

# Fossar de les Moreres

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The **Fossar de les Moreres** (Catalan pronunciation: [fuˈsa ðə ˈtəz muˈɾerəs]) is a memorial plaza in Barcelona (Catalonia, Spain), adjacent to the basilica of Santa Maria del Mar. The plaza was built over a cemetery where defenders of the city were buried following the Siege of Barcelona at the end of the War of the Spanish Succession in 1714. The plaza retains its everyday use as a public space, but also prominently features a memorial to the fallen Catalans of the war, with a torch of eternal flame and a heroic poem by Frederic Soler, "El Fossar de les Moreres".

In the aftermath of the War of Spanish Succession, Catalonia suffered a loss of autonomy. The subsequent royal decrees known as the *Decretos de Nueva Planta* abolished the *furs* (fueros) of Catalonia as well as institutions that dated back to the time of the Crown of Aragon and beyond. At a later date the public use of the Catalan language was banned for public documents. These actions by Philip V have two interpretations. First there was an obvious desire to punish for the support that was offered to Archduke Charles. Territories in Spain that supported Philip V had a less severe restriction of their historical *fueros*. Second, Philip V was initiating in Spain a greater concentration and centralization of power that was occurring simultaneously in the other major European monarchies, namely Great Britain, France, and Austria. The *Decretos* dealt not only with Catalonia, but also with other parts of Spain and the empire as a whole. Philip V sought to regulate what had been a complex and sometimes conflicting polysynodal system of governance that characterized the first two centuries of the unified Spanish monarchy.

Given this tumultuous history connected with the decrees and the war, the Fossar de les Moreres is an important place of remembrance every year during the National Day of Catalonia (Diada Nacional de Catalunya in Catalan). The holiday commemorates the date on which Barcelona fell, 11 September, and some Catalans yearly pay homage to the defenders of city who were killed and are buried at the memorial.

The original cemetery in which Barcelona's defenders were buried was paved over, and the plaza was created during the urbanization of parochial cemeteries in 1821 under pressure from King Charles III of Spain and General Castaños.

## See also

- History of Catalonia
- Decrets de Nova Planta
- War of the Spanish Succession
- Catalan nationalism

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