

La Biblioteca Pública del Estado de Jalisco, Guadalajara

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THIS INSTITUTION arose from the Liberals' victory in the War of the Reform. On July 24, 1861, Governor Pedro Ogazón decreed that all books recently appropriated from seven convents¹ and from the *Semanario Conciliar* be brought together to form a new state library. Part of that collection was on hand when the library opened on December 18, 1874; and several thousand more volumes came from the *Semanario Conciliar* to the Biblioteca Pública in 1894,² when a move was being made to the ground floor at the present location on Avenida Hidalgo.

In those early years losses probably about balanced additions. Many books and manuscripts were used as barricade material during the French intervention. During the troubled times of 1914, when Guadalajara was repeatedly occupied by different armies, the library lost many more valuable items.³ Since then, steady gains have been made in all kinds of acquisitions—a large number of manuscripts, a good collection of modern books, one large set of photographs, and many fine special editions of older publications. In 1925 the institution became a dependency of the Universidad de Guadalajara, when

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¹ San Francisco, Santo Domingo, El Carmen, San Agustín, La Merced, and San Felipe, with San Francisco of nearby Zapopan.

The decree, in part, is in José R. Benítez, "Breves noticias sobre la Biblioteca Pública de Guadalajara," in *Homenaje a don Francisco Gamoneda . . .* (México, 1946), 55. Benítez gives a good, concise history of the library. A briefer sketch is in Juan B. Iguíniz, "Excursión bibliográfica a Guadalajara," *Boletín del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnología*, I (México, 1911), 65-67. I have not seen Rafael Martínez, *Apuntes para formar una historia de la Biblioteca Pública de Guadalajara* (Guadalajara, 1903).

For most friendly advice and assistance at the Library, I am deeply grateful to José Cornejo Franco, Director; and my warmest thanks in the same way to Lic. José Luis Razo Z., Secretario of the Instituto Jalisciense de Antropología e Historia.

² And a final, sizable group of these volumes from the former *Semanario Conciliar* was found and removed to the Library in 1931 by the then (and now again) Director. Thus, many of the older theological works now in the Library were not listed in the 1873-1874 catalogue cited below.

³ Benítez, 64-65.

Governor José Guadalupe Zuno included it in the *Ley Orgánica* by which he re-established the University itself.⁴

What follows is a very brief survey of materials in the Biblioteca Pública, with least attention to books because published catalogues list some of the older volumes.

1. *Photographs* taken in Guadalajara, from the late nineteenth century to the 1930's: several thousand items by (and some collected by) the late photographer Ignacio Gómez Gallardo. Each photograph is pressed between glass plates. Some of the pictures, perhaps many, are gradually deteriorating, but this is a most valuable and irreplaceable source.

2. *Manuscripts.* (a) *Judicial papers of the Audiencia of Nueva Galicia*, beginning with the middle sixteenth century: about 150 slim legajos, each in a manuscript box, most in good condition. These papers were once in the Archivo del Supremo Tribunal del Estado de Jalisco.⁵ Since transfer to the Biblioteca Pública, a bare beginning has been made at cataloguing them. The sixteenth-century items are reportedly few. (b) *Various colonial papers, and manuscripts of later date*, mostly of religious origin, as listed in the original library catalogue of 1873-1874.⁶ Some originated with the Franciscans at Guadalajara, in colonial times and as late as the 1840's and 1850's. (c) *Bienes de Difuntos, 1549-1815*: about thirty legajos well preserved. None are catalogued but the set seems to be in good chronological order.

The manuscripts noted just below are on open shelves, in bundles labelled to show the category, the dates, and usually some indication of particular contents. Presumably none of the categories now contain all the original bundles, because of losses due to war. When cataloguing is undertaken, however, it may prove that some of these series are substantially complete. (d) *Hacienda* records of the state, from at least the 1850's until the 1920's. Here is a variety of detail, including *catastro* and *elecciones* records for different places in Jalisco, as well as much fiscal matter. (e) *Gobernación* papers of the state government, a scattering but sizable collection from the 1850's to

⁴ *Ibid.*, 65.

⁵ As noted in Luis Páez Brotchie, *La Nueva Galicia á través de su viejo archivo judicial* . . . (México, 1940), who extracts from some of these papers and from others listed below as *Judicial*. On pp. 116-131 he lists some hundreds of specific cases to be found in these records (some involving Saltillo, Culiacán, and Aguascalientes). Most of the rest of his book consists of discussions of sensational crime cases plucked from these papers.

⁶ Pp. 375-408 of vol. I, of *Catálogo de los libros que existen en la Biblioteca Pública del Estado* (2 vols., Guadalajara, 1873-1874).

about 1915. More recent records in this category are in the Archivo del Gobierno del Estado de Jalisco. (f) *Beneficencia* records of the state government, for various periods from the 1850's to the present century. (g) *Judicial* papers of Jalisco, from about 1811 to the 1920's. This is the largest group of manuscripts in the library, probably amounting to hundreds of legajos. Each bundle is labelled as *Civil*, *Criminal*, or *Secretaría de Acuerdos*, following the division of legal procedure. Some items are in print, but the older papers are almost entirely in manuscript.

In addition, there are some few photostatic copies of private letters (the Mariano G. Otero file), and microfilm of the acts of the Ayuntamiento of Guadalajara⁷ in colonial times (beginning with the oldest extant, 1607).

3. *Pamphlets*, at least seven hundred items but probably many more, beginning with a few of the seventeenth century and a handful of the eighteenth. The large group comes in the period 1820-1870, with a fair number on as late as 1900. Many are Mexico City and Guadalajara imprints. Some represent pastoral letters of the diocese; many are political; some are theses, with a few minor works of fiction, essays, and a wide variety of other items. The pamphlets themselves are bound and shelved, in good condition, and constitute a most valuable holding.

4. *Newspapers and other periodicals* begin with one eighteenth-century item, followed by *El Despertador Americano* of the independence period. The more numerous items and the longer runs begin in the 1850's, continuing with more or less effective coverage to the present. Very few files are complete, and some few obscure items of local origin may be missing; but this is a significant periodical collection, and a large number of current items of official and private origin are being received. A thoroughgoing card catalogue shows which issues of each periodical are on hand, and another useful file indicates which items are available for any given year. The periodical problem in this as in so many other large libraries is to obtain enough storage space, or to find equipment and funds for microfilming.

5. *Books*. The original collection was mainly of theological works from the sixteenth century forward—some of great value—with a

⁷ It is not known whether this copy is complete. In any case, the necessary preliminary work is now in hand, to transcribe and publish the whole series (to be sponsored by the city government) from the originals in the Archivo del Ayuntamiento de Guadalajara.

general assortment of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European writers. Most of the earlier books still remain in the library, well preserved by the quality of paper and binding. Several excellent catalogues have listed parts of this original collection.⁸

More recent acquisitions reflect the broad interests of a general library, and include many volumes of published documents of the national government and of the state, sizable literary collections including a number of special editions, and a sound assortment in many other fields. The books are now catalogued in ledgers, but a master card catalogue is being prepared (by author,⁹ for readers' use, with a stack list for the librarians) in the library's modified Dewey decimal system. The total of volumes has for some years been estimated at more than one hundred thousand.

Since 1939 the library has been fortunate in the direction of José Cornejo Franco, a fine writer, the leading local historian,¹⁰ and a close student of world literature and of Mexican culture in general. He has steadily found opportunities to strengthen the older collections and to create new ones, to improve various services for the staff, and to make many of the materials more readily available. Today the most valuable items are well protected from deterioration. It remains to be seen whether such needs as better protection and service for the newspapers and many of the manuscripts may be satisfied by the impending move to new quarters in the Casa de la Cultura Jalisciense, and whether that move will be accompanied by a budget for enough facilities, equipment, and training and employ of additional staff to accord with the size and complexity of the library's holdings. Mean-

⁸ Lorna Lavery Stafford, *Catálogo de incunables de la Biblioteca Pública del Estado de Jalisco . . . prólogo de José Cornejo Franco* (México, 1948), a careful identification and discussion of the eleven items; Robert Duclas, *Catálogo de los libros impresos en París durante el siglo xvi existentes en la Biblioteca Pública de Guadalajara* (Guadalajara, 1957), and his *Catálogo descriptivo de los libros impresos en la ciudad de Salamanca en el siglo xvi existentes en la Biblioteca Pública de Guadalajara* (México, 1961), both substantial works. Some of the pamphlets are listed by Ramiro Villaseñor y Villaseñor, *Bibliografía general de Jalisco, tomo I (A-F)* (Guadalajara, 1958), who gives bio-bibliographic sketches of some of the leading writers. He lists ephemera from twelve personal libraries in Guadalajara as well as from public collections.

The standard reference for historical writings on Jalisco remains the careful work of Juan B. Igúñiz, "Los historiadores de Jalisco; epitome bibliográfico," in Igúñiz, ed., *Concurso de bibliografía y biblioteconomía* (México, 1918), 15-114.

⁹ And by subject for History of Mexico and History of Jalisco.

¹⁰ Among a number of other works: *Guadalajara colonial* (México, 1938); *La Calle de San Francisco* (Guadalajara, 1945); *Reseña de la Catedral de Guadalajara* (Guadalajara, 1960); and *De la independencia a la reforma* (Guadalajara, 1958), the latter a brief but important essay.

time, there is an outstanding need for observance of the state's law of deposit affecting all publications issuing in Jalisco.

This library has for years been open six days each week, from nine to nine, serving a large public including many secondary and university students. It does not yet possess the support needed by the best library in Mexico's second largest city. But as it stands the Biblioteca Pública is a very important and in many ways an untapped collection of scholarly materials.