interests by bringing together a diversity of themes and subjects from almost all areas of knowledge.

Graphic 1 – Knowledge Areas

Source: From the authors

11
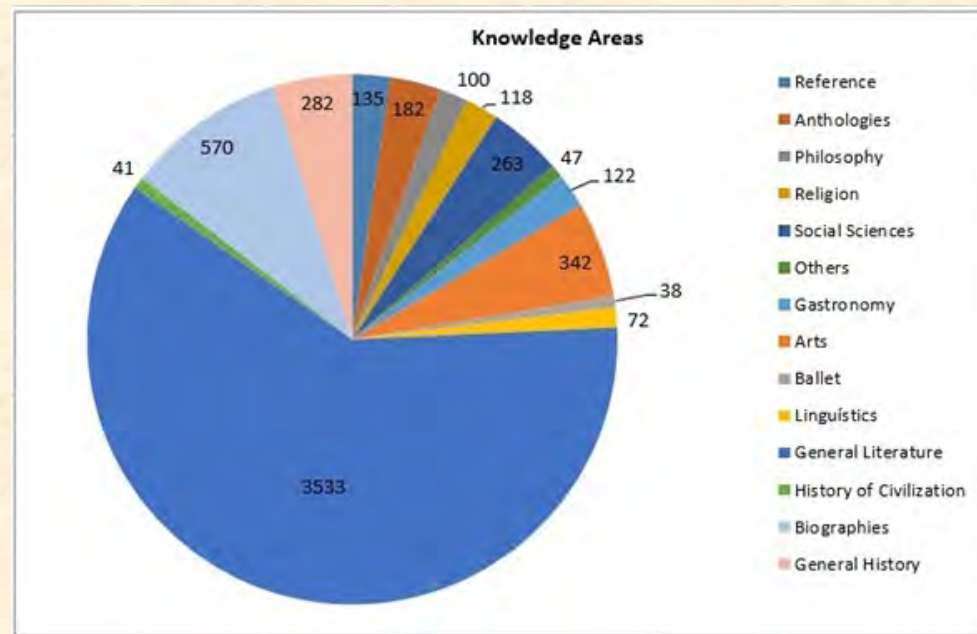
2) Language Diversity

- The collection contains works and handwritten dedications in several languages.

- Nélida Piñon's translations into Galician, Catalan, Spanish, French, English, Italian, Polish, Russian.

Graphic 2 – Languages
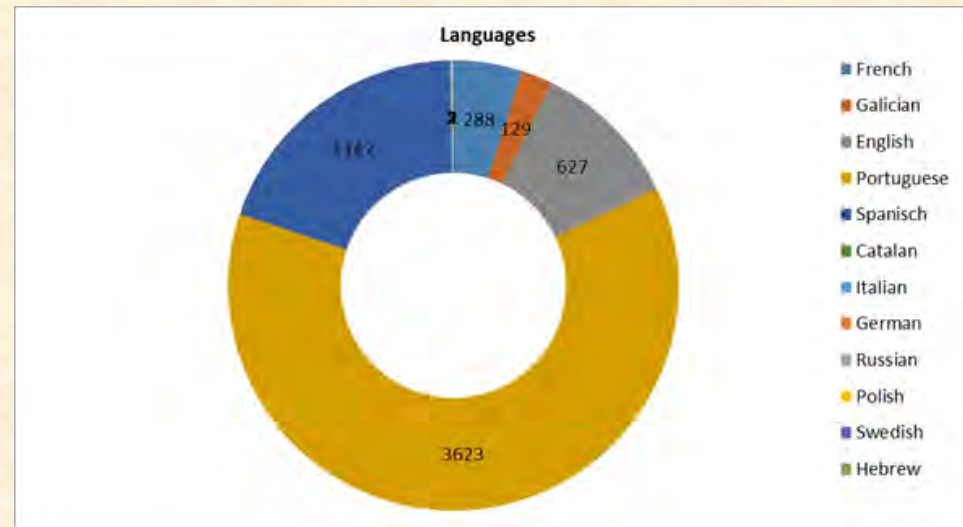
Source: From the authors

3) Marginalia

- Much of the collection contains:

- Notes, annotations, comments and markings in the author's own handwriting, dedications and handwritten signatures.

- Marks of provenance: stamps, seals, bookplates, etc.

Graphic 3 – Marginalia
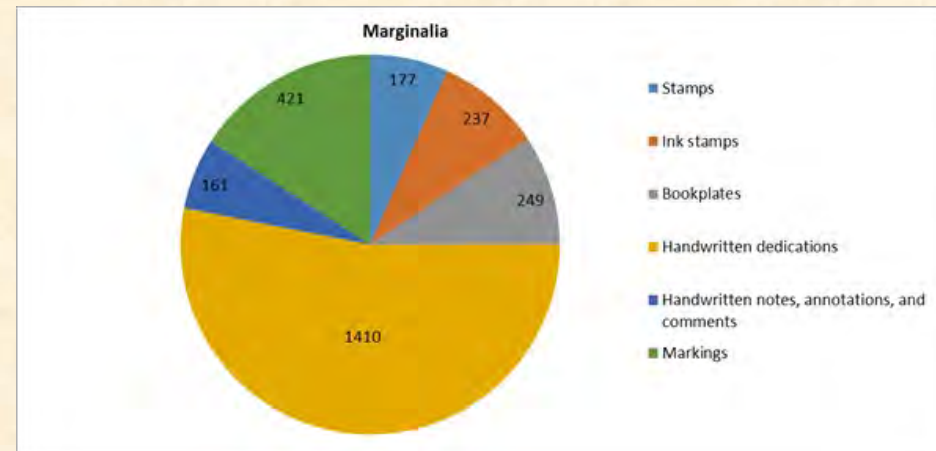
Source: From the authors

4) Thematic Sections

- Nélida Piñon requested the creation of the section "Galicia de Nélida" [Galicia of Nélida], which brings together all the works on Galician culture, language and literature.

- This led the cataloguing team to create other sections whose themes are important for research into the work and life of Nélida Piñon.

Graphic 4 – Thematic Sections

Source: From the authors

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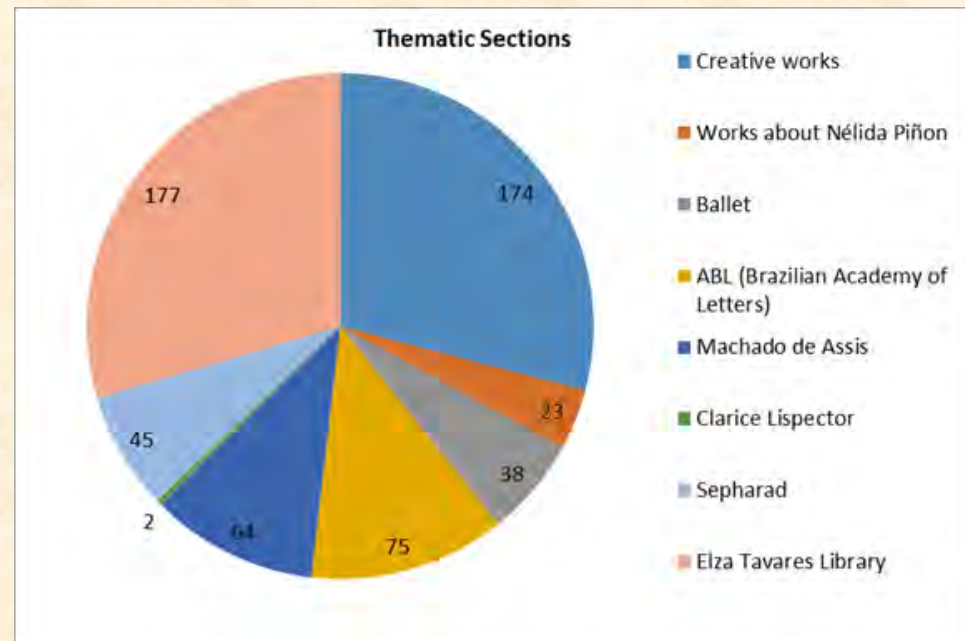
Thematic Sections

- **Works by Nélida Piñon** – literary production of Nélida Piñon, her translated works and those in which her name appears as collaborator and/or organiser.

- **Works on Nélida Piñon** – secondary literature on her writings. It includes works in which quotations from her appear, dedications printed to her, etc.

- **Ballet** – Nélida Piñon's second great passion after literature. It is composed of works on Ballet, programmes of Ballet seasons at the Municipal Theatre of Rio de Janeiro from 1948 to 1957. The first Spanish translations of works on Ballet published in Argentina, and handwritten autographs of great ballerinas.

- **ABL – Brazilian Academy of Letters** – It aggregates the publications of the Brazilian Academy of Letters of which Nélida Piñon was the first woman to preside.

- **Machado de Assis** – It brings together works by and about Joaquim Maria Machado de Assis, founder of the Brazilian Academy of Letters and Nélida Piñon's favourite author and reference.

- **Clarice Lispector** – Composed of works with handwritten dedications from Nélida Piñon's personal friend.

- **Sepharad** – Dedicated to the Jewish culture that Nélida appreciated so much. Also includes literary works by Jewish Brazilian writers such as Clarice Lispector and Moacir Scliar.

- **Elza Tavares Library** - This section contains works from the personal library of the lexicographer Elza Tavares, inherited by Nélida Piñon.
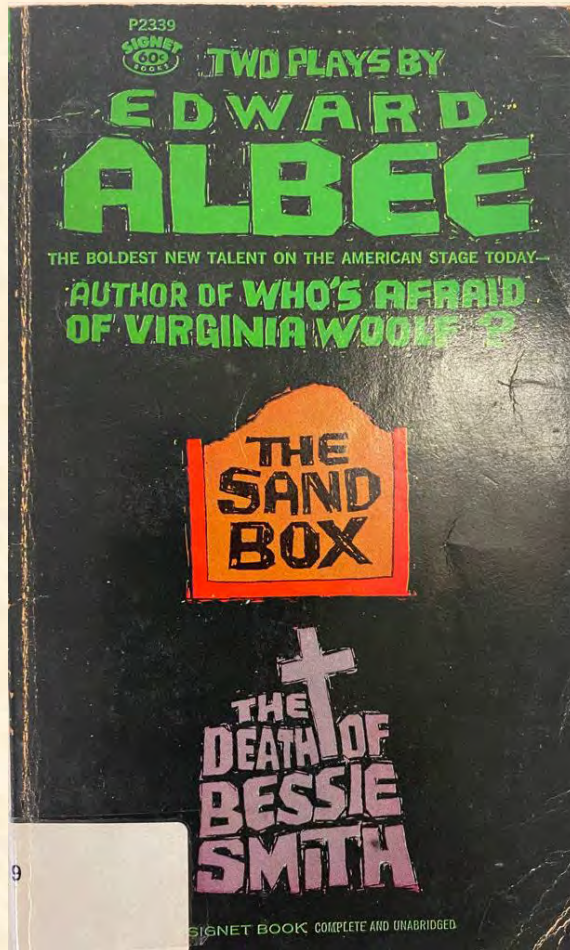
Particularities

- These particularities constitute a wealth of information that becomes a challenge for the cataloguing team.

- Personal collections require an in-depth level of detail according to each work.

- In the specialised literature there is still no consensus on the standards to be adopted for the description of dedications, comments, annotations, markings and provenance marks.

Dedications

Source: Nélida Piñon Collection

Comments

Source: Nélida Piñon Collection
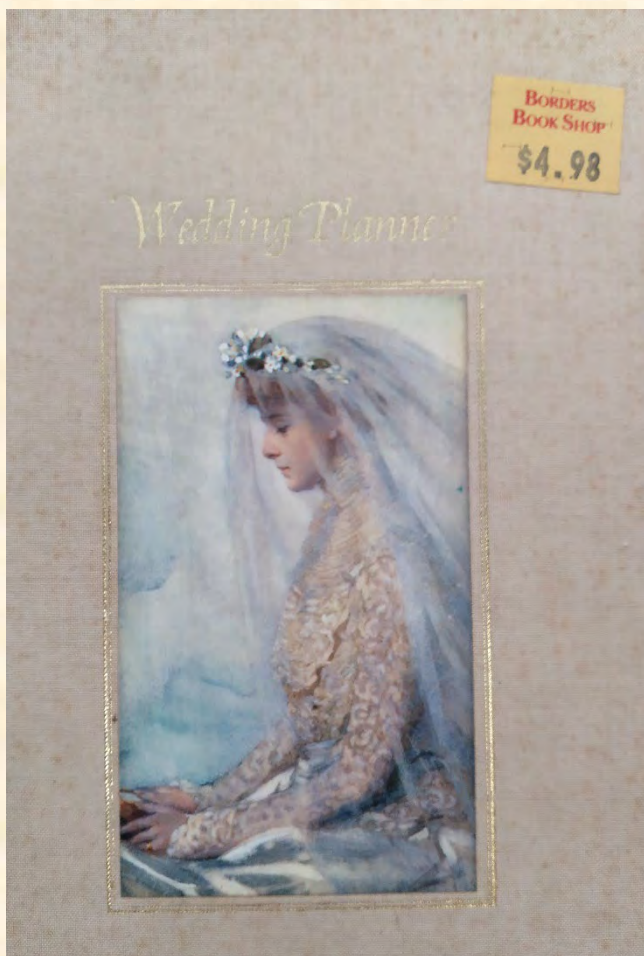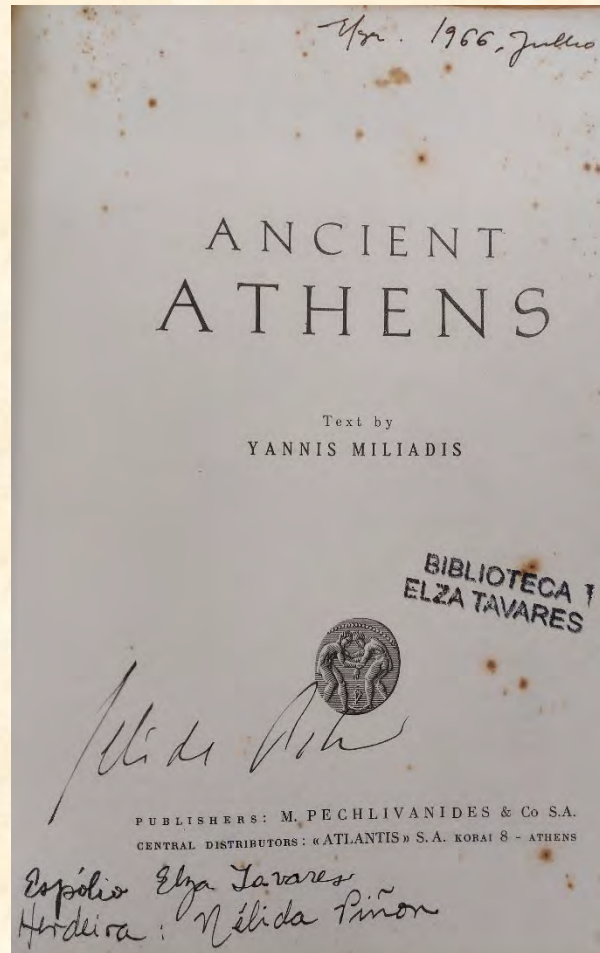
Markings and Annotations
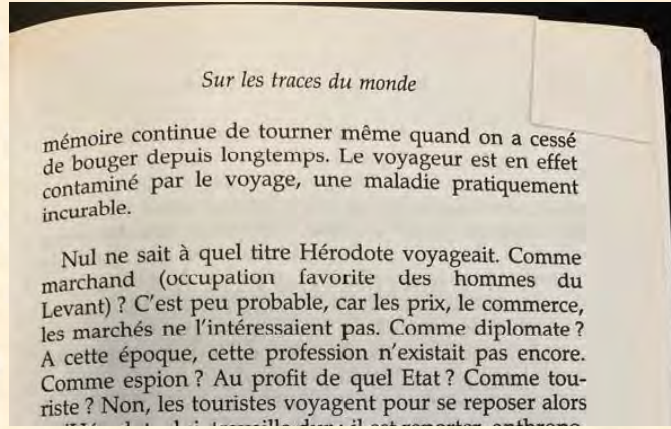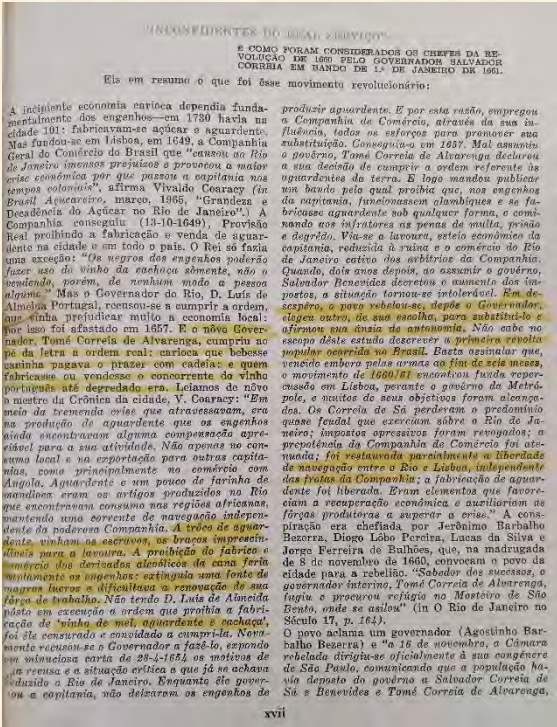
Source: Nélida Piñon Collection

Provenance Marks

Source: Nélida Piñon Collection

Inheritated Collection

Source: Nélida Piñon Collection

Cataloguing such Particularities in a Libraries Network

• MARC 21 establishes field 561 for a provenance mark note, which contains information on the previous owners and depositories of the document in question, from the time of its creation until its incorporation into the collection.

• Although the system adopted by RBIC - AbsysNet - is structured in MARC 21, the fact that this is the collective catalogue of a network made up of 60 libraries in five continents makes it impossible to fill in this field.

• This information could lead to a dubious interpretation by the users, i.e., that the document would be available in all the libraries of the network.

• The solution found was the detailing in the copy file of the IC Rio de Janeiro unit, since it has a MARC Notes field in which these data are inserted and the system allows them to be retrieved when searching the collective catalogue, so that it is clear to the user the unit in which that specific copy is located.

Cataloguing such Particularities in a Libraries Network

• Regarding the description of dedications, comments, annotations, markings and marks of origin, there is still no consensus in the literature on the standards to be adopted in relation to this diversity of informational details.

• Thus, it was found that field 561 of MARC 21 partially fulfils this requirement, but does not yet offer the possibility of listing the level of specificity of these particularities present in the Collection Nélida Piñon.

• For RBIC, the provenance data found are relevant because they personalise and characterise each work in this collection.

Cataloguing such Particularities in a Libraries Network

Cataloguing such Particularities in a Libraries Network

Fonte: https://catalogo-bibliotecas.cervantes.es

Particularities

- The diversity of the collection led the cataloguing team to search the specialised literature for rules and standards of descriptive and thematic representation that could meet these peculiarities of the collection, such as cataloguing rules (ISBD, AACR2, RAK, RDA), DCRM(B): Descriptive Cataloguing of Rare Materials (Books), and bibliographic data formats (MARC21, IBERMARC).

- This led to the preparation of a glossary of the particularities of the collection and the typological standardisation of the provenance marks on the cataloguing form.

- The daily experience with Nélida Piñon's collection revealed a series of requirements that should be contemplated in the training of professionals working with personal collections.

- Searches were made in the literature for the skills needed to catalogue this type of collection, as well as exchanging experience and good practices with professionals in institutions that house personal collections.

- The result of this search was two documents on the competences of information professionals, drawn up by two reference associations in the field of information and libraries: the **Special Libraries Association (SLA)** and the **European Council of Information Associations (ECIA)**, which are presented below.

SLA Competencies

- The document lists the six core competences:
  - 1) Information and knowledge services;
  - 2) Information and knowledge systems and technologies;
  - 3) Information and knowledge resources;
  - 4) Information and data retrieval and analysis;
  - 5) Organisation of data, information and knowledge assets;
  - 6) Information ethics.
  - In addition to these, the text mentions key enabling competencies for the information professional such as: critical thinking, lifelong learning, business ethics or project management, among others.

Table 1 – SLA Competencies

Competencies for Information Professionals	Elements of this competency include:
1: Information and Knowledge Services	Recognizing and articulating information and knowledge needs;
	Analyzing information and knowledge flows relevant to the context of community characteristics and organizational goals;
	Enabling the sharing of knowledge through interpersonal contacts and relationships as well as by using digital or electronic systems and processes;
	Prioritizing information services to meet the organization's most critical operational or strategic needs;
	Advocating for the effective use and management of information systems and processes;
	Teaching, training, and developing information literacy and associated skills for stakeholders;
	Using information management skills to learn about a domain, discipline or industry;
	Applying subject domain knowledge to the work environment to support the organizational mission; and
	Understanding the varied aspects of human information behavior.
2: Information and Knowledge Systems and Technology	Engaging multiple stakeholders to recommend the information architecture needed by the entire organization;
	Selecting and implementing information and knowledge systems;
	Selecting and using information management tools, such as library management systems, content management systems, social media platforms, and information retrieval and analysis tools
	Identifying systems and tools to meet requirements of specific communities;
	Designing interfaces for an intuitive user experience;
	Coding using appropriate scripting and other tools;
	Curating, publishing, and/or packaging information in usable formats; and
	Continuously evaluating information and knowledge systems and technologies.
3: Information and Knowledge Resources	Establishing a budget for resources and advocating for allocation of funds;
	Aligning the strategy for managing information resources to support the strategic goals of the parent organization and community needs;
	Systematically evaluating new or unfamiliar resources by applying analytical frameworks and methods;
	Delivering authoritative information resources to meet the needs of a particular audience, cover a certain topic, field, or discipline, or serve a particular purpose;
	Managing and delivering relevant resources of all types, media, and formats, including published and unpublished, internal to the organization as well as external, digital, textual, numeric, and visual;
	Negotiating appropriate pricing and terms and conditions for the licensing or acquisition of information resources;
	Continually analyzing the effectiveness of the portfolio of resources under management, making adjustments as needed to ensure relevancy and provide users with optimum decision-support content;
	Identifying experts and sources of expertise and facilitating knowledge sharing within organizations;
	Auditing and mapping information and knowledge assets available within the organization in order to advise users about resources relevant to various business activities; and
	Teaching others to critically evaluate information and information sources.
4: Information and Data Retrieval and Analysis	Interviewing and consulting with community members to identify and clarify information and knowledge needs;
	Developing sophisticated search and retrieval strategies to discover and retrieve information from varied systems and repositories;
	Understanding search engines and information retrieval systems, including the unique functionalities provided by different systems, and applying this understanding to information search and retrieval projects;
	Assessing the veracity or quality of information and its underlying sources in search engines and information retrieval systems;
	Using appropriate data analysis, text analysis, visualization, and similar tools to analyze information in order to extract insights and meaning;
	Communicating the results of information retrieval and analysis projects in a way that is usable and actionable by the intended audience; and
	Teaching all competencies in a variety of formal and informal settings.
5: Organization of Data, Information, and Knowledge Assets	Applying standard professional practices for descriptive and subject metadata to information assets;
	Developing custom metadata schemas;
	Developing custom taxonomies and ontologies as local circumstances warrant
	Developing retention and destruction policies and procedures based on legal requirements and organizational operational needs;
	Training others in effective practices for information organization and management;
	Applying quality control practices to ensure the appropriate application of policies and practices for information organization and management; and
	Coordinating the development and implementation of archival systems and processes that are customized to support organizational needs.
6: Information Ethics	Recognizing ethical issues relative to information handling, including but not limited to privacy and confidentiality, information security, intellectual property and copyright; and intellectual freedom;
	Modeling ethical information behavior;
	Teaching, influencing, and coaching others;
	Contributing to organizational policies, procedures, and other initiatives; and
	Assessing and auditing the organizational implementation of information ethics.
ENABLING COMPETENCIES	Critical thinking, including qualitative and quantitative reasoning;
	Initiative, adaptability, flexibility, creativity, innovation, and problem solving;
	Effective oral and written communication, including influencing skills;
	Relationship building, networking, and collaboration, including the ability to foster respect, inclusion, and communication among diverse individuals;
	Marketing
	Leadership, management, and project management;
	Life-long learning;
	Instructional design and development, teaching, and mentoring; and
	Business ethics.

Source: SLA Competencies (2016)

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ECIA Competencies

- The document brings together the competences and skills required of European information and documentation professionals.

- It is structured in 33 fields of competence, divided into 5 groups:
    - I - Information;
    - T - Technologies;
    - C - Communication;
    - G - Management;
    - S - Other Knowledge.

    - For each group, there are four levels of professional experience:
        - basic (basic notions),
        - intermediate (mastery of basic tools),
        - advanced (mastery of techniques),
        - master (mastery of methodology and management).

- The document presents 20 other aptitudes divided into 6 groups, corresponding to states of mind oriented towards the development of relationships of a different nature, such as:
    - autonomy, adaptation, intellectual curiosity, initiative and a sense of organisation.

Table 2 – ECIA Competencies

Summary of the fields of expertise and principal aptitudes

THIRTY-THREE FIELDS OF EXPERTISE[1]	TWENTY PRINCIPAL APTITUDES[1]
Group I – Information I01 – Relations with users and clients I02 – Understanding the LIS environment I03 – Application of the law of information I04 – Contents and knowledge management I05 – Identification and validation of information sources I06 – Analysis and representation of information I07 – Information seeking I08 – Management of collections I09 – Enrichment of collections I10 – Material handling of documents I11 – Organisation of site and equipment I12 – Conception of products and services **Group T – Technology** T01 – Computer based design of information systems T02 – Computer based development of applications T03 – Publishing and editing T04 – Internet technology T05 – Information and computer technology **Group C – Communication** C01 – Oral communication C02 – Written communication C03 – Audiovisual communication C04 – Computerized communication C05 – Using a foreign language C06 – Interpersonal communication C07 – Institutional communication **Group M – Management** M01 – Global management of information M02 – Marketing M03 – Sales and diffusion M04 – Budgetary management M05 – Project management and planning M06 – Diagnosis and evaluation M07 – Human resources management M08 – Management of education and training **Group S – Other scientific knowledge** S01 – Additional fields	**A – Personal Relations** 1 – Autonomy 2 – Communication skills 3 – Availability 4 – Empathy 5 – Team spirit 6 – Sense for negotiation 7 – Teaching skills **B – Research** 1 – An enquiring mind **C – Analysis** 1 – Analytical ability 2 – Critical ability 3 – Ability to synthesise **D – Communication** 1 – Discretion 2 – Responsiveness **E – Managing** 1 – Perseverance 2 – Rigour **F – Organising** 1 – Adaptability 2 – Foresight 3 – Decisiveness 4 – Initiative 5 – Sense of organisation

Source: ECIA Competencies (2004)

SLA and ECIA Competencies

- It can be seen that both documents list a series of competences and skills that are not foreseen in the curriculum of Librarianship courses and that the information professional develops and acquires them through work experience and continuous learning.

Source: ECIA Competencies (2004)

Cataloguing Team Competencies

- Both documents include various competencies for information professionals: the SLA for librarians in special libraries, and the ECIA for information professionals in general (archivists, librarians, documentalists, etc.).

- However, these documents lack specific competencies that address the training of **professionals working with personal collections**.

- The **competencies identified** by the cataloguing team **correspond** to those **recommended** by the SLA and the ECIA.

- Although, it was noted that the competencies indicated by the two institutions do not present a degree of detail of the **skills required by the professional who works in the cataloguing of personal collections**, as in the case of the cataloguing team of the Nélida Piñon Library of Cervantes Institute in Rio de Janeiro.

- Table 3 below shows the competencies identified by this team.

Table 3 – Cataloguing Team Competencies

NÉLIDA PIÑON LIBRARY CATALOGUING TEAM - COMPETENCIES	
Profile	Information professional with expertise in Personal Collections
Information Units	Archives, libraries, museums, cultural, documentation and information centres
Work Area	Cultural and academic
Education	**Degree in:** Librarianship and Documentation, Archivistics, Museology
Library Skills	**Bibliographic tools:** ABNT, ISO, APA, Chicago, ANSI, etc.
	Cataloguing tools: ISBD, RDA, Cataloguing Rules, AACR2, etc.
	Classification tools: UDC, DDC, LC, etc.
	Library technologies: Apple and Microsoft systems, OFFICE Package, HTML, Internet, bibliographic software, integrated library systems (ILS), integrated search tools, intellectual property/copyright management systems, institutional repository platforms, scanning techniques and digital file formats, etc.
Historiographic Skills	Paleography to decipher spelling, writing, dedications, notes, etc.
	Diplomatic to know about the material and structure of rare works and special editions
Languages	**Modern languages:** English, Spanish, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Galician, Catalan, Basque, etc.
	Classical languages: Latin, ancient Greek, etc.
	Transliteration systems for non-Latin alphabets (Arabic, Hebrew, Russian, Armenian, etc.)
Complementary Knowledge	Continuous learning
	Post-graduate studies: masters, doctorate, etc.
	Academic and cultural production
	Previous professional experience
	Training practices in information units with special collections.

Source: From the authors

Final Considerations

- Librarians working in special libraries, in addition to their academic training, need to develop competencies to work with special collections.

- The professional cataloguer needs to remain in constant learning, to be updated on innovations in the area of cataloguing, to be familiar with the standards, policies and different methods of cataloguing and descriptive representation.

- In addition to having a general culture, knowing how to read and analyse a document, that is, knowing how to verify the data necessary to transcribe and describe a document.

- When the special collection is a personal one, the skills to be developed need to be directed to this specific type of collection, as found by the cataloguing team of Nélida Piñon Library.

- It is hoped that the competences and skills identified by this team can contribute to the training of information professionals specialising in personal collections.

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Thanks!

Nélida Piñon Library
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Visit us!

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