

French Official Corporate bodies of the Ancient Regime (COFAR) and Religious Corporate bodies (CORELI): two operations in creating authority records in order to standardise the entries of bibliographic records in Bibliothèque nationale de France retrospective conversion.

During the retrospective conversion of its printed and cards catalogues¹, the Bibliothèque nationale de France was confronted with the existence of old bibliographic records without corporate body headings, because this concept was unknown when the books were catalogued.

The intellectual process behind systematic classifications used at the Bibliothèque nationale at the time in order to facilitate research by readers, cataloguers of past centuries had made visible the classification outline, in some specialised catalogues, by indicating names of corporate bodies on index cards. Relying partly on these information and partly on statements of responsibility found in bibliographic records, we were able to create headings allowing us to index corporate bodies during the preparatory work to the retroconversion. However, for lack of time, we could not plan the creation of corresponding authority records². This is why, the BnF later launched two research programs aimed at creating authority records for specific fields, specific but very important for the access to the national bibliographic heritage. These two programs were respectively named COFAR and CORELI.

COFAR (Collectivités Officielles Françaises d’Ancien Régime/ French Official Corporate bodies of the Ancient Regime)

COFAR Program was approved in February 1995. Its purpose was to enrich the authority file of the bibliographic database - BN-OPALE - with a corpus of official corporate bodies, mainly national and preceding the French Revolution. To carry out this program we relied on a list of access points to Administrative acts of the Ancient Regime descriptions drawn up by the retroconversion team. Between November 1995 and March 1996 the program was managed by the Bureau des autorités collectivités (Corporate body Section) of the Service de coordination bibliographique (Bibliographic coordinating Division) of the BnF³.

The very old catalogue of Administrative acts of the Ancient Regime was a handwritten card catalogue, organised systematically into 9 categories :

1. Actes administratifs
2. Actes judiciaires
3. Actes des corporations
4. Actes des universités et collèges
5. Actes des hôpitaux et hospices
6. Actes des maisons princières
7. Actes des provinces annexées
8. Actes des pays étrangers
9. Actes postérieurs à 1789

Each category of the acts was subdivided according to the types of act and the corporate bodies which produced them that is not according to alphabetical order but to the way the Ancient Regime was organised.

¹ 29 catalogues of printed documents had been retroconverted between 1988 et 1999. Cf. Beaudiquez, Marcelle. *Le chantier de conversion rétrospective à la Bibliothèque nationale*, In « Bulletin des bibliothèques de France », t. 38, n° 3, 1993, p. 10 ; Beaudiquez, Marcelle et Beaugendre, Anne-Marie. *Du tiroir à l'écran : les opérations de conversion rétrospective de la Bibliothèque nationale de France* : Workshop on retrospective conversion, IFLA, Beijing, 29 August 1996.

² During the retroconversion it was impossible to introduce authority control for the 6.000.000 records of monographs. Originally it was planed as a four hear program.. Cf. *Bilan du chantier de conversion rétrospective des imprimés, CRI : 1988-1999* / Bibliothèque nationale de France, Agence bibliographique nationale ; [réd. par A.-M. Beaugendre], 2001, p.48.

³ *DDSR : Programme COFAR*, In « Trajectoire en bref : lettre interne de la Bibliothèque nationale de France », n° 12, 31 mai 1996.

Example :

Administrations centrales Chancellerie Chancelier Chancellerie du palais Chancellerie des secrétaires du roi Commissions de la Chancellerie Tarifs du sceau

or

Actes judiciaires Juridictions ordinaires Grand conseil Requêtes Parlement de Paris Généralités Recueils d'actes généraux Recueils par matières Cour des pairs Avocats et procureurs Basoche du palais Procureur général Requêtes du palais Grands jours Arrêts isolés
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When the COFAR project started, we estimated that we would have to create or update about 500 authority records for corporate bodies. We ended up with 850 authority records.

We created our headings according to NF Z 44-060 standard - *Forme et structure des vedettes collectivité-auteurs*⁴ - which is the version by AFNOR (French association for standardisation) of IFLA international recommendations *Form and structure of corporate headings*⁵. The main characteristic of these authority records is that a great number of them include a note on the history of the item.

⁴ *Catalogue d'auteurs et d'anonymes : forme et structure des vedettes de collectivités-auteurs : NF Z 44-060 décembre 1996.* – Paris : AFNOR, 1996.

⁵ *Form and structure of corporate headings : recommendations of the Working group on corporate headings / approved by the Standing committees of the IFLA Section on cataloguing and the IFLA Section on official publications.* – London : IFLA International office for UBC, 1980.
Report from the Review group on form and structure of corporate headings, In « ICBC », oct-dec. 1992.

Example of COFAR record :

<p>France. Chambre de l'édit de Castres <i>forme internationale</i></p> <p>Nationalité : France Langue : français Naissance : 1595-....</p> <p>Du ressort du parlement de Toulouse, elle siège d'abord à Castres puis à Castelnaudary ; elle est composée d'un nombre égal de catholiques et de protestants</p> <p>Source(s) : Marion. - Zeller</p> <p>< France. Chambre de l'édit de Languedoc</p> <p>Notice n° : FRBNF12502875 1996/02/26</p>
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Whenever necessary, we made links with other authority records. In general these are chronological links allowing to follow political and/or administrative changes.

<p>France. Intendance (Lille) <i>forme internationale</i></p> <p>Nationalité : France Langue : français Naissance : 1691-....</p> <p>Cette intendance de pays d'Etats réunit la Flandre et l'Artois et comprend 8 baillages et une gouvernance. Le comté de Flandre entre dans le royaume au cours du règne de Louis XIV. Une intendance est d'abord établie dans chacune des deux régions naturelles (Flandre wallonne, Flandre maritime). En 1715, les deux Flandre sont réunies en une seule intendance dont la capitale est Lille. A partir de 1754, l'Artois relève également de cette intendance</p> <p>Source(s) : Marion. - Lex. adm. de la France d'anc. rég.</p> <p>>> << Avant 1715, voir : Intendance de Flandre wallonne >> << Avant 1715, voir : France. Intendance de Flandre maritime</p> <p>Notice n° : FRBNF12491748 1995/11/28</p>

<p>France. Assemblée nationale constituante (1789-1791) <i>forme internationale</i></p> <p>Nationalité : France Langue : français Naissance : 1789-06-17 Mort : 1791-09-30</p> <p>Les États généraux se transforment en Assemblée constituante, proclamée le 17 juin 1789 (Assemblée nationale) et définitivement constituée le 9 juillet ; la Constitution solennellement acceptée par le roi le 14 septembre 1791, la Constituante laisse la place à l'Assemblée législative le 30 septembre</p> <p>Forme(s) rejetée(s) : < France. Assemblée nationale (1789-1791) < France. États généraux (1789)</p> <p>Forme(s) associée(s) : >> << Regroupé par : France. Assemblée nationale</p> <p>Source(s) : GDEL. – Lalane</p> <p>Notice n° : FRBNF11863837 2002/07/19</p>
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This corpus of authority records, which identifies the official corporate bodies of the Ancient Regime, is a new working tool which is now at the disposal of libraries for cataloguing old collections, and particularly for those libraries which harbour books coming from French Revolution *confiscations*. It represents also a valuable source of information accessible to any one who takes an interest in the history of French government institutions.

After the conclusion of the COFAR program, the BnF Service de coordination bibliographique started a similar project for religious corporate bodies.

CORELI (Collectivités RELigieuses/ Religious corporate bodies)

CORELI is a much more ambitious project because its aim is to create authority records for all kinds of religious corporate bodies (parishes, dioceses, confraternities, orders and congregations, etc.) which appear in bibliographic descriptions of monographs in three ancient specialised catalogues which are now retroconverted : i.e. Ecclesiastical acts catalogue, CORDA (or statements of judicial causes prior to 1791) catalogue and French history catalogue, totalling about 3.000 corporate bodies.

Whereas the COFAR program was entirely carried out by the BnF, the CORELI program, on the other hand, is a collaboration between several institutions which have large collections of religious books – BnF, Bibliothèque du Saulchoir, Bibliothèque de Fels de l'Institut catholique de Paris, Bibliothèque du Centre national de pastorale liturgique – or expert in the field as Ecole pratique des hautes études en sciences sociales. An agreement was signed between BnF and each institution in order to give an official basis to the partnership. The division of the field had been decided according to the specialisation of each of them. For example all corporate bodies connected with Dominican spirituality were taken up by the Dominican Bibliothèque du Saulchoir.

Each partner has to supply information on a form, which all parties developed at the beginning of the project. The main items are: date of creation, of foundation, of approval, dates of activities, accurate juridical statute, official name, other forms of the name (such as old / obsolete names, common denomination, abbreviations, nicknames, etc.), hierarchical links, chronological data about fusion or partition of the entity, some information about history, address, and sources of all these data. The BnF has the responsibility for the control of the data, the eventual verifications, the harmonisation and conformity with national cataloguing rules and IFLA recommendations. The BnF enters the records in its database - formerly BN-OPALE, now BN-OPALE PLUS – in INTERMARC format. All the data supplied in the forms by the partners are not present in the authority records; part of the information is used to identify the entity without ambiguity, to distinguish one from another or to establish links.

It is the official name of the corporate body which is the heading chosen. For an abbey, a convent or a monastery, for example, the headings are for instance:

- *Abbazia di Montecassino*
- *Abbaye de Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert*
- *Carmel royal de Sainte-Thérèse (Paris)*
- *Couvent Saint-Jacques (Paris)*
- *Monastère de Fontaine-lès-Dijon (1614-1790)*
- *Prieuré Notre-Dame de Verdélais (1627-177.)*

For a religious order, a congregation, a confraternity :

- *Confraternità di santa Maria della Carità (Bologne, Italie)*
- *Confrérie de Saint Ferreol et Saint Ferjeux (Besançon)*
- *Congrégation des soeurs de Sainte-Clotilde*
- *Frères agricoles et hospitaliers du vénérable Géronimo*
- *Ordre des Frères mineurs*
- *Suore salesiane dei Sacri Cuori*

Some of the partners did not agreed with these headings, they wished:

- on one hand, they would prefer the common name and not the official one (Franciscans, Jesuits, Dominicans, etc.)
- on the other hand, hierarchical structured headings in order to gather the spiritual families.

As the BnF did not want to introduce inconsistencies in its authority file - and in order to answer to the particular needs of some libraries, future users of the authority records - we proposed to enter common names and hierarchical forms as additional variants.

For instance :

- *Congrégation de Solesmes. Abbaye Sainte-Anne de Kergonan*
- *Ordre des frères prêcheurs. Province de France. Couvent Saint-Jacques (Paris).*

This way we would make it easier for all kinds of users to search the catalogue whatever their expertise in the field.

As the authority records created by the COFAR program, the CORELI records also contain historical notes.

Collège de Boissy (Paris) *forme internationale*

Nationalité : France

Naissance : 1358

Langue : français

Mort : 1763

Collège fondé en 1358 par le chanoine Geoffroi Vidé et le chanoine Etienne Vidé, son neveu, originaires de Boissy-le-Sec (diocèse de Chartres), pour des étudiants pauvres de cette ville, ou, à défaut, de la paroisse Saint-André-des-Arts de Paris. Il fut réuni au collège Louis-le-Grand en 1763 et ses bâtiments vendus en 1764

Source(s) : Dictionnaire historique des rues de Paris / Jacques Hillairet, 1985

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In this corpus of religious entities are present not only famous orders and congregations but also local communities, of diocesan law, groups which had a very short life and, consequently, difficult to identify.

Frères agricoles et hospitaliers du vénérable Géronimo

forme internationale

Nationalité : France

Naissance : 1869

Langue : français

Mort : 1872

Fondé en 1869 par Mgr Lavigerie, évêque d'Alger, cet institut (du nom d'un Arabe converti, martyrisé au XVI^e siècle) avait pour but de soutenir financièrement par le travail de ses membres les oeuvres fondées en Algérie. Il ne connut guère de succès, et les quelques membres recrutés furent incorporés à partir de 1872 dans la Société des Missionnaires d'Afrique (fondée en 1868 par Lavigerie)

Sources : D.H.G.E., t. 18, col. 1351-1352

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When it was necessary, links had been established between religious communities which had united them, for example :

Soeurs du Saint-Enfant-Jésus d'Aurillac *forme internationale*

Nationalité : France

Naissance : 1804

Langue : français

Mort : 1957

Congrégation fondée en 1804 par Marie Maisonobe (qui venait du Puy). En 1957 elle fit fusion avec les Béates de l'instruction chrétienne du Puy et les Sœurs de la Sainte-Enfance de Jésus de Rambouillet pour former la Congrégation de l'Enfant-Jésus de Versailles, transférée à Paris en 1999

Forme(s) rejetée(s) :

< Congrégation du Saint-Enfant-Jésus d'Aurillac

< Religieuses du Saint-Enfant-Jésus d'Aurillac

< Saint-Enfant-Jésus d'Aurillac

>> << Après 1957, voir : Congrégation des Soeurs de l'Enfant-Jésus (Paris)

Source(s) : Guide des sources de l'histoire des congrégations féminines françaises de vie active / Charles Molette, 1974. – Histoire de la Congrégation du Saint-Enfant-Jésus d'Aurillac, 1927

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The CORELI program is still in progress. At the end of November 2002, 1127 records had been created. They give users an extra tool for identifying entities. But, unfortunately, lack of resources devoted to this task, do not allow a quicker progress. On the other hand, new agreements with other institutions will be necessary in order to cover all the areas of the project.

Conclusion

All the records created by COFAR and CORELI programs have been included in the authority file of BN-OPALE PLUS, so they are visible either via the online catalogue (URL : <http://catalogue.bnf.fr>), or separately (by the following steps : <http://bnf.fr>, then choosing "Informations pour les professionnels", "Consulter les notices d'autorité").

The authority records proceeding from COFAR and CORELI programs are not yet linked to bibliographic records from the retro-conversion. It will be another stage of the immense task aiming at improving the coherence of the online catalogue. It should be programmed as one of the BnF numerous correction projects. It will up to the newly created Catalogue Committee⁶ to determine priorities.

⁶ Created in March 2002, within the framework of a reorganization of the National Bibliographic Agency.