

## The Islamic Library "Felix M<sup>a</sup> Pareja" and private donations as a key player in collection development

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The Islamic Library "Felix M<sup>a</sup> Pareja" has developed an active collection policy focused on the private donations and the legacies of renowned arabists. In this way we have incorporated three specialized bibliographical collections, essential to study the historic period of the **Spanish Protectorate in Morocco**. Furthermore I will try to summarize the institution history, reader services, collections and management in our institution to provide the context.

Several different stages can be identified in the history of the Islamic Library. The first began in **1954**, the year of the foundation of the Institute of Hispanic-Arabic Culture and the creation of a library to provide documentary and bibliographical backup to Spanish and foreign researchers in the Arabic-Islamic field. Those years were profoundly marked by the indefatigable labour of Father Pareja who was entrusted with the task. Thanks to his work, the finest collection of Arabic and Islamic Studies in Spain was assembled. His encyclopedic knowledge defined the lines for the formation of this major resource.

In **1974** the Institute of Hispanic-Arabic Culture became an autonomous body in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the library benefited from the assignation of its own budget, enabling a policy of materials acquisition in Arab countries. Since 1985, due to a greater economic liberalization in that geographical area, it became easier to secure some journals and materials of limited commercial circulation. At the end of **1988**, the name was changed to Institute for Cooperation with the Arab World and after that it was made up by (became part of?) the recently created Spanish International Cooperation Agency (AECID, 1989). In **1992** the Islamic Library was relocated in AECID's headquarters, hence moving into a space more in consonance with its functions. The Hispanic Library was already installed in this new building, sharing both libraries the different resources, services and facilities.

The Islamic Library offers the following reader services:

- Bibliographic and reference information service at the Reference and Catalogue room (with manual and computerized catalogues).
- Home borrowing books with a new reader library card.

- Reading and journals room to seek and study with Wi-Fi area. Most of the documents are stored in repositories and it is necessary to ask for them in advance.
- The number of Interlibrary Loans increases every year with University Libraries, research institutions and even public libraries due to our bibliographic news.
- Internet allows new procedures for dissemination and to get in contact with our users, as for example:
  - Showcase: repertoires, advertisements and electronic contents.
  - Specialized bibliographies, new acquisitions.
  - Online summaries of recent journals:  
<http://www.aecid.es/es/servicios/bibliotecas/revistas/islamica/>
  - News about historic or artistic events organized by date and topic.
  - The monthly Newsletter Asdà  
(<http://www.aecid.es/es/servicios/bibliotecas/catalogos/islamica/boletines.html>)
  - AECID libraries Blog in <http://biblioacidmadrid.wordpress.com/>

We've just completed a survey to better know the researchers' opinion of our service: the typology and frequency of use and future needs. The survey reflects their request for virtual services, personalized attention and digitalization of historical collection. So these will be our priorities. The library perception will surely benefit from these improvements!

**The library collection has an enormous bibliographical wealth:**

The specific field of the Islamic Library was defined right from its origins, by its acquisition policy. From the very beginning, the special criteria with which Father Pareja defined the collection subjects were established: the Arab World in its multiple and varied aspects (cultural, artistic, humanistic, economic, social and political ones). With this policy, we have reached around 70,000 volumes and 1,350 titles of specialized journals, 300 of which are alive, besides other documents with a more enriching and open perception. Today the collection funds represent the result of those first basic lines and suppose the starting point for the documentary support to scientific research. They also reflect the political and social evolution of our country.

To adapt ourselves to multimedia formats the purchase of DVD's has been increased up to more than 700 audio-visual products which are receiving a big welcome from our readers.

It corresponds to the Islamic Library the increase of its funds according to the following documentary typology with a high level of specialization:

- Reference works: encyclopedias, handbooks, catalogues of manuscripts and bibliographies, bilingual dictionaries...

- Classic works on Islamic culture, in critical editions of outstanding arabists.
- Collection of Arab primary sources in all fields of specialities.
- Contemporary Studies on the Arab world.
- Literature and essays on modern Arab thought.
- Important journals of Arabism and orientalism.

A brief comment about the 1,320 **antique books** including some manuscripts must be made: it has increased gradually with purchases made through auctions or catalogues of antiquarian bookstores. Our priority projects include increasing the availability of such antique funds to the readers, using the digitalization, as a first step to become part of the European Digital Library (Europeana).

Although most part of our funds are **acquired by purchase** (in 2011: 2,800 books and 200 subscriptions to periodicals were paid), also the **exchange** regime for journals and books (500 last year) is very important thanks to our periodical *Awraq*, carried out in collaboration with Casa Árabe (Madrid). In this paper, as I explained before, we highlight the incidence that **donations** of private researchers have in a 21st century specialized library.

#### **Donations in the Islamic Library "Felix M<sup>a</sup> Pareja":**

Since the beginning of the year 2000 the Islamic Library funds have been enriched with outstanding gifts, but this is not an isolated or new phenomenon. Already at the stage that we could describe as formation of the main collection, we got significant donations from the cultural services of the Spanish embassies in Arab countries, such as Syria and Turkey, in a special way from Egypt, Libano, Jordan or even from Leiden (Netherlands). It seems that this circumstance of donations is reactivated through the legacy of private libraries, usually after the death of its owner.

**The aim of donations** in the development of the bibliographical collection is primarily to preserve the relevant documents that can be sent, before time devours them, to the most appropriate public institutions. It also aims to facilitate the access to specialized bibliographic funds gathered by the interest of the owner for many years of dedicated research in their relevant personal libraries. There are curiosities, photographs or ephemeral documents, reports and typed memoirs, as well as diverse personal documentation, such as correspondence with other colleagues, of great interest to researchers.

It is **an honor** for any cultural institution, considered to be a **centre of prestige**, to be chosen by bibliophiles and collectors to house, preserve and disseminate the whole of the collection formed over a lifetime. Many of those funds are nearly impossible to

achieve at the present time, both for the rarity and the price this would entail. The final consideration but perhaps the most important is the great contribution it supposes for our national cultural heritage.

**The procedure** normally followed at the library upon receiving one such legacy is first to verify the state of conservation of the items, followed by their technical processing. Each item receives a *currens* number in the signature with the purpose of preserving the legacy unity. To seal this honorable delivery, there is an institutional signing ceremony to acknowledge the commitment of the institution towards the donors, in accordance with Spanish laws. In addition, a catalogue stating the contents of the donation is published, separately or included in other publications, either in paper and/or electronic format, in order to publicize and spread the word about these funds.

Document management costs should be considered, since the procedure is expensive in personnel and time. It is better to provide some written guidelines for the type of document that is accepted, where and when sending it, and contact in advance with us to ensure that we will accept the material and thus to avoid sending inappropriate material. Besides, after a prior assessment of the offered materials it is made a brief description of the donation contents (approximate number of documents, covered areas of knowledge, publication dates, if there are different editions, etc.).

At this point I would like to tell in detail the donations of Mariano Arribas Palau, Fernando Valderrama Martínez and Rodolfo Gil Grimau which encompass fundamental documents on hispanic – moroccan relations during the period of the Spanish Protectorate in Morocco. The first of these donors, Arribas Palau, was a specialist in Spain – Magreb relations in the 18th century. Mr. Valderrama was responsible for education initiatives during part of the Spanish protectorate period in Morocco, while Mr. Gil came from a lineage of arabists, being himself a professor, translator and active agent in cooperation activities. The funds donated are a reflection of their respective specialities.

**a) Mariano Arribas Palau (Barcelona, 1917- Madrid, 2002)**

Due to economic problems in his family, Mariano Arribas postponed his early academic vocation and researcher and he got an expertise in Commercial Studies to the age of 14 years old. The Civil War interrupted their studies of Teaching that could not be finished until 1940. Afterwards he graduated in Semitic Philology. His professional career from here on was meteoric: first as assistant professor and then as deputy director of the Institute Muley-Hasan of moroccan studies of Tetouan, capital of the Spanish Protectorate of Morocco. In this city he stayed 28 years.

Since arriving in Tetouan he dedicated to the research, first in the collection of the Archive of the Crown of Aragon related with the Muslim kingdoms of Granada and Fez and, subsequently, in the National Historical Archive of Madrid. He became part of the

team of writers that created the *Tamuda* magazine in 1953, a phenomenon that was repeated in 1980 with the magazine *Al Qantarrah* (successor of the classic *Al-Andalus*). And he obtained his PhD in 1959.

There are many articles in a score of national and international journals from 1953 until his death. His research was meticulous of all the events that marked the history and relationships of political, economic and social character between Morocco and Spain and to a lesser extent with other countries of North Africa, during the kingdoms of Charles III, Charles IV and Fernando VII.

When Mariano Arribas died in 2002 his heirs donated his private library and files to the Islamic Library. This valuable legacy offers to the scientific world new possibilities for the study of the Arab world and has already been conveniently stored and cataloged for researchers to access these funds. Among the 1,000 items gathered, there are editions of works which are impossible to find on the market today, as well as a complete collection of reprints of his articles published in various magazines throughout his fruitful career as arabist. The private files provides, well arranged in folders and boxes, its working papers on these topics that he treated with so much depth and dedication, with a clear handwriting, correctly identified in terms of thematic and dates.

This library published in 2002 a catalog (*Journal of the Islamic Library*, no. 130) which collected the donation of Mariano Arribas's family. The scientific community now has a documentary compilation of great interest. On the other hand, M<sup>ª</sup> Victoria Alberola which was the Head of the library at that moment also edited "Spain–Magreb relations in the 18th century: studies selection".

#### **b) Fernando Valderrama Martínez (Melilla, 1913 – Madrid, 2004)**

The donation of a writer's private library is always good news for a library. When Fernando Valderrama died in September 2004 his family informed the Islamic Library that, according to his wishes, some of his books and other work would become part of ours. He was emotionally tied to this library, not only because of his relationship with Morocco, about which we will talk later on, but also because his wife, Asunción, was Father Pareja's niece.

A very important part of Mr Valderrama's life was developed in Morocco during the Spanish Protectorate period. He worked for 26 years there, first as a primary school teacher and later as a secondary school Spanish Language teacher in Tetouan. He was also professor of Moroccan sociology and was in charge of the Moroccan Teaching Service, as the chief adviser of the High Commission of Spain in Morocco for 19 years.

Between 1961 and 1973 he worked as a specialist in education at UNESCO and as an expert in adult literacy.

His private library is the result of his background, his ideas and his intellectual interests, especially the education of Moroccan children and young adults and ethnology. Considering he was a leading part of Spain's cultural performance in Morocco, the great interest that this legacy has had on the Islamic Library can be easily understood. Thanks to this donation, a wide range of information on the educational field during the Spanish Protectorate can be consulted.

Most of his library, carefully selected by the management to avoid duplicates and other books which are away from the purpose of the collection, is at the Spanish Agency for the International Cooperation and Development now. Other books were sent to the University of Granada, and to the Musical Document Service in Granada.

It was decided to make a selection of the titles of the collection to avoid Valderrama's library books being repeated in the donation of Arribas Palau. After that, some of the patterns applied in the first process were followed in the treatment of the second, trying to emphasize the individualization of each one. This individualization is achieved through the allocation of a distinctive symbol, which, in turn, entails a placement of the fund as a whole. The donation consisted of the following works:

-800 books. Among them we should point out the most relevant ones:

- *A History of the Spanish development in Morocco, 1912-1956*, Tetouan, 1956.
  - Facsimile edition of *Kunnas al-Haik manuscript*, carefully presented by Manuela Cortez. The original manuscript of Kunnas al-Haik was donated to the regional Government of Andalusia.
  - *History of UNESCO*, Paris 1961, foreword by Federico Mayor Zaragoza.
  - *Spanish-Arabic and Arabic-Spanish Dictionary of the 2,500 most common words used in diplomacy, politics and international meetings*, IHAC, 1980 and 1988.
  - *Spanish-Arabic and Arabic-Spanish Dictionary of economy, finance and commerce*, Madrid, 1986.
- A number of works written by Valderrama to facilitate the learning of different subjects (like Geography, Linguistics, History, etc.) to Moroccan students.
  - 66 volumes of a miscellaneous collection from 1947 o 1985, 44 of which have to do with Morocco. It consists of newspaper clippings which reflect the

political, social, intellectual and artistic activity of those years. This collection has been digitalized.

- 9 photograph albums, too digitalized.
- 2 manuscripts.

The catalog of the Valderrama collection (*Journal of the Islamic Library*, no. 181) is another example of the kind of tasks our library has been carrying out when it comes to donations. This publication is meant to thank Valderrama's family's generosity and open this interesting library to the researchers.

### **c) Rodolfo Gil Grimau (Madrid, 1931- 2008)**

Daniel Gil, Gil Grimau's son, has offered in a great gesture, the donation of the former "Gil Benumeya" collection, recipient in turn of the large volume of books from Rodolfo Gil Grimau and from his grandfather, Rodolfo Gil Benumeya. Books of professor and arabist Roberto Gil were moved from Tetouan during the month of May, thanks to institutional cooperation activities between Spanish legacies in Morocco (personnel from Cervantes Institute, Tetouan Consulate and the Embassy of Spain, among others) and our institution.

Rodolfo Gil was a Cosmopolitan arabist, who spent most of his childhood in Egypt, Morocco and Algeria. He studied Arab Philology in Madrid and later on he suffered different difficulties due to his family linkage to a well known communist politician, Julián Grimau. Despite these troubles, he carried out an outstanding professional activity in Morocco in the 70s, establishing the foundations for the later creation of Cervantes Institute. He clearly boosted cooperation and exchange links between Moroccan local institutions and Andalusia (Spain). His academic and research activities were focused on Moorish topics, popular literature in Northern Africa (moroccan oral tale-tellers) and bibliographical compilations, for example *Approach to a Spanish bibliography on the subject of Northern Africa*.

Its owner expressed his wish to put this library under our professional custody, and it contributed enormously to increase our collection and the value of our bibliographical deposits. We have itemized 550 documents including monographies (congress proceedings, PhD thesis, art catalogs), journals and reviews written in Arabic (70% are new titles) and in European languages (Spanish, French or English).

Although it has yet to be assessed in depth, it contains essays in Arabic and French, historical and political issues fundamentally: literature also in Arabic, (Kazimirsky, Arab-Berber dictionaries and other); dictionaries, glossaries, grammars as well as various materials published during the age of the Spanish Protectorate. We also can find methods of classical and colloquial arabic, apart from works on history, sociology,



politics, religion, literature and criticism, travel books, music books, etc. For the Islamic Library it is an important contribution because it supposes the gathering of all material donated by Gil Grimau since the beginning of the existence of our library. Therefore it can be considered of great value, especially for items published outside Spain and in Arabic to research on the Spanish Protectorate and Morocco.

#### **To conclude:**

In 2012 the topic of the **Spanish Protectorate in Morocco** (one century ago the Treaty was signed), is serving to articulate several actions in our Library: the contribution to the 34<sup>th</sup> MELCOM Congress (European Association of Middle East Librarians), the cooperation with other Spanish libraries specialized on these issues (Virtual Andalusia Library, CSIC, Spanish National Library and Casa Árabe), the strengthening of the relationships with researchers and the Arabists who are our regular users. Finally, it is favoring the dissemination of the funds on this topic in different cycles of conferences.

Our collections are essential to know this topic, among others: **periodicals** (for example the *Official Newsletter of the Spanish Protectorate in Morocco* and its predecessor, the *Official Newsletter of the area of Spanish influence in Morocco* which is partially digitized by Spanish National Library). Fernando Valderrama's donation (with 9 photograph albums, his *History of Cultural Action of Spain in Morocco, 1912-1956*, and the 60 volumes of miscellaneous collection, consisting of press cuttings and private documents of that time, which has been already digitized). More than 100 **monographs** that deal with it, 120 military **cartography** of the Spanish Protectorate in Morocco that could be digitalized. We will prepare a bibliographic repertoire or supply about Spanish colonial context with some specialist contributions in these subjects to better publicize our collection between national and international scholars and researchers.

In addition, in the Spanish National Library the García Figueras collection was the seed of an important African collection. But there are other documentary institutions and archives, as the General Administration Archive and Military ones possessing rich documentation. We propose therefore to show the documental sources located in different archives and libraries, both public and private, specialized in the Spanish Protectorate in Morocco as a whole because it would be very interesting to sum all the technical efforts of digitalization that are taking place in recent years in a thematic web site about Protectorate period. We will think on it and ask for bibliographic and dissemination cooperation in our country.