

MUSIC COLLECTIONS AND AUDIO-VISUAL DOCUMENTS IN THE SPANISH NATIONAL LIBRARY (MADRID)

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English Abstract

The Spanish National Library, Madrid, is at the head of the Spanish library system and in 2011 celebrates three centuries since its foundation by King Philip V. Its specialized department preserves unique sources related to Spanish music and Hispanic culture. Remarkable archives derive from the old Real Biblioteca, ecclesiastical institutions such as Toledo Cathedral, and private libraries such as the one donated by the musicologist Francisco Asenjo Barbieri (1823–94). The Library has always taken receipt of works recorded in the Spanish Register of Intellectual Property and via Legal Deposit, and the music and audiovisual collection grows at the rate of 25,000 new titles per year. A project such as the Hispanic Digital Library makes available via the Internet a wide selection of scores, music books, and historic sound archives. As a great library, the richness of the collections brings with it a major challenges of preservation, cataloguing, and dissemination.

French Abstract

La Bibliothèque nationale d'Espagne à Madrid est à la tête du réseau des bibliothèques espagnoles. En 2011, elle célèbre son existence tricentenaire depuis sa fondation par le roi Philippe V. Son département spécialisé en musique préserve des sources uniques liées à la musique espagnole et à la culture hispanique. Ces archives remarquables proviennent de l'ancienne Bibliothèque royale, des institutions ecclésiastiques, comme la cathédrale de Tolède, et des bibliothèques privées, comme la collection offerte par le musicologue Francisco Asenjo Barbieri (1823–1894). La bibliothèque a toujours reçu des ouvrages inscrits au Registre espagnol de la propriété intellectuelle ou par le biais du Dépôt légal ; un canal par lequel la bibliothèque reçoit une moyenne annuelle de 25.000 nouveaux documents musicaux et audiovisuels. Un projet comme la Bibliothèque numérique hispanique rend disponible par l'internet une large sélection de partitions, de livres de musique, et des archives sonores historiques. Comme une grande bibliothèque, la richesse de ces collections apporte des défis majeurs en ce qui concerne la conservation, le catalogage et l'accès.

German Abstract

Die an der Spitze des spanischen Bibliothekswesens stehende Nationalbibliothek in Madrid kann im Jahr 2011 das 300-jährige Bestehen seit ihrer Gründung durch König Philip V. feiern. In ihrer Musikabteilung werden einzigartige Quellen zur spanischen Musik und hispanischen Kultur aufbewahrt. Bemerkenswerte Teile der Sammlung stammen aus der alten Königlichen Bibliothek (Real Biblioteca), kirchlichen Institutionen wie der Kathedrale von Toledo und aus Privatbibliotheken, z.B. der nachgelassenen Bibliothek des Musikwissenschaftlers Francisco Asenjo Barbieri

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(1823–94). Die Nationalbibliothek verfügt über das Pflichtexemplarrecht und erhält Exemplare von Werken aus dem Register des geistigen Eigentums Spaniens. Der Bestand der Musik- und AV-Mediensammlung wächst jährlich um etwa 25.000 Exemplare. Das Projekt Hispanische digitale Bibliothek (Biblioteca Digital Hispánica) ermöglicht die Nutzung einer großen Auswahl von Noten, Musikbüchern und historischer Tonaufnahmen über das Internet. Mit der Reichhaltigkeit des Bestandes einer großen Nationalbibliothek sind selbstverständlich auch die entsprechenden Herausforderungen in Bezug auf Bestandserhaltung, bibliographischen Nachweis und Nutzbarmachung verbunden.

Spanish abstract

La Biblioteca Nacional de España (Madrid) es cabecera del sistema bibliotecario español y en 2011 cumple tres siglos desde su fundación por el rey Felipe V. Su Departamento especializado conserva fuentes únicas en el mundo, con colecciones muy ricas relacionadas con la música española y las culturas hispánicas. Sus fondos más notables proceden de la antigua Biblioteca Real, instituciones eclesiásticas, como la Catedral de Toledo, y bibliotecas privadas, como la donada por el musicólogo Francisco Asenjo Barbieri (1823–94). Siempre ha sido biblioteca receptora de obras inscritas en el Registro de Propiedad Intelectual y en el Depósito Legal español, una vía por la que recibe de media anual unos 25.000 nuevos documentos musicales y audiovisuales. Con proyectos como Biblioteca Digital Hispánica pretende difundir en todo el mundo, a través de su Web, lo más selecto de sus colecciones de partituras, libros sobre música y grabaciones históricas de sonido. Como toda gran biblioteca, su riqueza implica un gran reto de preservación, catalogación y difusión.

Introduction

In December 2011, the Spanish National Library, Madrid (BNE), will mount a commemorative exhibition to celebrate its first three hundred years of existence. One of the world's oldest national libraries, it has served as a research centre in all fields of knowledge – particularly Spanish and European culture, arts, and humanities – for three centuries. The Music and Audiovisual Department preserves unique archives used by researchers, teachers and university students, and to a lesser extent conservatory musicians and teachers. Every day the Library receives hundreds of user queries (either in person or via the Internet) about its collections, which are rich in historic sources and modern documents.

However, despite the size and the historical and artistic importance of the collections, the profile of the BNE is still associated in the collective subconscious primarily with great works of literature, not with music. Some musicians and Spanish musicologists are not aware of our collections and worse still, they ignore its existence. In part, this regrettable state of affairs can be explained by the peculiarities of the country's musical life and educational deficiencies associated with music as a subject, but it is also true that the music department's collections do not have an adequate social projection and usage. We are working hard to address this issue by taking the opportunity of the anniversary of the institution to raise awareness. The National Library has an enormous responsibility as the custodian of a substantial part of Spanish musical heritage and has to face a series of major challenges associated with collection development, cataloguing, preservation, and digitisation.

Historical background

The institution was created for public use as the Real Biblioteca through the initiative of Padre Robinet, Philippe V's confessor, and opened its doors in March 1712 in a passage

that connected the Madrid Alcazar with the Convento de la Encarnacion (Convent of the Incarnation). In accordance with royal decrees of 1712 and 1716, publishers and printers were obliged to deposit copies of their products in the Library. This precedent of Legal Deposit was not the first in our country, since in the sixteenth century a similar initiative was proposed, with the creation of the Monastery Library of El Escorial. This legislative method to acquire archives assured the regular deposit of musical works, especially since the nineteenth century with the promulgation of the first Spanish laws of intellectual property (1847 and 1879), but technical difficulties and a general lack of control made it less than fully effective. With the most recent Legal Deposit law (20 January 1958), the Library could finally claim the totality of Spanish book production. In March 2011, after years of study, the Cabinet approved a new bill of Legal Deposit, which has begun its progress through the House of Commons. It will try to adapt Spanish legislation to the latest technological advances and new distribution systems, as well as the communication culture that has resulted in the transformation of our profession and the social function of libraries. One of the most important aspects that will be corrected in the new law is the obligation not only for printers and publishers to deposit their works but also editors and distributors. In recent years, corporate delocalization has resulted in many publications promoted by Spanish firms being printed abroad and therefore not deposited at the Library, resulting in a distortion in the national bibliography.

Early in the eighteenth century, the first musical archives acquired by the Biblioteca Real included a collection of printed music and manuscripts donated by the crown, originally from the Torre Alta del Alcázar collection, which belonged to the ancient Spanish royal household. To that archive were added new collections from Italy and France acquired by Philippe V (1683–1746), the first member of the House of Bourbon to rule as king of Spain, who started a new dynasty in Spain after the War of Spanish Secession (1701–14). During those years, the Library was enriched by important collections confiscated from partisans of Archduke Carlos of Austria, many of them noble and clerical members from Aragón, Cataluña, and Valencia. Later, in the second half of the eighteenth century, books and scores acquired at auctions and purchased in foreign countries by intermediary agents – including apparently the London music publisher Robert Bremner – were added to the music collection. Later still, as the nineteenth century progressed, the collection was further expanded with a large number of liturgical books acquired from the dissolution of ecclesiastical properties: especially important in this respect was the *Decreto de Incautación* (Decree of Seizure) of 1869, which led to the acquisition of various medieval codices from Toledo Cathedral. Among the most important of them are the *Cantigas de Santa María de Alfonso X el Sabio* (BNE Mss. 20486) and the so-called *Códice de Madrid* or *Libro de conductus y motetes* (BNE Mss. 10069), one of the more important sources of polyphonic ars antiqua in the world.

In 1836, the Royal Library changed its name to the ‘Biblioteca Nacional’, or National Library, and it seems that its music collection continued to grow despite the lack of a specific acquisitions policy or personnel dedicated to it exclusively. In 1875, the cataloging of scores was undertaken for the first time, but a more significant change took place in 1899 with the acquisition of a bequest from the composer and musicologist Francisco Asenjo Barbieri (1823–94). The Barbieri Collection consisted of his personal archive (the “Papeles Barbieri”) and library, a collection of great value reflecting a life dedicated to collecting old music books produced in Spain and other European countries. That deposit was one of the events that justified the creation of a specialised music section in the National

Library, although a few years before, in 1878, an important collection of around 700 music manuscripts was deposited by the Infante D. Francisco de Paula Antonio de Borbón (1794–1865), brother of King Fernando VII and a great fan of Italian opera.² Despite the presence of this and other important historical collections of private origin, such as the excellent library of Juan María Guelbenzu (1819–86), it is true that the National Library has grown less from patronage and private initiative than from the production of legal norms or official initiatives.

A greater part of the manuscripts, printed scores, theory and liturgical books collected before 1800 are described in a catalogue compiled by the musicologists Higinio Anglés and José Subirá, published in three volumes by the Spanish Musicology Institute of Barcelona between 1946 and 1951.³ Because of the preparation of that catalogue the music section was definitively formed as a discrete administrative unit inside the Library in 1945. Although it is a work of a great value, the catalogue of Anglés and Subirá was not exhaustive and needs an urgent revision, because many researchers consider it, even today, to be the only tool to access to our historical collections. In 1989, a new catalogue of eighteenth-century printed music was published,⁴ following RISM Series A/I cataloguing standards, with more than 700 references not included in the Anglés-Subirá catalogue.⁵ Since April 2009 we have been working on a full review of all historical collections, with updated bibliographic descriptions of all works that had previously passed unnoticed. As part of this complete update, in Autumn 2010 we started to catalogue a collection of more than 80 volumes of plainchant and polyphony from the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries that apparently derive from ecclesiastical institutions that were secularized in the nineteenth century and heritage rescued from the Spanish Civil War (1936–39). This archive is now being catalogued with the assistance of a team of musicologists, courtesy of an agreement between la Fundación General Universidad de Alcalá de Henares. The catalogue records will include, for the first time in Library history, music incipits for all Gregorian melodies codified using the 031 field in MARC format.

In the past fifteen years, we have made great strides in the integration of music and audiovisual collections in the automated catalogue: with a marked increase in permanent staff of the Department and with the hiring of companies that specialize in cataloguing, we have also made great strides in digitizing paper documents, analogue audio and video, and introduced improved computer equipment with the help of endowment funds. However despite these efforts, some legacy problems are still not resolved, a lot of material is waiting to be catalogued (such as sound recordings on vinyl), and as with many other specialised libraries, the preservation of some archives that suffer from the process of acidification of the paper (especially the musical press and printed scores from the nineteenth century) or the deterioration of analogue recordings of video and sound, are of particular concern. In short, as any user can observe in our online catalogue, we have accomplished a lot and every day we make advances in the control and preservation of the collections, but we are conscious that there is still a lot to do.

2. A catalogue of the Infante's collection will be published in June 2011 by the librarians Isabel Lozano and José María Soto.

3. H. Anglés and J. y Subirá, *Catálogo musical de la Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid*. Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1946–51.

4. *Catálogo de impresos musicales del siglo XVIII en la Biblioteca Nacional*. Madrid. Dirección General del Libro y Bibliotecas, 1989.

5. *Répertoire International des Sources Musicales*, Series A/1: *Einzeldruck vor 1800*, 14 vols. (Kassel: Bärenreiter-Verlag, 1971–2003).

3. Dimensions and description of the collection

Counting only music books, scores, images and sound recordings, the music and audiovisual collection of the BNE grows at an annual rate of over 25,000 documents. It is, however, impossible to determine the exact number of items in the BNE, not only because numbers change quickly, but also because the collections are not organised in a discrete department. Taking minimum approximate numbers and only those that are effectively in Music and Audiovisual Department deposits, we can affirm that in April 2011 the BNE had:

- More than 210,000 scores
- More than 25,000 books on music
- More than 425,000 sound recordings (included in Spanish Legal Deposit legislation since 1938)
- More than 125,000 video and DVD recordings
- Nearly 100 manuscript books of plaint chant from before 1850
- 54 personal archives from musicians and music collectors
- 617 specialist music periodicals
- An indeterminate number of several hundred thousand brochures, microform editions, and minor publications (programmes, commercial catalogues, posters, etc.), of which only a small number can be consulted in our online catalogue

4. A tour through the main archives

Among the most significant medieval sources in the BNE are the monophonic and Notre Dame polyphonic codices from Toledo Cathedral, some original codices from the ancient Hispanic liturgy, the so-called “visigótico-mozárabe” from the tenth and eleventh centuries, historic treatises, and some important music incunables, such as *Lux bella* (Sevilla, 1492) by Marcos Durán, considered the first book of musical theory printed in Spain.

Highlights of the manuscript archive include Spanish polyphonic songbooks from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, operas and Spanish zarzuelas, and an important collection of “tonadillas” from Goya’s time. Manuscripts of instrumental music notably include some exceptional anthologies of guitar music and the *Flores de Música*, a famous compilation of keyboard works made by Martín y Coll in the early-eighteenth century, with an extensive repertoire covering two centuries.

The Library’s collection of Spanish printed music dating from before 1900 is without doubt the most important in the world: we preserve original music books copied to order for Cardinal Jiménez de Cisneros and printer Arnao Guillen de Brocar (died 1524) from the early years of the sixteenth century, as well as almost all Spanish editions of instrumental music from the Renaissance and Baroque periods. From the eighteenth century we preserve some autographs of music by the Italian composer Luigi Boccherini, who lived in Spain for 37 years and composed nearly all his music there. Also, users can consult in the Library nearly all editions of instrumental music produced in Spain and composed by Spanish authors during that period. Finally, we also have excellent collections of dance books and essays about Spanish and foreign music.

No less interesting are collections of material from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Alongside notable manuscript collections of Italian opera from the first third of the nineteenth century, we preserve important personal archives and tens of thousands of works deposited under Intellectual Property Registration and Legal Deposit, with a

massive presence of genres for everyday consumption: salon pieces for piano or voice and piano, zarzuela music, music for guitar, the so-called “bailes americanos” – popular American dance music from the early twentieth century – and numerous pedagogical editions.

In terms of sound collections preserved on historic media, we have 457 phonograph cylinders (mostly unique recordings realized in Spain between 1897 and 1905), more than 6,000 piano rolls (most of them Spanish trademarks, such as Victoria, Best, Iris, etc.), and more than 21,000 shellac records made prior to 1956.⁶ The Library also holds hundreds of recordings of conferences, book presentations, and round-tables, etc. that have taken place there since 1979, featuring many of the most important personalities of Spanish and Latin American culture.

Among modern sound and image archives, the Library preserves hundreds of thousands of microgroove discs and CDs, and more than 125,000 video tapes, DVDs, Blu-Ray discs, and multimedia formats, etc., most of them produced in Spain and received via Legal Deposit.

5. Personal and institutional archives

The Music and Audiovisual Department preserves more than 50 archives acquired via purchase or donation relating to people or institutions active in music. Within the overall scope is documentation produced not only by composers, writers, and other creators but also by performers, musicologists, teachers, and amateurs. With the objective to describe these archives as a whole, the Library has developed its own software application (2009) based on descriptive standards formulated by the IAML Working Group on Access to Music Archives, which allows us to catalogue and retrieve information at different levels. The application is available online via the Library’s website.⁷ For the moment, only 13 music collections can be consulted in this way, but we are working to provide open access to them all in forthcoming years.

6. Computerized catalogues and digitization projects

The process of automation at the BNE began in the early 1980s after some years of preparation. However, the Audiovisual and Music Department did not form part of this development until the mid-1990s, because at the time it was considered a priority to control the intake of new Legal Deposit material, for which bibliographic records were collated in the audiovisual and music supplements to the *Bibliografía española*. With limited staff, major efforts were made to maintain the cataloguing of that material, but it became clear that it was necessary to contract service companies to allow us in the early 2000s to undertake the retrospective conversion of old catalogue records. In 2008, data was migrated from the old ARIADNA system to a new integrated system called UNICORN, which is commonly used in the network of Spanish university libraries.

Since May 2010, the Music and Audiovisual Department of the BNE has been involved in a new phase in the systematic scanning of its archives, under the auspices of the Biblioteca Digital Hispánica (BDH: Hispanic Digital Library)⁸ and supported by an agree-

6. A part of that collection received via Legal Deposit in 1938 can be consulted in: *Catálogo de discos de 78 r.p.m. de la Biblioteca Nacional*. Madrid: Biblioteca Nacional, 1988.

7. <<http://www.bne.es/es/Catalogos/ArchivosPersonales/>>

8. <<http://bdh.bne.es/bnesearch/>>

ment between the BNE and Telefónica – the leading Spanish private telecommunications company. BDH is conceived as a Spanish contribution to Europeana⁹ and other digitization projects in the European Community. So far BDH has scanned a selection of nearly 1,000 music books and 60 music newspapers dating from before 1900 (searchable via the Library's website in the Hemeroteca Digital section),¹⁰ and has digitized ca. 12,000 sound recordings from shellac records and phonographic cylinders. In June 2011 we began to scan a selection of 8,000 scores from the more important historic archives of the Department dating back to 1860; they have been delivered to BDH and the first 460 sound recordings are available for streaming online. This first phase of scanning musical documents will be continued in future years until we reach the objective of making available to our users around 30,000 public domain works, with a selection of pre-1920 printed scores and sound recordings made before the advent of vinyl.

The BNE has always been a place of reference in research that could be called “classical”, based on traditional media. The Library will of course continue to cater for that natural public, even more efficiently now owing to virtual access to our collections via the online catalogue and digitization. Nevertheless our sound and audiovisual archives can be orientated with online resources to other types of usage and different publics. We live in an era that is very interested in music and audiovisual media, which is why our collections bring an excellent range of possibilities for research among musicologists and sociologists, but also more general usage by the public or even by entertainment companies looking for business. By their status as industrial products and the fruits of ingenuity, the historical collections of sound and image can offer us today a very interesting field of study and adaptation to new technologies and exploitation.

7. Personnel, services and dissemination

The Music and Audiovisual Department is one of eight departments that depend on the Technical Direction of the BNE. At the first level, it is structured in three administrative units or ‘services’, each one dedicated to collection management and responsible for the technical processing of documents: the score service; the sound recordings service; and the audiovisual service. Three subordinated units or “sections” (the Sala Barbieri section, the Old Collections section, and the Oral Archive Section) also exist, each one responsible for: loan control; user training; public services in the Department reading room; reference library maintenance of more than 4,000 volumes; historic collections management; cataloguing; and non-musical sound recordings control.

Actually the staff of the Department is composed of 27 permanent workers, covering day and afternoon shifts; to these are added 38 workers through a service company dedicated to cataloguing, digitization and the technical processing of documents. Technical and auxiliary personnel from the present staff are responsible for collection management and day-to-day public duties, but this is insufficient to cover all the technical work processes of Legal Deposit, systematic scanning, and retrospective cataloguing: that's the inevitable reason for seeking an increase in permanent staff or for the continuation in the future of external help for some tasks.

9. <<http://www.europeana.eu/>>

10. <<http://www.bne.es/es/Catalogos/HemerotecaDigital/>>

BNE is an autonomous organization inside the Culture Ministry, and members of staff belong to different functionary bodies of the State Administration, and therefore the Library budget depends on general state budgets. However concrete projects could be financed through collaboration with other public institutions, companies, or private foundations, with contributions to sponsor exhibitions, editions, or to digitise archives. On the occasion of its tercentenary celebration, the Library has obtained a legal framework that allows it to obtain fiscal contributions from companies interested in that event.

The department offers a public reference service, which is open for 12 hours every day from Monday to Friday, and invites remote enquiries through the *infomusica* service; in practice, we effectively offer a similar service to a musical documentation centre, by providing information not always limited to our own collections. We also carry out internal loans and attend to needs arising from inside the institution: Web development; the Hispanic Digital Library; information and requests from other departments; and cultural action and outreach initiatives (such as concerts, exhibitions, book introductions and “items of the month” in the Library museum, conferences, and group visits, etc.). Concerning external relations, we also offer interlibrary exchange and loan services with other institutions, and collaborate actively in technical committees in professional institutions such as RISM, the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), the International Association of Sound Archives (IASA), and AEDOM (the Spanish branch of IAML).

Over its 300 years of history, the National Library has formed collections that record the breadth of Spain’s musical life and with the new legislation under consideration, is poised to follow that musical life off the page and into digital realms.

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