



# From Lisbon to Rio: 200 years of the National Library of Brazil

Authors: Mônica Rizzo Soares Pinto • rizzo@bn.br & Jayme Spinelli • jspinelli@bn.br

This poster is a brief iconographic history of the National Library of Brazil. The goal is to describe the steps it took from Lisbon to Rio. It will also focus all major events of this saga: the 1755 Lisbon Earthquake, when the Portuguese Royal Library burned, the rebuilding of the collection, the transfer to Brazil when the Portuguese Royal family fled from Europe to feeling the pressure from Napoleonic invasion to Portugal, the places in which the collection was located in Rio up to the construction of the building where it is mainly located. The access and conservation of this legacy is also pointed out.

## Eighteenth Century

1755: On the morning of All Saints Day, November 1, an earthquake followed by tsunami and firestorms destroyed Lisbon, the Palace of Ribeira and nearly all the Royal Library were vanished. The organization of a new royal collection was immediately started in the reign of King José I.



## Nineteenth Century

1807: In November, feeling the pressure from France's invasion, the Prince Regent Dom Joao, the Queen Maria I, the entire royal family and most of the court, packed up and left Lisbon to Brazil. The Royal Library, with nearly 60,000 items, including books, manuscripts, prints, maps, coins and medals was also transferred to Brazil. The Royal Library arrives in Rio de Janeiro in three trips (1810 and 1811).

1810: On October 29, it was decided to house this library in the former Hospital of the Carmelite Third Order, in Rio de Janeiro. This date is considered the foundation of the National Library. In 1814, The Royal Library is open to the general public.

1821: Publication of the Statutes of the Royal Library. Return of the King D. João VI to Portugal. The Royal Library remains in Brazil, only 5,000 manuscripts relating to the history of Portugal went back to Europe.

1822: Brazil becomes independent on September 7. The Royal Library is now called Imperial and Public Library. On November 12 notice states that everything published by the National Printing House should be sent to the Imperial and Public Library.

1825: The Library became property of the Empire of Brazil by purchase. According to the treaty of Friendship and Alliance and Additional Convention signed between Brazil and Portugal.

1847: D. Pedro II determines the delivery of all forms of prints in Rio de Janeiro to the BN.

1859: The Imperial and Public Library is moved to new building at Rua do Passelo.

1876: Renamed as the National Library (BN). Launch of the first issue of the Annals of the National Library.

1881: Publication of the Catalogue of the Exhibition of the History of Brazil, a pioneer and unsurpassable, the most extensive, thorough and exhaustive bibliography of history and geography of Brazil.

1885: Installation of electric light in BN, in the Building of the Rua do Passelo.

1898: By this date, the National Library is responsible for copyright registration of intellectual works, that liability is maintained until today (Law 9610 of February 19, 1998).



## Twentieth Century

1902: The binding office and typography of the National Library are opened. Acquisition of the first Typewriter.

1905: Laid the foundation stone of a new building for the BN.

1907: Decree on legal deposit, with national coverage.

1909: In September, starts the collection transfer to the new building, which is only completed in February next year. Despite the monumental change that was made in 1132 travels, public attendance was not interrupted.

1910: Centennial of the BN. Inauguration of the Headquarters Building with the presence of the Brazilian President, Nilo Peçanha.

1911: Creation of the first Library Science Course in Brazil, to specialize the BN own employees (first in Latin America, third in the world) whose activities began in 1915.

1918: Begins the publication of the Bibliographic Bulletin discontinued in 1921.

1922: The Brazilian House of Representatives stays in the building of BN, until June 1926.

1924: Publication of first volume of Historical Documents, which reached the milestone of 110 volumes. This series published transcripts of historical documents without comments from BN collection.

1931: Decree establishes the National Bibliographic Exchange Service at BN.

1938: Resumption of the publication of the Bibliographic Bulletin.

1945: BN releases new technical basis for cataloging and organizing the collection.

1960: Exhibition commemorating the sesquicentennial of the National Library and the fiftieth anniversary of the building.

1973: The headquarters and gardens of BN are considered as national heritage building.

1978: National Plan for Microfilming of Brazilian Newspapers (PLANO) – the aim is to preserve the entire news production in the country. The ISBN Brazilian Agency begins its operation at the BN.

1982: Implementation of automated cataloging.

1983: National Recovery Plan for Rare Books (PLANOR) provides technical assistance for the organization and preservation of rare book collections in the country, build, at the National Library a catalog about the rare collections in the country. Completion of restoration works of the building as well as technical and administrative reform.

1984: Publication of Brazilian Bibliography, continuation of the Bibliographic Bulletin.

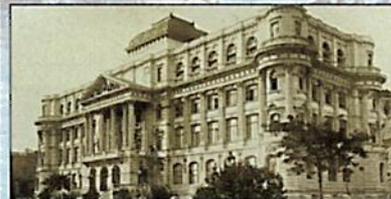
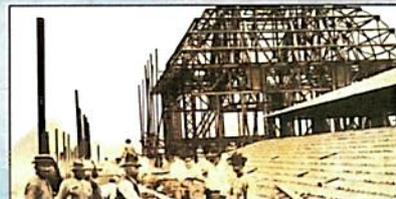
1989: Begins PROFOTO, a project for the preservation and conservation of photographic collections with the aim of identify, catalog and reproduce the nineteenth century photographs of BN collection.

1990: the National Library is now a Foundation and incorporates the former National Book Institute.

1992: It's established within the National Library, the National System of Public Libraries (SNBP). Its main objective is the strengthening of public libraries in the country. Creation of the National Plan for Reading Promotion (PROLER) that is a project for social enhancement of reading and writing linked to the National Library.

1996: BN launches the online cataloging.

2000: Inauguration of a New Auditorium.



## Twenty First Century

2004: New Law for the Legal Deposit of publications.

2005: Publication of the Revista de História da Biblioteca Nacional, monthly publication, edited by the Society of Friends of the National Library. Expansion and modernization of the conservation and restoration laboratories.

2006: Launch of the National Digital Library (<http://bndigital.bn.br>). BN is a partner in initiatives such as the World Digital Library, and the head of Brazilian Network of Virtual Memory.

2010: New Law provides measures for the Legal Deposit of musical works at BN.



MINISTÉRIO DA CULTURA  
Fundação BIBLIOTECA NACIONAL



Sede Av Rio Branco 219 • Rio de Janeiro • CEP 20040-008 • Tel 55 21 3095-3810 • Fax 55 21 3095-3811

Images: BN Collection • Graphic design: Will Correia