

The book triumphant: the book in the second century of print, 1540-1640

Veranstalter: University of St Andrews

Datum, Ort: 09.09.2009–11.09.2009, St Andrews

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The Universal Short Title Catalogue, based at the University of St Andrews, aims to catalogue all books printed in Europe during the sixteenth century. For parts of the European book production, printed short title catalogues will be published as well.¹ Along the way, the project also organises conferences on the history of the book. The second of these was called „The book triumphant: the book in the second century of print, 1540-1640“. The papers may roughly be divided into two groups, one devoted to databases on early books, the other dealing with a number of different aspects of book history.

MALCOLM WALSBY (St Andrews) presented the Universal Short Title Catalogue (USTC) project. It will permit users to search for a particular text, author or edition and to identify not only the location of surviving copies but also of online reproductions. The database is designed as well to permit a range of analytical searches such as genre, place of publication, printer or language. It will, in short, allow the whole corpus of books published in the sixteenth century to be subjected to both microscopic and general analysis. The date of completion is, ambitiously, set to 2015.

Somewhat smaller in scope is that of the Wellcome Trust database of sixteenth-century medical books, dealing „only“ with publications from England, the Netherlands, France and Switzerland. According to GRAEME KEMP (St Andrews), it will list about 3500 editions.

BRENDA HOSINGTON (Coventry) gave a sketch of a complete catalogue of all the translations published in Britain and all the translations into English published on the Continent during the period 1473 to 1640. It will demonstrate how translation moved from being confined to the court and universities, and to

few authors, subjects and languages, to a wider world of cultural values made available by translators, printers and booksellers for an ever-expanding readership.

The project „Controversia et Confessio“ has produced a database of the printed Protestant disputes in the Holy Roman Empire between the Interim of Augsburg (1548) and the Formula of Concord (1577/80). A first volume of edited texts, which has already been published, deals with the theological debates about the Lord's Supper and the Christology advanced in Wittenberg from 1570 to 1574. Using this volume as a basis, JOHANNES HUND (Mainz) looked into the interdependency between the printed writings and the development of a culture of controversy and the significance of the primarily intra-Lutheran conflicts for the confessionalisation of Lutheranism.

AMY NELSON BURNETT (Lincoln) described the planned on-line bibliographic database of sermons (excluding funeral sermons) printed in German-speaking Europe between 1517 and 1650 and examined the approximately 2800 sermons contained in a prototype bibliography covering the years 1601 to 1620. Although the volume of sermon publication generally tended to move together within all three confessions, sermon output peaked at different times for each confession. There are also confessional differences in the type of sermon printed – whether those on the traditional lectionary, for specific occasions, exegetical or thematic – as well as in the proportion of German to Latin sermons, indicating that the sermons of each confession were aimed at a different audience. Several of the authors whose sermons were most frequently printed during these two decades were either foreigners or dead, which indicates the crucial role played by editors, translators and printers in the publication of sermons.

JÜRGEN BEYER (Copenhagen/Tartu) discussed the completeness of the German national bibliographies for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, VD16 and VD17. Bey-

¹ Already available is: Andrew D. M. Pettegree / Malcolm Walsby / Alexander Wilkinson (eds.), *French vernacular books: books published in the French language before 1601*, 2 vols., Leiden 2007. Currently similar catalogues are being prepared for Dutch books and for Latin books published in France.

er argued that VD16 and VD17 at best describe two-thirds of the titles still extant, possibly only half of them. He arrived at these results in two ways: Firstly, by investigating the production of some Lubeck printers. Only 30 to 80 per cent of their books can be found in VD16 and VD17. Most of the additional titles are held by Scandinavian and Baltic libraries. Secondly, Beyer drew attention to imprints preserved in archives. Most of them are official publications spread among the handwritten records. For this reason they have not been catalogued as books. Extrapolating counts for Sleswick-Holstein and Estonia, he arrived at the conclusion that the percentage of official publications in VD17 should not be 4 per cent (as now) but rather 17 per cent. Beyer also discussed the decision to base VD16 and VD17 on the core German language area. This is a rather imprecise definition, since the language border was not constant during the period under consideration. A criterion easier to handle would be the main language of printing (apart from Latin). This would lead to the inclusion of the entire production from towns such as Riga, Tartu and Tallinn. VD16 excludes them, while VD17 only registers the imprints in German. The Latin production from these towns, however, was directed at a German readership.

Turning now to the second half of the conference papers, those on books history beyond databases, we shall begin with URS LEU's (Zurich) study of the book production at Basle and Zurich. During the 1530s and 1540s book production increased, following an increasing demand probably caused by the Reformation and its emphasis on literacy and education. Basle printers were particularly strong in publishing classical authors, church fathers, humanists, reformers, Latin Bibles and medicine. The main focus of the Zurich printers lay on German Bibles and works by leading figures of the Reformed Church in Zurich, especially Heinrich Bullinger. In both places there also appeared a number of masterpieces such as the book on plants by Leonhard Fuchs or that on zoology by Conrad Gessner. This golden age ended in Switzerland already in about 1580; the number of imprints decreased, because the demand and the distribution of books suffered as a result of the Wars of Re-

ligion and of confessionalisation. The increasing demand for vernacular books fragmented the market. Furthermore, the deaths of important printers and entrepreneurs such as Johannes Oporin in 1568, Christoph Froschauer in 1564 and his nephew in 1582 contributed to bringing this blossoming period to a close.

Unlike the other papers of the conference, NEIL HARRIS (Udine) discussed only one book, the edition of a late medieval Italian poem („La bellamano“ by Giusto de Conti), published in Paris at the end of the sixteenth century. Three seemingly different editions exist, dated 1589, 1590 and 1595 on their respective titlepages, all edited by Jacopo Corbinelli. After having compared not only the differently dated editions but also most of the surviving copies, Harris arrived at the conclusion that all copies were printed at the same time in 1595, but some sheets were replaced and the title page partly reset. He suggested that Corbinelli wanted, in the troubled times of the French wars of religion, to pay a tribute to the dead king (who had been his pupil), and for that reason he went to considerable lengths at fooling the censors as well as generations of bibliographers. This paper opened the conference and served as a caveat to some of the half-automated database projects which often do not study much more than the first page of each book.

JUSTYNA KILIAŃCZYK-ZIEBA (Cracow) presented printer's devices used by three sixteenth century Cracow publishers who either contributed to the Reformation or were Protestants themselves. Hieronim Wietor's sympathy for the reform of the Church grew out of his humanistic interests and his admiration for Erasmus of Rotterdam. Consequently, Wietor started to use Erasmus' personal emblem as his device. Maciej Wirzbięta, a Calvinist, marked his books with a device representing a willow-tree. It was a „punning device“ referring to the printer's surname, but it also symbolised Christianity that continues to grow despite oppression. The last device discussed was a sign of the publishing house of the Polish Brethren. It showed the brazen serpent, an Old Testament motif customarily understood as a prototype of the sacrifice of Christ. By using it, the owner of the publishing house, Aleksy Rodecki, probably wanted

to emphasise the importance which the Polish Brethren attached to Christ and the worship which was due to Him. Printers' devices were used not only to identify the products of individual houses, but also reflected the education, beliefs and the programme of publishers.

ALEXANDER MARR (St Andrews) explored donations of scientific books to the Bodleian Library in its formative years. Using evidence from the Benefactors Register, Sir Thomas Bodley's letters and extant books in the Bodleian itself, he assessed the socio-cultural contexts in which gifts were procured and recognised, before presenting three case studies of major donors before 1605. Having associated numerous extant books in the Bodleian with scientific titles given by these donors (as listed in the Benefactors Register), Marr explored issues of provenance, marginalia, binding and content, arguing that a focus on benefactors reveals much new information about the scientific community of late Renaissance England, as well as about book history in the golden age of print.

In 1571 the libraires of Paris bemoaned the state of bookcraft in Paris claiming that „if a Frenchman wants books he must gain them from Italy or Germany or Flanders or other nations which are much inferior“. Was this the case or was this just posturing, aimed at gaining the ratification of an edict beneficial to their business? By investing the output of the Parisian presses in the period 1570 to 1590 and comparing them with the export material available at the Frankfurt Book Fair, PHILIP JOHN (St Andrews) attempted to answer a number of questions: How important was the Frankfurt Book Fair to the printers of Paris? Was Paris a prime contributor to the Fair in either real or relative terms? The data suggests that the Frankfurt Book Fair was not overly important to Paris printers and that Paris' contribution, while fairly generous in real terms, represented a small proportion of the total output of Paris' presses. It would seem, therefore, that Parisian books were not exported in great quantities, at least eastward, and that if Frenchmen were buying books from Italy, Germany or Flanders, they were doing so despite the large amount of French books available.

ZSUZSA BARBARICS-HERMANIK (Graz)

reminded the audience that even during the golden age of print, a new manuscript medium could emerge: handwritten newsletters. The comparative study of collections from Central and South-Eastern Europe showed that handwritten newsletters, originating in Italy, were an important means of the period's communication and cultural transfer. Barbarics-Hermanik corrected former studies which had ignored the fact that the eastern part of Central Europe as well as South-Eastern Europe participated in these exchange networks. Her paper pointed out that the handwritten newsletter emerged as independent media in the early 1540s. The process of their geographical extension and development peaked one hundred years later. The advantage of handwritten newsletters was that they offered a regular overview of political and military developments taking place simultaneously in different regions of Europe and in the rest of the known world.

For several reasons it was a pleasure to participate in this conference: The papers held high quality, the organisation ran smoothly and the mix between database and book papers made it clear that both approaches will remain necessary in the future: databases for helping to locate and access early books, detailed studies down to single book level in order to better understand what to put into the databases. Last but not least, the organisers had had the wisdom to leave enough time for discussions on and off the premises. The conference proceedings will be published in the series „Library of the written word“ (Leyden: Brill).

Conference Overview:

Zsuzsa Barbarics-Hermanik, „The coexistence of manuscript and print: handwritten newsletters as a means of communication in the second century of print, 1540-1640.“

Jürgen Beyer, „How complete are the German national bibliographies for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries? The cases of some Lubeck printers seen in the light of Scandinavian and Baltic library holdings.“

Amy Nelson Burnett, „German sermons in the generation before the Thirty Years' War.“

Neil Harris, „Printing in Italian in Paris: the

mysterious affair of La Bellamano."

Brenda Hosington, „The 'Renaissance Cultural Crossroads' Catalogue: A witness to the importance of translation in early modern Britain."

Johannes Hund, „Pamphlets in the theological debates of the later sixteenth century: The Mainz edition project 'Controversia et Confessio'".

Philip John, „'If a Frenchman wants books he must gain them from Italy or Germany or Flanders or other nations which are much inferior': Paris, its international rivals and the Frankfurt Book Fair, 1570-1590."

Graeme Kemp, „MD15-16: The Wellcome Trust database of sixteenth-century medical books."

Justyna Kiliańczyk-Zięba, „Devices of Protestant printers in sixteenth-century Kraków."

Urs Leu, „Book and reading culture in Basle and Zurich, 1520 to 1600."

Alexander Marr, „'Learned Benefaction': science, civility and book-donations to the Bodleian Library before 1605."

Malcolm Walsby, „The USTC project and catalogue demonstration."

Tagungsbericht *The book triumphant: the book in the second century of print, 1540-1640*. 09.09.2009–11.09.2009, St Andrews, in: H-Soz-Kult 07.11.2009.