

EDITORS' NOTES:

Welcome to the Spring 2026 edition of the Newsletter! We are now well into 2026, and talk of AI and libraries and collections doesn't seem to have slowed down. In this issue, we hear about how computational bibliography is being used to investigate book ownership in 16-17th century England, how AI can come together with special collections to evoke human creativity, and about a project to develop an ethics-based approach to using AI to support metadata generation. We also share important news about updated MARC standards and controlled vocabularies to support equitable and anti-racist approaches to the creation of metadata.

As always, we want to hear from you. Whether you contribute to the Padlet to share your ideas, experiences or knowledge around AI and special collections, or join us in Cambridge for our autumn conference, we're looking forward to continuing our conversation.

If you have anything you'd like to share in the Newsletter, please do get in touch. You might like to write about a project you're working on, a star collection or item you'd like to share, a review, or an update on an exhibition. Our Newsletter is all about sharing stories and insights from our members, so we want to hear more from you!

Enjoy the issue - our summer Newsletter will focus on the theme of 'dangerous books'.



A page from the Plantin Sales Journal from the Collectie Stad Antwerpen, Museum Plantin-Moretus'

CONTENTS

Editors' Notes	1
News from the Committee	2
Feature: Continental European Books in Early Modern England, 1500-1640: A New Approach Using Bibliographic Data Science	7
Report: Evoking Human Creativity with AI Through Special Collections	15
Postcards: DAIMS project	16
Events & Exhibitions	17
Committee Members	22

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NEWS FROM THE COMMITTEE

Your AI experiences

Are you dubious about AI? Intrigued about opportunities, but don't know where to start? Wondering what AI is all about, or perhaps you're well aware of how AI works and are looking for the chance to try some ideas in practice? If you've got something to share around AI, whether it's a question, an idea, a project or some useful reading, share it with the community on this [Padlet](https://padlet.com/universityofleeds/ai-in-rare-books-and-special-collections-ae1rpjqioy94txr05) and connect across the sector.

We aim to keep the Padlet open until the Autumn Newsletter is published, in November.

<https://padlet.com/universityofleeds/ai-in-rare-books-and-special-collections-ae1rpjqioy94txr05>

Share with us on Socials

Did you know that RBSCG are on Instagram and Bluesky @ciliprarebooks? We're looking to share more content from our members with our growing audience online, the more visual the better! If you'd like to share anything with us (to share again), contact Chloe Carson-Ashurst, our Social Media Officer, via email at chloe.carson-ashurst@nationalgallery.org.uk or directly via the handles above.

Call for Reviewers

Would you like to read and review books for the RBSCG Newsletter? If you have found any books related to rare books and special collections for review, or if you are interested in becoming a reviewer, please contact both Katherine and Jane, our newsletter editors, via email at k.a.krick@gmail.com and j.m.gallagher@leeds.ac.uk.

Emotional Wellbeing for Researchers

A recently published toolkit focusses on how researchers of all kinds can support their emotional wellbeing when engaging with archives. Whether they're accessing challenging and upsetting materials or approaching archives to the first time, this toolkit offers practical advice and support for users to feel more confident, informed and supported.

The toolkit was produced by an interdisciplinary project focused on developing healthy engagement, based at the University of Leeds. Access the toolkit via [White Rose Research Online](#).

Cataloguer's Corner

If you have a cataloguing query, conundrum, or mystery that you would like to share or seek advice about, please consider submitting it for Cataloguer's Corner! Email your ideas or entries to Christine Megowan at cmegowan@gmail.com.

NEWS FROM THE COMMITTEE

RBSCG Conference 2026

Readers may have seen recently on mailing lists that the call for papers for the 2026 conference is open. That means we have our theme - **A Sense of Place: Collections and communities in context** - as well as the date and location confirmed. This year our conference will be held in person at **St John's College in Cambridge** from the **9th to the 11th of September**. We will advertise costs and further details soon and registration for the conference will open in May.

This year, the conference will be in person only. We recognise that for some, an online option is preferred and we will continue to run an online conference every other year. Meeting in person does, though, allow for a different sort of experience, and the event will include visits and opportunities for onsite knowledge-sharing. Both the format and theme of the conference respond to feedback provided by previous conference delegates.

In case you didn't see it, or have been holding off submitting a proposal, here's the call for papers. The deadline is close, but has not yet passed:

The notion of collections being more than the sum of the words they contain has been recognised for long enough for it to be something of a cliché. But little collective attention has been paid to the value of place and space in the examination of our libraries and special collections. The conference will explore the importance of place on collections and of collections on places. We will consider such topics as how place influences the development of collections, what happens when collections are separated from their places of origin, and how understanding the significance of place provides our collections with a greater degree of relevance.



The 2026 RBSCG Conference will take place at St John's College, Cambridge.

Image by Jean-Christophe BENOIST, CC BY 3.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons

NEWS FROM THE COMMITTEE

RBSCG Conference 2026

We invite potential speakers to submit a short proposal of no more than 400 words. Possible topics might include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- how place influences collections/collecting
- foundation collections
- dispersed or lost collections
- history of collecting by groups, libraries, communities
- community collections and access
- the politics of place and colonial collecting
- repatriation and restitution
- provenance research
- library architecture
- libraries as destinations
- collecting for institutions that have no 'home' (e.g. protest movements)
- the digital 'place'

Presentations should last 20 minutes. Proposals for longer presentations, panels or interactive sessions will be considered but should be discussed in advance with the RBSCG Conference Coordinator.

We also invite proposals for lightning talks. These last for five minutes and are an opportunity to, for example, focus on a particular collection item or collector.

We want to encourage a range of speakers to take part in the conference. If you have not submitted a proposal before and have questions about format and content, then please get in touch.

Please note that the conference is fully in-person, and talks will be delivered in the conference venue in Cambridge. For those giving a 20 minute (or longer) presentation, you will receive a free place at the conference for the day you are speaking. A night of accommodation can be provided, and travel costs will be paid (up to £150).

Proposals should be sent to Richard Wragg, RBSCG Conference Coordinator, at r.wragg@nhm.ac.uk. The deadline for proposal submissions is **Friday 3 April**.

Whether you submit a proposal to speak, or would rather attend the whole conference as a delegate, we hope you will save the date for what promises to be a thought-provoking and stimulating event.

Cataloguer's Corner: Justice, equity and anti-racism in rare books cataloguing: some updates

Cataloguing is not neutral: the way we choose to describe a book reflects the societal structures in which we're working, and can easily reproduce their biases and prejudices. It also affects the way any reader approaches a work, with - or without - an understanding of the content that it may hold. These considerations apply particularly to rare books cataloguing when we consider that the centuries-old materials we work with may well articulate sentiments or theories of discrimination or outright hate, and that the descriptions of them present in our catalogues are all too often themselves decades old, thus replicating offensive language and attitudes.

Some recent updates to MARC standards, and to controlled vocabularies, and a recent report, all provide means to ameliorate potential harms and to take active steps to prevent inadvertent harm in the future.

Title field 245, subfield \$z

A new subfield - \$z - has been added to the 245 title statement field in the MARC standard. <https://www.loc.gov/marc/bibliographic/bd245.html> This subfield, the title statement context note, is intended for 'providing immediate explanatory or historical context for the title statement, for example, when it uses obsolete or misleading language or when it is from an unclear source.' Its use case is to provide contextualisation of potentially harmful or offensive content that appears in a work's title - for example, racist or ableist insults, or colonialist names for places and peoples - which would otherwise be completely unremarked upon in the bibliographic record, or contextualised much farther down the record where many users would not see any comments made.

Later this year I will be starting a pilot project to add contextualising information to book titles in the Royal College of Physicians Heritage Library that feature now-offensive terms for d/Deaf and disabled people.

RBMS Controlled Vocabularies

In 2024 an ALA RBMS working group completed and reported on its review and revision of genre headings in its controlled vocabularies (RBMS CVRMC) to be used for prejudicial works that 'exhibit hostility toward or bias against a particular group or groups of people based on religion, race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, ability, creed, national origin, etc.', intended both to aid the retrieval of this material in order to study the histories of oppression, and as a means to alert readers to the content of works before they read them. <https://hdl.handle.net/11213/22548>

Cataloguer's Corner: Justice, equity and anti-racism in rare books cataloguing: some updates (cont'd)

The RBSCG and CILIP Metadata & Discovery Group will be co-hosting an open discussion on about how practically to implement the use of these terms later in the year: watch all the usual channels for more information (or email me to be kept directly informed).

Statements of harm

Adding a statement of harmful language or content to a collections homepage and/or catalogue is one way to alert users to the nature of material that they might encounter. The ALA Bibliographic Standards Committee has produced a useful analysis of statements of harm across multiple institutions, with practical advice for anyone wanting to add one, or to review any statements that they already have. <https://hdl.handle.net/11213/23864>.

Continental European Books in Early Modern England, 1500-1640: A New Approach Using Bibliographic Data Science

England was ‘Europe’s most unusual book market’, Andrew Pettegree writes in *The Book in the Renaissance* (2010). In most parts of sixteenth-century Europe, the number of books printed in the vernacular and in Latin was relatively equal. In England, the former outnumbered the latter a staggering eight times. That’s because England was far more dependent on books imported from abroad than almost any other part of Europe. Yet we still know relatively little about what these books were and who had access to them.

In contrast, information about books printed in England has long been readily available through the printed STC (celebrating its centenary this year!) and, for several decades now, online through the English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC) and Early English Books Online (EEBO). Despite its unusual dependence on foreign-language books printed on the Continent, we lack a similar resource for foreign books in early modern England—for obvious reasons in many ways: the circulation of books after they were printed is more difficult to recover and surviving records are incomplete, partial, and raise challenging questions of interpretation. However, this absence has reinforced a misguided tendency to equate early modern English literary and intellectual culture with English-language books published in London.

The aim of my Arts and Humanities Research Council funded project ‘Continental European Books in Early Modern England, 1500-1640: A New Approach Using Bibliographic Data Science’ (CEBEME, 2024-25) was to address this issue by combining data on different aspects of foreign books in early modern England from a variety of sources into a single open-access database that can be queried, analysed, and visualised through a user interface on the web. The five source datasets that the project combines are:

1. Private Libraries in Renaissance England (PLRE), the largest collection of books in private libraries in England, consisting of over 18,000 records representing more than 400 owners. Originally published in print, it can now be accessed online and searched through a user interface on the Folger Library website (<https://plre.folger.edu/>).
2. Provincial Booksellers (PB), comprised of nine surviving lists of booksellers’ stock from regional English towns and cities dated between 1538 and 1629. This dataset is derived from the table in the appendix to Jennifer Winters’ 2012 St Andrews PhD thesis (<https://hdl.handle.net/10023/3449>). Bookseller stocklists give us a better idea of when foreign books became available in England than the probate records on which PLRE is largely based. PB also extends the geographical scope of PLRE, which started life as a project based on Oxford archives, covering booksellers in York, Norwich, Kirkby Lonsdale, Shrewsbury, Exeter, and Ormskirk.

Continental European Books in Early Modern England, 1500-1640

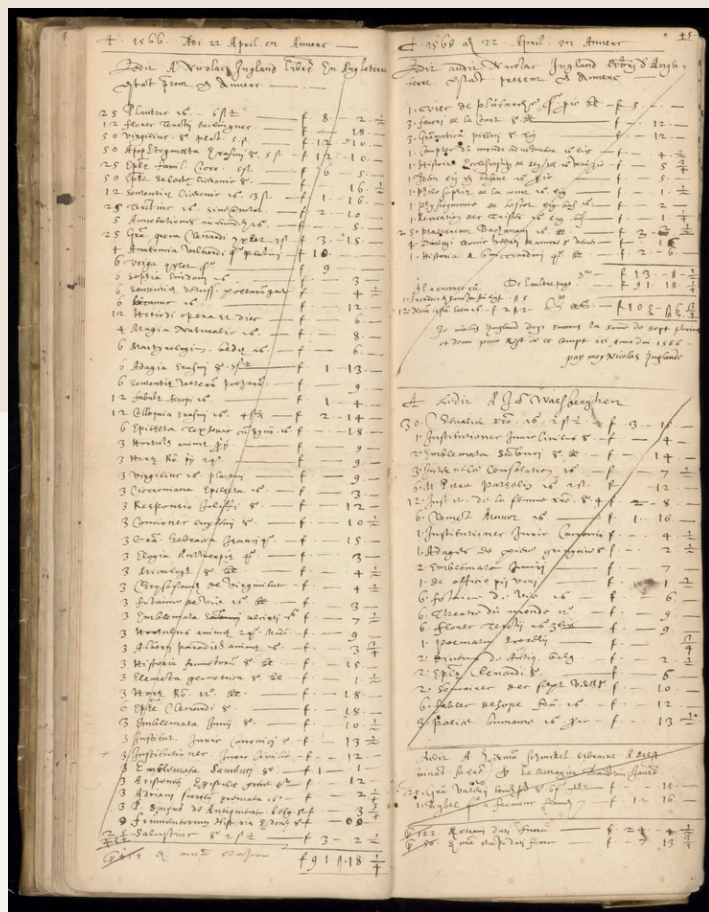


Fig. 1: Plantin Sales Journal

Collectie Stad Antwerpen, Museum Plantin-Moretus'

translations alongside foreign-language books printed abroad, we get a fuller and more rounded picture of which texts were popular when.

Existing databases are generally published on separate, dated online platforms with divergent data models and interfaces. At the heart of the project, therefore, is the idea of harmonising this data so it can be analysed together. If we had stopped there, however, we would have ended up building another silo, just a bit bigger than the ones we combined. That's why we decided to use Linked Open Data (LOD) for CEBEME.

What is LOD? Firstly, LOD is open. That means not just free to access via an online user interface, as almost all library catalogues and book history research websites are, but with an open license (such as CC BY) that allows anybody to access the data directly and download and reuse it. That's really important for researchers like me who want to combine and analyse information from different sources about books as well as the people, places, and so on associated with those books.

LOD is not only open but also linked. Every piece of information is represented by a URI (in practice normally a

3. Plantin Sales (PS (ZvL)), recording sales of Christophe Plantin to English customers (1558–89) from the Journals (day-to-day ledgers) in the archive of the Museum Plantin-Moretus (MPM) in Antwerp (Fig. 1). This dataset was produced by Zanna van Loon, Curator of Rare Books and Manuscripts at the MPM. The Plantin records add a uniquely comprehensive and fine-grained picture of the circulation of the books of a single major Continental printer-publisher in England.

4. Plantin Sales (PS (CEBEME)) records sales of the Officina Plantiniana under the direction of Jan Moretus between 1590 and 1610 in the MPM archive and was created by the CEBEME project team.

5. Renaissance Cultural Crossroads (RCC) is a catalogue of English translations before 1641 (<https://www.dhi.ac.uk/rcc/>). By looking at

Continental European Books in Early Modern England, 1500-1640

URL) to which you can link on the web. But how do you know my URI represents the same thing as yours and therefore you should link to it? There are two elements to this, the structures and the individual pieces of data.

The CEBEME data model is primarily based on the Library Reference Model (LRMoo) of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA). LRMoo defines classes (such as Work) and properties (like `has_language`), so both humans and computers can identify what kinds of entities (like books or people) and relationships (like authorship) the data represents. We complement LRMoo with the cultural heritage model CIDOC-CRM, of which it is an extension, and other ontologies, such as RiC-O (to describe the archival documents on which most of our data is based).

CEBEME also uses authority files produced by the library community, notably the Virtual International Authority File (VIAF) hosted by OCLC. Readers of this newsletter are no doubt familiar with the importance of authority files to ensure consistency. Using VIAF ensures that we use the same URI for a printer, say, as library catalogues and other knowledge bases. What is exciting about authority files in a LOD environment is the ability to draw on these links to add more information about entities. Think, for example, of the date and place of birth and gender of an author or the geographical coordinates of places and the administrative units to which they historically belonged (like the Holy Roman Empire).

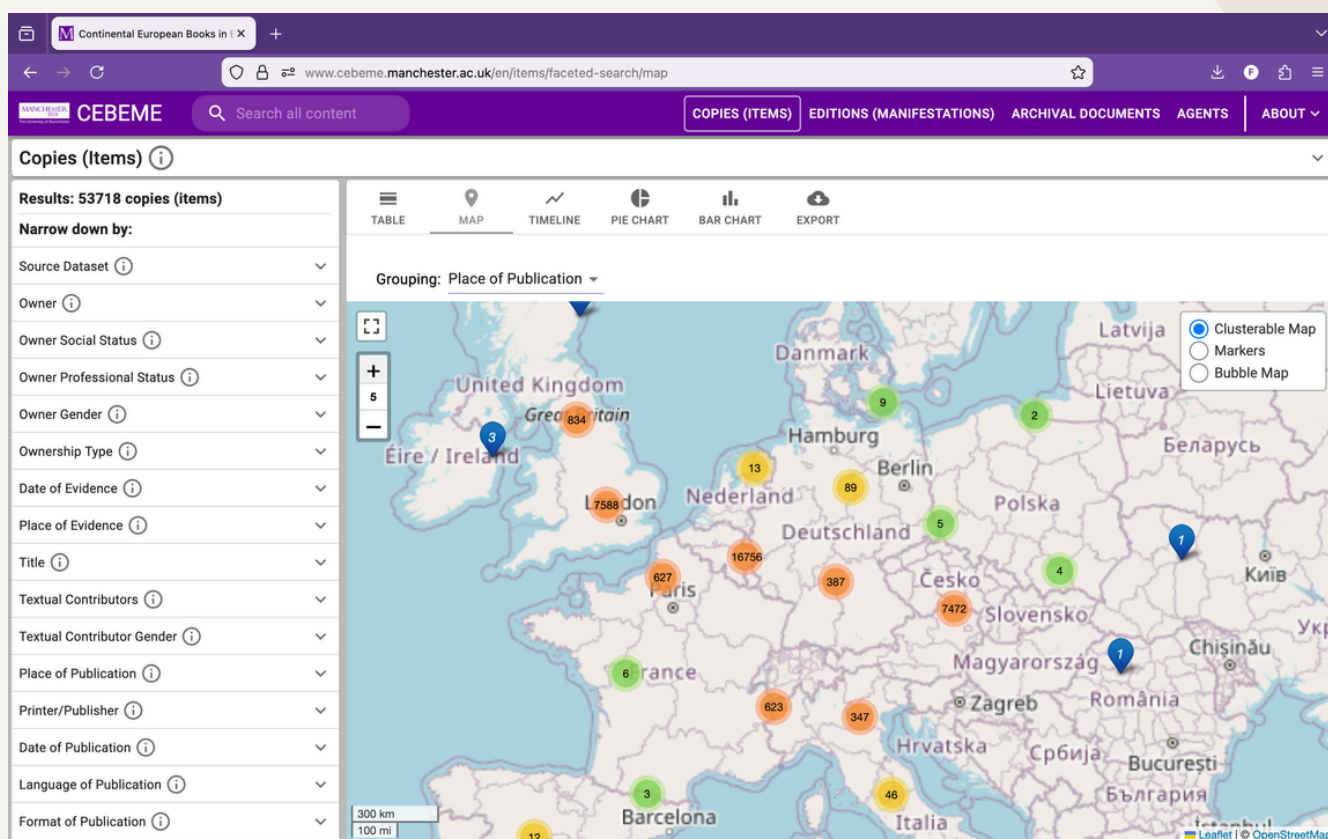


Fig. 2: The CEBEME website is based on the SAMPO-UI framework.

Continental European Books in Early Modern England, 1500-1640

Web links work in both directions, so other data repositories can also draw on information in our database. In theory, it would be straightforward for a library catalogue to display early modern English owners, sellers, or buyers of copies of a book in the collections by linking to CEBEME. In practice, this would require the library catalogue to adopt LOD and an interface able to make these connections. It also depends on the quality, reliability, and use of the underlying information architecture, including not only VIAF but also bibliographic identifiers such as ESTC, VDI6, and CNCE numbers. We found that while the potential benefits of LOD are substantial, there are also various limitations in the quality, reliability, and adoption of these resources.

Because LOD uses a standard data format (RDF triples), there are powerful open source user interfaces that can be adapted for use. The CEBEME website is based on the SAMPO-UI framework (Fig. 2). You'll notice straightaway that the web interface looks very different from a traditional online library catalogue, even if the left-hand sidebar for faceting is quite similar. The focus in SAMPO-UI is not on finding individual items (though there is a search box at the top of the screen) but on visualising and analysing data. So, you not only have a table view but also maps, timelines, pie charts, and bar charts. You can facet all of these, and also change what is displayed in a visualisation, for example the place of publication or the place of ownership (technically the place where archival evidence was produced) on a map.

So what did we find? Although CEBEME officially finished at the end of 2025, we are still in the process of analysing the results. So look out for our publications as they come out! But let me offer you a sneak peek. If you look at the database figures overall, for instance, it appears that men mostly read Latin books printed on the Continent and women English books published in London. That's hardly surprising, and the effect is exaggerated by the dominance of Oxford records in the PLRE data. But if we compare men and women who belonged to the nobility, the pattern is much more nuanced (Fig. 3). Men still owned more Latin books and women more English ones, but noblewomen also had many books in French and Italian published abroad. This makes them quite similar to noblemen, who owned plenty of books in English, nearly as many in French, and good numbers in Italian and Spanish too. It's worth looking beyond the headline figures, which can be deceptive because of the inevitable gaps and biases in the surviving evidence.

My second example relates to books printed by the Plantin press in early modern England. If we look at surviving copies in the PLRE database, we may get the impression that they were dominated by scholarly tomes of theology and history, many in quarto or folio (Fig. 4). The data from the stocklists of provincial booksellers valuably highlights the significance of schoolbooks and classical editions in smaller formats, which tend to survive less well and are less likely to be recorded in inventories. If we look at the sales records of the Plantin press, however, we not only see a much broader range of subjects, many in the 16mo or 24mo formats almost completely absent from PLRE and PB. We also notice the prominence of books on the subjects of language,

Continental European Books in Early Modern England, 1500-1640

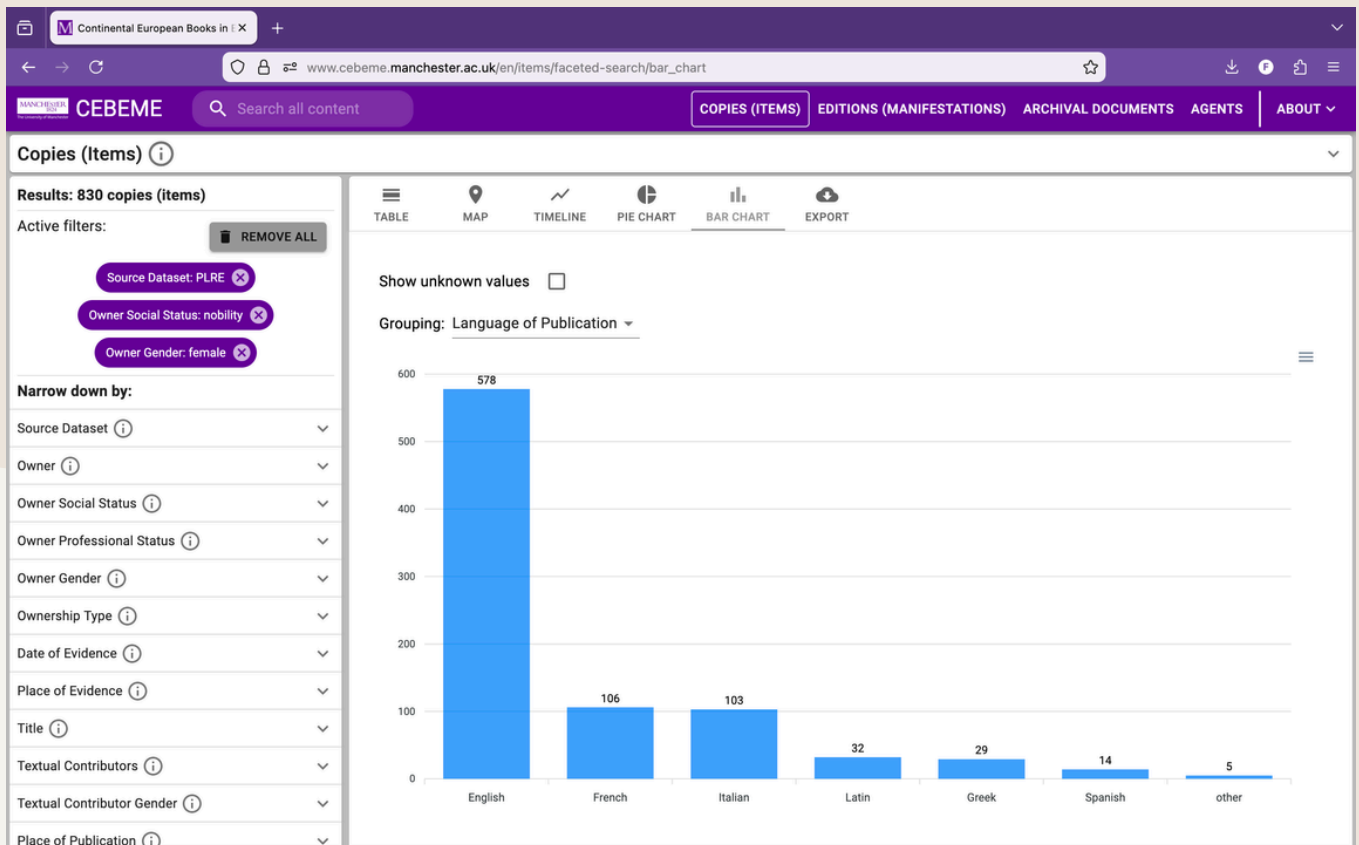


Fig. 3a: noblewomen's books grouped by language

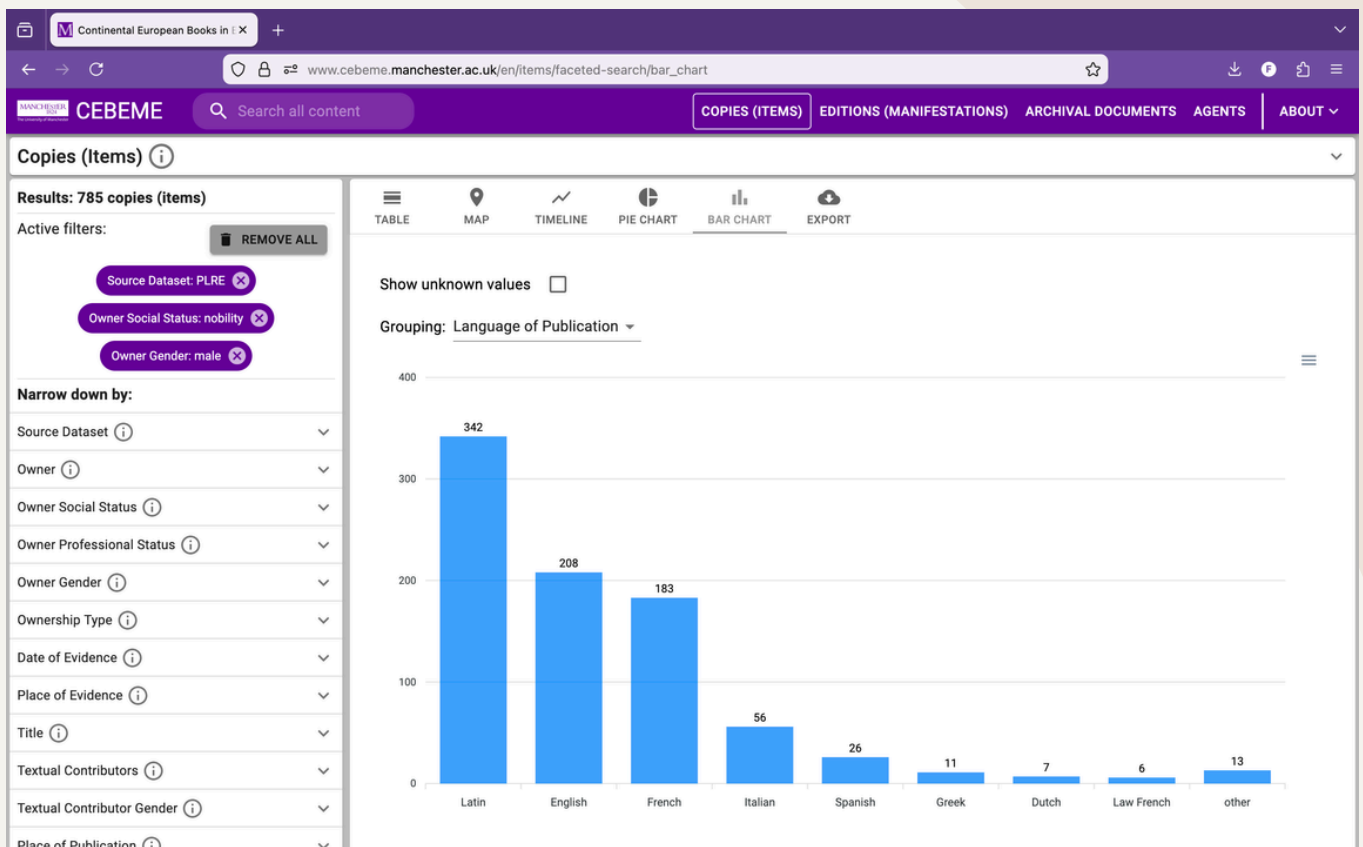


Fig. 3b: noblemen's books grouped by language

Continental European Books in Early Modern England, 1500-1640

literature, and science that was much less noticeable in the other datasets. Often, working across the different types of sources allows us to get different, complementary perspectives on an issue.

I could give many more examples, but I would much rather that you explored our website and database yourself and made your own discoveries! The website is now live at <https://www.cebeme.manchester.ac.uk/>. You can also query the database directly via the SPARQL endpoint (<https://jena.cebeme.manchester.ac.uk/CEBEME/sparql>) if you know SPARQL, or download the CEBEME project data from the University of Manchester research repository (<https://doi.org/10.48420/31149868>). Here, you will also find the documentation and data model diagrams.

One of the best things about the project for me personally has been the opportunity to work with a team of amazing people. I want to take this opportunity to thank the postdoctoral researcher, Dr Anna-Lujz Gilbert, Pete Morris and Nilani Ganeshwaran from the Library AI and Ideas Adoption team, and Aman Goel, Annie Zheng, and Doug Lowe from Research IT at the University of Manchester. We also held two workshops with Library and Information Science professionals from across the UK last year, and I am grateful to everybody who contributed to the discussions.

Of the project members, Anna had primary responsibility for cleaning the data from the source datasets and reconciling authors, places, and so on with authority files, for which we used OpenRefine. Considerable human oversight and subject knowledge was required for these tasks, for example to work out to which generation of a Continental European publishing dynasty a printer belonged. Anna also designed the harmonizing data model and created the Python scripts to transform the source data into RDF triples.

Aman set up the technical infrastructure underpinning the project, for which we used Docker and Apache Jena Fuseki, while Annie created the website. Research IT had limited prior experience with Linked Open Data, but Annie proved a whizz at writing SPARQL queries in no time (in contrast to my halting steps!). Pete oversaw the project on behalf of the library digital team, which is also responsible for maintaining the website. It was challenging at times to work in partnership with two teams from different parts of the university, each with their own ways of working, but I think we all learned new systems and approaches and the end result was great.

So what's next? As I've been mulling over this question, I have found my mind wandering back to the pilot with which the project started. CEBEME ended up being based mostly on archival sources rather than surviving copies of books because that data was available at the time in a form we were able to use. In the pilot project for CEBEME, we also tried to make use of the increasingly full provenance information in library catalogues, but we

Continental European Books in Early Modern England, 1500-1640

identified a number of barriers to do with access, format, and uniformity. It is my hope that in the future we will be able to find ways to take full advantage of the fantastic information on former owners recorded by cataloguers, link it with academic research data, and produce resources that reflect a genuine partnership between both groups.

During the project, I also started a Computational Bibliography Research Group under the umbrella of the John Rylands Research Institute at the University of Manchester. This provides a forum for library and academic staff to work together to test and realise the potential of data-driven approaches to books, increasingly including AI. All our seminars are hybrid or online, and please drop me (fred.schurink@manchester.ac.uk) a line if you would like me to add you to our mailing list or would be interested to present on your work. Do get in touch too if you have any questions, comments, or suggestions about CEBEME—I'd love to hear from you!

SPECIAL REPORT

Evoking Human Creativity with AI Through Special Collections

What happens when 19th century journals, street literature, bibles and scrap books are reinterpreted through an interactive dialogue with AI? Similar questions sit at the heart of the undergraduate course “[AI for the Arts and Humanities](#)” at the [University of Glasgow](#) – a course that has been running since 2022. Proposed and delivered by [Dr Yunhyong Kim](#) (Senior Lecturer at the School of Humanities), the course sits at the intersection of artificial intelligence technologies and cultural heritage, focusing on how AI reshapes creative production, cultural interpretation, and scholarly work illuminating archival materials in unexpected ways.

The ethos of the course is simple: combine computational experimentation with humanistic inquiry for stimulating creative collaboration and critical reflection. Students are introduced to the fundamentals of AI, but the emphasis is less on mastering algorithms than on uncovering how these technologies might reshape our engagement with cultural heritage. Manuscripts, rare books and ephemera from collections become talking points for experimentation and investigation, encouraging students to ask how machine learning, text analysis and generative media might offer new ways to understand historical materials.

The students on the course are expected to work closely with cultural collections, for example, those at the [University of Glasgow Archives and Special Collections](#) and the [National Library of Scotland](#). Students are free to select an object from a pool showcased by the archive staff, to develop a project using AI to “introduce a new perspective” regarding the object, and/or to “engage your target audience with your chosen object”. The creativity archives and special collections evoke are demonstrated in the diverse range of emerging projects - see [this ongoing list](#), [project showcase](#) and [project review blog](#) - further reflected in the students’ own words, stating how they are “inspired to work within the archive sector” especially after “seeing all the incredible items” held in the collections.

For me, the real pivotal role of special collections in the strengthening AI landscape is poignantly demonstrated when students unknowingly and repeatedly adopt archival concepts in their creative practices to bring the objects to life. These echo already familiar archival practices in digitisation, transcription, description, translation and interpretation. From automated text recognition to creative remix of the old and the new, these concepts are adopted in Sara Buccheeri’s [reimagined “Disability Through the Lens of the Raised Type New Testament”](#), Lina Pfeiffer’s [spatially resituated “Andrew McGeorge’s Interactive Travel Diary”](#), Lachlan Doig Henderson’s [anachronistic selfies in “Authentic account of the important battle of the Nile”](#) and more. Concepts of “digital transformation”, “metadata generation”, “translated forms of communicative content” transport AI and special collections to an “undiscovered country”(1). Perhaps “someone in some future time will think of us” (2).

(1) William Shakespeare's play *Hamlet* (Act 3, Scene 1).

(2) Sappho, *The Art of Loving Women*.

DAIMS (Developing AI Metadata Standards) for Research Libraries Cultural Collections

Like many University Libraries, at Leeds we have been thinking a lot about what AI means for our students, staff, and the people who access our Cultural Collections and Galleries. We're now undertaking a short project which aims to provide some standards and guidelines for ethical use of AI to create metadata for collections.

The Developing AI Metadata Standards project (DAIMS) will enable us to experiment with different methods of creating, checking, and tracking metadata using AI tools, led by a Research Fellow and a Research Software Engineer, over 5 months until July 2026. Leeds' Cultural Collections include a coin collection, art collection, rare books, early photographs, business records, and archives, all of which are being considered as starting points for these experiments. Crucially, the project doesn't just consider how metadata might be created using AI tools but puts equal emphasis on ethical approaches.

AI tools are now included in many Library software packages, including Alma's metadata editor, JISC's ITHAKA services, and the plethora of 'AI supported' research tools available from commercial electronic resources providers. As we know, alongside risks of inaccuracy and bias, such tools are often 'black boxes' with little opportunity to interrogate the underlying algorithms or training models. Metadata is relied upon to be an accurate reflection of collections and may itself form the basis of future datasets. The risks of erroneous data generated through AI presents a significant challenge to the trust in collections information.

As part of the project, we will learn from others across the sector who have also been investigating how AI can support metadata creation. Critical engagement and a shared approach is crucial to the success of any AI tools we create. Our project outputs will include an openly available framework for ethical use of AI in cultural heritage settings, underpinned by the importance of transparency, accountability, and research equity.

Harnessing AI tools to support cataloguing of collections offers a range of opportunities. These tools could support us in making large, previously uncatalogued collections available, and in tracing links between related collections held in different repositories. Such tools can support our professional practice, and should ensure responsible, ethical, and effective use of technology.

The DAIMS project is a partnership between the University of Leeds' Libraries and the [Digital Creativity and Cultures Hub](#), drawing together specialists across libraries, archives, digital development, and research. Through this shared expertise and experience, we aim for this project to support sector-wide developments and explorations of the opportunities of AI for metadata, while ensuring a standards-based and ethically-based approach.

EVENTS & EXHIBITIONS

London

Primate of All England

Lambeth Palace Library invites you to two talks free talks connected to its current exhibition, *Primate of All England*. The talks are free, but tickets must be booked through Eventbrite.

Primacy: Archbishops and Authority from Late Roman Africa to Medieval England

Lambeth Palace Library: April 9 at 17:30 – 19:00

Why is the archbishop of Canterbury called the ‘primate of all England’? While the title comes from the position’s rank as the first (primas) bishop of the English church, there is in fact a long and intriguing history behind the notion of the primate bishop. Dr Edward Roberts (University of Kent) traces the medieval origins of this concept, from late Roman North Africa, to the Frankish empire of Charlemagne and the Carolingian dynasty in the ninth century, and finally to England in the time of the Norman Conquest, when a dispute over the matter erupted between the archbishops of Canterbury and York. Primacy was a controversial idea, and its history is bound up with some of the most notorious forgeries of the Middle Ages. This talk uncovers what it signified to be a primate and why the title repeatedly generated conflict in the medieval church.

All are welcome, but those wishing to attend should book a free ticket via Eventbrite or email archives@churchofengland.org no later than Wednesday 8 April 2026

[Dr Edward Roberts \(University of Kent\): Primacy: Archbishops and Authority from Late Roman Africa to Medieval England – Lambeth Palace Library](#)

A Seat in Canterbury: enthronements of archbishops through the ages

Lambeth Palace Library: April 16 at 17:30 – 19:00

In this talk, Cressida Williams, Archives and Library Manager at Canterbury Cathedral, will give an account of enthronements or installations of the Archbishop of Canterbury from medieval to modern times. The talk will be illustrated with images from the historic collections of the Cathedral, and from other collections. She will also give an account of the archbishops’ palaces in Canterbury.

All are welcome, but those wishing to attend should book a free ticket via Eventbrite or email archives@churchofengland.org no later than Wednesday 15 April.

[A Seat in Canterbury: enthronements of archbishops through the ages – Lambeth Palace Library](#)

EVENTS & EXHIBITIONS

London

The English Print Revolution: Caxton and Beyond

You are warmly invited to visit Senate House Library's free new exhibition to commemorate the 550th anniversary of printing in England: The English Print Revolution: Caxton and Beyond (26 Feb. – 1 July 2026). Exhibits extend from high chivalry and music to gruesome murder and include books printed by William Caxton.

<https://www.london.ac.uk/about/services/senate-house-library/exhibitions/english-print-revolution-caxton-beyond>.

The Library is offering guided tours. If you would like to bring a specific group for a tour, contact karen.attar@london.ac.uk.

Whether you come alone or with others, we look forward to seeing you.

Windsor

Elemental

For millennia the four traditional elements of Earth, Water, Air and Fire have been central to the human experience in cultures around the world. Before the advent of modern science, these four elements were the fundamental and interconnected components of the physical universe, suffusing myth, religion, folklore, language, literature and art.

Modern science has replaced the classical elements with the chemical elements of the periodic table. Our increasingly urban, screen-mediated lives can leave us feeling orphaned and apart from the natural world, and climate change and environmental concerns dominate the headlines.

'Elemental' presents books, manuscripts, archives, objects and more from Eton College Library and the College Collections as an invitation to explore our relationship with the four elements from ancient times to today. Exhibits range from Aristotle's physics to the pioneering Eton chemist Robert Boyle, from a 13th-century illuminated Apocalypse to contemporary studio pottery, from Shakespeare and Shelley to fossils, shipwrecks, the London Underground and pizza.

Exhibition Details: URL: <https://collections.etoncollege.com/whats-on/exhibitions/elemental/>

Verey Gallery, Eton College, Windsor SL4 6DW

6 November 2025 – 14 June 2026

Open Sundays 1.30pm to 4pm, or weekdays by appointment (etoncollections@etoncollege.org.uk, 01753 370590)

Free entry, groups welcome by arrangement

EVENTS & EXHIBITIONS

Leeds

Who am I to you?

Until 3 October 2026.

Celebrate ten years of the Treasures of the Brotherton with a bold reimagining of our collection of portrait busts.

Since opening in 2016, Treasures of the Brotherton has introduced over 100,000 visitors to the extraordinary Cultural Collections cared for by the University of Leeds. It is a place to share our curiosity about the world. We've sought to invite conversation, spark inspiration, and explored some of the most important questions of our time. Now in 2026 we ask: Who am I to you?

Who am I to you? encourages you to see familiar faces in a new light. Explore identity, representation and public memory through sculpture, rare books and 3D technologies. Encounter life casts, coins and medals that challenge traditional ideas of portraiture. Discover how art and science shape our understanding of people, power and cultural heritage.

The exhibition invites reflection on what these objects can tell us about our shared past and present. It also explores the silences and absences that shape who is remembered, and who is forgotten.

The Galleries are open Tuesday–Saturday: 10am to 5pm in the Parkinson Building, University of Leeds.
Parkinson Building, 162A Woodhouse Ln, Woodhouse, Leeds LS2 9HB

<https://library.leeds.ac.uk/events/event/997/who-am-i-to-you>



Image courtesy of University of Leeds Libraries and Galleries.

EVENTS & EXHIBITIONS

Manchester

Cottonopolis: The Origins of Global Manchester

Until 9 May 2026.

Explore Manchester's cotton industry and global connections.

Cottonopolis explores how 18th century Manchester was transformed into a manufacturing powerhouse and the centre of Britain's booming cotton industry. Manchester became known as Cottonopolis.

The exhibition explores how the city's explosive industrial growth depended on links to India, Africa and America that inspired, supplied and provided markets for its machine-made cotton goods. Read letters, factory plans and ledgers that were working documents in Manchester cotton mills. See Indian fabrics that were admired by the British cotton industry and learn how these fabrics drove innovation. Examine a rediscovered cotton sample book that traces a world of exchanges that connected Manchester to markets in Africa and the Caribbean.

The exhibition is curated by Professor Edmond Smith as part of his research for his new book *Ruthless: A New History of Britain's Rise to Wealth and Power, 1600-1800*.

The John Rylands Library is open Wednesday–Saturday: 10am to 5pm.

John Rylands Research Institute and Library, 150 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 3EH.

www.library.manchester.ac.uk/rylands/visit/events/cottonopolis/



Image courtesy of John Rylands Research Institute and Library, University of Manchester.



CILIP RBSCG

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