THE TEXAS COLLECTIONS OF COMEDIAS SUELTAS

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The Texas Collection of Comedias Sueltas and Spanish Theater at the Harry Ransom Center contains approximately 15,000 titles spanning over three centuries. Cataloging of these titles and the approximately 600 titles held in the Cushing Memorial Library at Texas A&M University has been funded by the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR), Cataloging Hidden Special Collections and Archives. Publication dates range from 1603 to the late 1930s. Over 2,500 different authors have been identified; about ten percent of these are women writers. The majority of these plays were published post mid-19th century, and most of these originated in Madrid, followed by Barcelona. Several hundred were published in smaller cities in Spain and in Latin America. Most of the over 2,000 translations included in the collection are from the French followed by Italian and English, with some German and Catalan. Included in this collection are the 1,119 sueltas described in Mildred Boyer’s bibliography, Texas Collection of Comedias Sueltas (1978), covering the second half of the seventeenth century until 1833.

Genres in the collection include comedia, historical drama, zarzuela, sainete, entremís, pasatiempo, disparate, farsa, and several other cleverly named types. Each title has been examined, documenting most of the salient features of each work in the database. (Works are searchable by author, title, composer, place of publication, publisher, printer, keyword, and date.) In addition, dimensions of the works, stamps or markings, handwritten notations, added text, and presence of musical and illustrative content have been recorded. Performance statements have also been noted when they appear in a work. These statements include the date, city, and the theater where the works were initially performed. Censors’ statements and edits have also been recorded. As well, those works that have been used as actors’ prompt copies, where the markings and notations indicate their use in actual performances, have been recorded. The collection also contains some 200 romances de ciego and other related genres of literatura de cordel.

The database can be accessed here:

http://research.hrc.utexas.edu/sueltas/
ARENGA BURLESCA.

En nombre patrio: espina, carles, albares, corujo, aceite, dueños, alféreces y abrigos,
que os vos yo nombrabais en los apus.
Desde el río tus, mis fieras, al embrego,
atreuido lo que os digo;
pues si no están atrechos
no supieráis rodado de jumentos.

Cueros bien brios, manna pasto en campo,
se dividieron menos de Melecongo,
ausente y epite albusa,
in extensis libro de Athalante.

Cosas son, tiernas, muy dificultosas
el pescar con anzuelos mariposas;
y esta es una verdad tan asustadiza,
cómo ajetar un pase en una cuesta.

Nacho Panza lo dice en sus historias,
de las cueles hablando y zambarías,
de escarabas, pepinos y melones,
de los gollos, golillas y copozo;
pues d'entender os da elegantemente,
que comiéndose un día un pan caliente,
dió tan grande trigo,
que la una masa híbrida le dio un beso,
y al verla con alabarda,
que a sacar del estuche una alabarda.

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