

Cartographic Holdings of the Research Library in Zadar

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Abstract

The Research Library in Zadar was founded in 1855 based on a donation by Pietro Alessandro Paravia (1797–1857) and was accordingly named *Biblioteca Comunale Paravia*. In 1949, after the Second World War, it was renamed the Scientific Library (*Naučna biblioteka*), and since 1992 has operated under its present name – the Research Library of Zadar.

With the richness and diversity of its holdings, this Library occupies a significant place among Croatian libraries. As a general scientific library that houses literature from all fields of human knowledge, it is equally attractive to all categories of users, and especially to researchers. It inherited a holding of 55,719 volumes of various kinds from the former Paravia Library. After the Second World War, it was amplified by books from the Collection Centre, the holdings of various institutions, schools, courts, and valuable private collections. In 1949, it was granted the right to receive deposit copies of all Croatian printed works. The library holdings have also increased through purchases and donations. Today, the Library has about 1,130,000 volumes of books, of which about 1,020 were printed in the 16th century.

The Dalmatica Fund, comprising approximately 20,000 items printed or published in the area from Rab to the Bay of Kotor, written by Dalmatian authors or referring to Dalmatia, is extremely important. The great wealth of the Research Library holdings is also represented by about 12,000 titles of periodicals with 83,000 year files. Old Dalmatian periodicals occupy a prominent place among them.

The following collections are of particular value to the Library holdings: the Parchment Collection (372 items), the Incunabula Collection (34 items), the Manuscript Collection (1,140 items), the Rare Books Collection (1,460 items), and the Collection of Maps and Atlases (2,735 items)

Geographic maps and atlases, which are a specific type of library material, make an exceptional contribution to the Research Library holdings. In fact, the Library houses maps and atlases by the most famous European cartographers of the 16th and 17th centuries. Among them are the map *Zarae et Sebenici descriptio* (around 1575), which is probably a sheet from Abraham Ortelius's atlas, and the *Plan of the Defence Fort of Zadar/ Zarra* created about 1595 (17 × 10 cm). A group of significant maps by Ortelius, Mercator and Coronelli include Ortelius's *Synonymia geographica, sive popvlorum* ... (1578), and three atlases without title pages by the famous authors of 17th and 18th-century European cartography: Homann, Seutter, Masse and others. Other significant materials which are not in this fund, but form part of the Manuscript Collection, include geographic and topographic maps, and there are also geographic, topographic and hydrographic maps which form integral parts of the publications in the Monographs Collection.

In this paper, we will attempt to present the most significant works in which various cartographic materials which form part of the Library's heritage are found.

Keywords: Zadar Research Library, geoheritage and cartoheritage, Dalmatia in cartography, maritime, military, and topographic cartography