News

CONSORTIUM OF EUROPEAN RESEARCH LIBRARIES

Accessing the record of Europe's book heritage

Issue No. 44 – June 2024

The objects and aims of the Consortium of European Research Libraries (CERL) are to provide services to its members and to the library and scholarly world at large in the form of bibliographical databases, seminars, workshops, publications and co-operation with other library organisations and individual libraries and their staff. CERL concentrates its efforts on printed material from the hand-press period – up to the first half of the 19th century – and on manuscripts, in analogue or digital format.

Content

CERL Annual General Meeting in 2024

The CERL Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be hosted by the Biblioteca nazionale centrale di Roma – BNCR. The meeting of the CERL Executive Committee will take place on Tuesday 22 October 2024. The annual Seminar on the following Wednesday will focus on European Printing in Non-Latin Scripts (see elsewhere in this Newsletter). Finally, the Annual General Meeting and a meeting of the Board of Directors will take place on Thursday 24 October. In preparation for this meeting the Board of Directors is working on the CERL Strategic Plan for 2023-2026 (the current Strategic Plan is available here), which they will circulate to the CERL members after the Summer holidays. CERL members will be invited to send their suggestions for the draft Strategic Plan in September 2024, and the aim is to ratify the new plan one month later, at the AGM in Rome.

In preparation

In the course of 2024 CERL will publish the conference proceedings 'Retrospective Bibliographies and European Print Cultures to 1830: Challenges and perspectives in the Digital Age.' An agreement was reached with Harrassowitz for the book to be available both Open Access and as print-on-demand. The publication is financially supported by a generous grant from the Lanckoroński Foundation.

THE LANCKORONSKI FOUNDATION

European Printing in Non-Latin Scripts – CERL Annual Seminar 2024
National Central Library of Rome, 23 October 2024
www.cerl.org/services/seminars/main

Printing technologies have historically been used worldwide to reproduce texts written in different languages and scripts. When European typography developed in the mid-fifteenth century, this technology was first utilized to manufacture books written in Latin and European vernaculars. However, printers soon begun to publish texts in Hebrew (from 1469), Greek (from 1471), Glagolitic (from 1483), Cyrillic (from 1491). The earliest edition in Armenian dates to 1512, in Ge'ez to 1513, in Arabic to 1514, in Syriac to 1539, in Gaelic to 1571.

During the sixteenth century, starting in Rome and spreading in Europe, substantial investments in technology and knowledge are behind the development of a range of non-Latin types for the production of material for global circulation. Nowadays, European and American Libraries are home to extensive holdings of early books printed in non-Latin scripts in Europe. These publications are housed alongside significant collections of books printed in numerous regions of the world and in a range of languages and different writing systems, which entered the current institutions following a variety of historical (political, religious, economical, as well as cultural) events.

The forthcoming 2024 CERL Annual Seminar organised by Cristina Dondi (Consortium of European Research Libraries – CERL), Andrea Cappa (Biblioteca nazionale centrale di Roma – BNCR) and Alessandro Bianchi (Cambridge University Library – CUL) will focus on printed books in non-Latin scripts, exploring three main themes:

- Technology – The European production of books printed in non-Latin scripts; the models, the people, and the motivations which enabled the casting of special sets of type to represent multiple writing systems.
- Collections – Notable collections of books printed in various non-Latin scripts currently housed in European and American institutions.
- Cataloguing – Current/traditional cataloguing practices; discoverability of data and information; Cataloguing standards, codes (Marc code, Ethnologue ISO code), and their use.

Francesco Berlinghieri, Geographia, Firenze, Niccolò di Lorenzo della Magna, [1482] (BNCR, 70.1.G.5)

Poster Display and Publication of the Proceedings

You are invited to prepare a printable poster to present a collection of editions in non-Latin scripts and highlight their histories and individual cases. The deadline to express an interest in preparing a poster is 21 June 2024; deadline for delivery of the posters is 13 September 2024. The posters will be displayed during the conference and later on the CERL website, and will be included in the publication of the conference proceedings. Guidelines for the poster are available here.

Learning lessons from the cyber attack on the British Library

In October 2023, the British Library suffered a major cyber attack. Since then British Library has published a report with details of the intrusion, its response, implications for the Library's operations, future infrastructure, risk assessment and lessons learned. The purpose of the report is to ensure a common level of understanding of key factors that may help peer institutions and other organisations learn lessons from the Library's experience. The report is available online.

Not simply putting a book on a shelf: Collection Security Summer School

Programme: https://www.cerl.org/collaboration/security/2024summerschool

The Collection Security Summer School 2024 will be hosted by Vilnius University Library and will take place on 11-13 September 2024. Sessions will take place at the Central Library which is situated near the Presidential Palace and the Scholarly Communication and Information Centre in Saulėtekis, as well as the National Library of Lithuania. During each site visit we hope to visit the Preservation Department to explore the connection between their work and collection security.

The summer school focuses on two further themes. The first is balancing security with access (to old buildings, modern buildings that are open 24/7, and those where building work is in progress). The colleagues of the Academy of Sciences will share their experiences of working at a time of disruption due to building works.

The second theme is balancing customer care and security. We will create new Quick Audit Tool discussion cards based on lessons learned in connection with the thefts of 19th Russian literature and our visits to the Preservation Departments. On Friday there is an optional visit to Trakai castle.

The International Council of Archives' Expert Group against Theft, Trafficking and Tampering (EGATTT) has expressed great interest in the Summer School, and we hope that many colleagues from the archives community will join us in Vilnius. If you wish to attend, you can register by writing to secretariat@cerl.org.

The Book of Books (= BOB) database for the Colon

https://bookofbooks.ku.dk/

Colón's Coat of Arms, depicting the four principal indices to his library, the books of authors (autores), sciences (ciencias), materials (materiales) and epitomes (epitomes).

The project is centred on the *Libros de los epitomes* of Hernando Colon, discovered in the library of the Arnamagnæan Institute, University of Copenhagen, and it is headed by Prof. Matthew Driscoll and Prof. Morten Heiberg, University of Copenhagen; Matilde Malaspina (formerly 15cBOOKTRADE) is one of the post-doctoral researchers. The database, modelled on MEI/Patrimonit, in Spanish, English, and Italian, was delivered by A. Walker (Data Conversion Group) in March 2021 and was subsequently populated.

The database will be launched at the end-of-project conference taking place in Copenhagen 28-30 August 2024, *The Book of Books: The Libro de los Epítomes in context. An international conference on the production, circulation and reception of books in the early modern period*. The topics include 1) Collecting, cataloguing and managing information 2) Writing in libraries 3) Practices of reading, early modern literacy and Libraries 4) Global libraries /universal libraries 5) Creation and dispersion of 16th-century libraries 6) Diplomatic and intellectual networks in the circulation of written cultural heritage.

CERL Internship and Placement Grants

https://www.cerl.org/collaboration/internship

Each year, CERL members are invited to put forward projects plus an invitation for an intern to temporarily join their team. CERL coordinates the selection of the interns, where we are looking to support people new to the profession, whether in librarianship or in academia, and to facilitate international mobility. The guest libraries take the final decision in selecting the successful candidate. This year, we were able to advertise six grants (a mixture of in-person and remote placements). The deadline for applications was 11 April and the successful applicants will be announced shortly.

1. Incunabula at Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge – in person, 2 months
The proposal in hand is for a dedicated cataloguer, with the specialist skills and experience, to review and overhaul the 65 records already in MEI and to create 36 for the remaining incunabula. The College will provide accommodation, free meal (Monday to Friday), and reimburse travelling expenses.

2. Incunabula at the Huntington Library, San Marino California – in person, 1 month
The Huntington is offering a one-month internship to create records of its incunabula in the Material Evidence in Incunabula (MEI) database. The Huntington was able to offer a stipend of $3,500 for the month, with the intern bearing the travel cost from the funding.

3. Aikaterini Laskaridis Foundation, Piraeus, Greece: Work on the project map-inc (Mapping incunabula in Greek libraries, see also elsewhere in the Newsletter) and CERL's Provenance Digital Archive (PDA) – **in person or remote, 1 month**. The Foundation offered free housing for the duration of the internship.

4. Fagel Collection, Library of Trinity College Dublin, Description of provenance marks in the Provenance Digital Archive of CERL – remote, 1 month
A remote internship for one month to interpret provenance marks found in the Fagel Collection from photographs, and to document these in the CERL Provenance Digital Archive (PDA).

5. Incunabula at the University Library of Naples, creating 50-80 records in MEI – in person, 1 month
Recently, all volumes were catalogued in SBN, and digitized. Now the Library would like to share the historical findings of 50 to 80 incunabula in MEI. Preferred month: October 2024.

6. Utrecht University Library: matching incunable holdings with ISTC numbers – in person, 1 month
In preparation for a digitization project, Utrecht UL is looking for an intern to help draw up a list matching their holdings to the relevant ISTC numbers. The matching involves close comparison of metadata as well as book-in-hand examination.

New FIS Grant to work on US incunabula

In September 2023, C. Dondi was awarded a four-year grant by the Italian Ministry of Research to work on incunabula today in the United States. The project *Printing Revolution and American Collections: the migration of cultural heritage at times of political change* (PrintRevUS), will investigate the consequences, intended and unintended, direct and indirect, of historical policies and events on the European book heritage that migrated to the United States.

Once funding reaches Sapienza University of Rome, where the project will be based, hopefully before the end of 2024 (!), a team of specialists, in collaboration with American libraries, will examine the books to reconstruct the history of their migration, in large collections such as Yale, Harvard, Princeton, New York, Chicago, Washington, Baltimore and San Marino in California, and in hundreds of smaller libraries.

Sending your queries to the Data Conversion Group

To optimise the handling of requests at DCG a ticketing system was set up. You can send issues and technical requests to met-support@sub.uni-goettingen.de.
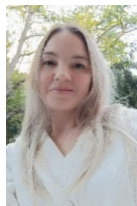
Your queries will be dealt with by Helena Nebel (→) and Elena Liventsova (←). Her interest in research metadata in libraries brought Elena to the Data Conversion Group in August 2015 after completing a BA in Information Management (University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Hannover). Her work involves conversion of metadata and user support for CERL Thesaurus and HPB. Helena Nebel joined the DCG team early in 2023, after completing her BA in Library and Information Management at the Stuttgart Media University. She describes herself as a 'librarian in love with programming, data & databases, proud to make use of my skills to help to preserve cultural heritage and support research.'

HPB Provenance

https://data.cerl.org/hpbprov/_search

HPB Provenance, which was launched in August 2021, is a database that holds provenance-related annotations to items of editions printed after 1501 and retrieved through the Heritage of the Printed Book database. Like MEI, from which it takes the overall structure, HPB Provenance allows the reconstruction of dispersed collections along with facilitating the study of individual copies and networks of owners. Research projects which share their data in HPB Provenance are identified as 'segments' with dedicated titles e.g. MNEMOTECNICA (see sample record below), IVRIDICA etc.
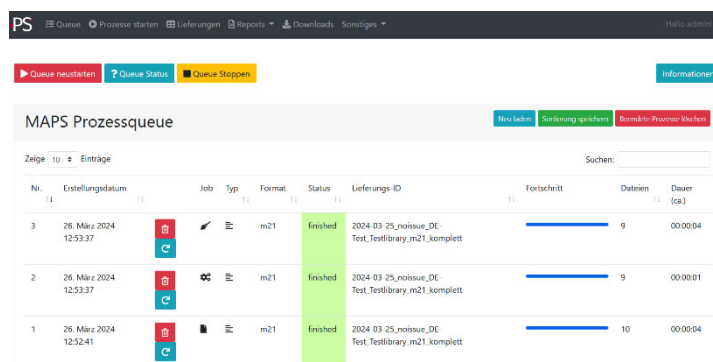
The database is currently used by Alessandra Panzanelli for her project: *IVRIDICA Copies & Owners of Early Modern Law Books* (University of Turin) and was used by Clément Poupard, who created records for books about Mnemotecnica, (successful PhD awarded jointly by the universities of Turin and Paris). More recently, Aurora Longhi (Sapienza University, Rome, Global Humanities course) began creating records about the 16th-century Law editions belonging to the Library of Francesco II Della Rovere, mostly kept in the Biblioteca Alessandrina of Rome (BA thesis). And from March 2024 Debora Di Pietro at the University of Catania (supervised by Prof. Simona Inserra) began to capture provenance evidence relating to the Italian region of Sicily (data segment '_sic').

London, British Library (GB): 1030.h.3.(2)

HPB No.	FR-341725201.SUDOC.168202476
Author	Azevedo, Juan-Velázquez
Title	El fenix de Minerva, y arte de memoria de Don Iuan Velazquez de Azeuedo que enseña sin maestro a aprehender y retener....
Imprint	Con priuilegio en Madrid : Por Iuan Gonçalez, 1626
Collation	[8], 135, [1] ff. in-8.
Note	Vign. de titre et 2 pl. blasons grav. s. bois
	Signatures: [para.]⁸ A-R⁸

full HPB record

Further Bibliographical Description

Normalised Title	Fenix de Minerva
Note	Record created by Clément Poupard
Subject	Mnemonics
Illustrations	64v-65v ; 68r-v : Maps of the architectural loci system
	103r ; 104v : Charts illustrating the organization of data in the process of memorization
Illustrations reused in	The matrices are different, but the diagrams are copied by El Conde de Nolegar Giatamor [Jerónimo Argenti], for his Assombro elucidado de las ideas (Madrid, Herederos de Francisco del Hierro, 1735)

Description of Copy

Copy Id	00000116
Holding Institution	London, British Library (GB)
Shelfmark	1030.h.3.(2)
Also bound with this copy	Filippo Gesualdo: Plutosofia. - Vicenza : Pietro Bertelli, 1600 [IT-ICCU.BVEE003477]
Copy Features	Complete
	No evidence of use
Support material (book)	Paper
Support material (plates)	Paper

Material Aspects of the Copy

Provenance 1753 - 1973

Place	London (Geonames Id: 2643743)
Area	Great Britain
Time period	1753 - 1973
Provenance name	*London, British Museum Library, since 1973 The British Library, 1753-* [Corporate body; Former Owner] (Library, No characterisation/lay)
Provenance Type	Stamp
Binding date	20th cent.
Certainty	The recording of this evidence is considered certain
Source	Book in hand

Provenance 1973 -

Place	London (Geonames Id: 2643743)
Area	Great Britain
Time period	1973 -
Provenance name	*London, British Museum Library, since 1973 The British Library, 1753-* [Corporate body; Present Owner] (Library, No characterisation/lay)
Provenance Type	Seller's mark/note
Method of acquisition	Institutional transfer
Certainty	The recording of this evidence is considered certain
Source	Book in hand

Other Information

Database Segment	MNEMOTECNICA - ASSA PhD Torino
Completeness	The enumeration of provenance evidence is considered complete
Last Edit	2022-07-18 16:33:57

Preparing data for ingestion into the HPB database

Helena Nebel, Andreas Lüschow and other colleagues at the Data Conversion Group (DCG) have developed a new tool for processing file contributions for inclusion in the Heritage of the Printed Book database. They were able to base the tool on MAPS, a data analysis and processing workflow created by the Deutsche Digitale Bibliothek, in the context of their work with Europeana, the Archiv Portal and a portal for newspapers.

DCG migrated the analysis and transformation processes they previously used to the new MAPS tool and have tested it with the first datasets. Data processing can now be done via a graphical user interface where all the processes can be started and data deliveries can be managed (interface in German).

Data analysis and the generation of a report, which will be shared with the file provider, is done fully automatically and a workflow with different modules for data cleansing and enrichment is generated from the result of the analysis. DCG will of course adjust the automatically generated workflows after examining the analysis to identify further improvements to the data quality. The processing of deliveries from HPB file providers will take on average less time (reduced to less than a week, where previously the process would require around 12 working days) which makes it more efficient and much easier to keep the HPB up-to-date.

Dante 1491 Project
https://www.archive-venice.org/project/dante-1491/

On 14 March 2022, Fondazione Cini of Venice (Dr Ilenia Maschietto) launched the illustrated census of Dante 1491 Venice edition (one of the colophon variants is shown below), in collaboration with CERL. Martyna Grzesiak (CERL Grantee 2018/19) collaborated within the project. The results of the project are dedicated to the memory of Lilian Armstrong, famous scholar of Italian illustrated books. A launch will take place shortly. The project is now freely accessible (see URL above) and has been published on the new website of ARCHive, the digitisation centre that Fondazione Cini together with Factum Foundation (Madrid) and EPFL (Lausanne) created in 2018, supported by the Helen Hamlyn Trust.
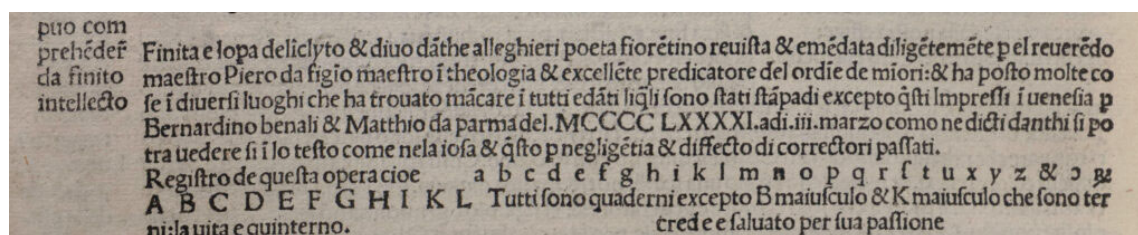
The project was modelled on CERL's Dante 1481 Project. In both projects data and images were uploaded into MEI and PDA (93 out of 113 to date). The first presentation of the work was during the conference on Dante organised by Ca' Foscari University in Venice (June 2022) and in the publication of the proceedings: M. Grzesiak – I. Maschietto, 'Il Progetto "Dante 1491" alla Fondazione Giorgio Cini. Un censimento illustrato degli esemplari superstiti', in *Dante, com'era nel 1472 (e come si lesse da allora). Prime edizioni, incunaboli, post-incunaboli e altro*, a cura di F. Ciabattoni e A. Scarsella, Milano, Biblion Edizioni, 2023.

Elections at the CERL Annual General Meeting, 8 November 2024

www.cerl.org/about/organisation

CERL Chairman

Kristian Jensen
Chairman
2018-2023

Claudia Fabian
Chairman 2023 onwards

At the AGM in Brussels (November 2023), CERL members, Directors and members of the Executive Committee and the Secretariat warmly thanked Kristian Jensen for his gracious and generous leadership as CERL Chairman for the past six years. Colleagues wrote their personal messages of farewell and thanks in an *Album Amicorum*, which Kristian has since read. He sends his heartfelt thanks. Claudia Fabian, due to retire from the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in April 2024, was elected as the new CERL Chairman. In her vision for CERL, which was shared with the members before the elections, Dr Fabian wrote that she aimed to revive the enthusiastic, positive, open approaches of CERL's early years, a time marked by the opening of European borders and collections. 'It is important to identify and encourage young, new, dynamic colleagues for CERL's working groups and committees and to ensure true consortial co-operation at all levels, in order to profit from its mutual benefits. In a context of war and antagonism, this is no longer self evident. But the common European cultural heritage of the past, which CERL cares for today and tomorrow, may now be an important unifying factor even more than in the past, and CERL has the capacity to continue to play an important role in its advocacy'. Members gave her a warm welcome very much look forward to working with her.

CERL Board of Directors – New Directors 2024

It was with regret that the CERL members said their good-byes to Lucinda Jones and Lars Ilshammer, who left their libraries before completing their three-year term as CERL Director and Wolfram Horstmann (SUB Göttingen) and Maria Georgopoulou (Gennadius Library), who had each served six years on the Board of Directors. We are grateful for their unfailing enthusiasm for CERL and their generous, thoughtful contributions to the Board's deliberations about the future course of the organisation. Fortunately, excellent candidates were found to take their places and we are pleased to introduce to you these four new members of the CERL Board of Directors.

From left to right:
- Maria Berggren, Head of Special Collections, Uppsala University Library
- Nijolė Klingaitė-Dasevičienė, Director of Heritage Collections and Research Department, Vilnius University Library
- Xerxes Mazda, Head of Collections and Curation, The British Library, London
- Laura Shanahan, Head of Research Collections, Trinity College Dublin

Executive Committee 2024

Three members left the Executive Committee. Scot McKendrick retired from the British Library, Flavia Bruni (formerly of ICCU) and Stefan Wiederkehr of the Zentralbibliothek Zürich had to focus on other tasks. CERL is very grateful for their invaluable input over the years. We were very fortunate that Beāte Orlova of the National Library in Latvia, Vicky Gerontopoulou (Onassis Foundation) and David Speranzi (BNC Firenze) were willing to join the Executive Committee. The Secretariat would be very happy to hear from colleagues with additional suggestions for new EC members, for example manuscripts or binding experts, and other skills that complement those of the current committee members.

New additions to the CERL Thesaurus

The Women's Print History Project

https://womensprinthistoryproject.com

The Women's Print History Project of Canadian Universities is a comprehensive bibliographical database of women's contributions to print for the long eighteenth century, one of the most lively periods in both women's and print history. Information about books that women were involved in producing, not just as authors, but also as printers, publishers, booksellers, editors, compilers, translators, engravers, illustrators, and composers. The database therefore contains more than women's names and is a great addition to the CERL Thesaurus (CT). About 15,000 imprint names, corporate bodies and printers' names were taken from this source. To search for these records use this URL: https://data.cerl.org/thesaurus/_search?query=external_id:WPHP.

Portraits for CT records

More than 60,000 records in the CT were supplied with images from two sources: German Museum of Books and Writing and Wikimedia. The collection of digitised portraits of printers, editors, book dealers and book binders from the German Museum of Books and Writing is published by the German National Library, as one of many free collections of digital objects.

From Wikimedia we use only those pictures that are published under CC0 or similar licence. Many CT records contain a Wikidata ID and these make it relatively easy to implement the integration of appropriate links to images. In both cases the portraits are transferred on the fly (i.e. DCG does not store the images).

Launching IMPRESSVM

Relying on a standardised method of description, *STCV. Bibliography of the Hand Press Book* (stcv.be) of the non-profit Flanders Heritage Libraries (Vlaamse Erfgoedbibliotheken, or VEB) collects extensive bibliographical data for early modern books printed in the Southern Netherlands in an online and freely accessible database. Although the Southern Netherlands were an important centre for the production of incunabula, the STCV database contained only a small section of incunables. In 2022, STCV received a grant from the Flemish government and the European Regional Development Fund for the subproject *IMPRESSVM. The Cradle of Flemish Printing.* This project catalogued incunabula from the Southern Low Countries in STCV by locating as many preserved copies in Flanders (Belgium) as possible and adding a selection of editions from major collections abroad. In cooperation with an advisory board of scholars, bibliographers and curators they developed an applied model of description based on the STCV method and international standards. A new database IMPRESSVM, launched on 7 May 2024, was developed as an addition to the existing STCV database and includes not only edition-related data (incipit, imprint, authorship, collation, typography, etc.) but also copy-related data (book block dimensions, illumination, handwritten additions, etc.). So far, the project has registered 720 incunables belonging to 471 editions.

Onser vrouwen zoutere ghedeelt in drye rooze[n] cranskens

Integrating CERL in academic curricula

CERL Secretary, Cristina Dondi, has been running for the third year her course on the History of the Book at Sapienza University in Rome, part of the Global Humanities BA Course, in English. Cristina supervises numerous PhD students both in Italy and beyond.

CERL has entered into an agreement with the University of Erlangen: students who need to do a 60-hour practical assignment, can fill this requirement by cataloguing incunabula in MEI. CERL is also involved in the ERAMUS+ programme, and in that context Debora Sturzo from the University of Turin catalogued incunabula from the Bath Record Office in MEI. Some of the items were sold or sent to Wells Cathedral, others went on much convoluted journeys. Debora plans to share her research with us in a CERL blog post. Also under the umbrella of the ERASMUS+ programme, Marina Ruiz Fargas of the University Library in Barcelona will spend a week in June 2024 to catalogue the incunabula of Wadham College (Oxford) in MEI.
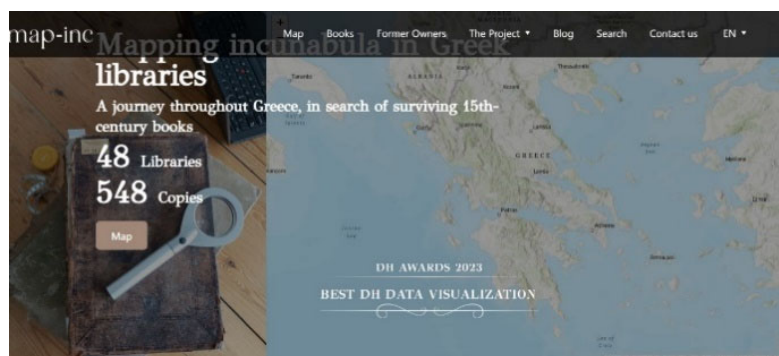
Antonia Delle Fratte, CERL Grantee 2022, won in 2023 a fully-funded doctoral position at the University of Padua/Venice for her project Gustav Friedrich Waagen's contribution to the origin and development of studies on the history of illumination, through the analysis of his works *Works of Art and Artists in Great Britain* (1837) and *Treasures of Art in Great Britain* (1854); supervisors Prof. Paola Molino, Flavia De Rubeis and Prof. C. Dondi; Antonia spent 6 months in Oxford, Bodleian Library, as part of this doctoral scheme, facilitated by CERL.

Mapping Incunabula in Greek Libraries
https://map-inc.gr/public/

Warmest congratulations to the Aikatarini Laskaridis Foundation, who was awarded the Digital Humanities Award in the category of Best DH Data visualization, for their website map-inc.gr. 'The website serves as an invaluable digital resource, tracking the dispersion of 15th-century books preserved in libraries across Greece. It offers a user-friendly and clear way for visualising the results of extensive research into the oldest printed treasures held in Greek libraries. Through this platform, 548 book copies from 48 libraries nationwide are mapped and documented, with a focus on their material evidence, including stamps, annotations, ownership marks, and bindings, in collaboration with the international database Material Evidence in Incunabula. This comprehensive approach transforms each copy into a vivid source of information, revealing insights into historical patterns of book distribution, trade, and pricing. Additionally, it sheds light on the identities of book owners, their reading preferences, as well as the enduring legacy of significant libraries all over Greece'.