



## MUNICIPAL HISTORICAL LIBRARY

### HISTORY

Traditionally, the origin of the Municipal Historical Library of Madrid has been related to a Decree of the Council of Castile of 1774. However, its true inception dates back to a Resolution of the City Council of 1876, by virtue of which the Municipal Library was created. Ramón de Mesonero Romanos, who was subsequently appointed first director of the Municipal Library, played a crucial role in said resolution.

The basic collection was taken from Mr Mesonero's library, along with important donations from institutions and public figures of the time, among which we could mention the Ministry of Public Works, the King Alfonso XIII, Juan Eugenio Hartzenbusch, José Santa María de Hita, Hilario Peñasco and Ricardo Fuente.

In 1898, the Theatre and Music Collection arrived. It was followed by other collections that, along with the continuous acquisitions, make up the current collection of handwritten and printed works from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Various important figures were in charge of this institution at different times. Besides the above mentioned Ramón de Mesonero Romanos, we must not forget Carlos Cambronero, Ricardo Fuente or Manuel Machado, whose work was vital for the creation of the Library.

Several buildings have hosted the Library throughout its history: First Town Hall, Casa de la Panadería, Escuela Modelo and Hospicio de San Fernando. In 1990, it was transferred to the Barracks of Conde Duque, after its separation from the Network of Municipal Public Libraries, when it changed its name for the current one. Since then, its purpose and goals have been those of any specialised library: preservation, research and dissemination of its collections.

In 2007, with the inauguration of its new seat at the central yard of the Conde Duque Cultural Centre, the Library facilities were enlarged and modernized.



## SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

### Madrid Collection

This is the heart and origin of the Historical Library. Its works, old and modern alike, are related to history, art, literature, economy, society, folklore and any other subject connected to Madrid. New works in the market are continuously added to the Library, as well as old books that may help cover some gap in terms of subjects or chronology. This collection includes the *Guías de Forasteros* covering 147 years (1749-1935).

### Theatre and Music Collection

Most of it comes from the former theatres of Madrid, Teatro de la Cruz and Teatro del Príncipe. This original collection was enlarged thanks to other private collections: those donated by Ramón Guzmán, José Santa María de Hita or Ramón Carnicer, as well as the works brought from the Teatro de los Caños del Peral. In 1917, the private library of José María Sbarbi was acquired, containing over 1,000 scores.

The Theatre collection comprises nearly 9,000 handwritten and printed issues. It is worth mentioning the sacramental plays handwritten by Calderón de la Barca, although most plays are from the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and from 19<sup>th</sup> century, including works by Ramón de la Cruz (many of them handwritten), Bretón de los Herreros, Ventura de la Vega, etc.

The Music collection contains 5,900 musical compositions, most of them handwritten, mainly from the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Among other relevant works, we find music for *tonadillas* (theatrical-origin songs), *sainetes* (farces) and *entremeses* (short comic plays), musical comedies, *zarzuelas* (Spanish lyric genre) and operas, instrumental music and a collection of guitar pieces.

### Bio-Bibliographical Collection

It was created by Francisco Beltrán, who during the 1920s gathered nearly all the books and brochures from the time concerning Spanish and Latin American bibliography. In 1927, he published the catalogue of the collection, which then comprised 3,432 works. This collection is still growing with both old and modern pieces.

### **Paremiology Collection**

The bookseller Melchor García Moreno gathered a rich library related to paremiology and made up of 480 books containing the most important proverb collections classified by topic, relevant paremiology bibliographies (Duplessis, Sbarbi, Bulbena i Tosell, etc.) and Spanish literature works including a large number of Spanish proverbs. The collection arrived at the Library in 1922, along the thorough catalogue prepared by the bookseller himself.

### **Cervantes Collection**

Coming from the bookshop of Gabriel Molina Navarro, it became part of the Library in 1919. The original set was made up of 981 works described by the collector himself in his *Catalogue of a collection of Cervantes books...*, published in 1916, to which new titles have been progressively added. It includes important editions of *Don Quixote* in several languages, and a considerable amount of adaptations and imitations. There are also many works on critical and interpretation studies, bibliographies and other works that, in some way or another, reflect the world of Cervantes.

### **Collection of Rare and Remarkable Works**

It comprises 899 volumes, unique pieces or hard to locate. The most important are those from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### **Shorthand Collection**

It is made up of 560 volumes, including books and brochures, on this speciality.

### **Lope de Vega Collection**

It was purchased from the Catalan bibliophile Ricard Viñas in 1963. It has 325 works in 421 volumes, many of which were bound by Emilio Brugalla. It is made up of first editions of several works of Lope, important comedy collections and critical studies about his plays.

### **Veterinary Collection**

It was brought from the Municipal Slaughterhouse and was gathered by Cesáreo Sanz Egaña, Director of the Institution. This collection, with over 4,000 monographs, contains works from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, some of them very rare and valuable.



### **Civil War Collection (Tomás Borrás)**

Brought to the library by the writer Tomás Borrás in 1977, it is mainly focused on the history of Spain during the 20<sup>th</sup> century and particularly during the years of the Civil War. The topic of Madrid at war is present in many of the works.

### **Bullfighting Collection**

Bullfighting treaties, biographies of bullfighters and curious books and brochures about bullfights in Spain.

### **GENERAL COLLECTION**

This Section has over 92,000 volumes and 18,000 brochures, most of them on paper, from the 16<sup>th</sup> century to our days, primarily focused on humanities.

Among them, the titles of Spanish literature are particularly interesting, comprising first editions of authors from the 19<sup>th</sup> century and first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well as a set of books on travels throughout Spain by foreign authors from the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, and brochures from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century on various extremely rare and unique topics.

Deserving a special mention, the collection of 235 royal letters written between 1494 and 1834, along with a valuable series of handwritten documents of relevant figures of Spanish history and literature.

### **SERVICES**

- Bibliographic information
- Consultation of works in Rooms, for holders of a library card
- Request of works in advance by sending an email to [bibliotecah@madrid.es](mailto:bibliotecah@madrid.es)
- Reproduction services

### **OPENING HOURS**

From Monday to Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

For special opening hours, please check the web

Closed on 24 and 31 December

### **ADDRESS**

C/ Conde Duque, 9 y 11-1<sup>a</sup> planta



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### **MEANS OF TRANSPORT**

Underground: San Bernardo (Lines 2 & 4), Noviciado (Lines 2 & 10), Ventura Rodríguez (Line 3) and Plaza de España (Lines 3 & 10)

Buses: 1, 2, 21, 44, 74, 133, 147, Circular and Minibus M-2

Car park: Plaza de España