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The full text may be found [here](#).

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Books and their owners: provenance information and the European cultural heritage

CERL Seminar 2004

The subject of provenance studies is proving to be very popular at the moment. A number of conferences have been announced recently with the history of ownership of books as a theme, often linked with topics such as the history of reading and literacy. CERL's 2004 Seminar on 'Books and their owners' took place at the National Library of Edinburgh on the day before the Consortium's Annual General Meeting. It proved to be a very successful day attended by about 60 people, both members of CERL and librarians and scholars from Scotland and elsewhere in the United Kingdom.

The Seminar was opened by Dr David Pearson (University of London Research Library Services), a well-known author on the topic of provenance studies, who spoke on 'Provenance and rare book cataloguing: its importance and its challenges'. This was followed by reports on two Scottish projects. Dr James Knowles (Scottish Institute for Northern Renaissance Studies, University of Stirling) introduced a new project which plans to document the books and libraries of Scots of the early-modern period; Dr Anette Hagan and Ms Helen Vincent (Rare Book Collections, National Library of Scotland) gave a presentation on 'Cataloguing the Fort Augustus Collection' showing the complex origins of this ecclesiastical library, part of which started life in a monastic collection in Ratisbon.

After lunch, Dr Marina Venier (Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Rome) spoke on 'The computerised archive of owners in the older publications database of SBN: the experience of the Central National Library of Rome', describing the origins of the library's historic collections in a series of confiscations during the 19th-century struggles for Italy's independence. Dr Bettina Wagner (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek) introduced the online database of the BSB's incunable provenances in a paper entitled 'The world's largest collection of incunables and their provenances'. The Seminar finished with a paper by Dr Marianna Czapnik (Warsaw University Library) on 'Provenance Research as a Method for Reconstruction of Historical Collections' which discussed the many dispersals and destructions which have befallen historical collections in Warsaw over the centuries.

Following the Seminar, the National Library of Scotland invited participants to a reception for the opening of an exhibition called 'The Private Lives of Books'. It is intended to publish the papers of the Seminar (including the catalogue of the exhibition and a contribution from Dr Juergen Weber of the Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek, Weimar) as CERL Papers V. This volume should be ready for distribution at the 2005 Annual Meetings in Rome.

David Shaw, Secretary