

Sammelbände at the University of Barcelona's Rare Books Library, or how we deal with facticis (with some examples)

Sammelband 15-16

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École nationale supérieure des sciences de l'information et des bibliothèques ([Enssib](#))

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CRAI Biblioteca de Fons Antic

**PowerPoint,
part one.
Slide 1**

Good afternoon,

Before we begin, we would like to thank Professor Malcolm Walsby for the invitation to participate in this [workshop](#). With this talk, we want to present the collection of Sammelbände, or “facticis” in Catalan, that we hold at the library of the University of Barcelona; we also want to share how we have managed them so far and what are the certainties and doubts that have arisen due to the participation in this meeting. The point of view will thus be librarian.

The Rare Books Library is part of the CRAI, The Learning and Research Resources Centre, of the University of Barcelona, which currently consists of 16 libraries, a Conservation and a Digitization Centres.

We are responsible for preserving, cataloguing and disseminating of the bibliographic and documentary collections of the University of Barcelona prior to the year 1821.

Where does our collection come from?

The core of the Rare Books Library comes from religious houses located in the region of Barcelona, which were suppressed in 1836. A year before, however, a large part of the religious buildings in Barcelona burned down following a social riot or *bullanga* in Catalan.

The books were taken to the monastery of Sant Joan de Jerusalem in Barcelona to form a large public library. Forty years later, in 1881, they moved to the new university building, where they are now.

The serious lack of personal and material resources and the holding of books in premises with bad environmental conditions severely punished the considerable mass of books, consisting of approximately 150,000 volumes. Subsequently, the collection was diminished by the sale of duplicates and the destruction of more than 60,000 copies under the dubious pretext of a poor state of conservation. Thus, about half of the collections of the religious libraries were destroyed, stolen or sold. It is estimated that around 70,000 editions in 130,000 copies have survived.

Despite the religious origin of these collections, we find all kinds of subjects. This could be explained for several reasons, mainly because some religious houses benefited from patronage, donations and bequests from private libraries and because some were opened to the cultured public of the city of Barcelona, officially or tacitly. Another outstanding feature of our library is the presence, on numerous occasions, of multiple copies of the same edition.

In addition, apart from the books coming from the religious libraries, we also hold an important collection of engravings and parchments, and some printed books that became part of our collection through a few donations that we received between the end of the 19th century and the present day.

All these collections, nearly 145,000 documents, constitute the Rare Books Library of the University of Barcelona, one of the largest and most important Spanish collections of rare books.

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What have we catalogued online?

Unfortunately, the work of cataloguing the rare books collection is not complete and many books and documents have not yet been catalogued online. This graph illustrates the

current state of online cataloguing of manuscripts, incunabula and printed books from 1501 to 1820.

As for the manuscripts, although only a third are catalogued online, they are described in their entirety in a published catalogue. Regarding the incunabula and the printed books of the 16th century, they are all catalogued. We are about to complete the 17th century, and we hope to be able to complete the 18th and 19th centuries in the upcoming years.

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What do we consider "factici"?

We estimate that more than 20 percent of the copies -approximately 30,000- are part of Sammelbände. But... what do we consider "factici" in the Rare Books Library?

A Sammelband is a volume in which two or more documents are bound together. It can be several volumes of the same edition or several copies belonging to different editions. In addition, printed books and manuscripts can coexist.

In this talk, we will focus on Sammelbände that contain copies belonging to different printed editions or that contain printed books and manuscripts.

Currently, our library has catalogued online a total of 2,297 Sammelbände that gather 22,855 copies from 14,128 different editions. As an anecdote, the largest volume includes 159 copies, most of them printed in Barcelona, between 1770 and 1775.

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As we can see in the graph, half of the editions and copies bound in Sammelbände were printed in the 18th century.

Although this is relevant information, we cannot provide data on the format, subjects and cities of publication. The limits of our management system, Alma, are really considerable when it comes to extracting data.

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Regarding the countries of publication, in the following graph we have only represented those of which we have at least a hundred different editions bound in Sammelbände. It should be mentioned that, although we are talking about countries, in the graph we

separate the editions printed in Catalonia and the rest of Spain since, as a Catalan institution, we have a special interest in the Catalan bibliographic heritage. In fact, the editions and copies printed in Catalonia, mainly in the city of Barcelona, represent half of the editions and copies bound in Sammelbände, showing its strong local character.

Having made a general presentation of our Sammelbände, we want to focus more specifically on those containing works from the 15th and 16th centuries, of which we will see a few examples shortly.

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As for the 15th century, we have 21 Sammelbände that bring together a total of 33 editions and 42 copies. These are editions printed in Venice, Rome, Paris, Lyon and Barcelona, between 1471 and 1500.

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Regarding the 16th century, we have 1,044 editions and 1,289 copies printed in 11 different countries, in addition to the *sine loco* editions. They are bound in 87 different Sammelbände.

Naturally, editions from different centuries can coexist in the same Sammelband, so all these figures are approximate.

Despite having a large number of Sammelbände, when we catalogued them, we were mainly concerned with stating this condition in the copy-specific field without considering how we could group and give visibility to the whole as such in the catalogue facing the user.

The cataloguing of Sammelbände varies depending on whether they contain only printed books, or whether they contain manuscripts and printed books at the same time.

In the case of Sammelbände that contain only printed books and those that contain mostly printed books and some manuscripts, each work is described separately in a bibliographic record. On the other hand, the Sammelbände that mainly contain manuscripts and some printed books are catalogued as an integral unit and, in addition, a separate bibliographic record has been created for each of the printed books.

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How do we make them unique?

In the case of Sammelbände that include only two works, we use the literal "Bound with" for the first work and "Bound after" for the second work, followed by descriptive bibliographical information of the other work in the copy-specific field.

In the case of Sammelbände that include more than two works, we use "Sammelband" and for each work we specify the order number within the Sammelband.

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But what is the problem presented by the Sammelbände when it comes to cataloguing?

From the perspective of RDA, the cataloguing rules we have been using since 2016, a Sammelband is a physical unit consisting of a compilation of items, that is a single instance or occurrence of a manifestation, each item corresponding to a different manifestation, that is a physical embodiment of an expression of a work. The physical unit that represents the Sammelband is not included in the Work-Expression-Manifestation-Item scheme of the RDA.

The conceptual restrictions of the cataloguing rules and the data coding system, as well as the structural limitations of our library management system, make it currently impossible to establish links between the different items that make up a Sammelband. In the future, when BIBFRAME, a data model for bibliographic description designed to use linked data principles, is implemented, these links between items of the same physical unit will be possible since the RDA cataloguing rules contemplate the accompanying item relationship "bound with".

For the preparation of this talk, we have been exploring, while enforcing the current cataloguing rules, how the different items of the same Sammelband can be linked to each other. This is a practice that we had not contemplated until now and one that we now consider essential given the significant presence of Sammelbände in our collection. The link cannot be made at the copy-specific record level but must be made at the bibliographic

record level and, here, we encounter a second difficulty, since it is very common to find several copies of the same work bound in different Sammelbände.

We would have loved to present you with a solution to this cataloguing problem today, and while we have some possibilities on the table, we have not been able to do enough testing to see what the best solution is.

How do we digitize them?

Our Digitization Centre was created in 2016 and is dedicated to the digitization of the Library heritage collection. All digitized material is accessible through the portal of the Digital Heritage Library (BiPaDi), divided into thematic collections, and also through a link in the bibliographic record. In addition, all digitized copies have a public note in the catalogue indicating that they are in the digital library.

After several meetings, in February 2022 we changed the practice of digitizing Sammelbände, which sought to give more importance to the binding. This practice varies depending on whether the Sammelband contains only printed books, or whether it contains manuscript and printed documents.

Regarding Sammelbände containing only printed books, a digital record is created for each of the printed books and, in each of them, all the elements of the binding are included in the following order: front cover (outside and inside), front endleaves; the document; back endleaves, back cover (inside and outside), spine and edges (head-edge, fore-edge and tail-edge).

We decided to add all the elements of the binding in each of the items of the Sammelband because neither the catalogue nor the digital library allows us, at present, to link the different items of a Sammelband with each other. This way, we make it easier for the user to retrieve the elements of the binding.

Regarding Sammelbände containing manuscripts and printed books, a single digital record is created for the Sammelband as an integral unit. In the bibliographic record of

independently catalogued printed books, there is a link to the specific pages of the digitization where the printed document in question appears. Therefore, in the cases of these mixed volumes, if someone wants to see the binding, they have to go to the beginning and the end of the digitization of the Sammelband as an integral unit.

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Religious houses' Sammelbände

It is now time to talk about a type of Sammelband that may not be of the greatest interest to those attending this meeting -since it is from a later period- but which has an important presence in our collection.

This type of Sammelband began to be produced in large numbers in the collections of the religious houses of Barcelona throughout the first half of the 18th century. It became one more amongst the practices adopted by the librarians in order to achieve a better management and access of their collections that had become more and more numerous and complex.

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Generally, the librarians of the various religious houses were the ones who prepared these Sammelbände, although on occasions they were also made by friars, for their private use.

The aim was to gather thin documents like sermons, booklets, broadsheets, etcetera, and the practice did not stop until the first third of the 19th century, when the libraries of religious communities disappeared following the burning and confiscation of monasteries.

These Sammelbände gather mainly printed materials from the 17th and 18th centuries, but also manuscripts, and, as we have seen, those produced in Catalonia predominate. They show in-folio and in-quarto format.

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Their function was clearly a means of saving space and of preserving particularly fragile materials, and in this regard, here is an interesting text coming from a Capuchin rule on the functions of the librarian, published in the second half of the 18th century:

He must take great care to gather the loose papers, and bind them, so that they are not lost, putting an index to their folios, and the title on the spine of Papeles varios. He should be even more careful in this than in the works of the Fathers, for the works of St. Augustine, for example, will be found with money, but there are often loose papers so rare and exquisite that they cannot be found at any price.

However, this type of Sammelband had another important mission: to collect documents on the same subject and facilitate their retrieval and use.

In fact, they are easily distinguished by the handwritten titles on the spines, defining the type of texts contained. Very often we see several volumes numbered correlatively under the same title.

Sermons predominate, to assist the friars in their preaching. Pleadings, "al·legacions jurídiques" in Catalan, printed but also manuscript documents in which the different stages of a lawsuit are described, are also very common, and are probably a symptom of the centrality acquired by the economic administration in the religious communities.

In addition to that, academic exercises are frequent, as well as booklets that contain the poetic texts that served as the basis for the musical compositions known as "villancicos" and "oratorios", performed in the churches of our city.

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Finally, it is worth mentioning the Sammelbände containing the so-called "relaciones de sucesos", or news, where these interesting documents of the early press were gathered.

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When the collected materials could not be easily categorized under a specific subject, generic terms were used such as "Varia" or "Miscellanea", or the more picturesque "Farrago" or "Pellaca". This last term intrigued us enormously. After looking for it in different dictionaries without success, we speculated on the possibility that it was an alteration of the Latin "pelagus", in the sense of "abundant or copious", an option that has proved to be plausible.

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Although printed documents predominated, it is not rare to find examples of Sammelbände in which the latter coexist with manuscripts, or even examples in which the number of manuscripts exceed by far the printed ones. According to the type of documents contained, these volumes sometimes acquire a hybrid character, standing between the library and the archive.

To facilitate the location of each of the works, numbered correlatively within the Sammelband, a table of contents was often written on a preliminary leaf.

Similarly, other procedures were meant to give uniformity to the collected items, which thus lose their entity by being diluted into a whole, that is, the Sammelband. In most cases, the document loses its provisional binding, consisting of white or decorated paper covers. These procedures can also include the correlative numbering of all the leaves that are part of the Sammelband.

It is also not unusual to find copies in which the frontpage and preliminary contents have been removed (quite frequently in the case of sermons) and on some occasions, we can find two copies of the same edition bound in the same Sammelband.

It is important that all these standardizing elements - title on the spine, table of contents, continuous foliations and, of course, the original shelfmarks -, are included in the copy-specific area, because they make the Sammelbände unique and together they can help to determine non-explicit provenances.

An accurate and thorough description of the bindings would be essential. Currently, however, the information we provide is quite scarce. We would need the establishment of descriptive standards that ensure a minimum essential for their identification.

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Apart from the large number of surviving Sammelbände that are preserved in the Rare Books collection, a remarkable amount of thin documents are held, which, for some reason, did not end up being bound together with others, and which may show their provisional paper covers, or no cover at all, as if they had been about to be part of Sammelbände but they didn't make it. There are approximately 3,100 copies.

Provenances

A key aspect in our library, closely related to Sammelbände and specifically to this meeting, is the attention we devote to provenances.

Our collection is distinguished by two main features: its flooding and copious character, and its fragmentary quality, given the destruction and dispersion of which it was victim when the religious orders were suppressed.

Provenances of the religious houses of the city of Barcelona and its province predominate, but underlying this institutional origin, there is also a multitude of ownership marks by individuals. Among them, although relevant names are not rare - some of which represented in a considerable number of volumes - there is a high number of people we know nothing or very little about. We are referring to the names of those who previously owned the books, which in most cases arrived in the religious communities after being bought in the second-hand market, given or bequeathed. Besides, the scenario is enriched by the presence of friars who gathered and kept books in their cells, *ad usum*, either on a small or large scale, in case they were wealthy.

However, we must say that the shelving of the books is not organized according to their origin, but the books are scattered in several stacks within the Library of Philology, in the Historical Building of the University of Barcelona. In short, our collection is a kind of a mess...

However, there is a sort of unity: the collection has not increased much, since, from the moment the religious houses were suppressed, there have not been new acquisitions and we've only received a few donations. Besides, it is also important to mention that it is mostly a local collection, limited to Barcelona and Catalonia. And this is relevant when we consider book provenance.

Local but, as Núria has already said, it is also one of the most important Spanish rare books collections, and preserves a great number of volumes. In a recent CERL provenance seminar, David Pearson talked about the importance of seizing the opportunity to work in a large collection to produce a "critical mass of data", and the need to make the curators of rare

books collections understand the importance of working on provenances, and its benefits, from different points of view. It seems that, in this respect, we are on the right track.

We have enriched the copy-specific information, with a transcription or description of any evidence indicating ownership and use, and we have created authority records for all previous owners. These names are also present in the bibliographic record, as a secondary entry.

The creation of these authority records allows us to regularly update our database [Former Owners](#), which currently displays 994 images of provenance corresponding to 846 names of individuals and institutions.

UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA | Former owners

Former owners
1.004 marks of 858 former owners
from XIV century to XX century
in the Rare Book and Manuscript CRAI Library.

Enter your search...

Owner Person and family/Institution Gender Institution type Occupation Title Place Religious order Type of evidence

What characterizes the database?

- * The importance given to images: the first thing you see is a gallery.
- * 3 types of navigation: by marks, by owner, by location (map).
- * Multiple search options.
- * The possibility to combine different searches.

Sammelbände at the University of Barcelona's Rare Books Library

* The importance given to location in space and time, through the timeline and geolocation.

Please note the density in the whole territory of Catalonia.

* Search in 3 languages: Catalan, Spanish and English.

UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA Former owners

Found 854 Owners

Browse by: Marks Owners Map

Agellós, Antoni de, 1899

Adler, Nathan ben Simeon, ha-Kohen, 1741-1800

Aguiar, Baltasar Felipe de

Agulló i Sagarriga, Francesca d'

Agustí i Albanell, Antoni, 1517-1586

Alagret, Magi, actiu 1720

Albanell, Josephus, O.S.A., actiu 1694

Albanell, Juan

Albanell, Paulus

Alcover i Guitart, Pau, 1804-1832

Aldibert y Serra, Antón

Aldibert y Serra, Francisco

Aldrete, Bernardo, 1565-1645

Alegria, Fulgencio de

Altava, Llorenç

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The Sammelband project and the UB Rare Books Library's collection

But what is the aspect of our collection that may be the most interesting to the Sammelband 15-16 project?

Even if all the incunabula and 16th century printed books are now on the online catalogue, before 2009, when this part of the collection was catalogued, copy-specific information was quite poor regarding provenances and reading marks, as well as bindings. And as already mentioned, it is currently very difficult to virtually gather and link the documents belonging to a specific Sammelband in the online catalogue.

However, we are very slowly working on the recataloguing of the incunabula, with a special emphasis on the copy-specific data. Information on provenance and use is corrected and completed. New authority records are created that can be viewed in the bibliographic

record and the *Former Owners* database. Besides, this revised data is added to MEI, [Material Evidence in Incunabula](#). Therefore, we will soon have more to say about earlier Sammelbände.

Some examples

And now, briefly, some examples of Sammelbände containing incunabula.

PowerPoint,
part two.
Slide 2

First example:

07 Inc 611

-1. Leonardo Bruni. [Epistolarum familiarum libri VIII](#). Venice : Damiano de Gorgonzola, in part by Petrus de Quarengis, 15.VI.1495.

Provenance: [Convent de Sant Francesc d'Assís de Barcelona](#)

-2. [Fasciculus medicinae](#). Venice : Giovanni e Gregorio de' Gregori, 15.X.1495.

Provenance: [Joannes Palleres](#), [Gulielmus Domingo](#)

In this case we noticed that the covers are smaller than the documents inside and were recycled. The two gathered copies had had a previous and independent binding, and had been roughly put together by simply gluing them.

Slide 3

The incunable by Leonardo Bruni bears the name of the Franciscans of Barcelona, written shortly before the burning of the convent, whereas the *Fasciculus medicinae* shows two names on its frontpage: Joannes Palleres, probably the author of the marginalia, from the 16th century, and that of a doctor, Gulielmus Domingo, that according to his handwriting can be dated around the first half of the 17th century.

The latter is also found on the front glued endleaf. This was presumably separated from its original position, as a part of the *Fasciculus* .

Slide 4

On the spine we can read the titles and date of the two editions, written by some librarian active after the suppression of the religious orders, around mid-nineteenth century, a feature found in some incunabula of our collection. It is a handwriting frequently seen in spines and other elements of the bindings of books of our collection.

Incidentally, the copy of the *Fasciculus medicinae*, although preserved in a considerable number of libraries around the world, is unique in Spain.

We were wondering when and by whom this clumsy Sammelband was made. The name of the doctor Gulielmus Domingo on another Sammelband, also containing two works, and as roughly constructed as the previous one gave us the clue.

Slide 5

07 Inc 472

-1. Arnau de Vilanova. [*Breviarium practicae medicinae*](#). Milan : Ottino di Luna, 21.X.1497

Provenance: [Gulielmus Domingo](#)

-2. Diogenes Laertius. [*Vitae et sententiae philosophorum*](#). Venice : Filippo Pinzi for Benedetto Fontana, 22.VII.1497.

Slide 6

The dates on the spine of the text block, again in a recognizable 19th century handwriting made us think that these two Sammelbände, each of one containing incunabula from the same year, were made after the end of the religious houses by some librarian, with the aim of uniting and protecting books that somehow had lost their covers.

Slide 7

Second example:

07 Inc 283

- 1. Johannes de Sacro Bosco. [Sphaera mundi](#). Venice : Erhard Ratdolt, before 4.XI.1485
- 2. Alphonsus, Rex Castellae. [Tabulae astronomicae](#). Venice : Erhard Ratdolt, 4.VII.1483

In the second example the quires of the two incunabula have been mysteriously combined. It doesn't seem to be a mistake by the binder, as it affects all the quires, but on the other hand contents have not a textual continuity, as it is obvious.

The verso of the last leaf is full of *probationes pennae*, amongst which the name of the notary [Lluís Cendra](#), active in Tarragona in 1577. Later on, the book ended up in the [Convent de Sant Agustí of Barcelona](#), of the Calced Augustinians, where it was probably rebound in the 18th century.

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Third example:

07 Inc 225

- 1. Riccobaldo da Ferrara. [Chronica summorum pontificum imperatorumque](#). Rome : Johannes Schurener, 10.II.1476.
- 2. Lucius Annaeus Seneca. [De remediis fortuitarum](#). Rome : Johannes Schurener, ca. 1477.
- 3. Bernardus Claravallensis. [Epistola de gubernatione rei familiaris](#). Rome : Ulrich Han, ca. 1475.
- 4. Johannes Mathias Tuberinus. [Relatio de Simone puero Tridentino](#). Rome : Bartholomaeus Guldinbeck, 1475-1476.
- 5. Antonio Roselli. [De ieiuniis](#). Rome : Bartholomaeus Guldinbeck, ca. 1475.

Provenance: [Josep Jeroni Besora?](#), [Convent de Sant Josep de Barcelona](#)

Third example: five rare editions gathered in a Sammelband coming from the Convent de Sant Josep of Barcelona, Barefoot Carmelites. The provenance derives from the shelfmark on the spine and on the right upper corner of the front cover.

Marginalia show signs of trimming. One can see the provisional covers, blank leaves, some of them being part of the quires, with titles on them.

It may have arrived to Sant Josep from Josep Jeroni Besora, owner of one of the most important private libraries in modern Catalonia. He died in 1665 after bequeathing his collection to the barefoot Carmelites, with two conditions: that a public library will be opened to the city and that none of his books will leave the monastery, under any circumstance.

Slide 9

Fourth example:

07 Inc 209

-1. Sixtus IV. [De sanguine Christi](#). Rome : Johannes Philippus de Lignamine, not before 10.VIII.1471.

-2. Sixtus IV. [De futuris contingentibus](#). Rome : Johannes Philippus de Lignamine, not after 10.VIII.1473.

Provenance: [Federico da Montefeltro, duke of Urbino](#), [Convent de Santa Caterina de Barcelona](#)

And finally, a beautiful volume, of a sort that is not very frequent in our collection: it belonged to Federico da Montefeltro, duke of Urbino, and came to Barcelona and to the Convent de Santa Caterina, of the Dominicans, thanks to the patronage of a friar from Tarragona: [Tomàs Ripoll](#). He was Master of the Order from 1725 until 1747, and from his

privileged position in Rome enriched enormously the library of Santa Caterina, where he had taken his vows.

Conclusions

As a conclusion, we can say that we have often reflected on Sammelbände, but from a very restricted perspective that does not consider their visibility in the catalogue and the interest they can arouse among their users: not just researchers, but also students who might want to know which other documents a particular edition is bound with.

Our poor knowledge on our 16th and, partly, 17th century Sammelbände has also been revealed: from their main subjects to the provenances, this latter in a lower degree.

Regarding the Sammelbände produced in the libraries of the religious houses, we only are more aware of them because they exist in huge quantities and in general terms they have been regarded as a nightmare. Despite the relatively small space they occupy in the shelves, the high number of documents contained in one single volume means a time-consuming and painstaking cataloguing. The subjects are often unattractive, or very repetitive, and the texts, sometimes difficult to interpret, especially the ones about legal issues.

We are nevertheless learning to appreciate their specificity: they have preserved unique documents, they represent a significant part of a local printing industry based precisely on ephemera, and they are receptacles of relevant contents for the cultural, social and the economic history of our territory.

We also would like to emphasize the need to continue working on marks of provenance and use, both in the catalogue and in the display of information in the database. And we recognize our shortcomings when it comes to interpreting the information borne by the binding.

In short, preparing this talk has allowed us to be aware of mainly two issues: even if Sammelbände have been a regular presence on our desks, as catalogers, and even if they have always seemed to be documents of particular interest, we have not assessed them in all their complexity. And an obvious one: only a thorough cataloging, offering relevant information in the correct way, and an online catalogue allowing an adequate display and retrieval of information will be able to do Sammelbände justice.