

Archives of the Crown of Aragon



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HISTORY

UNTIL THE 1137 UNION OF THE COUNTY OF BARCELONA AND THE Kingdom of Aragon, there is no firm evidence of archives as such in the lands that since then were part of the Crown of Aragon. This said, a number of documents that predate the union have been preserved. The 13th century, especially during the long reign of James I the Conqueror (1213-1276) saw a significant increase in bureaucratic and administrative activity, which generated a greater number of documents. We know of several archives of original material from this period, including those housed in the monastery of Santa María de Sigena, that go back to at least 1255. However, the idea of creating a general archive for the Crown only took hold at the beginning of the 14th century.

It first saw light as the Royal Archives, which was housed in Barcelona's Main Royal Palace (*Palacio Real Mayor*) for more than four centuries. It was created at the behest of a monarch with a keen attention to detail who knew how to use written documents as both a legal and diplomatic weapon in order to acquire new territories and jurisdictions. The Archives was established in 1318 at a time when the accumulation of ancient royal decrees, archives seized from the Knights Templar in 1307, compounded by the weight of documents emanating from his own chancery, prompted King James II (1291-1327) to dedicate to it two rooms within the Royal Palace in a place that had been vacated after the construction of the new Palatine Chapel (what is known nowadays as the Chapel of Saint Agatha). The Royal Archives was to remain here until 1770, when significant cracks appeared in his walls.

Omnis est manifestum quod ego Ramirus dei gratia rex aragonensis. Ad filiam nam Ramirudo comiti barcinonensi simul cum omni regni mei honore. Hunc & spontanea voluntate ac firmitate cordis effectui. volo. p. cor. & nunc do civitates hominum. mof. milites. felices. clericos. ac pedites. quatenus castra. & munitiones. siue alios omnes honore ita p. eundem Ramirudu comitem deinceps teneat & habeat. sic per regem ad se tenere & habere. & si aliqua regi in omnibus sub omniua fidelitate obdiant. Et ut in hoc nullis occasionis id pessime machinationis ingenium ab aliis possit intelligi. totum ei demito. dono. atque concedo. quid retinuerit in ista alia carta. donationis regni. qui et antea fecerat. cum filia mea et Aduse. Supradicta ergo omnia ego Ramirus aragonensis rex. dono. & firmis. laudo. p. phato Ramirudo comiti barcinonensi. ut hec que illi presentia dono & omnia alia que habuit. sep. habet. adstruatis. min. & fidelitate. omni tempore. Quod est acti in suspirio. idus novembrii. in presentia multorum nobilium hominum regni aragonensis inibi assistentium. Anno dñice incarnationis. & xxx. vii. p. mill. c. lxx. vi. Supradicta omnia illi dono & firmis. laudo. sic melius nunquam habuit se in antea. & habet ea omnia ad fidelitatem meam omni tempore.

Ramirus. R. Ramirus

Ramirus. Ramirus

Ramirus. Ramirus

Ramiro II of Aragon informs his subjects that he has bestowed his daughter Petronilla and his entire realm to Ramon Berenguer IV. Signed in Zaragoza, 11 November 1137, this document is regarded as marking the beginning of the Crown of Aragon. ACA, Chancery, Parchment charters of Ramon Berenguer IV, 85.

It was during the latter end of the reign of James I the Conqueror, when paper began to be used more extensively, that records began to be kept, initially in synopsis form but later in greater detail, of the most significant letters and instructions, sealed and delivered by the royal chancery. Such practices continued under James I's two immediate successors, yet it was James II who standardised the complete copy of documents in thematic series of registers. He also made the prior registration of a royal document as obligatory a measure as the affixing of the royal seal. He managed to gather eighty books of register that pre-date his accession, some of which had been in the possession of the scribes of the chancery, while a full 330 registers survive from his reign.

In addition to administrative files and registers, James II took care to ensure that his Archives held all important documentation that related to his royal household, including treasury accounts, cases brought before

L. 89v

franco facientium ad quatuordecim libras evolvendas licet dilecti
 nra carina vos. Hieronymus bale domitelli filio et heredes dicti
 gonasti pro pre dicti Antonij fuerit acquisita illas solue renuit in eade
 Antonij barreca providentium et factuam. Eademem supplicat nos
 p eundem Antonij de iustine remedio. Ad ipsius ignis supplicat
 humilom supplicacione atq; iustitiam dem in hie officium examinat
 debet pmi serie seu illi vtm ad quem spectet dano et mandant
 quod vntis pntis rursus debet de pmissis taliter q iustinat p
 totis remedij compellat et stampato. Dntam carnam ad soluen
 dnu dicti Antonij barreca de renona nobilitate pntis dicti qua
 draquinta libras videt exequutione valem in eis bonis faciendo
 quibusvis elongacione seu suspenciono p illam ad impediendum
 huius exequutione allegacione que quo ad her omi robore recte
 volum obsequendo nullo modo. Hor no differant quamo causa si
 penam quingentoz ^{particulari} rapine evitae. Sic enim iustina suadente
 dntam providendum et p vos exequendum dare in castello
 novo curato nra Neapole die xvi^{to} Novembris anno anate
 dnt ad pnt. Lxxv quagesimo secundo. Petrus dnt

Johannes de rampo
 ex p. ff. p. dnt

Pro Jacobo curia Sicilia regio

Nos hinc et fidei scribe nro Jacobo curie tenenti claves dntu
 nra in civitate Barthele Salite et gram. Cupientes ordinacione
 bus curie sic nra dnti recordi. Nos comon Regum ex eis
 pntem que optime atq; viles et necessare conservacione Regi
 paternum videtur in pnt. ordinacione et statutum sta
 pec strenuissimu Regem petrum secum pccatum nra de his
 que vto incumbunt oneri vone decem nra pnt que est hinc
 pnt. Com sia necessari pec conservacione et nra paternum

The first Ordinances of the Royal Archives of Barcelona, granted by Peter IV the Ceremonious on 12 March 1384 and confirmed by Alfonso V on 4 November 1452. ACA, Chancery, Register 2551, f. 89r-90r.

the judges who were members of his court and reports of his envoys and trusted informants, together with his daughters' marriage contracts and letters from his family. Around 20,000 paper documents survive from his reign, together with more than 5,000 in parchment form.

His successor, Alfonso the Gentle (1327-1336) following in his father's footsteps, amassed a similar quantity of papers and deeds, both private and official. Once Peter the Ceremonious (1336-1387) assumed the throne, the Royal Archives began to be considered less the monarch's private or exclusive archives and more the archives of the royal administration.

Peter the Ceremonious was just as thorough and organised as his grandfather, maybe even more so. He automatically kept documents that he regarded as important, ensuring that they were readily accessible when required. For example, he sent to the Archives for safe keeping significant documents such as the Book of Privileges of Mallorca, seized when this kingdom was incorporated into the Crown of Aragon in 1344; Book of Privileges of Valencia, which became null and void when the Union was defeated in 1348; the original copy of his famous 'Ordinances', detailing household and curial customs; originals of the two chronicles that he commissioned, one about the Kingdom of Aragon, the so called Chronicle of San Juan de la Peña, and the other concentrating upon his own reign; the trial of James of Mallorca; his speeches before the *Cortes* (Parliament), etc. He also continued the practice of transferring to the Archives all chancery registers, which numbered 1,800 volumes at the time of his death.

Peter the Ceremonious' principal achievement is to have transformed the Archives into a permanent office for housing and maintaining documents. In 1346, he nominated as archivist his clerk Pere Perseya, who immediately set about compiling the first full inventory of charters, which were stored at that time in cupboards and chests which acted as a form of classification. The king always remained in close contact with the archivists who succeeded Perseya, ordering document searches, demanding copies or originals to be forwarded to him and sending documents for conservation. In 1384 he gave orders to Berenguer Segarra, archivist at the time, on how registers should be treated: ensuring that they were submitted by the royal scribes, la-

belled and foliated; undertaking repairs, where required; compiling indexes by name of the recipients of the documents they contained.

In succeeding reigns, and despite a change of dynasty in 1412, the role of the Archives vis-à-vis the royal administration remained constant. What did change was its social role.

A PUBLIC ARCHIVE

The registers of the chancery recorded the rights and privileges enjoyed by the monarch. They also deal with matters of import for his subjects, those who had at some point paid for a judgement to be implemented, for exclusive rights to work a mine or for legitimatising children born out of wedlock and so on. In this way, as documents became publically available, the Royal Archives became much more than a repository that served the interests of the monarch alone.

The Estates of the time realised this and themselves demanded access to the documents. In 1419, the *Cortes* of the Kingdom of Valencia, gained a concession from King Alfonso that the chancery should draw up separate registers for matters relating to this kingdom and that these should be held in the royal palace in the city of Valencia. Some time later, in 1461, the Aragonese *Cortes*, taking advantage of the rebellion of Catalonia against John II, was granted the same concession, leading to the establishment of the Royal Archives of Aragon in Zaragoza.

So now the Barcelona-based Archives was no longer the only one serving the Crown. During the course of the 15th to 17th centuries, it incorporated only the registers relating to Catalonia, the Balearic Islands and Sardinia. Charters and bundles of papers from the time of the former Counts of Barcelona and Kings of Aragon were stored in thirty cupboards and two large chests, each rarely opened except on occasions such as the time when historians Jerónimo Zurita, Francisco Diago and Pierre de Marca perused them. The personal documents of Alfonso the Magnanimous, who died in Naples in 1458, were never forwarded to Barcelona, which received only the registers – and that only after his death. Similarly, under Ferdinand II (1479-1516) the number of registers sent to the Archives by the royal secretaries dimin-

ished significantly. Once the king had successfully delegated powers to the viceroy and the *Audiencia* (Royal Court), there was little for the king to administer in Catalonia and his secretaries were reluctant to send the registers to the Barcelona Archives. The matter came to a head during the time of the Habsburg dynasty: of the Emperor Charles I (1516-1556) and his two immediate successors, Philip II (1556-1598) and Philip III (1598-1621) there are, respectively, a mere 101, 116 and 92 registers of documents sanctioned directly by the king and his Council of Aragon at the royal court. From 1621 onwards, royal registers were no longer transferred. The only documents to reach the Barcelona Archives were the registers of the royal viceroy, who remained in the city.

Access to the Archives was also an issue in Catalonia. The Catalan *Cortes* in their 1481 sitting approved a resolution by which the royal archivist was obliged to reveal any letters that affected individuals and to arrange for them to be copied. Later, in 1503, the *Cortes* ordained that all the registers should be entered into the Archives within a maximum of ten years from their completion. During its 1599 session, the *Cortes* decreed that the *Libros de cabrevación* (land registers), compiled in 1580 and based upon documents held by the Archives, should be readily available to whoever applied to consult them. In its session of 1702, the *Cortes* forbade the archivist from removing any book or letter from the Archives, whatever the reason, even if he had express permission from the viceroy. James II, long in his grave, would have been outraged at such an assault upon 'his' Archives.

The final step was taken in 1706, during a session of the *Cortes* called by Archduke Charles. In seven long chapters relating to the Royal Archives, the Estates prescribed a set of tangible changes that they insisted upon and set out measures they considered necessary in order to make all documentation generally accessible. However, all this was in vain. In 1714, Barcelona surrendered to the troops of Philip V and the new Bourbon regime impeded any further intervention in the Archives.

A CLOSED ARCHIVE

From the 15th Century onwards, when the monarch was away from Barcelona for long periods, the Archives came to depend on the *Real*

Audiencia (Royal Court), headed by the *lugarteniente* or viceroy. The position of archivist was annexed to a scribe's office responsible for writs and warrants and was financed from a fund that received its income from stamp duties.

The new *Audiencia* set up by a decree of 1716, continued to observe all former customs and practices. Its secretary assumed the responsibilities of archivist, while the administrative and judicial registers of the Principality of Catalonia continued to be transferred back to the Royal Archives. Following an application for the post of official archivist by a private individual in 1727, the *Cámara de Castilla* (Council of Castille, which since 1707 had also powers in regard of the former Crown of Aragon), began to take an interest in the Barcelona Royal Archives.

After various investigative reports by the *Audiencia* (one of which amounted to 120 pages), each urging the need to reorganise the Archives, Philip V signed a Royal Mandate «regarding the institution known as the Royal Archives: procedures for appointing staff and the norms and regulations to be observed in the processing and conservation of documents» (1738). This was in fact very much the same model established by the Catalan *Cortes* in 1706, yet with one significant difference: there was no provision for the transfer of documents and the Archives were considered closed to new inclusions. And so it was: the last registers to be transferred from the *Audiencia* to the Royal Archives are those of 1727, ten years before.

The lesser officials were appointed by the same mandate. Two years later, Francisco Javier de Garma was appointed chief archivist and immediately set to work, influenced by the ideas of the Enlightenment. The Archive's old collection was regarded as a single entity. Cupboards, chests and trunks were emptied out with no attention for its origins and without preserving small collections. Parchments were set to one side (papal bulls apart) and bundles of paper and notebooks to another. Everything was catalogued by reference to the chronology of the counts of Barcelona and kings of Aragon, following the existing scheme of the series of registers.

1754 saw another Royal Mandate, this time setting out further regulations for the Archives and endorsing current practices. This was the first occa-



A decorated silk cover to the document confirming the transfer of the Archives of the Crown of Aragon from its original location in the Royal Palace to the Palace of the Royal Court (*Real Audiencia*) in 1770. ACA, History of the Archives, box 9.

sion on which the term 'Archives of the Crown of Aragon' was used in a document signed by a monarch, even though the title had been in official use since the end of the 16th century. Exploiting such a grand name, Garma unsuccessfully attempted to incorporate the Royal Archives of both Valencia and Zaragoza, together with that of the *Real Audiencia* of Mallorca.

When in 1770 it became necessary to vacate the premises of the old Main Royal Palace (known at the time as the Palace of the Inquisition), the task of classification could be regarded as complete. Not so, however, that of indexing, the scale of which exceeded the planning and executing capacity of Garma and his colleagues. The Archives was moved to the Palace of the *Audiencia*, formerly headquarters of Catalonia's *Diputació del General*. Upon the death of Garma in 1783, new procedures were established for affixing seals to documents, which until that time had borne the personal seal of the head archivist: from this moment on, the Archives, with its own seal and regulations, was no longer a mere office but a fully-fledged institution.

AN OPEN ARCHIVE

In 1814, after the turbulence of French rule in Barcelona and coinciding with the return of Ferdinand VII, the post of chief archivist fell to a man of commitment, of particularly perceptive intelligence and a truly amazing awareness of the historical value of documentary sources. His name was Próspero de Bofarull (1777-1859). In a very short time, he completed the classification of registers and parchment charters and drew up a number of inventories that were a model of clarity for their time. He set about the systematic transfer of old documents that fill a total of 34 thick volumes. He drew up a series of impressive indexes and improved the quality of those that were unsatisfactory. He restored and had bound thousands of registers and volumes.

With the 1836 publication of *Los Condes de Barcelona vindicados* ('Vindication of the Counts of Barcelona'), he defended the ancient history of Catalonia. He also brought to light documentary treasures contained within the first 17 volumes of the *Colección de documentos inéditos* ('Collection of Unpublished Documents') belonging to the Archives of the Crown of Aragon, which he founded and his successors



Portrait of Próspero de Bofarull, Director of the Archives of the Crown of Aragon from 1814 to 1840 and from 1844 to 1849, painted in his office by Claudio Lorenzale. ACA.

furthered. He interacted with the intellectuals of his time, wrote an extraordinary quantity of aide-mémoires to historians, both Spanish and foreign, who consulted the Archives in ever greater numbers, either with permission granted by ministerial order or recommended by sen-

En te conseil passas suiva.
 E chorar a cruel mortua.
 tot los ofens de ton regnat.
 qui son de tres ans d'oberrat.
 mes en l'anni laischa los fomes
 quar tu son de greus toquites.
 le que tu parat stange des os foyants. Car
 le mot qui a tenue cadufes de jamais, ont en
 chagun morrau de poulamou. cellec (celle finit
 au nom pappe) dan, y... per ton om. le a bon
 fere a que ala signifi?
 Adieu seron els, des Marcel, y'ont
 tendraie barben, et d'ault, se per, alle amou, de,
 vobanis, qui ont, poudans de joie couterie a
 piteu b'epitete amoneste et de bon la raie a
 piteu amou, ami. P. Mérimée

Paris Rue de Lath 52
 le 6 Janvier 1855
 Intitule en l'Maye per
 Manuel de Bofarull, (M. Bofarull)
 Monsieur de Bofarull

de tair que ont, ay, mes
 bon ve m'airis, et il faut que j'y compte
 beaucoup pour est, con, s'irre. Pour
 tair que y ont, honillement p'aypans y
 a Paris, ou a tant de chos, con, s'irre, a
 piteu que il se ont plus, de temps, pour
 les amou. Le abi se, vob, lape, p'ati,
 L. L. ton, se rappeli, a' s'ote m'omou y
 ton, p'at, de p'icenter, ton, repete, a' s'ote
 m'ellous p'at amou, qu' a' 2^m h'ou. Le
 s'ous copie pour, vos, s'otours, quelques, s'ous
 l'omoumou, qu'ont le nos, m'ellous, s'otours, s'otours
 bonnes, d'ay, ou, ton, ou, ou, ou, s'otours

passas, a' le, m'omou, se, le, a' h'ou
 ton, ou, p'at, de, la, comite, m'ellous, de
 l'epite, de, l'epite, et, tout, cath'edrale, de
 P'epite. Le, ont, tant, de, ton, p'at, m'omou
 de, poulamou, d'ou, m'omou, p'at, l'ou, de, le
 fere, de, 13^m d'ou. L'epite, a' le, h'ou, ou, 8^m, se
 il, faut, adou, y'ont, s'otours, ou, ou, ton
 s'epite, a' s'ote, comite, se, alle, ou, a' plus, de
 de, p'at, de, p'at, se, le, d'ou, se, tout, m'omou
 pas, pas, le, ton, s'otours. S'otours, se, p'at,
 ton, foyants, et, ton, m'omou, p'at, l'ou, de, le
 de, l'omou, de, l'omou, se, d'ou, de
 p'at, l'ou, ou, s'otours, s'otours, ou, ton, de, l'ou
 S'otours, s'otours, s'otours, a' l'ou, m'omou, de, le
 p'at, l'ou, s'otours, s'otours, s'otours, plus,
 qu'ou, p'at, m'omou, de, l'ou, de, le, ou, ou,
 ou, ou, p'at, l'ou

Morana Regi¹ cellie
 Res vengut sei ala tua cocha.
 Meill sei persons cuna g'ets cocha.
 Septantans a no m'ichit fers.
 Maura nos fins per ton cors. (ou, m' amou)
 Ma d'ito en me l'ou p'at. (ou, m' s)
 J'ai percha des ton regnat.
 Morana p'at. dan
 S'otours que mas queu i an.
 Si no ages cache ton gren.
 Le reis com a ses nos amou.
 Trop pass que bon de la ton.
 Morana e. (poulamou, l'ou) per les om.
 Fere per te conseil y'ont mes
 D'ou amou, ou, s'otours.
 d'ou, l'ou, s'otours, m'omou, d'ou.
 No ti fere s'otours.
 a p'at, sei, a' ou, s'otours.

A letter dated 6 January 1855 from Prosper Mérimée, the French writer and historian, to the Director of the Archives, Manuel de Bofarull, inviting him to attend the Universal Exhibition in Paris. Enclosed with the letter was a copy of some verses in Occitan that he had discovered in the cathedral of Périgueux. ACA, Secretaria, 127.

ior officials. After extraordinarily complex bureaucratic procedures, he was finally granted a building that was truly fit to house the Archives. This was the *Palacio de los Virreyes* (Viceroy's Palace). In 1853, shortly after Borafull's retirement, the Archives re-opened in its new premises.

Próspero de Bofarull was in perfect harmony with the sense of history that emanated from the Archives that had been entrusted to him. He rejected the idea that the Archives was «the burial ground of ancient documents» and endeavoured to make it once again a living repository, for Catalonia at least, since the remaining other lands of the former Crown of Aragon were now beyond his range. Even so, in 1852, he managed to transfer from the Simancas General Archives the records of the *Consejo de Aragón* (Aragon Council) that were stored there. Similarly, it is indeed telling that in 1819 he negotiated for the Archives to be the repository of documents generated by the *Junta Superior de Cataluña* (the ruling body in Catalonia between 1808 and 1812) and in 1823 of these of the short-lived University of Barcelona (1822-1823) and *Diputación Provincial de Cataluña* (1821-1823), which he was later obliged to return. 1828 saw the addition of the collection of the *Diputació del General*, a body established in medieval times and abolished in 1714. Just in time since its archives had been neglected and indeed were on the point of being lost. His endeavours to save archives belonging to monasteries and convents that were confiscated, and in many cases torched in 1835, was inspired primarily not because he wanted to preserve them for the intrinsic quality of these treasures from antiquity but rather because they were documents, both ancient and contemporary, belonging to vanished institutions.

In his praise, one might say that the best of the directors who came after him are those who sought to follow his example.

A CONTEMPORARY ARCHIVE

Próspero de Bofarull died in the same year that the *Cuerpo Facultativo de Archiveros, Bibliotecarios y Arqueólogos* (Professional Body of Archivists, Librarians and Archaeologists) was founded. In 1858, the Archives ceased to be self-governing, and the relevant Ministry determined its activities. Some of the records added to the collec-

tion were of a general nature, others were especially relevant, while yet others were due to the personal efforts of distinguished directors of the Archives. Collections that are significant for both their quantity and historical importance include those of the former *Archivo del Real Patrimonio* (Archives of Royal Heritage), monastic records assembled by the *Delegaciones de Hacienda* (taxation offices) of Barcelona, Girona and Tarragona, historic records of both the *Real Audiencia* (Royal Court) and *Delegación de Hacienda* (taxation office) of Barcelona, together with a significant number of aristocratic and family papers.

In 1993, new premises were formally opened and a year later the Archives moved to its new location, equipped with modern security and storage facilities. Subsequently, the former Viceroy's Palace was fundamentally renovated to make it a fit place for changing cultural and documentary requirements. The formal opening of the renovated premises took place in 2007, coinciding with the inaugural meeting of the board of trustees that oversees the work of the Archives.

In 2018, the Archives of the Crown of Aragon will celebrate 700 continuous years of existence as an independent body. In this, it is unique. One of Europe's oldest archival collections, it has functioned without a single break ever since it was established. Throughout its long history and thanks to the valuable documentary heritage that it has accumulated ever since its distant foundation, it has been witness to the complex history of European society. It was at one and the same time the result of and witness to the lengthy, diverse processes that have shaped Europe (and, by extension, our contemporary world), with its defining principles and values: the primacy of law, the workings and organisational framework of the modern state and the intrinsic value of preserving texts, whether composed by individuals or public bodies, as a guarantee of their rights and obligations. It also recognises the prime value of efficient information storage and retrieval. After 500 years of existence as a resource for the kings of the Crown of Aragon (from the 14th to the 18th centuries) followed by two centuries in the service of historical knowledge (the 19th and 20th centuries), the Archives of the Crown of Aragon have embarked upon a major transformation in order to serve all European citizens and to play its role in the formation of a trans-national culture, shared with all members of the European Union.



[2]

CURRENT LOCATIONS

VICEROY'S PALACE

The Royal Archives was originally established in 1318 and housed in Barcelona's Main Royal Palace, in the place that had previously been home to the Comtal Chapel. At the base of what is nowadays the Chapel of Saint Agatha, it gave onto the *Tinell*, the great royal hall. The Archives remained here until the year 1770 when it was incorporated into the premises of the *Real Audiencia* (Royal Court), the former Palace of the Catalonia's *Diputació del General*, nowadays occupied by the regional government (*Generalitat*). Prospero de Bofarull, director of the Archives at the beginning of the 19th century, was searching for a larger building that could accommodate the quantity of documentation that had been amassed since 1814. In 1838 Queen Maria Cristina bequeathed for this purpose the Viceroys' Palace, which became home to the Archives on 18 December 1853.

The building was constructed at the behest of the *Cortes* held at Monzón in 1547, as a *cuarto nuevo* (extension) of the Main Royal Palace, originally planned as the living quarters of the viceroy. Designed by Antoni Carbonell, it was built between 1549 and 1557. The palace was erected on top of part of the former palace and of old houses confiscated by the *Diputació General* of Catalonia.

Antoni Carbonell designed the building as an essentially Renaissance structure, yet one that preserved certain residual Gothic decorative

features. It was constructed around a square central patio, its ground floor shaped by four basket-handle arches. A parallel open staircase gives onto this patio. The first floor has four semi-circular arches, ridged ceilings, Tuscan columns and a running balustrade. Despite the regular layout of the windows and a number of classical features, the facades retain several Gothic decorative features such as the turrets, gargoyles and sculpted motifs on, for example, the mouldings, corbels and capitols.



The Viceroy's Palace, home to the Archives of the Crown of Aragon since 1852.

One of the most significant architectural features of the Viceroy's Palace is the coffered ceiling above the monumental staircase. This octagonal dome, embellished with coffers and rosettes in its central part, is supported by a colonnade and balustrade. Another important element is the monumental portal, named after St George (*Sant Jordi*). On the main staircase, it was carved in 1975 by the famous Catalan sculptor, Josep Maria Subirachs. The decoration on the pair of bronze plaques represents the history, constituent bodies and culture of the former Crown of Aragon.

The so called King Martin Tower, with its five open rectangular storeys and a gallery of semi-circular arches is perhaps the crowning feature of the palace. It remains to this day a significant landmark within Barcelona's *Barrio Gótico* (old city center). After the radical renovations that took place between 2003 and 2006, the Viceroy's Palace houses the meeting chamber of the board of trustees, storage facilities, a gallery for temporary exhibitions, a reading room and an auditorium for congresses, conferences and general cultural activities.

NEW PREMISES IN ALMOGAVERS ST.

The much more modern building in Almogavers St. was first opened to the public in 1994. It lies within what was formerly a railway mar-shalling yard that was landscaped and greened as part of Barcelo-na’s extensive urban renewal at the time of the city’s 1992 hosting of the Olympic Games. Here too is the equally contemporary Auditorium and National Theatre of Catalonia.

The building was conceived of as two separate spaces: the first of these, on three floors, has areas that are accessible to the general public, offices, laboratories for restoring and digitization documents, a read-ing room and sundry other services. The second one, four storeys high and equipped with storage facilities, houses documents in the Archive’s collection. This state of the art building meets all requirements for con-serving, protecting and curating the documentary heritage. It is also de-signed to respond to the needs of scholars and the general public.



Facade of the Archive’s premises in Almogàvers St., opened in 1993. On it appears the insignia of the European Heritage Label, granted to the Archives in 2015.



[3]

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

THE DOCUMENTARY RESOURCES OF THE ARCHIVES OF THE Crown of Aragon are relevant to the history of Europe in general and indeed to all countries of the Mediterranean littoral. They are of special relevance for those lands that at one time belonged to the former Crown of Aragon: southern France, Corsica, Sardinia, Naples and Sicily. They are also a rich documentary resource for today's autonomous regions of Aragon, Catalonia, Valencia and the Balearic Islands. Given the inter-regional nature of the Archive's documentary resources, in addition to improved conservation, research and dissemination, greater collaboration is required between the Spanish state and these four autonomous regions. The mission of the Archive's board of trustees is to promote such collaboration. It was sanctioned by Royal Decree no. 1267/2006 of 8 November 2006 and featured in the Official State Gazette (*BOE*) of 9 November that year. Its functions are the following:

- To approve the annual plan of action as proposed by this standing committee.
- To monitor and assess to what degree the plans and programmes of the Archives of the Crown of Aragon are effectively executed and to implement specific activities that support the work of the Archives.
- To be aware of programmes for the purchase, preservation and conservation of documentary resources.

- To consider the Archives director's annual report of activities and the draft budget drawn up by the *Subdirección General de los Archivos Estatales* (Sub-Directorate for State Archives).
- To stimulate and encourage participation by society as a whole in the enrichment, preservation, conservation and dissemination of the documentary records belonging to the Archives of the Crown of Aragon.
- To stimulate collaboration, both practical and academic, with archives elsewhere in Spain and abroad.
- To issue mandatory report of all proposals for the removal on a permanent basis of items in the collection.
- To pursue ways of obtaining special resources from public and private bodies and to supervise their use.
- To be responsible for the appointment of a new director of the Archives of the Crown of Aragon, when required.
- To form study groups with specific aims and objectives.



EUROPEAN
HERITAGE LABEL



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Santa Fe Capitulations
Inscribed on the Register in 2009
Memory of the World

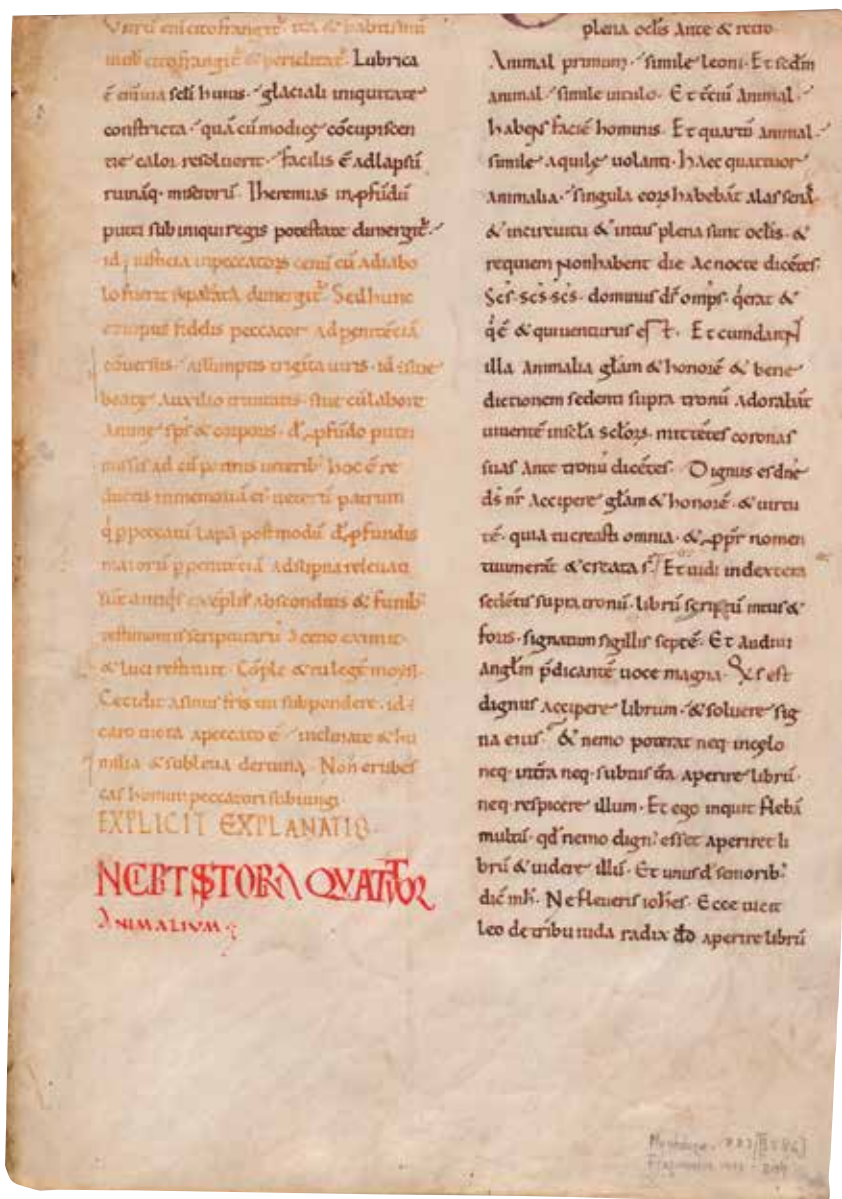
[4]

EUROPEAN HERITAGE LABEL AND UNESCO MEMORY OF THE WORLD REGISTER

THE EUROPEAN HERITAGE LABEL, OPEN TO ALL MEMBER STATES, IS a recognition awarded by the European Union. Its purpose is to reinforce citizens' sense of belonging to the Union, based upon shared values and common features from Europe's history and cultural heritage. It also promotes intercultural dialogue and recognises national and regional diversity.

The European Commission awarded the European Heritage Label to the Archives of the Crown of Aragon in 2015, although the Archives had been included in this intergovernmental organisation ever since its foundation in 2007. This distinction recognises the Archive's commitment to the preservation and dissemination of the rich cultural heritage within its records, in themselves a unique testimony to the development over centuries of Europe's history and culture.

In 1992, UNESCO introduced its Memory of the World programme in order to increase awareness of the need to preserve our planet's documentary heritage. The most evident aspect of this programme is its Memory of the World Register. This list of items that meet selection requirements as documents of world significance is approved by the organisation's International Consultative Committee and ratified by UNESCO's Director General. Two documents from the collection of the Archives of the Crown of Aragon are included in this register: the Capitulations of Santa Fe signed between the Catholic Monarchs and Christopher Columbus, and a fragment of a manuscript of the 'Commentary on the Apocalypse' by Beatus of Liébana.



The 'Commentary on the Apocalypse' by Beatus of Liébana, writing in the 8th Century, is one of the most renowned mediaeval texts thanks to around thirty codices, transcribed between the 10th and 12th centuries and for the most part richly illustrated. Because of their significance, each one has been included in UNESCO's Memory of the World Register. The Archives holds a fragment of a version of the early 12th century and subsequently used to bind a lawsuit of the Carthusian monastery of Montalegre in 1604. ACA, Collections, Fragments of manuscripts, 209.



[5]

DOCUMENTS

REFLECTING THE ARCHIVES' CHANGING HISTORY AND THE incorporation of documents over many years, its documentary resources are grouped together as follows:

REAL CANCELLERÍA (ROYAL CHANCERY)

The name of this section is a reminder of the former role of the Archives as Barcelona's Royal Archives. It contains documents that were added to the collection up until the 18th century. The office of Chancellor, created by James I was generally assumed by a bishop. It had as part of its remit the safekeeping and application of the royal seal. The Chancellor was regarded as the monarch's principal advisor. Acting as president of the Royal Council, Royal Court and Royal Chancery, his duties included reading royal documents and their dispatch, once the royal seal had been applied.

The best known and most studied part of this section are the books of register, which began to be compiled in the mid-13th century. From the very beginning, these compendious books were written on paper and bound in vellum. Until the 15th century, every single royal document, whatever its subject matter, that had been created in Crown territories was transcribed into these volumes at the time of issue. By any measure, the richness of such content is literally inexhaustible. From the earliest days, these registers were codified thematically according to the nature of the documents they held (*Comune* for standard legal documents, *Curiae* for matters of court, *Gratiarum* for graces and privileges and so on). As time went by, fresh categories were established to reflect those lands newly incorporated into the Crown of Aragon: Sar-

dinia, Mallorca, Sicily and Naples. Registers, already arranged by series and number, were sent from the chancery to the Royal Archives using a system of classification that, broadly speaking, has continued until this day. In the 15th century registers of documents relating to the Kingdom of Valencia (1419) and the Kingdom of Aragon (1461) were classified separately before dispatch to, respectively, Valencia's Royal Archives and those of the *Diputación* of Aragon in Zaragoza. Registers relating to Catalonia, Mallorca and Sardinia continued to be filed in Barcelona's Royal Archives. Once the court of Aragon moved permanently to merge with that of Castile, the quantity of documents promulgated by the king and his council declined markedly. Although at first they continued to be sent to the appropriate archive for each kingdom, before long quite a few series were never dispatched onwards. Finally in 1621, the flow ceased completely and only registers of documents issued by the viceroy in Barcelona were lodged in the Archives there. After the change of royal house upon the death of Charles II (1665-1700), the register system of the former Crown of Aragon continued in simplified form until the establishment of a liberal government in the 19th century. This said, from 1738 onwards registers were no longer lodged in the Royal Archives but filed instead in the *Audiencia* (Royal Court) of Barcelona.

Although the Royal Chancery was the most important body feeding the Royal Archives (and the one that has given its name to the section of the Archives of the Crown of Aragon that holds its documents), other records were incorporated that the Chancery was not responsible for either producing or receiving. King James II, founder of the Archives, took care to forward on all documents emanating from his household, whether official or private and his successor, Alfonso the Gentle, followed this practice too. During the reign of Peter the Ceremonious the Archive's status as the monarch's private resource declined as its role in support of officialdom increased. Even so, it was still customary to consign to the Archives (though not always in a systematic manner) relevant royal papers such as *Cortes* (Parliament) proceedings, decisions of the *Real Audiencia* (Royal Court) and other legal materials. Similarly, all documents and archives commissioned by the king were entered, whether through confiscation, simply for storage or for various other motives. As an example, in 1610 the archives of the monasteries of Sant Joan de les Abadesses and Santa Maria de l'Estany, including a considerable quantity of parchment charters dating from the 9th and 10th centuries, were incorporated into the collection. Another significant addition



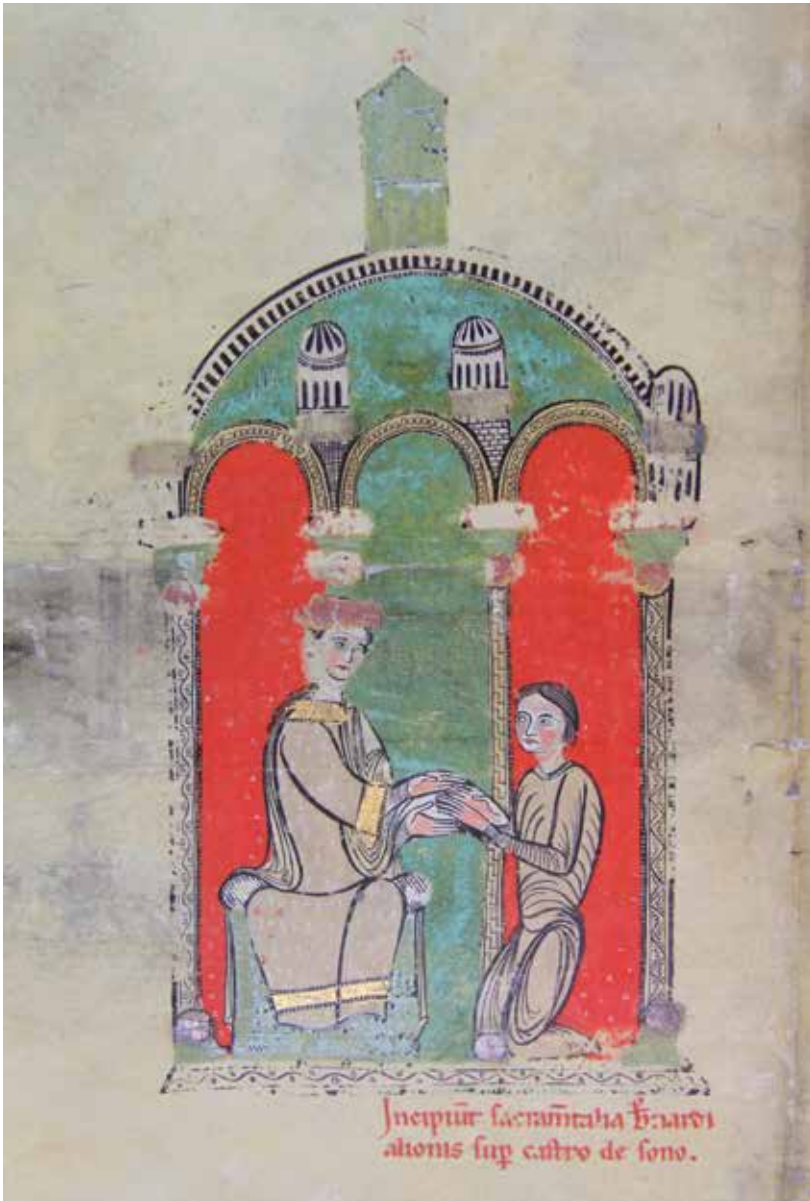
Registers of the Royal Chancery in their current location in the storage room of the Archive's premises in Almogàvers St. They contain more than 6,000 volumes discounting the related registers of the *Consejo de Aragón* (Council of Aragon) and *Real Audiencia* (Royal Court). Collation began in the mid-13th century and continued until the 18th. Within them are estimated to be several million documents.

was a number of documents from Sicily confiscated from the Archives of the Alagons, who rebelled against the King of Aragon in 1393. Many documents came from the Knights Templar, most of them from the Templar Houses of Barberà and Barcelona, confiscated in 1307. A great number of documents came too from the archives of the Baronage of Castellví de Rosanes and Montcada, also seized by the King in 1397.

As indicated earlier, from 1754 onwards the contents of the Archives, of whatever provenance, were regarded as a single entity. As a result, aside from the registers, all records of whatever origin were re-classified. On one side were parchment charters and on the other, papers and notebooks, classified according to the succession of the counts of Barcelona and kings of Aragon and conforming to the classification system of the registers. Such a method of cataloguing papers and parchments by date erased all traces that might allow the reconstruc-



The *Liber Feudorum Maior*, or 'Great Book of Fiefs', is one of the best-known and significant documents in the Archive's possession. Richly illustrated with miniatures that for the most part portray the obligations of feudal vassalage, this cartulary of documents compiled between the 12th and 13th centuries relates to the feudal dependencies of the Counts of Barcelona and Kings of Aragon. Truly enormous, in its original form it was composed of around 900 large sheets of parchment collected in two volumes that between them con-



tained nearly 1000 documents from the 10th to 12th centuries. By 1800, these two large codices were badly damaged; only around 120 sheets are preserved, more than half of them with miniature illustrations. These two illustrated pages from the *Liber feudorum* were only recently recovered. Since they bore no accompanying text, they had been recycled at the beginning of the 19th century and used in the binding of two volumes of chancery registers. ACA, Chancery, Register 1.

tion of archive groups, whether small or large, that were consigned to the Royal Archives on an irregular basis, or also of theme-related files, for example regarding relations with Castile or concerning the Western Schism. These files undoubtedly existed but were dispersed because of the adherence to a rigid system of classifying solely according to chronological order. The whole was divided into two broad divisions, the one listing more than 20,000 parchment charters and the other containing letters and other records written on paper and stored in some 400 boxes. In addition were formed various collections of legal and parliamentary proceedings, registered grievances (*greuges*), matters relating to Aragonese minor nobility (*infanzonía*) and judicial proceedings, together with sundry letters in Arabic, papal bulls, seals, autographs and documents detailing the history of the Archives.

CONSEJO DE ARAGÓN (COUNCIL OF ARAGON)

This section is devoted to records of the Supreme Council of Aragon (*Consejo Supremo de Aragón*), which were transferred from the Archives of Simancas in 1852 in accordance with a royal decree of 15 June 1850. Established by pragmatic sanction of Ferdinand the Catholic and signed in Madrid on 19 November 1494, it was an offshoot of the longstanding Royal Council with its own rules and regulations. Within its remit were affairs of state, royal pardons, taxation and war. It also exercised a judicial function as a court of appeal. Its books, files and registers from the 16th and 17th centuries are an inexhaustible historical resource for the study of Spain in the modern era. The Council of Aragon, which was always based within the royal court, was responsible for all matters pertaining to Aragon, Catalonia, Valencia, the Balearic Islands and Sardinia. It also administered Italy until 1555 when Charles V withdrew responsibility for Naples, Sicily and Milan from the Council of Aragon. The Council was disbanded in 1707, when its functions were transferred to the newly-created Secretariat for Aragon, which was an organ of the *Cámara de Castilla*, an inner circle of the Council of Castile.

The sheer range of responsibilities of the Council of Aragon makes difficult any breakdown of items that fell under its control. What is undeniable is that it was constantly and positively active across the years in affairs of state, bestowing offices on the king's behalf and supervising *insaculaciones* (sortitions). It also confirmed privileges and gave orders in all matters relating to the economic and political government of towns

and cities. The Council was also active in preventing criminal acts and maintaining public order, in matters such as maritime patrols, frontier control, raising levies, controlling banditry, public safety, plagues and religious censorship. It also played its role in the appointment of senior university staff, literary output and general regulations for studies. It was also involved in economic affairs including the issue of commercial licences, the import and export of goods, deterring smuggling, encouraging industry (for example, mining and salt pans), together with matters of infrastructure such as ports, highways and the *acequia imperial* (irrigation ditch) of Aragon. There are many reports of various kinds that describe activities such as the granting of concessions in areas such as privileges for the nobility, charity for widows, concessions for military services rendered and tax exemption. In the field of procedural law, both civil and criminal, the Council's status as the state's High Court allowed it to call citizens before it in matters such as the sentencing of Crown officials, rulings handed down by the court of the Captain General or by audiences with the monarch and matters relating to royal possessions.

The registers of documents issued in the name of the king were created at the Council of Aragon and were dispatched as a matter of course to the relevant archives. Therefore, royal registers since the beginning of the 16th century relating to Catalonia, Mallorca and Sardinia are lodged in the Royal Chancery section of the Barcelona's Archives. This said, some series of registers of particular importance, such as the *Curiae* series, ceased to be forward around the year 1575 and in 1621 the general flow of registers stopped. A part of such registers remained with the royal court and is nowadays kept in the National Historical Archives in Madrid. Another part, containing some 400 volumes relating to all Crown lands was dispatched to the Archives of Simancas. This latter collection was incorporated into the Archives of the Crown of Aragon in 1852. At the same time, the Archives took over more than 200 volumes that deal with the economic activity of the Council, a function held by the former magistracy of the *Maestre Racional*, the senior official in charge of the treasure of the kings of Aragon.

The most substantial part of the Council's records are the hundreds of thousands of documents, most of them dating from the 17th century and relating to the range of official activities cited above, assembled in 1,400 folders from the various secretariats (Aragon, Catalonia, Valencia, Sardinia and the Balearic Islands).

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PRAGMATICA
REAL SOBRE COSAS TO-
cantes al asiento general del Reyno de Va-
lencia, por razon de la Expulsion de los
Moriscos, y reduccion de
los Censales.



EN VALENCIA,
Por Pedro Patricio Mey, junto a S. Martin.
Año 1614.

CA. leg. 885, n. 51

'Royal edict relating to matters affecting the generality of the Kingdom of Valencia as a consequence of the expulsion of the Moriscos and consequent decline in population'. Printed in Valencia, 1614. Matters of major importance that were considered by the Council of Aragon were promulgated by means of a *Pragmática*, an edict or law of general application. This was printed in order to guarantee a wide and rapid distribution. ACA, Council of Aragón, bundle 885, document 51.

REAL AUDIENCIA (ROYAL COURT)

The Royal Court collection contains historical records prior to 1900 that were transferred from the Court of Barcelona (*Audiencia de Barcelona*) on various occasions during the 20th century (specifically in 1937, 1940, 1969-70, 1976 and 1986). For the most part, these came from the Barcelona body's predecessor, the Royal Court of Catalonia (*Real Audiencia de Cataluña*) although the Archives also contain documents from other legal bodies that no longer exist.

The Royal Court of Catalonia was established around 1370 by Peter the Ceremonious as *Audiencia Real* or Royal Court, a body that was part of the Crown's central administration, acting as the representative of the Royal Council in legal matters. It played a role in matters of both justice and government, although its responsibilities in the latter sphere lessened after the demise of the Ancien Régime at the beginning of the 19th century. At this time its name was changed to *Audiencia Territorial de Barcelona* (Higher Regional Court of Barcelona).

Notable items within its collection are the registers of the Bourbon court, which fill more than 1,700 volumes, and continue the series of the viceroy's registers from the previous dynasty. Even though at the beginning these continued to be transferred to the Archives (they are kept nowadays in the Royal Chancery section), from 1728 onwards they were stored on the premises of the *Audiencia* itself. These registers were kept too in chronological order, reign by reign. Documents were also sub-divided into theme-based categories such as *Cartas Acordadas*, *Cartas de la Real Audiencia*, *Consultas*, *Comune*, *Corregimientos*, *Curiae*, *Diversorum*, *Officialium* and *Privilegiorum*. This practice continued until the abolition of this body during the reign of Isabella II (1833-1868).

Other documents generated by Court administrators include around a thousand bundles of files on a whole variety of different subjects. These are grouped into two categories. The first, labelled *Papeles de su Excelencia* (Papers of His Excellency), covers the period from the early 18th century until the mid-19th while the other, entitled *Expedientes de la Audiencia* (Files of the Court), covers the years 1821 to 1916.

Noteworthy among documents of a more strictly legal nature is a complete series of more than 300 books entitled *Conclusiones civiles*

(Civil Proceedings). Within their covers are the debates, votes taken and decisions made by the Court and Council of both the king and his viceroy. Beginning in the second half of the 14th century and continuing until 1844, even though their titles, format and content were subject to change, they have survived without interruption until the current system of recording proceedings was introduced. Other series that have survived to this day, albeit not in such a complete form, are those entitled *Conclusiones Criminales* (Criminal Proceedings) and *Provisiones Verbales* (Verbal Provisions), both civil and criminal, together with around 600 books of civil and criminal judgments from 1845 to 1900.

The major part of this section contains more than 33,000 lawsuits, mostly dating from the 18th and 19th centuries. Such proceedings of civil suits were not preserved in any systematic manner since they remained in the hands of their notaries rather than with the Court and also because they were divided among various archives.

The *Audiencia* has also preserved a number of collections from independent tribunals that were deposited there when the tribunals themselves were abolished. Significant among these is the *Tribunal de Comercio de Cataluña* (1830-1868), the region's commercial court which had the power to pass judgement on matters of commercial disputes. It preserved the records of its predecessors: the *Consulado de la Lonja de Mar* (1715-1761), a mercantile court, and the *Real Consulado de Comercio* (1762-1829), a royal body that performed the same function. It holds volumes devoted to subpoenas, manuals for public scribes, records detailing protests under maritime law, compilations of court verdicts and some 25,000 lawsuits.

Other smaller collections that have been preserved are those pertaining to the Manresa Criminal Court (1882-1892) and Barcelona's *Subdelegación de bienes mostrencos* (1786-1835), the tribunal dealing with unclaimed property.

REAL PATRIMONIO (ROYAL HERITAGE)

The *Archivo del Real Patrimonio* (Archives of the Royal Heritage) was created in the early 19th century by the amalgamation of documents from two long-closed mediaeval bodies called the *Mestre Racional* (the senior official in charge of the treasure of the kings of Aragon, or

Chancellor of the Exchequer) and the *Batllia General* (General Bailiwick) of Catalonia, fiscal controller for Crown assets, both of them with its own archive, separate from the Royal Archives of Barcelona. This Archives was part of the new *Bailía General del Real Patrimonio*, created to control the Crown assets in Catalonia. The Archives also absorbed some of the files of the *Intendencia*, which fulfilled much the same role as the *Bailía* during the 18th century. Cataloguing and classifying the documentation that it had received began from the moment it was created. Having been abandoned for many years, the papers themselves were all jumbled together and in poor condition. Unfortunately, it proved impossible to avoid mixing up documents emanating from the various sources. When the post of *Baile General* (director of the above unit) was suppressed in 1910, the *Archivo del Real Patrimonio* continued to exist as an independent entity until it was absorbed into that of the Crown of Aragon in 1936 and formed the basis of the section *Real Patrimonio* (Royal Heritage). Today it holds more than 6,000 books and bundles and a further 8,600 parchment charters.

The *Mestre Racional* was an official court position that was introduced in the late 13th century by analogy with a similar position in the Sicilian government. Its role was to monitor the accounts of royal officials and of royal possessions in general throughout crown lands. It produced a great amount of documents from mediaeval to modern times. Within it are treasury ledgers, accounts submitted by auditing offices, both local and general, records of income and fiscal practice of the Crown in Sardinia; censuses undertaken for financial motives from the 14th century onwards; accounts and lists of Crown purchases in Mallorca and its possessions of Roussillon and Sardinia and, in general, every type of record of income and expenditure that needed to be audited, including a fascinating set of 14th century documents from a private bank.

Although its roots can be traced back to the early 12th century, the *Bailía General* of Catalonia came to full fruition at the end of the 13th as a legal body within the royal administration. It was charged with overall control of Crown property and had full jurisdictional powers. Upon its abolition in 1714, its role was passed to the *Intendencia* of Catalonia. This copious collection of documents dating from the 13th century includes titles related to surveying and land demarcation, the accounts of institutions with responsibility for Crown rights and properties, books of contracts and correspondence and also lawsuits that came before its courts.

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Handbook of the Descaus-Olivella bank dated 1377. ACA, Real Patrimonio, Maestre Racional, volume 2375, f. 3r.

GENERALITAT OF CATALONIA

This is the name given to the Archives of the former *Diputació del General* of Catalonia, which was the permanent representative of the three Estates of the *Corts* (Parliament) whose jurisdiction extended throughout Catalonia. It was established in the 14th century, and then abolished in 1714. Abandoned for long years in the storage attics of the Royal Court of Barcelona, in the very building that until that time had been the headquarters of the *Diputació*, the documents passed to the Archives of the Crown of Aragon in the first instance in 1821 and the transfer was formally confirmed in 1828.

The *Diputació del General* came into being during the reign of Peter the Ceremonious when commissions set up to manage subsidies approved by the *Corts* were made permanent. We can date its origin to 1359, during parliament held at Cervera, when the state of war with Castile –what is known as the War of The Two Peters (1356-1375)– required exceptional financial measures. The *Diputació*'s position was strengthened by the *Corts* held at Monzón (1362-1363) when the *generalitats*, the taxes that were most typical of the *Diputació*, were first voted. These *Corts* also approved the creation of a triumvirate of deputies, one for each Estate, who were obliged to live in Barcelona since they were part of the governing team there. It was during a session of the *Corts* of Barcelona (1412-1413) that the monarch, Ferdinand I, gave royal approval to this body, its structure and its powers and responsibilities, not only in legal and financial matters but also in the political domain in order to defend the Constitutions of Catalonia.

Among the highlights from its various collections are more than 160 books of *Deliberacions*, which record sittings of the *Diputació* between 1440 and 1714; the *Dietaris*, or daily records, that present the main events day by day; registers itemising mail dispatched, brought together in 300 volumes that go back to 1365; accreditations and a large number of books and notes relating to the taxes that were under the *Diputació*'s control such as what was known as the *dret de la bolla* (a tax levied on cloth) or customs duties.

Additionally, this section holds material from the Archives of the *braç militar* (feudal nobility) that were previously held in the headquarters of the *Diputació*. Of especial value are more than 100 volumes of

porque no ay plaza de hombres de negocios ni cambio
aseguro al R. S. que camara qualquier Real
que se saca. Dios q. al R. S. como de nro R. S.
a pastoreo a febrero 1640. Per mia per in
solo Dios que no se pierda de tiempo
en lo que se ha de arguer los nros
y en que el enemigo y bien se nos le
pueda entender mi y lo de lo que
Jesu christi

Gaspar de Guzman

S. C. & S. Coloma.

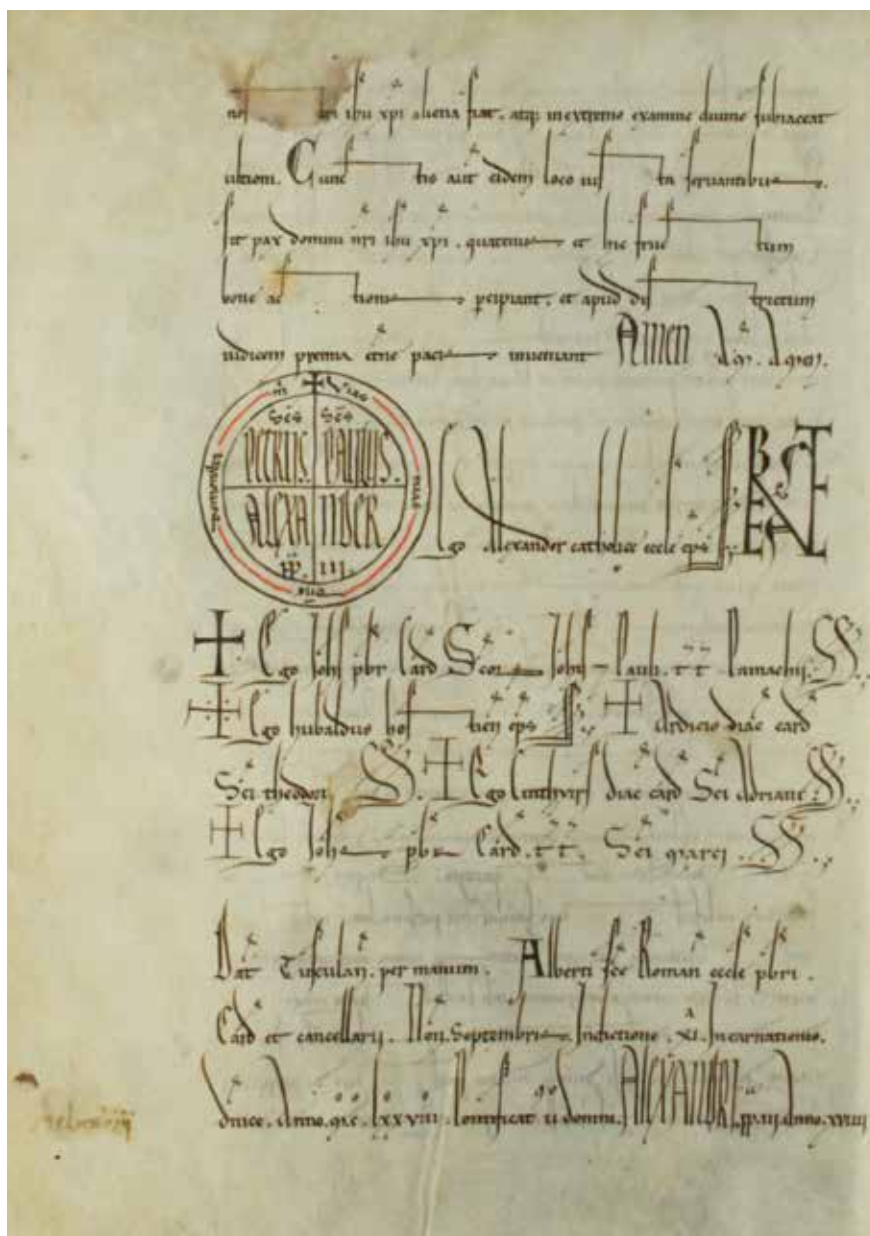
An autograph postscript by Gaspar de Guzmán, Count-Duke of Olivares, to his letter dated 29 February 1640 to Dalmáu de Queralt, Count of Santa Coloma and Viceroy of Catalonia about fortifications and provision of foodstuffs for the war against the French. From the papers of the Viceroy that were confiscated by the *Diputació del General* after his assassination on 7 June of the same year. ACA, Generalitat, Letters of the Viceroy Count of Santa Coloma, 9181.

Corts proceedings and also the *Llibre Verd* (Green Book), the feudal nobility registration list. The Archives of the *Diputació* also contains the fascinating correspondence of Dalmau de Queralt, count of Santa Coloma and viceroy. Seized in 1640 at the start of the civil war, it consists of more than 10,000 letters, composed in the period immediately before the outbreak of rebellion.

RELIGIOUS AND MILITARY ORDERS

This section groups together records from several Catalan monasteries and convents that were incorporated into the Archives for a variety of reasons during the 19th and 20th centuries, beginning from the time of the laws of confiscation of ecclesiastical property.

Each monastery and convent had its own archive. Although these collections vary considerably in age, wealth and significance, they were for the most part well maintained and catalogued at the time of the first acts of confiscation in 1820. By royal decree, all records from Catalan monasteries and convents were to be delivered to the Archives of the Crown of Aragon. However, at the end of the brief period of liberal government in 1823, they were returned to their place of origin, where they risked destruction in the 1835 wave of convent and church burnings. Thanks to the timely action of Próspero de Bofarull, director of the Archives at the time, some particularly valuable ecclesiastical collections were rescued. These included those of the monasteries of Sant Cugat del Vallès and Barcelona's Sant Pau del Camp, which had amassed documents from various monasteries belonging to the grouping known as the *Congregación Claustal Tarraconense y Cesaraugustana*. Subsequently, several other collections were rescued in whole or in part. Notable among these are the convent of the Mercedarian Order in Barcelona and the Carthusian monastery of Montalegre. Even so, most of the documentation from monasteries and convents that were sequestered ended up in provincial tax offices. There they stayed, scattered in no particular order and regularly plundered, until 1918, when orders were given for their removal to the Archives of the Crown of Aragon. The relocation was executed by the Provincial Tax Offices (*Delegaciones de Hacienda*) of Barcelona and Girona and also to their equivalent in Tarragona, although the major part of monastic documentation from this province had already been lodged in the National Historical Archives in Madrid.



Copy of a bull promulgated by Pope Alexander III on 5 September 1178 in which he makes over to the Knights Templar all bequests by Ramon Berenguer IV, Count of Barcelona, and by his son Alfonso II of Aragon. Included in the cartulary of the commandry of Gardeny. ACA, Religious and Military Orders, Great Priory of Catalonia of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, volume 197, f. 7v.

The above records supplemented those that the Archives of the Crown of Aragon had already held since the 19th century. To these were added elements of other monastic collections like that of Sant Joan de les Abadesses, which had been incorporated many years before the confiscations of ecclesiastical assets. Subsequently, in 1943 yet more archival documentation of monastic origin that was previously held by the University of Barcelona library was transferred. In all, the Archives holds around 6,000 volumes and bundles plus 20,000 parchment charters from a hundred or so Catalan monasteries and convents (especially in the provinces of Barcelona and Girona), all generated between the end of the 9th century and 1836.

Although many of these archives are incomplete for reasons outlined above, there are also collections of great value and antiquity like that of Sant Cugat del Vallès, with its famous 13th century cartulary, a large parchment codex containing the transcription of more than a thousand documents, among them, three hundred prior to the year 1000 AD.

Worthy of special note are the archive of the Great Priory of Catalonia of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem (nowadays the Order of Malta). The collection remained in the convent of the nuns of St. John in Sant Gervasi (Barcelona) until the Spanish Civil War, when, after several mishaps, it finally reached the Archives in 1939. It includes general documentation relating to the Priory plus that of the thirty or so commandries. These in their turn included documents of the Knights Templar, abolished at the beginning of the 14th century. In total, they contain more than 8,000 parchment charters, the oldest of which date from the 10th century, plus some 1,200 books and bundles. Among them can be highlighted the cartularies of the Knight Templar commandries of Gardeny and Tortosa and the so called *pruebas de nobleza*, documents to prove the noble status, from the 16th and 17th centuries, that provide invaluable genealogical information.

NOTARIAL DOCUMENTS

Documents from various historical Catalan notary's offices form the nucleus of the Archives of the Crown of Aragon's collection of notarial records. During the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), they were brought together in Barcelona's Monastery of Pedralbes in order to prevent them being destroyed. They were handed over to the Archives of

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Die dñm eedño iuy mensis
 July In villa de Mataró
 En nom de nre sñor sen patron
 Sobria la familia de agnells
 non de temarcel Francesc de
 clary del dñm principal del
 seproa loqual se faze contrafor
 secons agnells de vell qnebruy
 eproa fne enca clary de barre
 lona loqual se faze del dñm
 nafans emmbaronari y engen
 tar cam fca Com se piga
 per aspirari de bon barco
 lo qual sen volen emen
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Because of the quantity and variety of notarial records held by the Archive, historians can shed light on many people and events that otherwise might not form part of historical discourse. We find here the contract for the construction of a large commercial ship, the *Juliana*. This was signed on 27 July 1567 in the shipyards of Mataró by Francesc Palau, the ship-owner, and the two master constructors, Sebastià Carbonell and Sagimon Pereller. Because of its size, the king to take part in military campaigns requisitioned the vessel. It was a troop carrier for forces at the battle of Lepanto, was part of the royal forces in campaigns off Portugal and, as part of the *Invincible Armada*, met its end off the coast of Ireland. The document was kept in a *Vademecum*, a notebook in which were jotted down the main features of business deals, which were then edited and enlarged upon in the Protocol of Joan Cortés, notary of Mataró. ACA, Notarial Documents, Mataró, volume 123, f. 29r.

the Crown of Aragon in 1940 by the *Servicio de Recuperación Bibliográfica y Documental*, the office responsible for post-war recovery of books and documents. In subsequent years some of these records were passed on to the Provincial Historical Archives of Girona, Lleida and Tarragona. There remained behind around 8,000 volumes, most of them collated before 1800 and for the most part generated by notary's offices of the province of Barcelona.

In Catalonia the earliest books that collate notarial records date back to the first third of the 13th century. They follow a common pattern whereby up to three series of books were maintained simultaneously under a variety of titles according to time and place (*Liber notularum*, *Liber communis*, *Manuale*, *Prothocollum* or *Vademecum*). There were also more specific titles for certain kinds of notarial documents such as wills, marital settlements and *cabrevaciones* (documents relating to property and land ownership). Although notarial practice evolved with the passage of time, there were no radical changes. In particular, Latin continued to be used almost exclusively for notarial documents until the middle of the 18th century, when the notarial Protocol typical of the Crown of Castile were introduced and local languages took the place of Latin.

Within the Archives of the Crown of Aragon, notarial documents of special interest for their antiquity, going back to the end of the 13th century, are those of the notarial offices of Bagà and Sant Cugat del Vallès. Other collections valued for their quantity and comprehensiveness include those of the offices of the notarial districts of Igualada, Mataró, Berga, Manresa and Sant Feliu de Llobregat. As a consequence of the treatment that these documents have been subjected to, no one set of records is complete and most are scattered between various archives. Others include extraneous parish and municipal material.

HACIENDA (TREASURY)

Provincial tax offices (*Delegaciones Provinciales de Hacienda*) were established by a law signed on 9 December 1881. This sets out procedures for tax collection at provincial level. Its procedures –and therefore the documents the offices generate– remain constant to this day. Transfer to the Archives of the Crown of Aragon of the oldest records held in the archives of the Barcelona *Delegación* began in 1962 and continued until 1981. Some of these documents were kept in

the *Depósito de Archivos* (archival store) of Cervera, which was itself transferred to the *Generalitat* of Catalonia in 1995.

This section, which holds more than 14,000 volumes and 4,000 bundles, brings together documentation from Barcelona's *Delegación Provincial de Hacienda* (from 1881) and also that of other pre-existing bodies that had a tax-gathering function such as the *Intendencia de Ejército y Provincia del Principado de Cataluña* (1713-1849) and other provincial revenue-gathering bodies (Administration, Accounts and Treasury). Because all records of the *Contaduría de la Intendencia* were lost in the upheavals of the 19th century, there are significant gaps in all pre-1845 income and land registry (*catastro*) documents.

The major part of these materials concerns fiscal, accounting and land ownership information, collected for purposes of managing tax revenue and the properties that had accrued to the state as a result of ecclesiastical confiscations. Among the most important series are records of industrial and land-based tax payments following the tax reforms of 1845.

MUSCELLANEOUS AND OTHER COLLECTIONS

From the early 19th century, during the long years when Próspero de Bofarull was director and until the present day, the Archives of the Crown of Aragon has continued to incorporate a great variety of archives, differing in time and content and from a variety of sources. From the early 20th century, some of these have been grouped together under the title Miscellaneous and Collections although they still maintain their individual character and personality.

Archives that date were incorporated in the 19th century include those of the *Gobernación General* (Governorate) of Catalonia (1390-1714), the Spanish Legation in Genoa and Turin (1652-1808), the Association of Drogists and Confectioners (*Colegio de drogueros y confiteros*; 16th to 19th centuries), or the Vallgornera family (12th to 17th centuries). Important too are a pair of archive groups from the time of the Napoleonic invasion (1808-1814): those of the *Junta Superior* of Catalonia and those belonging to the *Casa de la Moneda* (Mint) at the time of French domination. These would be supplemented in 1922 by the addition of documents entitled 'Napoleonic Domination' that were generated by the French administration at this time.



Drawing of an artillery piece on its carriage at the moment of discharging a bomb, together with its ammunition box and a light weapon. It features in the first register of official letters issued by the *Junta Superior* (High Command) of Catalonia. The register, which runs from 24 August 1808 until 10 January 1810, is composed of several separate notebooks that were assembled together on the instructions of Próspero de Bofarull. In the information relating to the binding at the end of the book, he records that it was added to «this Royal and General Archive for which I am responsible» in response to a Royal Order, dated 9 September 1817. The *Junta Superior* of Catalonia was formed in Lleida in June 1808 by the amalgamation of a number of separate *Juntas Corregimentales* (local commands) that had organised resistance to the Napoleonic occupation. It was dissolved in December 1812. ACA, Miscellaneous and Other Collections, *Junta Superior de Cataluña*, volume 21, f. 313b.



The final part of the draft treaty negotiated between James II of Aragon and Muhammad II, ruler of Granada. It is composed of 3 sheets of paper sewn together. For each paragraph in Arabic detailing concessions from the King of Granada there is an equivalent paragraph in Spanish listing similar concessions on the part of the King of Aragon. The Archives also houses an extraordinary collection of around 200 documents in Arabic, mostly produced at the end of the 13th century and the first half of the 14th. They reveal the close relationship between the Crown of Aragon and Muslim kingdoms from Granada to Egypt. ACA, Miscellaneous and Other Collections, Letters in Arabic, 2.



The first page of a manuscript of the Works of Seneca from the late 14th Century, illustrated with a miniature of great quality. It is part of a collection of nearly 100 mediaeval codices that came from the monastery of Sant Cugat del Vallès and were added to the Archives in 1835. At much the same time, the Archives received more than 200 codices from the library of the monastery of Santa Maria de Ripoll. ACA. Miscellaneous and Other Collections, Manuscripts from Sant Cugat, 11.

In 1940, after the Spanish Civil War, the *Servicio de Recuperación Bibliográfica y Documental* consigned to the Archives a great number of heterogeneous materials consisting of family, municipal and parish records. Some time later, in 1956, the collection was enhanced by the addition of the archives of the Counts of Santa Coloma de Queralt, which contained documents from the 11th to 19th centuries, and the rich Archives that had belonged to the *Comandancia de Ingenieros* (military engineers) of Catalonia. The latter contained more than 700 bundles of materials dating from the 18th and 19th centuries, including a great number of maps and plans of great interest to historians of urban planning. Between 1969 and 1987, the inventory actually doubled with the incorporation of important family records, both mediaeval and modern, that had belonged to the Marquis of Sentmenat, the Count of Sástago, Marquis of Monistrol, Marquis of Montoliu, Count of Centelles and the Marquis of Castellbell (the set of documents known as *Can Falguera*). In this century, single items, collections and archives, like that of the *Casal de Catalunya* in París and that of the Count of Berbedel, continue to be incorporated.

Various and varied collections assembled throughout the history of the Archives are grouped together here in sub-categories under headings such as Autographs, Reserved Material, Seals, Letters in Arabic, Hebrew and Greek, Curiosities, Maps and Plans and *Memoriales* (old catalogues and inventories of the Archives from the 14th to 19th centuries). This section also contains a most valuable collection of mediaeval manuscripts, incorporated in 1835, that originated in the libraries of the monasteries of Santa Maria de Ripoll and Sant Cugat del Vallès.

CULTURE

The Archives of the *Servicios Periféricos del Ministerio de Cultura* (Barcelona's office of the Ministry of Culture) was transferred to the Archives of the Crown of Aragon in 1997. The following years were spent on identifying, ordering, describing and repairing the documentation, assembled into more than 2,000 bundles. It gathers together records of the now defunct Barcelona-based offices of the *Delegaciones Provinciales* (provincial offices) of the Ministry of Information and Tourism, the *Secretaría General del Movimiento Nacional* (a body exercising power during the Franco regime), the Ministry of Culture and the Barcelona offices of the Commission for Assessing, Valuing and Exporting works of historical interest.

Of special interest within this section and relevant to the conservation of Spain's historical and artistic heritage is a set of documents relating to the return to their place of origin of works of art upon conclusion of the Spanish Civil War. These were received from the *Servicio de Defensa del Patrimonio Artístico Nacional* (Organisation for the Protection of the National Artistic Heritage), which was created in 1938. These documents have been partly digitised.

LIBRARY

In the early years of the 19th century, when Próspero de Bofarull was director, the library came into being at a time when the Archives as a whole was being overhauled. With an initial stock of only a few books culled from the Archives sections entitled 'Legal Codes' and 'Curiosities', it expanded rapidly. A number of historical works that had been removed from convents at the time of confiscation of ecclesiastical property were incorporated (those of the Mercedarian Order and San Agustín in Barcelona were a particularly rich resource). These were supplemented by purchases and donations, especially of works relating to documents held by the Archives.

Nowadays, the library has more than 27,000 monographs and an interesting collection of old periodicals. In addition, it subscribes to a hundred or so current journals. It also has an outstanding collection of ancient books that came for the most part from monasteries that were closed down, including 50 incunables from the monastery of Sant Cugat del Vallès.

The library primarily serve historical research, especially of the former Crown of Aragon. The acquisition of editions of documentary sources are a priority.

General and reference titles are to be found in the reading room and can be accessed directly by researchers. The remainder material, which cumulatively stretches for more than a kilometre, can be consulted by prior appointment. It is also possible to consult author indexes and the master file of materials for publications prior to 1996. For those that were published after this date, researchers can consult an automated catalogue of the network of libraries affiliated to the Spanish State Archives.

Al Sr. Rey
 Yo el Rey
 Donnu Rey mandauo mibi don Fran.
 Gual Viraper Rey Vicey. Guadiola
 Falda y mance. Aloniz, et Porca
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Licencia y V. M. da a dona Lencia Lucari Abbades
 del fountains de S. Andras de Athenas orden de S. Basilio
 ya de compania y para guardar y con Linana en
 los Reynos de la corona de Aragon por tiempo de un año en
 la forma aqui contenida

Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra

Nos Don Phelippe III Por quanto por parte de
 Vna Dignidade de Comercio Saavedra Nos ha sido hecha
 relación que forma Inductiva y Franca Saavedra conque
 Mito Inductivo nos es exemplar de bono uini entrete
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«In that you, Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, have made known to us that by your diligence and effort you have written a book entitled 'Exemplary Novels of very honest entertainment', the which is most useful and beneficial», king Phillip III grants the author licence to print it in the lands of the Crown of Aragon. Dated in San Lorenzo el Real (San Lorenzo de El Escorial), 9 August 1613. ACA, Chancery, Register 4894, f. 249v-251v.



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SERVICES AVAILABLE

GENERAL INFORMATION

Advice on the search and identification of documents held by the Archives or by other such centres belonging to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports. Information and tailored advice about research topics, use of the Archive's database and the way in which the Archives is organised.

CONSULTING DOCUMENTS

Support for consulting documentary records directly in the reading room or via the Internet through PARES (Spain's digital collection of Archives). Access is free to all upon presentation of a passport or identity card.

REPRODUCTION OF DOCUMENT

Assistance in copying documents in digital or microfilm form or as a paper copy from microfilm or slide upon prior payment of the required sum and according to regulations currently in force.

GROUP STUDY AREA

The Archives has a special study area that can accommodate a maximum of twenty students. Reservations must be made at least 15 working days in advance.

LOANS

Loan of documents from the Archives' collection for exhibition purposes by previous consent from the Ministry and according to the rules and regulations of the *Subdirección General de los Archivos Estatales* (Sub-Directorate for State Archives).

CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The Archives is willing to organise exhibitions, guided visits, conferences and courses. It works with other bodies in the creation of cultural events.

Guided visits are free of charge and must be agreed at least 15 days earlier. Each group must consist of a maximum of 20 people and be accompanied by a responsible person.

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

The Archives have an auditorium equipped with simultaneous translation facilities that can accommodate up to 125 persons, an exhibition area, box office and rest area.





PRACTICAL INFORMATION

PREMISES IN ALMOGÀVERS ST.

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Closed Saturdays and Sundays, 24 and 31 December and national and local holidays

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Bus: 6, 40, 42, B20, B25, H14 y V21

Tram: T4, Marina

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Admission: free

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Bus: 45, 120, V15 y V17

Telephone: (34) 934854285

e-mail: aca@mecd.es

<https://www.mecd.gov.es/cultura/areas/archivos/mc/archivos/aca/portada.html>

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