



LIGUE DES BIBLIOTHÈQUES EUROPÉENNES DE RECHERCHE  
ASSOCIATION OF EUROPEAN RESEARCH LIBRARIES

## Manuscript Librarians Group

### Portugal – Backgrounds

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Contents: Introduction. – National Library of Portugal. – Library of Ajuda Palace. – Lisbon Academy of Sciences Library. – University of Coimbra General Library. – Évora Public Library. – Municipal Library of Porto. – Vila Viçosa Ducal Palace Library.

#### Introduction

Most of the manuscript collections in Portugal are kept in libraries and public archives, in the various districts of the country; in administrative terms, these institutions depend on Central Administration - as is the case with the National Library of Portugal, the Ajuda Palace, the National Archives, and the Lisbon Academy of Sciences Library - or on Local Administration (autarchies). Among those autarchies the ones with the most valuable collections are the Évora Public Library, the Porto Public Municipal Library, and the University of Coimbra General Library.

There are also important manuscript collections in private libraries, as the Vila Viçosa Ducal Palace Library, the Earls of Sabugosa Library or the House of Fronteira and Alorna Library.

To assemble actual information on manuscript deposits of libraries and archives, a project has been developed at national level on collections of medieval illuminated manuscripts: *Inventário dos Códices Iluminados: até 1500*, vol. I, Lisbon District (Lisboa, Instituto da Biblioteca Nacional e do Livro, 1994); *Inventário dos Códices Iluminados: até 1500*, vol. II, Districts of Aveiro, Beja, Braga, Bragança, Coimbra, Évora, Leiria, Portalegre, Porto, Setúbal, Viana do Castelo e Viseu (Lisboa, Biblioteca Nacional, 2001).

#### Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, Lisbon (BNP)

The National Library of Portugal was created in 1796 by Queen Mary I as the Royal Public Library of the Court (RBPC). The institution known presently as BNP was intended to divulge knowledge to a larger number of readers (who in those days were mostly in convent libraries or

in private ones) following the illuminist vocation for education and according to the Enlightenment tendency for widespread knowledge. — The greatest part of the manuscripts collections came from the Royal Public Library of the Court as well as from colleges and houses of Jesuits, the library of the Convent of Our Lady of Divine Providence of the Teatines, the Royal Academy of Portuguese History, some very large and important donations, as the ones from Archbishop D. Manuel do Cenáculo Vilas Boas (1724-1814) and António Ribeiro dos Santos (1745-1818), the first Chief Librarian of the institution. — After the extinction of religious orders and their convents in 1834, new incorporations took place. There was also the acquisition of the valuable library of the historian and politician D. Francisco de Melo Manuel (1608-1666).

Major collections:

- Codices collection — Presently they amount to 13,423 items, from the 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Among them, the *Cancioneiro da Biblioteca Nacional*, from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, represents the most complete collection of *trobador* poetry in Portuguese language;
- Manuscripts collection — Manuscripts of various origins, includes presently *ca.* 36.000 documents, stored in 261 boxes;
- Collection of *Codices Alcobacenses* — Originally belonged to the Library of Santa Maria de Alcobaca Monastery. It comprises 461 codices, 287 earlier than the 16<sup>th</sup> century; especially relevant is the fond of Romanesque biblical manuscripts, a unique collection in all Europe. This collection is, in fact, one of the most complete repertoires of Romanesque painting in the whole world;
- Pombalina Collection — Consisting of 758 codices, with documents from the 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century, this collection includes not only library manuscripts but also the Marquis of Pombal, Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo (1699-1782) personal archive, as well as his family's. Among these documents stands out the correspondence between Saint Ignatius of Loyola and Saint Francisco Xavier (1543-1554);
- Tarouca Library — Includes 250 manuscripts from the 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century, belonged to the House of the Earls of Tarouca. The *Cancioneiro de D. Maria Henriques e D. Francisco da Costa*, a collection of poetry from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, is one of the most relevant items in this library;
- Illuminated Codices — Presently holds 238 codices from the 12<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century. The *Cervera Bible* (1299-1300), the *Fuero Juzgo* (a Castilian translation of the 13<sup>th</sup> century Visigothic *Forum Judicum*) and the *Atlas* (1576) by cartographer Fernão Vaz Dourado which includes 17 maps in illuminated parchment are some of the most important pieces;
- Jorge de Moser Collection — Was a donation of Jorge Alberto Hofacker de Moser (1906-1971), and includes the personal and family archive as well as his codices collection, with documents from the 14<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The report concerning BNP does not contemplate personal archives, such as literary ones, dating after the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Information on such archives can be found on a separate (BNP) website: [Arquivo de cultura portuguesa contemporânea](#). — A great part of BNP manuscripts collections is described in its [online catalogue](#). Parallel to this, some detailed catalogues have been published over recent years, some of them thematic, raising the public's awareness to the legacy of the manuscript culture. — As an important research instrument for manuscripts, the general inventory of manuscripts deserves to be mentioned. — The number of fully digitised manuscripts is constantly increasing, and a significant effort is being made to disseminate to the public some of the most valuable bibliographical treasures of Portugal.

#### [Biblioteca da Ajuda](#), Lisbon (BA)

Accommodated in Ajuda Palace, this library has replaced the former royal building destroyed by the 1755 earthquake. The manuscripts collection of the Library of Ajuda Palace started with the nucleus of the Royal House manuscripts, to which were added the libraries from Jesuit institutions such as São Roque monastery e Santo Antão College, from the Oratorio Congregation and from Necessidades Palace. — This assemblage was enriched with acquisitions and donations of relevant libraries, as those belonging to Queen Carlota Joaquina (1775-1830),

Princess Maria Benedita (1746-1829), King Peter V(1837-1861) and King Louis I (1838-1889). — In the year of 2007, Ajuda Library was integrated, as a dependent service, in the National Library of Portugal.

Major collections:

- Codices collection — Consists of the following components:
  - «Jesuits in Asia», a fonds of great importance for the study of the Jesuit Missions within the Portuguese Royal Patronage;
  - «Rerum Lusitanicarum/Symmicta Lusitanica», documentation existing in the Papal Archives which were copied for King John V;
  - «Genealogy and Peerage Books» a collection which includes Damião de Góis's *Livro de Linhagens* and *Famílias do Reyno de Portugal*, by Belchior Andrade Leitão;
  - «Historical Miscellanea», a collection of manuscripts of various types and contents, from the 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century;
  - «Government», the archives of rulers, politicians, churchmen and military who were in office in Portugal, Angola, Brazil, India and Timor;
  - «Embassies», documentation concerning the Portuguese diplomatic action throughout the centuries;
  - «Illuminated Manuscripts», a collection which includes *O Cancioneiro da Ajuda*, *A Phenix de Portugal* and *Retrato de Várias Aves*, by João Nunes Tinoco, the *Régime du corps*, by Aldobrandino of Siena, and the letter from the Chinese Emperor, Qianlong, to King Joseph I of Portugal.
- Manuscripts Collection — From the 16<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century. Among them, the correspondence of King John I, Queen Mary I and the Earl of Redondo, as well as documents from the Royal Exchequer, the House of Aveiro and the Kingdom Ministry (Home Office).
- Music Collection — Consists of 2,950 codices and about 10,200 manuscripts from the 13<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries. It includes private archives and documents from the musical archive of the Royal Festivities, which constitute the most complete collection of 18<sup>th</sup> century Italian Operas, Serenades and Oratorio scores in the world.
- Cartography Collection — Comprises atlas, maps, drawings, plans, manuscripts and printed documents, as well as other historical documents. The collection includes about 1,000 items; among them, the *Roteiro de todos os Sinaes*, attributed to Luís Teixeira, and the *Descrição de toda a costa da Província de santa Cruz a que vulgarmente chamão Brasil*, by João Teixeira, 1642.

The descriptive catalogue by librarian Conceição Geada deserves to be mentioned as an important research instrument for manuscripts (not yet published).

#### [Academia das Ciências de Lisboa \(ACL\)](#)

The Lisbon Royal Academy of Sciences, since the Republic Implantation of 1910 known as the Lisbon Academy of Sciences, was founded by Queen Mary I in 1779, and was housed in 1838 at the old Convent of Our Lady of Jesus in Lisbon.

Major collections:

- [Red Series](#): a collection of about 1.000 manuscripts, from the 14<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries, which belonged to the convent of Our Lady of Jesus. A *Koran* (14-15<sup>th</sup> centuries) and *Curiosidade*, by Friar Vicente Salgado (18<sup>th</sup> century) are two of the most precious items. — An online catalogue (PDF) is available on the website.
- [Blue Series](#): a collection of about 2.020 manuscripts, from the 14<sup>th</sup>-early 20<sup>th</sup> century, received through legacy, acquisition or donation. Highlights are the illuminated manuscripts of the *Cronica Geral de Espanha*, attributed to D. Pedro, Earl of Barcelos (ca. 1285-1354), the *Atlas*, by Lázaro Luís (1563), the *Livro de Horas da Condessa de Bertandos*, and *Memória das Armadas*, both from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and the *Missal de Estêvão Gonçalves*, from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. — An online catalogue (PDF) is available on the website

#### [Biblioteca Geral da Universidade de Coimbra \(BGUC\)](#)

University of Coimbra General Library – Even before 1537, when the University was definitively transferred from Lisbon to Coimbra, a so called «study library» (*Livraria de Estudo*) was already in function in the city. However, during the reign of King Philip I (1527-1598), King Philip II (1570-1621) and King Philip III (1605-1665), kings of Spain and Portugal, and the subsequent Restoration War, this institution did not progress as expected. In 1725, however, a new and magnificent baroque library was established, called *Joanina Library*, named after King John V, the founder. By the reform of 1901, the library was renamed *Biblioteca Central da Universidade* (University City Library). – The current designation, *Biblioteca Geral da Universidade de Coimbra* (University of Coimbra General Library), exists since 1924, and its main building dates from 1962; the library is divided in two buildings, the [Biblioteca Joanina](#), classified as national treasure monument, holds an important collection of rare books, from the 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century, and the new building.

Major collections:

- About 5,000 volumes, including manuscripts from the 13<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century, concerning diverse subjects. Among these works, the set of Apostilles on Theology, Canon-Law and Philosophy and the epistolary of the 2nd Marquis of Alorna are especially noteworthy.
- The Library of the Viscount of Trindade - This collection was bequeathed to the library in 1960 by Dr. Alberto Navarro (the 1st Viscount of Trindade).
- The collection of printed and manuscript music and several personal archives from Portuguese writers such as [Almeida Garrett](#) (1799-1854), are also relevant.

The vast majority of manuscripts are accessible through the printed catalogue published by the library. – Some of the main manuscripts treasures were recently described in the following publication: A.E. Maia do Amarel (ed.), *Tesouros da Biblioteca Geral da Universidade de Coimbra*. Coimbra 2009. It includes a detailed study on illuminated Bibles.

### [Biblioteca Pública de Évora](#) (BPE)

Évora Public Library was created in 1805 by Manuel do Cenáculo Vilas Boas, Bishop of Beja, later Archbishop of Évora, a personality of relevance in the Portuguese Enlightenment. Because of the richness and antiquity of its holdings, Évora Public Library (BPE) is considered one of the most important patrimonial libraries in Portugal. It holds an important collection of original documents concerning Brazil, Africa and Asia, and items as varied as travelling itineraries, chronologies, grammars, books of history, theology, law, philosophy, medicine and physics.

Major collections:

- General collection – This collection came from D. Manuel do Cenáculo Vilas Boas' private library, and its chronological boundaries are the 12<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century. Because of its dimension, characteristics and contents, it includes many relevant items. Some of them deserve to be mentioned:
  - [*Duarte Pacheco Pereira, Esmeraldo de Situ Orbis*]  
Duarte Pacheco Pereira, a navigator and cosmographer, wrote this book on his arrival from his first voyage to India, between 1505 and 1508. The original work was lost in the Lisbon earthquake of 1755. The manuscript kept in the Évora Public Library, a copy made from the original in the 18<sup>th</sup> century – before its disappearance – is the oldest existing version of this work.
  - [*João de Castro, Roteiro da Viagem à Índia, 1538*]  
Written by D. João de Castro in 1538, while commander of the *Grifo*, a ship of the Indian fleet, in his first voyage to India, after being appointed Vice-Roy of the colony. It is mostly a diary, enriched with drawings of the coast painted in colours with great artistic and documental merit.
  - [*António Bocarro, Livro das Plantas de todas as Fortalezas, Cidades e Povoações do Estado da Índia Oriental, 1632*]  
King Phillip III of Portugal ordered the Vice-Roy of India, D. Miguel de Noronha, Earl of Linhares, to send him a thorough description of the Indian State. The chronicler António Bocarro was charged with the task. Attached to the codex there is a set of 48 coloured drawings, by Pedro Barreto de Resende, who was then the Vice-Roy's secretary.

- **Manizola collection** — Holds 667 codices concerning diverse subjects from the 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century. Amongst these works, a Book of Hours, and several illuminated Manuelin *forais* (*foral*, legal document granted by the king, giving rights and fixing rules to a municipal community) are especially noteworthy, as well as scientific treatises and modern historical manuscripts, valuable for the study of local history, heraldry and genealogy.
- Convents collection — Holds diverse documents that came from the convents of Arraiolos, Borba, Estremoz, Évora, Montemor-o-Novo, Mourão, Portel, Redondo, Viana do Alentejo, and Vila Viçosa, assembled in 19<sup>th</sup> century, after the extinction of religious orders and their convents in 1834, also valuable for the study of local history.
- «Cunha Rivara» Collection — Valuable collection which belonged to the personal library of bibliophile Joaquim Heliodoro Cunha Rivara, donated on 1879 to Évora Public Library.

Some of the main manuscripts treasures were described in the following publication: João Ruas (ed.), *Tesouros da Biblioteca Pública de Évora. Bicentín'ario, 1805-2005*. Lisboa 2005. This work contains specialised studies such as the one on medieval illuminated manuscripts, by Isabel Cepeda.

### [Biblioteca Pública Municipal do Porto](#)

Porto Public Library was established on July 1833, at the time named Royal Public Library of Porto. The greatest part of the manuscript collections came from convent libraries, and numerous private owners. The library initially consisted of 36,000 volumes, plus 300 manuscript codices. The legacy of Count Azevedo collection of rare manuscripts has significantly enriched the library holdings.

Major Collections:

- Fundo Geral: the medieval Library of the Monastery of the Holy Cross, Coimbra (Mosteiro de Santa Cruz de Coimbra), incorporated in 1834; it holds 97 codices earlier than 15<sup>th</sup> century; it is especially relevant *Testamentum Vetus* (12<sup>th</sup> century), *De bestiis et aliis rebus* (12<sup>th</sup> century), *Psalterium* (12<sup>th</sup> century), *Breviarium et missale* (13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> century). — *Crónica de D. Afonso Henriques* (Chronicle of the first King of Portugal, Afonso Henriques), and *Diário da viagem de Vasco da Gama* (the travel diary of the famous Portuguese navigator, 16<sup>th</sup> century) also deserve to be mentioned in this collection.
- Music collection: consisting of more than 250 manuscripts from the 16<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century. It includes 80 codices, main source for the study of Portuguese music history (16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries); a relevant manuscript from the Library of Monastery of Holy Cross, Coimbra, from 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> century.
- Azevedo collection: consisting of 81 volumes with several manuscripts about history and literary works, from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The most important items are *Thesaurus pauperum*, from 15<sup>th</sup> century and a Treatise on nobility from the 16<sup>th</sup> century.
- Autographs collection: includes presently ca. 40,000 documents, from 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, which belonged to several Portuguese writers.

### [Biblioteca Ducal do Palácio de Vila Viçosa](#)

Vila Viçosa Ducal Palace Library (BDM - King Manuel II Library) — The Ducal Palace was the former residence of the Dukes of Braganza from the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The library is composed of two essential parts: the Department of Rare Books as well as Manuscripts, and the General Deposit.

Major collections:

- The manuscripts collection consists of three different fonds, according to the provenance of the items:
  - 128 items from King Manuel II private library;
  - 25 items from the Ducal Palace library;
  - Other items acquired by the House of Braganza Foundation.
 This collection comprises items from the 13<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century, among them King Manuel I's

and King John III's *Livro de Menagens* (1505-1539), *Livro de Sentenças para D. Sebastião* (1554), a Parisian Bible from the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Books of Hours from the 15<sup>th</sup> century, as well as a collection of Manuelin *forais*. – The collection also contains important documents about Portugal's Restoration of Independence in 1640, correspondence of ambassador D. Luís da Cunha (1662-1740) and Alexandre de Gusmão (1695-1753), a letter from Queen Victoria to Queen Mary II of Portugal, as well as travel diaries of Prince D. Luís (1838-1889).