



Richard Kirwan and Sophie Mullins, eds. *Specialist Markets in the Early Modern Book World*

Richard Kirwan and Sophie Mullins, eds. *Specialist Markets in the Early Modern Book World*. (Library of the Written Word: Vol. 40; The Handpress World: Vol. 31.) Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015. xix, 414 p., ill. ISBN 9789004288102. €145.00 / US \$188.00 (hardcover).

When we think of printers in early modern Europe, we assume they all printed just about anything. This informative volume of essays for the specialist academic audience sheds light on those printers who focused on smaller, specialized markets throughout Europe. The authors presented their papers at the 2012 conference “Specialist Markets in the Early Modern Book World” held at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. Some of the chapters contained therein are parts of larger projects (theses, dissertations, and monographs). The underlying themes include: the economics of printing for smaller markets; patronage and readers; the distribution of works published in one country for external markets (as was the case for Spanish-language materials, and earlier, English-language books, printed in the Netherlands); distribution networks and new readers; and printers who used non-Roman alphabets, as well as specialized typefaces and symbols.

These nineteen case studies draw on printed items of permanent and ephemeral nature found in repositories throughout Europe. Some studies focus on compiling descriptive, analytic bibliographies by verifying information about materials that are scattered and poorly identified in public and private collections throughout Europe, and on examining the printing of illustrations, be they woodcuts, engravings, or etchings. Several articles examine the printing of music (of both lyrics and scores). Newspapers, that elusive ephemeral resource, are the subject of several essays, as are books in foreign languages, including Latin, Greek, Russian, Hebrew, and Arabic. All the articles are in English, which means that the collection will appeal to a broad audience within book history.

The introductory essay sets the stage for this collection of articles derived from the conference, which is divided into four parts: high-risk speculation, demand and supply, print on demand, and not for profit. Kirwan’s introduction pulls together current thinking and provides some contextual background. The numerous illustrations of early modern woodcuts and engravings are reproduced in black and white, which is reasonable given the medium. The contemporary maps and graphs are legible. All the illustrative materials are identified after the table of contents and captioned within the text. There are no color illustrations. Footnotes for each article provide resources for future investigation of the topics by readers. The essays expose new fields for scholarship including new uses of the digital humanities



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(including digitized searchable indices and texts). Many articles discuss the role of the printer in selecting materials of publication, as well as a firm's financial risks incurred while filling an ever-growing demand for printed materials in scientific and philosophical inquiry, music, and most especially, news about events across neighborhoods and continents. Taken as a whole, *Specialist Markets* broadens the study of book markets throughout the western world.

This collection is not for a general audience or even undergraduate students but for scholars and graduate students interested in the specific topic of book printing history in early modern Europe. *Specialist Markets* could be used in a seminar on the history of the book or in a course where various research techniques are explored.

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