

# THE EUROPEAN LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

Editorial – September October 2010. In Focus - 'Reading Europe: Europeana culture through the book'. In Brief - Exhibitions across Europe



## EDITORIAL – September - October 2010

This month's newsletter celebrates the launch of the riveting new exhibition, **Reading Europe: European culture through the book**. Over 1,000 of Europe's most fascinating works are featured in a new multilingual online arena created by The European Library and supported by Europeana.eu.

From 18th century English bestsellers to medieval cookbooks, the exhibition offers visitors the chance to view masterpieces in over 32 different languages, from 23 national libraries of Europe. With many rarely seen manuscripts and first editions available to view, Europe's hidden literary gems are now accessible to all.

## IN FOCUS - Reading Europe: European culture through the book

The exhibition uncovers rare and classic works as well as highlighting the history behind the texts. Curators from the contributing libraries provide a fascinating insight into famous and forgotten tales, with an analysis of each book's background. Here are just some of the tempting texts on offer:



**The First Edition of Don Quixote by Cervantes** - The first edition of this classic tale is more notable for what it leaves out than what it keeps in. José Luis Bueren, who is responsible for the National Library of Spain's Department of Digital Library, explains why it proves to be such a compelling copy. *"It was carelessly done - typographic, punctuation and foliation errors abound. Accents are missing and, what is worse, parts of the original, such as the passage in which Sancho Panza's donkey is stolen, were not included."* Because of these glaring mistakes the publisher tried to withdraw as many copies of the first edition as possible and corrected the errors for the second edition.

*"These circumstances," explains Bueren, "in addition to the fact that very few copies were printed in the first place, have made this edition extremely rare."*

Despite the initial mistakes, the novel was an instant success, with Portuguese editions taking the lead over Spanish ones.

It wasn't until 1662 that an illustrated edition of the novel was printed in Brussels, with the first luxury edition and critique of Quixote published in England

## TOP 3 SEARCH ENTRIES ON THE EUROPEAN LIBRARY - SEPTEMBER 2010:

1. **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** - Austrian composer, 1756 – 1791,

2. **Symbolism** – The practice of representing things by means of symbols or of attributing symbolic meanings or significance to objects events, or relationships according to [Answers.com](http://Answers.com)

3. **Blasco Ibanez** "was a Spanish realist novelist writing in Spanish, a screenwriter and occasional film director." according to [Wikipedia](http://Wikipedia).

[Launch your own query!](#)

## VIDEO CORNER

This [video](#) features "Reading Europe: European culture through the book". View the exhibition highlights in two minutes.



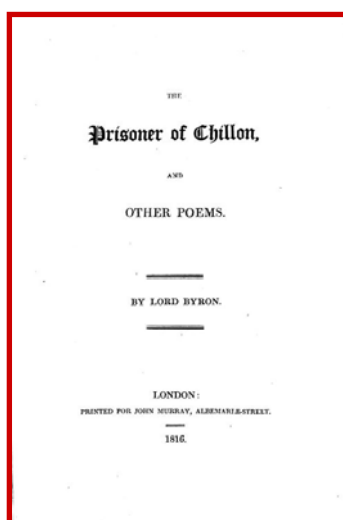
## OUR TIPS

Send an **e-postcard** from the national libraries of Europe. Celebrate reading and deliver your own literary note!



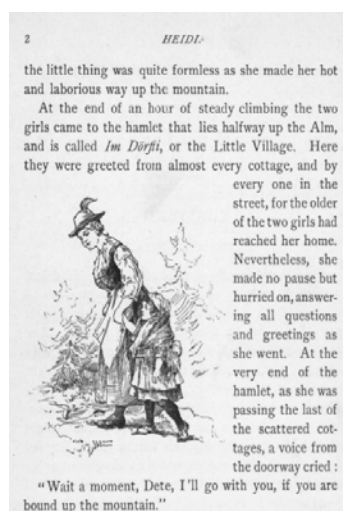
**The Idiot by Dostoevsky** - 'The Idiot' by celebrated Russian author Fyodor Dostoyevsky, is ranked as one of the classic literary achievements of Russia's "Golden Age". It was first published serially in *Russky Vestnik* between 1868 and 1869. However, it wasn't until the 20th century that it was finally translated in to English.

This great Russian writer's parable has proved pivotal to the development of many authors. Dmitry Epstein, from the Russian State Library's Department of Book Studies, explains it was, "*cited by many authors writing on totalitarianism and mind control, including Aldous Huxley and Noam Chomsky*". And Epstein goes on to hail Dostoevsky as the "predecessor of existentialism".



**Prisoner of Chillon by Lord Byron** -

This first edition of Byron's famous work was published in December 1816, following his visit to the shores of Lake Geneva in June of the same year. Genevieve Clavel-Merrin, from the National and International Cooperation - Federal Department of Home Affairs, explains its importance. "*It is one of the key writings from the early Nineteenth Century that did so much to promote the idea of tourism in Switzerland among English travelers. Many visited, with these verses in hand, to discover the Castle of Chillon, site of the monk Bonnivard's prison and to see the graffiti left by Lord Byron to commemorate his visit.*" This book forms part of the Swiss National Library's special reserve.



**Heidi by Johanna Spyri** - Heidi is one of the best-known and loved works of Swiss literature. This translation, by one of three early U.S. translators of Spyri's works, proves of great literary merit. "*It captures the simplicity and liveliness of the original,*" explains Genevieve Clavel-Merrin. The Swiss National Library acquired the copy in 2005, to complement their first edition in German (published in 1880 and also available in the exhibition). It forms a vital part of the library's extensive collection of around one thousand versions of the novel, in over forty languages.

## YOUR SAY

"*I find your work remarkable.*" Mary – Ireland – Subscriber since January 2007

"*I am a big fan of libraries. I have become a big fan of The European Library*" Henry – Subscriber since April 2009

## CREDITS

The editorial content of the Newsletter was gathered with the kind cooperation **Agnete L. Rodskjer** from the National Library of Denmark, **Araceli Sánchez-Piñol de Anta** from the National Library of Spain, **Genevieve Clavel-Merrin** from the National Library of Switzerland, **Tamara Butigan** from the National Library of Serbia, **Elena Zimina** from the Russian State Library & put together by **Tiziana Fazio, Justine Maybank** and **Aubéry Escande** from The European Library Office.



**Jammers Minde (Memoirs of my Wretchedness) by Leonora Christina** - 'Jammers Minde' is the compelling 17th century autobiography of the daughter of King Christian IV, who was imprisoned for 22 years in Copenhagen's infamous Blue Tower. The details of her life and confinement prove of huge cultural, historical and literary value. Renowned as a masterpiece of Danish literature, 'Jammers Minde' proves a perfect example of a valuable work that is little known outside its country of origin. Agnete Rodskjer, consultant at the National Library of Denmark, explains that the manuscript of 'Jammers Minde' was preserved thanks to the efforts of Leo Ulfeldt and his descendants.

"The 'Jammers Minde' manuscript was inherited by their great-great-great-grandchild Count Johann Waldstein, whose efforts finally saw Leonora Christina's tale published in Copenhagen in 1868. The manuscript was sent back to Count Waldstein in Austria, where it remained until the Danish authorities oversaw its return to Denmark." In 1920, The Museum of National History Frederiksborg Castle, brought back the treasure, where it still resides to this day. The facsimile of "Jammers Minde og andre selvbiografiske Skildringer" published by Johs. Brøndum-Nielsen og C.O. Bøggild-Andersen, 1949 and displayed in 'Reading Europe' is one of several editions printed in different versions since the first edition from 1869.



### **IN BRIEF – Exhibitions across Europe**

**EUROPEANA** - Renowned Art Nouveau masters Alphonse Mucha and Victor Horta are among the artists featured in the first virtual exhibition from [Europeana](#). Set to go live this month, the digital display will unite Art Nouveau posters, sculptures, photographs and designs from dozens of cultural institutions in 17 European countries.

[More info...](#)

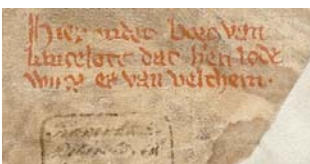


**SERBIA** – One of the foremost figures from Serbia's modern literary movement is celebrated in a new digital collection. Visit the Digital Library of Serbia's new exhibition 'The legacy of Miloš Crnjanski (1893-1977)' to learn more about this prominent literary light. [More info...](#)



**POLAND** – Head to the Fryderyk Chopin digital collection for highlights of the National Library of Warsaw's "chopiniana".

[More info...](#)



**NETHERLANDS** - The Koninklijke Bibliotheek presents a digital facsimile edition of the famous Dutch Lancelot-Compilation. The ten romances of the knights of King Arthur's Round Table are now ready to view online.

[More info...](#)



**SLOVENIA** – The Digital Library of Slovenia has just been revamped. The upgraded portal now offers new and improved search functions. And there are user-friendly options for personalized browsing through their collection of almost 450.000 digital objects.

[More info...](#)