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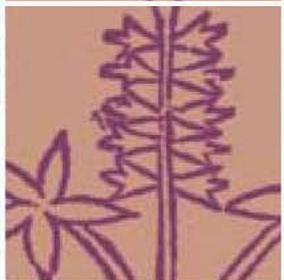
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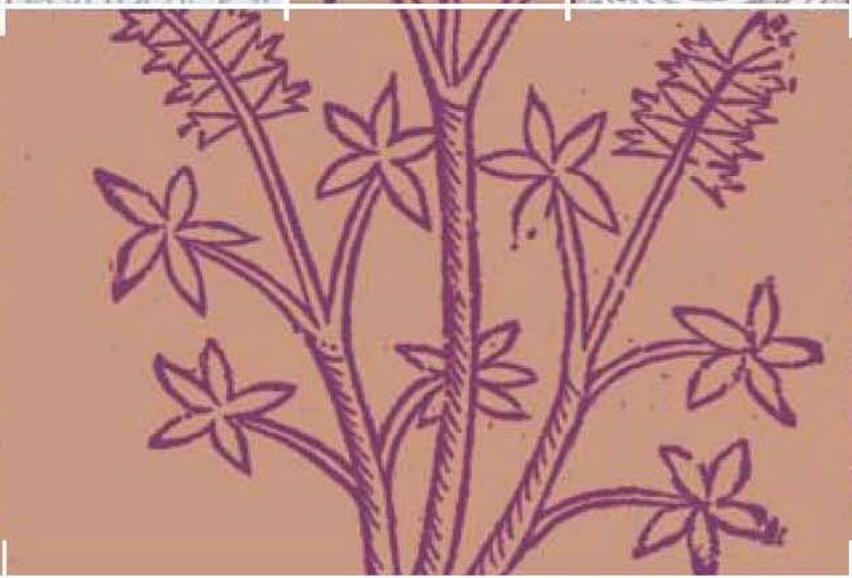
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Incunabula: The Printing Revolution in Europe, 1455-1500



A brief overview

- Sourced from more than 120 libraries in Europe
- The comprehensiveness of early printed works is not available in one place in any other format.
- 6300 titles in the areas of science, literature, religion, philosophy, history, law, medicine and current affairs
- A unique archive of the earliest printing in Europe

A unique full-text microfiche collection

Incunabula: The Printing Revolution in Europe, 1455-1500 preserves the earliest examples of printed books, pamphlets and documents — many of them extremely rare — and transforms research into medieval and Renaissance history. It is of enormous value to scholars of early printing, typography, history, literature, philosophy and all areas of 15th-century studies. The collection assembles, in thematic units, full-text microfiche of incunabula from libraries around the world. Scholars are thus able to study the texts themselves as well as the printing and production techniques of this emerging and revolutionary technology.

The first printed books and their subjects

The earliest printed texts were ecclesiastical works such as Bibles, Psalters and devotional texts, or calendars, grammars and classic works of famous authors such as Cicero and Thomas Aquinas. By the end of the 1460s, a whole range of titles by classical, medieval and contemporary authors and commentators was also being printed on subjects as varied as literature, philosophy, rhetoric, medicine, astrology, law, history and science.

The microform collection - overcoming difficulties of access to original incunabula

The collection is divided into thematic units ranging from a synopsis of printing in a particular region to specialised material revealing medieval theories of the physical world, from early medical literature to the first translations of the classics. A leading scholar in the field was appointed for each theme to oversee the selection of titles and write the introductory essay in the detailed printed guide that accompanies each unit. Each unit contains approximately 100 titles or approximately 320 microfiche and a short index.

Every page is displayed as a full-text facsimile image which enables the user to study the original text, images and typographical layout used by the printer. In many cases it is also possible to see how a particular book was “finished by hand.” The relevant record from the British Library’s “Incunabula Short-Title Catalogue” (ISTC) is filmed before the book and provides information on the author, title, imprint, date, bibliography and any notes. Each theme is accompanied by a separate printed hardbound guide which includes a detailed listing of contents drawn from the ISTC, bibliographical information, and an introductory essay which describes the selection criteria, editorial focus of the unit and an informative outline of the subject.

- General Editor: Dr. A.S.G. Edwards, FSA, Professor of Textual Studies, De Montfort University
- Former General Editor: Dr. Martin Davies, Head of Incunabula at the British Library from 1992-98
- Founding Editor: Dr. Lotte Hellinga, former Deputy Keeper at the British Library



Unit 1: Printing in Mainz to 1480

Introduction and selection: Dr. Lotte Hellinga (Former Deputy Keeper, British Library, London)

This collection brings together all that survives from the origins of European printing and contains more than 130 publications originating in Mainz between 1454 and 1480. Among the most notable items are two states of Gutenberg's 42-line Bible.

Unit 1: 327 fiche, 133 titles

Unit 2: The Classics in Translation

Introduction: Prof. John Monfasani (Professor of History, State University of New York at Albany)

Included in this collection are many very rare editions, some of which survive only on a single copy - Italian, French, German, Spanish, Catalan, Dutch and English versions of the Greek and Latin Classics. Among the translated classics are six editions of the anonymous German translation of Aristotle's *Problemata* and Caesar's *Gallic War* in French, Dutch and Castilian.

Unit 2: 679 fiche, 119 titles

Unit 3: Image of the World: Geography and Cosmography

Introduction: Dr. Denis Cosgrove (formerly Prof. of Human Geography, Royal Holloway and Bedford New College)

Numerous cosmographic and cartographic images combined with written descriptions have been included in this collection which has several editions of Johannes de Sacro Busto's *Sphaera Mundi* and texts such as Johannes Angelus's *Astrolabium* and Albumasar's *Introductorium in astronomiam*.

Unit 3: 549 fiche, 116 titles

Units 4 & 5: Chronicles and Historiography

Introduction: Dr. Bettina Wagner (Inkunabelabteilung, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, München)

These collections present a wide range of authors and topics of historiographical works written between the fourth and fifteenth centuries. Included in the collection are editions of the *Historia ecclesiastica tripartita* written by Cassiodorus in the sixth century and Eutropius's *Breviarium historiae Romanae*.

Unit 4: 718 fiche, 106 titles; Unit 5: 534 fiche, 86 titles

Unit 6: Image of the World: Travellers' Tales

Introduction: Dr. Pamela Neville-Sington

This collection of stories and practical advice of early explorers and sailors provides remarkable insight into the influence these voyagers had on the ideas and imaginations of the time. Included in the collection are all the known versions and translations of Columbus's letter on the discovery of the New World, as well as Bernhard von Breydenbach's pilgrimage to the Holy Land and other journeys.

Unit 6: 328 fiche, 125 titles

Units 7, 8, 9 & 10: Printing in Italy Before 1472

Introduction: Prof. Luigi Balsamo (Professor of Bibliography, Università di Parma)

These four units of the Incunabula collection bring together hundreds of books from the world's major collections of Italian printing which began in 1465 in the monastery of Subiaco, east of Rome. The collection includes early administrative and statutory announcements printed in 1471 and five editions of the Bible, including competing editions of Italian translations.

Unit 7: 376 fiche, 75 titles; Unit 8: 369 fiche, 103 titles; Unit 9: 375 fiche, 48 titles; Unit 10: 345 fiche, 33 titles

Units 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 & 21: Medical Incunabula

Introduction: Mr. Peter Jones (Librarian, King's College, Cambridge)

A comprehensive archive of medical thought and practice during the incunable period. Included are classical and Arabic texts as well as works of medieval authors. The medical units comprise a large range of printed items from single sheet broadsides to massive scholarly tomes, as well as many detailed individual case histories. Among the highlights is the *Fasciculus medicinae*, a compendium of practical medical knowledge and the most beautiful medical book printed in the fifteenth century.

Unit 11: 365 fiche, 56 titles; Unit 12: 365 fiche, 75 titles; Unit 13: 315 fiche, 106 titles; Unit 14: 318 fiche, 66 titles; Unit 15: 296 fiche, 83 titles; Unit 21: 370 fiche, 97 titles



Units 16 & 17: Incunabula Hebraica

Introduction and selection: Dr. Adri Offenberg (former Curator, Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana, Universitaatbibliotheek Amsterdam)

For the first time this collection brings together a comprehensive microfiche collection of the Hebrew Incunabula that appeared in several different countries across Europe, including Italy, Spain and Portugal as well as the Ottoman Empire. Notable items include Jeshua ben Joseph Halevi's *Halikhot olam* (Methodology of the Talmud).

Unit 16: 301 fiche, 68 titles; Unit 17: 344 fiche, 84 titles

Units 18, 19 & 20: Printing in the Baltic Area

Introduction: Dr. Wolfgang Undorf (Rare Books Librarian, Kungliga Biblioteket, Stockholm)

These collections present many rare and beautifully illustrated texts published in Baltic countries during the fifteenth century. Notable items included are rare illustrated, devotional texts such as the *Dialogus Creaturarum* - the first book printed in Stockholm - as well as editions of Ovid and Lactantius.

Unit 18: 324 fiche, 86 titles; Unit 19: 295 fiche, 61 titles; Unit 20: 217 fiche, 78 titles

Units 22 & 23: Rhetoric

Introduction and selection: Prof. James Murphy (Emeritus Professor of Rhetoric, University of California, Davis)

This selection embraces both classical and medieval rhetorical treatises and letter-writing manuals, as well as original works composed by fifteenth-century orators and rhetoricians. Cicero and Quintilian are amply represented, and such moderns as Albrecht von Eyb.

Unit 22: 266 fiche, 75 titles; Unit 23: 269 fiche, 94 titles

Units 24 & 25: Italian Humanism

Introduction and selection: Dr. Martin Davies (Formerly Head of Incunabula, The British Library, London)

This set represents the work of the cultural movement known as humanism as it was printed in the incunable period. It reflects "rediscovery" of classical texts and the wide-ranging contributions of Italians to their interpretation and to creative use of the classics, in commentaries and in original works of prose and poetry. The highlights include the collected works of Politian.

Unit 24: 322 fiche, 79 titles; Unit 25: 375 fiche, 102 titles

Units 26, 27 & 28: Philosophy: Ancient, Medieval and Renaissance

Introduction and selection: Dr. Jill Kraye (Librarian, Warburg Institute, London)

These units include classical texts in Greek and Latin along with their medieval and Renaissance commentaries, and philosophical treatises produced by the most important medieval and Renaissance thinkers, such as Thomas Aquinas and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola. Among the notable items are the Aldine Greek Aristotle and the first complete translation of Plato into Latin.

Unit 26: 349 fiche, 76 titles; Unit 27: 341 fiche, 104 titles; Unit 28: 352 fiche, 95 titles

Units 29, 30 & 40: Grammar

Introduction and selection: Dr. Kristian Jensen (Head of British Collections, The British Library, London)

Latin was the international language of secular and ecclesiastical administration, of diplomacy, of liturgy, and of the schools where students were prepared for positions in these spheres. In grammar books of the fifteenth century we see the reflection of the complex struggle of a society in the process of changing its language in profound ways. Among the grammars included are the first edition of Aldus Manutius's Latin Grammar and the first book printed entirely in Greek, Lascaris's, *Erotemata* (Milan, 1476).

Unit 29: 261 fiche, 128 titles; Unit 30: 259 fiche, 71 titles; Unit 40: 205 fiche, 79 titles

Unit 31, 32, 33 & 73: Sermons

Introduction and selection: Dr. Stephan Borgehammar

These units provide a representative sample of the almost 200 different sermon collections, *plenaria* and Good Friday sermons published before 1501, in Latin and various vernaculars. The scope ranges from simple gospel commentaries to elaborate orations in praise of the Holy Virgin, and from classic works by great thirteenth-century preachers like Jacobus de Voragine to contemporary products such as the best-selling *Postilla Guillermi* (106 editions 1474-1500).

Unit 31: 325 fiche, 40 titles; Unit 32: 294 fiche, 39 titles; Unit 33: 339 fiche, 40 titles; Unit 73: 316 fiche, 44 titles



Units 34, 35, 36, 37, 38 & 39: Law Incunabula

Selection: Dr. Douglas Osler (Academic Fellow, Max-Planck-Institut für Europäische Rechtsgeschichte, Frankfurt)

This collection brings together the primary works of medieval jurisprudence printed before the close of the fifteenth century. It encompasses the chief texts of Roman and canon law together with their commentators, which provided Western Europe with a unified legal order, as well as national codes such as the *Siete Partidas* of Castile. The selection of legal works effectively offers a complete library of the most important medieval jurists, aiming specifically at the first or very early editions, before later editorial interventions and accretions affected the texts.

Unit 34: 387 fiche, 48 titles; Unit 35: 397 fiche, 58 titles; Unit 36: 351 fiche, 55 titles; Unit 37: 443 fiche, 60 titles; Unit 38: 355 fiche, 45 titles; Unit 39: 440 fiche, 53 titles

Units 41, 42, 43 & 44: Science

Introduction: Dr Anke Timmermann, University of Glasgow; Selection: Prof. Robert Goulding, University of Notre Dame

These units embrace the whole range of science as it was understood in the medieval and early Renaissance world with the exception of medicine, which has been covered in six earlier units. It thus includes much astronomy and astrology (not clearly distinguished at the time), calendars, prognostications and ephemerides based on them, advanced mathematics and elementary arithmetics - some for merchants, some for schoolchildren - commentaries on Aristotelian physics and biology, works on perspective, agriculture and the theory of architecture and music, the encyclopedias of classical and medieval scientific learning and cosmography by Pliny, Strabo, Isidore and Bartholomaeus Anglicus. With the Medical units, the Science selection represents the universe of natural philosophy as it was found in print in the age of Columbus.

Unit 45: Printing in Greek

Introduction and selection: Dr. Martin Davies (Formerly Head of Incunabula, The British Library, London)

This selection embraces all the continuous Greek texts printed in the fifteenth century, as well as a representative sample of Latin works that include substantial quotations of Greek, such as Aulus Gellius, Lactantius and Politian's *Miscellanea*. The collection is very largely Italian but works including Greek printed in France, Spain, Holland and Germany are included. Highlights include the Aldine Aristotle, and the commentators on Aristotle from other presses; all the grammars and lexica used by westerners to acquire the Greek language, including Kallierges's celebrated *Etymologicon magnum* of 1499; liturgies and prayer books, produced for the use of the Greek émigrés in communion with Rome; ancient poetry of Homer, Hesiod, Apollonius Rhodius, Callimachus, Theocritus, Musaeus and the Greek Anthology; the first publication of Greek tragic drama, four plays of Euripides; the *Speeches* of Isocrates and the Dialogues of Lucian; the ancient medical works of Dioscorides and Galen; the unique Vatican copy of the regulations for Aldus Manutius's *Neacademia*; and a selection of Latin books incorporating Greek quotations.

Unit 45: 502 fiche, 83 titles

Unit 46 & 47: German Vernacular Literature

Introduction and selection: Prof. John L. Flood (Professor of German and Deputy Director, Institute of Germanic Studies, University of London)

Covering a wide range of subject matter and literary forms, these units offer a broad survey of what was available to the German reading public in the later fifteenth century. The material illustrates how, in the broader literary context of the time, original works created in Germany interlink with works translated or (more often) adapted from foreign sources. The books chosen - many of which feature simple but strikingly effective woodcuts - span some 40 years, from about 1461 to 1500. They were printed predominantly in the south German printing centres Augsburg, Strasbourg and Basle, but other towns such as Nuremberg, Heidelberg and Ulm are also well represented.

Unit 46: 256 fiche, 80 titles; Unit 47: 192 fiche, 51 titles

Units 48, 49 & 93: Printing in England

Introduction and selection: Dr. A.S.G. Edwards (FAS, Professor of Textual Studies, De Montfort University)

William Caxton produced the first book printed in England at Westminster in 1476. This collection acknowledges the Caxton's importance by including most of his major works. These include his first and second editions of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (the second is the first illustrated edition of the poem), *Troilus & Criseyde* and the *House of Fame*.

Unit 48: 308 fiche, 128 titles; Unit 49: 366 fiche, 106 titles, Unit 93: approx 320 fiche, 100 titles



Unit 50 & 51: Liturgy

Selection: Dr. Christine Dondi (Lyell Research Fellow in Bibliography, Lincoln College, Oxford)

Liturgical texts were published under the authority of the various dioceses and monastic orders and defined the official order and forms of divine service. This collection of Incunabula liturgies represents the great variety of uses practiced in the period up to the Council of Trent in 1545 and enables comparisons between local churches and orders and their liturgies. Many of the items selected are very rare and can be seen as the tail-end of a medieval tradition, which, however, may not always have survived in manuscript form.

Unit 50: 313 fiche, 24 titles; Unit 51: 353 fiche, 23 titles

Units 52 & 53: Current Affairs

Selection: Prof. Margaret Meserve (University of Notre Dame)

These units bring together a wide array of printed material about contemporary events in fifteenth-century Europe and its rapidly expanding global horizons. The collection includes vernacular ballads and prose accounts of battles, sieges, treaties, trials, coronations, royal marriages, scandals and murders, among many other significant events in the history of Renaissance Europe. Also included are humanist commentaries on contemporary political issues, topical sermons, and some early examples of state-sponsored propaganda such as calls to crusade, open letters to princes and peoples and official proclamations. The collection offers unrivalled access to hundreds of important primary sources in Renaissance history, many of which, because of their extreme rarity, have remained largely unknown to scholars until now. The collection is especially strong in texts relating to the European struggle against the Turks; the capture of Granada; the rise and fall of Savonarola; the French descent into Italy; the siege of Rhodes; the murder trial of the Jews of Trent; and Columbus's discoveries in America.

Unit 52: 337 fiche, 229 titles; Unit 53: 310 fiche, 258 titles

Units 54 & 55: Iberian Printing

Selection: Dr. Martin Davies (Formerly Head of Incunabula, The British Library, London)

Printing in Iberia brings together titles from across the peninsula from its origins in the late 1470s as the work of mostly German printers to its establishment throughout the region. Latin, and the Iberian vernaculars, Castilian, Catalan and Portuguese, all feature in these units. Works from the main printing cities such as Barcelona, Valencia, Seville, Salamanca and Burgos are included as well as books from the presses of Fadrique de Basilea, Compañeros alemanes, Pedro Posa and Lambert Palmart amongst others. The titles represent the broad range of issues that confronted the Iberian Peninsula towards the end of the fifteenth Century.

Unit 54: 329 fiche, 101 titles; Unit 55: 340 fiche, 113 titles

Units 56, 57, 58, 59, 67, 78, 79 & 83: Bibles and Commentaries

Introduction and selection: Dr. Kristian Jensen (Head of British Collection, The British Library, London)

Bibles and Commentaries were an important part of fifteenth Century printing and this collection brings together a wide range of them. As well as numerous Latin editions, including the 42-line "Gutenberg" Bible of 1454/5 and the 36-Line Bamberg bible, there are Czech, French, German and Italian translations. It includes books printed in Rome, Venice, Paris, Lyons, Louvain, Strasbourg, Basel, Cologne, Nuremberg, Speyer, Bamberg and Mainz and works by commentators such as Nicolaus de Lyra, Johannes Marchesinus, Aurelius Augustinus and Gregorius I, amongst others.

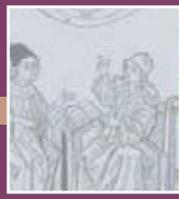
Unit 56: 326 fiche, 25 titles; Unit 57: 329 fiche, 25 titles; Unit 58: 324 fiche, 25 titles; Unit 59: 356 fiche, 19 titles; Unit 78: 380 fiche, 26 titles; Unit 79: 393 fiche, 21 titles; Unit 83: 352 fiche, 19 titles

Units 60, 61 & 62: Academic Theology

Introduction and selection: Dr. Jill Kraye (Librarian, Warburg Institute, London)

This fiche contains writing by the Church Fathers and other medieval theologians. Writers represented include Alan of Lille, St Anselm, Thomas Aquinas, Dionysius the Areopagite, Duns Scotus, Alexander of Hales, Jean Gerson and Peter Lombard. Their works are represented in incunables printed in German printing houses (including ones in Cologne, Nuremberg, Strasbourg and Tübingen), Italy (including ones from Rome, Bologna, Florence, Naples, Padua and Venice) as well as from Basel, Paris, Bruges and Seville.

Unit 60: 333 fiche, 63 titles; Unit 61: 400 fiche, 41 titles; Unit 62: 344 fiche, 387 titles



Units 63, 64 & 74: Romances

Introduction: Dr Mary Flannery (Lecturer, School of English and Drama, Queen Mary, University of London).

Selection: Yu-Chiao Wang

Works included in these fiches are in both verse and prose, in Latin and in a variety of European vernaculars, including French, Italian, German, Spanish and English. Over thirty different sites of printing throughout Europe are represented, including Paris, Poitiers and Troyes in France; Florence, Venice, Naples, Milan and Bologna in Italy; Antwerp, Gouda, Haarlem and Utrecht in the Low Countries; Burgos, Toledo and Seville in Spain; as well as works from Geneva, Bruges and Westminster, among others. Some of the most famous printers of the period are represented including Caxton and Verard.

Unit 63: 329 fiche, 77 titles; Unit 64: 317 fiche, 87 titles; Unit 74: 277 fiche, 69 titles

Units 65, 66 & 70: Printing in French

Selection: Dr. Adrian Armstrong (Professor of Early French Culture, University of Manchester)

These fiches inaugurate a new series which will represent incunabular printing in France. From the 1470, France and particularly Paris, was a major force in the development of printing. French book design, in its typography and decoration quickly set new standards exemplified in the work of printers like Antoine Verard and Jodocus Badus Ascensius in Paris and Guillaume le Roy in Lyon. These standards, as well as the full range of materials produced by French printers will be explored in this new series.

Unit 65: 354 fiche, 113 titles; Unit 66: 310 fiche, 97 titles; Unit 70: 313 fiche, 68 titles

Units 68 & 69: Printing in Dutch

Introduction and Selection: Professor Ad Putter (English Department, University of Bristol)

These fiches make available more than 180 incunables from the Low Countries. They represent the work of numerous printers including Gerard Leeu, Van Homberch, Govaert Bac, Johan Veldener, and Jacob Bellaert. The selection includes the earliest examples of printing in Dutch, famous masterpieces of medieval Dutch poetry and drama, such as *Elckerlyc*, *Karel ende Elegast*, en *Reynaert*. Ranging from chronicles to prognostications, from chivalric romances to mystical works, from legal and medical treatises to saints' lives, and from fable collections to encyclopedias, this selection provides a unique insight into the Low Countries.

Unit 68: 297 fiche, 82 titles; Unit 69: 334 fiche, 99 titles

Units 71, 72, 75 & 89: Printing in Florence

Selection: Dr. Margaret Smith (Department of Typography, Reading University)

Florence was a relatively small site for the production of incunabula, with probably fewer than thirty printers before 1501. These fiches assemble the works of these printers and particularly reflect their shared interest in a range of classical and humanist writings as well as the controversial writings of Girolamo Savanorola.

Unit 71: 315 fiche, 88 titles; Unit 72: 222 fiche, 108 titles; Unit 75: 255 fiche, 112 titles; Unit 89: 278 fiche, 124 titles

Units 76, 77, 80, 82, 85, 86, 87 & 88: Printing in Venice

Selection: Dr. Matthew Rusnak (Professor of Italian, Rutgers University)

Venice was one of the major European centres for the production of incunabula after the first press was established there in 1467 by two German exiles. Before the end of the fifteenth century there had been nearly two hundred printing houses set up there (more than for Paris and Rome combined). These fiches reflect the range of Venetian printers and the extraordinary diversity of works they produced.

Unit 76: 401 fiche, 79 titles; Unit 77: 383 fiche, 87 titles; Unit 80: 390 fiche, 67 titles; Unit 82: 336 fiche, 82 titles; Unit 85: 334 fiche, 57 titles; Unit 86: 326 fiche, 55 titles; Unit 87: 320 fiche, 51 titles; Unit 88: 389 fiche, 54 titles

Units 81 & 84: Printing in Rome

Selection: Stephen Parkin (Curator, Italian Printed Collections, The British Library, London)

Rome was the first large centre of printing in Italy; the papal court, with its bureaucracy and its ceremonies, and the numerous scholars, diplomats and travellers which it attracted, ensured that the city's contribution to the development of printing in fifteenth-century Italy remains significant. All aspects of printing in Rome are represented in this selection, from the large-scale editions of classical and other texts sponsored and prepared by humanist scholars to the more routine production of ceremonial orations, sermons, papal bulls and the like, reflecting the life of the Papacy and of the city which it ruled. Unit 81: 371 fiche, 123 titles; Unit 84: 257 fiche, 110 titles



Units 90, 91 & 92: Printing in Milan

In the second half of the fifteenth century, Milan flourished as a cultural and artistic centre, rivalling the primacy of other Northern Italian towns such as Venice and Mantua. The printing industry, established around 1471, thrived in such a vibrant environment and Milan became the third most important printing centre in Italy after Venice and Rome. Printing ventures, set up by both Italian and foreign printers, prospered under the patronage and financial support of the powerful Sforza rulers and their courtiers, religious institutions, eminent jurists, doctors, and humanists as well as merchants and members of minor secular clergy. This most varied and diverse patronage accounts for the diversity of the early Milanese book production, which includes some of the most elegant books, influential literary texts and classical editions, and innovative scientific and juridical works of the incunabula period alongside encomiastic and liturgical texts of more limited local interest. This richness and diversity is fully represented in the present selection of incunabula, which provides a privileged insight into the social, political, cultural, religious and economic life in late fifteenth-century Milan.

Unit 90: 399 fiche, 104 titles; Unit 91: approx 320 fiche, 100 titles; Unit 92: approx 320 fiche, 100 titles

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Series 1: Manuscripts of the Spanish, Portuguese and French Inquisitions in the British Library, London from the Department of Manuscripts, the British Library, London. The Inquisitions presents a remarkable collection of original manuscripts of the Spanish and other Inquisitions from the 14th to the 18th centuries. Acquired from antiquarian collectors and diplomats over the centuries, the collection features unique originals and early transcripts of both statutes, tracts, trial proceedings, correspondence and original papers of the Council of the General Inquisition in Spain.

State Papers Online, 1509-1714 (Online)



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