Adding new bibliographic records to the HPB Database

In the coming months, we will see good progress on HPB file loading. The Heritage of the Printed Book Database will be enhanced with detailed information on libraries’ holdings in the Regione Toscana and the VD16 records will be augmented with references to digital material. A few more weeks will also see the inclusion of just under 4,000 records for the Mendham collection in Canterbury and an update from Yale University (over 8,000 new records). Behind the scenes, CERL is investigating automated harvesting of updated ISTC records, so that these may be included in the HPB on a regular basis.

Extending the HPB hosting contract with OCLC

Shortly after the CERL Annual General Meeting, CERL’s Chairman, Prof Dr Elmar Mittler traveled to OCLC at Dublin (OH), where with Jay Jordan, OCLC President and CEO, he signed a two-year extension to the contract for hosting the Heritage of the Printed Book Database. CERL looks forward to intensifying its contacts with OCLC in the years to come, and will attend the OCLC EMEA Council meeting, taking place in Leiden, the Netherlands, on 24 and 25 February 2009.

CERL Portal: Manuscripts and Early-Printed Material

http://cerl.epc.ub.uu.se/sportal/

The aim for the CERL Portal has always been to give access to a great variety of information on manuscripts and early-printed materials, including digital facsimiles wherever possible. This so-called deep-linking has recently been implemented for the records of the Royal Library in Copenhagen, and the Medieval Manuscripts in Dutch Collections (MMDC). Early in 2010, CERL hopes to include the West Midlands Manuscripts of the University of Birmingham and the Handrit, the Union Catalogue of Icelandic manuscripts in Europe. Gent University Library has indicated its interest in making records visible through the CERL Portal. CERL is very enthusiastic about this contribution, and early awaits their OAI implementation.

Joint LIBER CERL Working Group for Heritage Collections

The Working Group for Heritage Collections in one of the two Working Groups of the LIBER Steering Committee for Heritage Collections and Preservation, chaired by Graham Jefcoate (UB Nijmegen). Marian Lefferts (CERL Executive Manager) acts as the SC’s Secretary. The Working Group for Heritage Collections is chaired by Chris Banks (UL Aberdeen), and Jutta Weber (SB Berlin), who is also a member of the CERL Executive Committee, has agreed to act as the Secretary of the Working Group. The Steering Committee has drawn up a Work Plan for 2010, which will also be presented to the CERL’s Advisory Task Group and Executive Committee for their input. The final version of the Work Plan will be made available on the CERL website in due course.
CERL Thesaurus
http://cerl.sub.uni-goettingen.de/ct/

In November 2009, the CERL Thesaurus contained 723,070 records. The number of searches per month reached a peak of 15,409 in March 2009. The average search count per month in 2008/2009 was 10,425 (2007/2008: 9,857; 2006/2007: 6,465), and the top three countries in terms of search activity were Italy, Hungary and Germany. Further statistics are available from http://www.cerl.org/web/intern/atg/cerl_thesaurus/webstat.

Numerous new data sets were added to the CERL Thesaurus in 2009, including imprint names for Swedish, Spanish and Italian printers and personal names indicating provenance from German, Polish and Spanish contributors. Full details of all data sets which are now part of the CERL Thesaurus are available from the CERL Thesaurus website (see above). In 2009, CERL drew up guidelines on editing printers’ records in the CERL Thesaurus. The guidelines are available from the ‘editing’ subsection of the CERL Thesaurus section. In 2010, we look forward to including place names and geo-references used in the Bernstein Paper Atlas project to the CERL Thesaurus, as adding geo-coordinates to the CERL Thesaurus’ place name records opens a variety of visualisation options, from simply displaying a map showing the location of a certain place to the creation of maps showing the printing activity within a specified time period.

Digital Resources – Printers’ Devices

The Alsatian printer devices from Elsässische Büchermarken bis Anfang des 18. Jahrhunderts / hrsg. von Paul Heitz; Mit Vorbemerkungen und Nachrichten über die Drucker von Karl August Barack. - Strassburg : Heitz & Mündel, 1892. - XXXIV, 160 S. : Ill. (LXXVI Taf.). - (Die Büchermarken oder Buchdrucker- und Verlegerzeichen ; [1]) which were digitised by the Berlin State Library (SBB-PK) and stored at the CERL web server are not yet linked from CERL Thesaurus records because adjustments to the authority data format in the GBV union catalogue (GVK) are yet to be implemented. The authority information and links to the images will be edited by the SBB-PK in the printers’ records of the GVK rather than directly in the CERL Thesaurus. With the next update of the GVK printers records the data will also become available through the CERL Thesaurus.

Provenance Working Group
http://www.cerl.org/web/en/resources/provenance/main

As a parting gift to its Secretary, Dr David Shaw, CERL developed a new resource for public discussion and identification of provenance problems. The user does not need a login to view items on the database, but does need to create a login in order to be able to post queries (including images) and join the discussion on items which have already been displayed. Dr Shaw has agreed to act as the site’s editor and moderator. Even though this new database is still under development and not all facilities are yet working (e.g. the Help menu), it has already been instrumental in resolving four queries in January 2010 alone.

The Association of National Committees of the Blue Shield (ANCBS) wants to help Haiti
http://www.ancbs.org/

The earthquake in Haiti of 12th January has caused enormous devastation. At the moment basic humanitarian aid and the rebuilding of a functioning infrastructure is crucial. However, as soon as the situation has become more stable, Blue Shield wants to help to enable experts from all over the world support their Haitian colleagues in assessing the damage to the cultural heritage and therefore to the identity of their country. Subsequently, Blue Shield wants to support recovery, restoration and repair measures necessary to rebuild libraries, archives, museums, monuments and sites.

An important task is to coordinate information. ANCBS needs to know who and where the experts are and therefore calls upon archivists, restorers, curators, librarians, architects and other experts to register online as volunteers. ANCBS wants to bring experts in contact with those organisations that will send missions to Haiti, and make sure that volunteers are informed about the situation there. Blue Shield invites you to help your Haitian colleagues. You may find the application form at http://haiti2010.blueshield-international.org/.
Early printed books as material objects: Principles, problems, perspectives
Pre-conference - 75th Annual Congress of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA)

More than 136 librarians and book historians from 27 countries went to Munich from 19 to 21 August 2009, where the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (BSB) organised a conference on the topic ‘Early printed books as material objects - Principles, problems, perspectives’. The meeting was held under the auspices of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) as a pre-conference for the 75th annual IFLA congress which took place from 23-27 August in Milan, Italy. The conference, which was co-sponsored by the Consortium of European Research Libraries (CERL), provided an opportunity to discuss the requirements for recording copy-specific information in projects for the cataloguing and digitisation of early-printed books with speakers and an international audience of librarians and scholars.

During the three days of the conference, 25 papers in eight thematic sections were given. Ten former or present members of the Standing Committee of the IFLA Rare Books and Manuscripts Section were involved as speakers or chairs, and CERL was represented by both the former and the present secretary. While the sections at the beginning and end of the conference focused on methodological questions and thus opened up wider contexts for the study of early-printed books, the other sections dealt with particular types of copy-specific features: painted decoration, bindings, provenances and manuscripts notes. Two sections approached more technical questions, presenting current projects for binding databases and the recording of provenances.

The programme of the conference and abstracts of the papers can be found on the conference website (http://www.bsb-muenchen.de/Archiv-Einzeldarstellung.410+M5af719b59c0.0.html). A selection of papers will be published in the series ‘IFLA publications’ (De Gruyter Saur, Munich); the volume will be edited by Marcia Reed and Bettina Wagner. The conference was accompanied by an exhibition on the beginnings of printing in the fifteenth century which was opened on the eve of the conference; descriptions (in German and English) of the c. 90 manuscripts, blockbooks and incunabula on show were published in an exhibition catalogue titled ‘Als die Lettern laufen lernten’ (Reichert Verlag, Wiesbaden).

Bettina Wagner, Munich

Presentations in 2010


Other presentations by Cristina Dondi:
- Oxford, 8 May 2010, Magdalen and Merton Colleges: ‘Book Provenances: examples and techniques’; speakers will also include David Pearson and Nicholas Pickwoad.
- Venice Seminar, Manchester, John Rylands Library, 15 May 2010: ‘The Venetian trade in printed books in the 15th and 16th centuries: evidence from the local as well as the international market’.
Results of the PARSE.Insight survey
http://www.parse-insight.eu/publications.php#d3-4

PARSE.Insight aims to highlight the longevity and vulnerability of digital research data and concentrates on the parts of the e-Science infrastructure needed to support persistence and understandability of the digital assets of EU research. One of their deliverables is a detailed inventory of existing and planned preservation support, which has now been published.

The report describes the results of the surveys conducted by PARSE.Insight to gain insight into research in Europe. Major surveys were held within three stake-holder domains: research, publishing and data management. Some 2,000 responses offer interesting insights into the current state of affairs in digital preservation of digital research data (including publications), the outlook of data preservation, data sharing, roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in research and funding of research. Graphs of the survey results will be publicly available soon. For information, contact jeffrey.vanderhoeven@kb.nl.

Incunabula Project at Cambridge University Library
www.lib.cam.ac.uk/deptserv/rarebooks/incunabulap project.html

In October 2009 Cambridge University Library launched a cataloguing project which will make records for its collection of 4,650 incunables available and searchable online for the first time. The incunabula collection, part of which goes back to the late fifteenth century, is internationally renowned and includes some 134 unique items. The scope of the project is to create specialist records for all the incunables in Newton, the Library’s online catalogue, with special emphasis on copy specific information such as variants and imperfections, rubrication, decoration and illumination, annotations, binding, marks of ownership, and provenance, enhancing and bringing up to date the short title catalogue published by J.C.T. Oates in 1954, and including the 256 items acquired by the Library since.

The descriptions will comply with international standards for the bibliographical description of rare material. Their inclusion in the Library’s online catalogue will ensure that the records will be quality-controlled, maintained and upgraded if necessary, and freely available worldwide. The records will also be sent to both COPAC (the merged online catalogues of many major University, Specialist, and National Libraries in the UK and Ireland) and WorldCat (the OCLC catalogue of books and other materials in libraries worldwide). The project has been funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for five years.

The project cataloguer is Dott. Laura Nuvoloni, Research Associate. For further information on the Incunabula Cataloguing Project, see the website. A project blog with regular news and updates will be launched in 2010.

Laura Nuvoloni

Digitised Islamic manuscripts at the Wellcome Library
http://library.wellcome.ac.uk/arabicproject.html

The Wellcome Library, Bibliotheca Alexandrina and King’s College London, have formed a partnership to create a free searchable online catalogue of 500 Islamic manuscripts in the Wellcome Library.

The partners will design a cataloguing system to create and manage descriptive metadata for Asian manuscripts, including adapting the ENRICH TEI metadata schema, catalogue the manuscripts using this tool, create cover-to-cover, high quality digital photographs of the manuscripts, and produce a website to enable sophisticated access to the metadata and its associated digital images.

The website will be hosted by the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, and digitised content will also be available via the Wellcome Library catalogue, pending inclusion of the complete catalogue on the Wellcome site when circumstances permit. The project is partly funded by a grant from the JISC’s Islamic Studies Programme.
As well as rare sixteenth-century editions of Vitruvius, Palladio, Serlio and Vignola, the exhibition presents works from the historic holdings of the library and its valuable collection of drawings, such as the very well-known notebook of Giuliano da Sangallo, the treatises on architecture by Francesco di Giorgio Martini and Pietro Cataneo, the drawings by the school of Baldassarre Peruzzi for the porticoes of Piazza del Campo, never constructed, and the plans for the Cappella del Voto in the cathedral of Siena by Benedetto Giovannelli Orlandi, an architect highly regarded by Pope Alexander VII Chigi. The exhibition also includes the rare notebook of Oreste Vannocci Biringucci, architect of the Gonzaga of Mantua, the works of the famous physician and architect Teofilo Gallaccini whose treatise on the mistakes of architects were left unpublished for almost a century after his death, and also the plans of the less known Giacomo Franchini, a local interpreter of the grand Borromini style of architecture.

Thanks to the use of visual projections, the visitor will have the chance to leaf through the pages of some of the books on show as well as to compare them with other material not in the exhibition. The exhibition is held on the 250th anniversary of the foundation of the municipal library of Siena, Biblioteca degli Intronati, and is sponsored by Fondazione Monte dei Paschi di Siena and Regione Toscana.

It was organised by Daniele Danesi, together with the scholars Daniela Arrigucci, Elisa Bruttini, Giovanni Maria Fara, Emanuela Ferretti, Gianni Mazzone, Bruno Mussari, Mauro Mussolin, Alina Payne, Matthias Quast, Bernardina Sani and coordinated by Milena Pagni and Annalisa Pezzo. The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue. For information, contact antico@biblioteca.comune.siena.it.

RLG Partnership European Meeting on Special Collections, 22-23 April 2010
http://www.oclc.org/research/events/2010-04-22.htm

The theme of the next RLG European Partnership Meeting, which will take place at St Anne’s College, University of Oxford, is ‘Moving the Past into the Future: Special Collections in a Digital Age’. At this meeting, several expert speakers from many of the top universities and archives in the US and Europe will examine these major themes: refactoring and reframing, collecting in a digital age; doing more with less; special collections and the law; and management of collections: working with donors.

Staff from RLG Partner institutions are invited to attend and participate in provocative and informative presentations and discussions, and to engage with the future of special collections. Cristina Dondi (CERL Secretary) and Richard Ovenden (Bodleian Library and CERL Director) will attend the meeting on behalf of CERL.

Blockbooks in Bavaria

The Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in München has undertaken to digitise and catalogue all blockbooks in Bavarian collections. By the year 2011, full colour digital reproductions and detailed descriptions of c. 90 blockbooks from 14 collections will become available. For information, contact bettina.wagner@bsb-muenchen.de.
Research Grants and Awards

Cristina Dondi

Our Secretary together with Nigel Palmer, Professor of Medieval German Literature at the University of Oxford, has been awarded a British Academy Research Development Award (BARDA), to study 'The Venetian Book-trade in the 15th Century: material evidence for the economic and social history of the Renaissance'.

The project will investigate, analyse and contextualise the material evidence (ownership notes, binding, decoration, manuscripts notes) of thousands of surviving incunabula printed in Venice and exported and used everywhere in Europe to assess how their distribution took place, so to advance our knowledge of the trade network, as well as of the response of different publics to the introduction of printing, of purchasing and of reading habits. Data will be partly extracted from published catalogues of incunabula which contain such information in varying degrees of completeness, and partly collected by researchers first hand. Both sets of data will populate a new database created by Alex Jahnke of the Data Conversion Group in Göttingen to allow for the integrated research of data up until now scattered in hundreds of printed or electronic catalogues. The four most innovative features of this database are: 1) Each piece of information can be individually dated and geographically localised, therefore becoming a valuable clue for the circulation of books (e.g. sixteenth-century German binding, will be tagged as sixteenth century, and as Germany, and a search for Venetian editions used or circulating in Germany in the sixteenth century will pick up the binding evidence). 2) Private and institutional ownership is further classified as religious and lay, male and female, and by profession, leading to detail research on the social history of book production and use. 3) Information on prices is specifically recorded to allow for an economic evaluation of the early book trade based on a large pool of data. 4) Places (of production and of use) and ownership names are linked to and fed into the CERL Thesaurus.

It is the intention to open the use of the database to the public, so that libraries which would like to catalogue the material evidence of incunabula in their collection may make free use of this tool and at the same time contribute to an ever expanding centralised database for the integrated research on incunabula by scholars.

Lotte Hellinga

CERL is very proud to announce that Dr Lotte Hellinga, who was the Consortium’s first Secretary, has been awarded the Gold Medal of the Bibliographical Society. The Gold Medal is awarded every second year to a scholar who has made significant contributions to bibliographical studies. The award of the medal was made at a meeting of the Society at University College, London, on 17 November 2009. The Society’s President, Professor John Barnard, praised Dr Hellinga’s work in the field of fifteenth-century printing, especially the recently completed volume of the British Library’s incunables printed in England.

In her reply, Lotte Hellinga noted that she was the third woman (out of thirty-nine recipients) to be awarded the Gold Medal. She was very pleased to have received the Medal on the fiftieth anniversary of the first award in 1929. The list of recipients of the Gold Medal can be seen on the Society’s web site at http://www.bibsoc.org.uk/goldmedl.htm.

David Shaw

CERL Annual Meetings and Seminars in 2009

The 2009 Annual General Meeting and accompanying meetings took place at the Bibliothèque royale de Belgique / Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België (Bruxelles/Brussel), 5-7 November 2009. It was attended by 37 representatives of CERL member libraries from 18 countries and by two members of LIBER, Dr Ann Matheson (LIBER General Secretary) and Mr Graham Jefcoate (Chair of the Steering Committee for Heritage Collections and Preservation). Members reviewed the activities of the Consortium during the previous year and approved plans for the coming year, including the membership fee for 2009-2012, the budget for 2009-2010, and the Strategic Plan for 2010-2015. Members also discussed progress with the Consortium’s services (HPB, CERL Thesaurus, CERL Portal, and Provenance) and heard reports from OCLC, the Advisory Task Group, cooperation with Europeana, LIBER, and the Finance Committee and Secretariat.
Elections
Details on committees may be found at http://www.cerl.org/web/en/about/organisation

Professor Dr Elmar Mittler was elected as Chairman of CERL for a second term commencing on 7 November 2009. He indicated that he does not wish to serve the full period of three years. A new Chairmanship Search Committee has therefore been appointed to identify candidates to succeed Professor Dr Mittler in 2010 or 2011; it will be chaired by Dr Claudia Fabian. M. Raymond Bérard, Director of ABES (Agence bibliographique de l'enseignement supérieur, Montpellier, France), was elected as Director and Treasurer of CERL, and Mr Richard Ovenden, Head of Special Collections and Western Manuscripts and Associate Director, Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, was elected as a Director.

Urban Networks and the Printing Trade in Early Modern Europe (15th – 18th century)
http://www.cerl.org/web/en/services/seminars/main

This year’s annual CERL Seminar was held at the Royal Library in Brussels. It took the form of an international one-day conference on the European book trade, organised jointly by CERL, the Royal Library, the Groupe de contact FNRS ‘Documents rares et précieux’, the Interuniversity Attraction Poles Programme, Belgian Science Policy, the Université Libre de Bruxelles and the Vlaamse Werkgroep Boekgeschiedenis. The participants were welcomed by Patrick Lefèvre, the Director of the Royal Library. The first paper ‘Les réseaux commerciaux d’un imprimeur bruxellois: Guillaume Fricx (1705-1708)’ by Claude Sorgeloos (Bibliothèque royale de Belgique) presented a detailed account of the activity of this printer, bookseller and publisher, drawing on his surviving day books. This was followed by a paper by Stijn van Rossem (Universiteit Antwerpen), ‘Books and the city: the urban networks of the Verdussen family (Antwerp, 1585-1700)’ on the family networks of the Verdussen dynasty over a period of 250 years, including their relations with civic and religious authorities.

Sébastien Afonso (Université Libre de Bruxelles – Interuniversity Attraction Poles Programme) in his paper on ‘L'imprimé officiel : enjeu et objet de rivalités entre imprimeurs dans les villes du sud des Pays-Bas méridionaux au XVIIe siècle’ looked at the ways in which the civic authorities in the smaller urban centers encouraged the establishment of a local printing press. Alexandre Vanautgaerden (Musée de la Maison d’Érasme, Anderlecht [Bruxelles]) in his paper ‘Pourquoi Bâle ? Imprimerie et humanisme à Bâle avant l’arrivée d’Érasme en 1514’ gave an overview of the book trade in Basel, its university connections, and Erasmus’s decision to settle and work there.

After lunch, CERL’s new Secretary, Cristina Dondi, ‘Printers, traders, and their confraternities in fifteenth-century Venice’, presented her research on the book trade members of some of the confraternities (scuole), especially the Germans who were significant members of the Venetian book trade in the incunable period. Falk Eisermann (Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke, Berlin) spoke next on ‘Printers, patrons and audiences in fifteenth-century Leipzig’, looking in particular at the interaction between the book trade and the university in Leipzig.

As a result of a strike on Belgian railways, David McKitterick (Trinity College, Cambridge) was unable to attend the Seminar. His paper, ‘Licensed freedom. The book trade in London in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries’, read by David Shaw, looked at the centrality of London in the English book trade and the growth of the Stationers Company.

The final paper by Jean-Dominique Mellot and Anne Boyer (Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris) presented a series of statistics illustrating the spread of printing in France and its increasing centralisation on Paris in ‘The French printing and publishing network through the corpus of the Répertoire d'imprimeurs/libraires of the Bibliothèque nationale de France (16th-18th century)’. David Shaw ended the Seminar with a short summing up, which examined the variety of networks and local specialisms which characterised the book trade in Europe in the early-modern period. The papers will be published jointly by CERL and the Royal Library as CERL Papers X.

David Shaw
CERL Annual Meetings and Seminars in 2010

The 2010 Annual General Meeting will take place at the Royal Library in Copenhagen on Saturday 6 November 2010, preceded by a seminar on Historical Collections on Friday 5 November 2010, and meetings of the CERL Advisory Task Group and the Executive Committee on Thursday 4 November.

Recent publications
- The latest issue of *Almanacco Bibliografico*, the online bibliographical bulletin of Centro di Ricerca Europeo Libro Editoria Biblioteca (= C.R.E.L.E.B), Milan, edited by Professor Edoardo Barbieri, is available at [http://creleb.unicatt.it/allegati/Almanacco Bibliografico 012.pdf](http://creleb.unicatt.it/allegati/Almanacco Bibliografico 012.pdf), and contains ‘Incunaboli: fonti storiche’, an opening editorial article by C. Dondi, mentions the inclusion of ManusOnLine into the CERL Portal (pp. 48-49), and reviews CERL Papers VI, VII and VIII.
- C. de la Mare and Laura Nuvoloni, *Bartolomeo Sanvito: The Life and Work of a Renaissance Scribe*, ed. by Anthony R. A. Hobson and Christopher de Hamel. Whitsbury: *The Handwriting of Italian Humanists*, 2009 (The Handwriting of Italian Humanists, 2). This is a catalogue of the manuscripts copied by the Paduan scribe Bartolomeo Sanvito based on the unpublished notes of the late Prof. Albinia C. de la Mare, organised and prepared for publication by Laura Nuvoloni, published in a limited edition of 350 copies by the Association internationale de bibliophilie.