The few studies devoted to museum libraries show that researchers, museologists and bibliographers have so far shown little interest in this issue. Their research has been mainly focused on museums and libraries as independent institutions. Perhaps this lack of interest in museum libraries is partly due to their unclear legal situation. Indeed, their importance and the definition of their missions are rarely governed by a dedicated legislation setting the rules and objectives to be achieved, unlike other sister categories such as public libraries. They are more often defined directly in the museum’s strategic plan. This reality consequently generates a variety of organisations and structures which are not always easy to grasp and to codify given their multiple nature. From one situation to another, the department – whether it is a documentation centre, a research library or a media library - will have a reduced visibility, assumed, constrained or, on the contrary, will be considered as an essential adjunct to the museum policy.

However, museum libraries, like the museums to which they belong, are today affected by the changes that have led to a “market” organisation of the cultural institutions. In this model, attendance rate has become a crucial evaluation criterion. This change of paradigm is pushing professionals in the sector to rethink the orientations and missions of museum libraries.

It is with this in mind that we propose to analyse the issues and characterise the most recent trends in the sector. The focus will not be limited to an examination of the situation in the French-speaking world as there is much to be learned from a more global analysis, integrating the libraries of museum institutions throughout the world. Here is a non-exhaustive list of avenues to explore:

- **The “revolution” in the cultural market and museum libraries;**
  How do museum libraries, whose historical missions are based on conservation, provision of documentary resources and research support, manage to adapt to the new museum culture?

- **Attracting readers/visitors, a new mission for museum libraries?**
  What new and relevant strategies can museum libraries follow to attract an audience beyond their traditional readers?

- **Museum libraries and mediation;**
  Is the involvement of museum libraries in the organisation of events (exhibitions, conferences, etc.) an asset or a constraint? Does this involvement put their traditional missions at risk?

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1 Recent studies include issue 20 (2019) of *La Revue de la BNU* (Bibliothèque nationale et universitaire de Strasbourg) (https://doi.org/10.4000/rbnu.2052).
2 The Spanish law of 29 March 1901 on state archaeological museums is a notable exception.
3 On this issue, see, for example, the work of André Gob and François Maressse.
• The (in)visibility of museum libraries; the visibility of museum libraries is often problematic and contributes to their isolation. Whether it is a question of their physical location (within or outside the museum circuit), their digital access (structure of websites), or their communication.

• Trends and issues in museum libraries outside the French-speaking world; this section deals with the specificities or particular visions adopted by museum libraries outside the French-speaking world.

• Which collections for a museum library? The collections managed by museum libraries cover a wide range of typologies, but are often characterised by specific collections that distinguish them from other scientific libraries. Their nature, whether printed or digital works, catalogues, rare books, manuscripts, archives, etc., has a profound impact on the organisation, credit and development of the service.

• Status and tasks of librarians within the museum; the staff of museum libraries has many and varied profiles, both at the head of the service and among the staff. Librarians, archivists, researchers, scientists, civil servants, volunteers... are all involved. The degrees of qualification and involvement of the managers in the decision-making committees of the museum necessarily have major impacts on the dynamism and strategic orientations of the library.

• The training of museum "librarians"; the main and continuing training courses currently available give little or no space in their programmes to the particular realities and methods of museum libraries. However, original initiatives are gradually emerging to meet an increasingly perceptible demand (INHA [Paris], Hénallux [Namur]...).

• What collaborative networks should be set up? Given the multiple structures of museum libraries and the different profiles of their managers, dedicated professional exchange and meeting places are rare, despite a growing desire to develop them.

• Etc.

Proposals for contributions, in French or English (including an abstract of 2,000 to 3,000 characters including spaces, with a provisional title, a short bibliography on the subject, and a biography of 2 or 3 lines) should be sent to the editor of the Cahiers de Mariemont, Jean-Sébastien Balzat (jean-sebastien.balzat@musee-mariemont.be) before 15 October 2022. The text of the article as well as an abstract (French and English) and 10 key words (French and English) are expected by 15 February 2023.

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THE CAHIERS DE MARIEMONT

Established in 1970, the Cahiers de Mariemont is the annual journal of the Royal Museum of Mariemont (Belgium). The journal is peer-reviewed. It aims at promoting the study of the Museum’s rich collections, and also publishes articles, mainly in French and English, about a wide range of subjects from various disciplines including Ancient Mediterranean art and archaeology, extra-European arts, Belgium’s regional archaeology and history, rare books, decorative art, and museology. Its dossiers deal with current research themes in both transversal and cross-disciplinary perspectives. Issues 1 to 40 is available on the open access academic platform Persée (https://www.persee.fr/collection/camar).

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