



The Arcadian Library: Bindings and Provenance (Studies in the Arcadian Library)

By Giles Mandelbrote

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The Arcadian Library, based in London, is one of the finest collections of books reflecting European interest in the Arab and Islamic worlds. Among its c.10,000 volumes are many copies with important provenances and fine bindings. In this companion volume to no. 8 in the series, six distinguished authorities on the history of book-collecting and the ownership and use of books, and the history of bookbinding, deal with significant aspects of the Library's holdings from these varied perspectives.

The two opening essays, by Alastair Hamilton and Giles Mandelbrote, survey, respectively, notable European and British provenances, including royal, princely, aristocratic and learned owners, celebrated later collectors, and some remarkable annotated copies and copies associated with their authors.

P.J.M. Marks describes and analyses a wide range of European decorative bindings, with particular emphasis on early German bindings, French work from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, and the production of nineteenth-century England. Anthony Hobson examines three magnificent sixteenth-century bindings à la fanfare, identifying them as the work of an exceptionally talented binder in the milieu of Gommar Estienne in Paris.

John-Paul Ghobrial studies the products of the famous Melkite monastery at Shuwayr in Lebanon, and reveals the mix of European and indigenous influences that moulded the style of the local binders. Finally, Nicholas Pickwoad examines a range of commercial binding structures and materials, deploying close physical inspection and forging a precise terminology to reveal careful craftsmanship and technical innovation.

The scholarly essays in this volume are complemented by a very large number of specially commissioned photographs, making available a wealth of comparative evidence and new examples of particular bindings, details of decoration, inscriptions and marks of ownership.

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Editorial Review

Review

"After reading this book one feels that the Arcadian Library has opened itself up to the historian of the book and one longs to book a flight to London right away and visit this marvelous collection. The authors have succeeded in raising an appetite for further investigation into the collection -- and this must have been the original purpose of the book." --*Quarendo*

About the Author

Giles Mandelbrote was appointed Librarian and Archivist of Lambeth Palace Library in 2010, after working for some years at the British Library. Among his publications are *Out of Print & Into Profit: A History of the Rare and Secondhand Book Trade in Britain in the 20th Century* (2006), as well as the second volume (1640-1850) of *The Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland* (2006), edited jointly with K.A. Manley. More recently he contributed to and edited (with Barry Taylor) *Libraries within the Library: The Origins of the British Library's Printed Collections* (2009). He is an honorary Senior Research Fellow of King's College, London, and one of the convenors of the annual London conference on book trade history. At present his research is mainly concerned with the book trade in early modern Europe and with book ownership and collecting in seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century England.

Dr. Willem de Bruijn is a Research Associate at The Arcadian Library, London. He studied architecture in the Netherlands and in 2010 obtained a doctorate in History and Theory of Architecture from The Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL. His research focuses on the role of the book in architecture, where it has always been both a vehicle for the dissemination of ideas and an object of experimentation - graphic, material and spatial. De Bruijn has published a number of articles relating to his research and is currently working on a book that looks at the typographic ornamentation in Palladio's *Quattro libri dell'architettura*. He also practices bookbinding.

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