

NATALE VACALEBRE
COME LE ARMADURE E L'ARMI
PER UNA STORIA DELLE ANTICHE BIBLIOTECHE
DELLA COMPAGNIA DI GESÙ
CON IL CASO DI PERUGIA

During the Early modern age, the Society of Jesus was the religious institution that, more than any other, linked its reason for existence to the world of the book. Indeed, between the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries, Jesuits founded some of the richest and most highly organized libraries of the Christian world. By analyzing archival documentation, in large part unpublished, this work navigates and delves into the twists and turns of Jesuit library history. In doing so it seeks, for the very first time, to reconstruct the operations and affairs of the library institutions of the *Societas Iesu*. By employing a unique historical-thematic structure, the distinct characteristics of Jesuit collections are



revealed, and the library practices of the order, prior to the papal suppression of 1773, are reconstructed. The case of Perugia ultimately offers a prime example of a true Jesuit library. Through the analysis of unpublished sources, as well as the Jesuit bibliographic patrimony presently archived at the Biblioteca Comunale Augusta, the organizational and functional history of this 'militant library is traced from its origins to the Eighteenth-century suppression. A complex history, constructed by books and people, is brought to light, through an articulated bibliographic and document-based excavation, that offers the reader a fine example of one of the most significant cultural realities of the Age of typography.

NATALE VACALEBRE (1985) holds a research doctorate in Library, Text and Document Science from the University of Udine. In 2012 and 2013 he had a research fellowship in Bibliography at the Università Cattolica in Milan, where he chiefly studied the production of prints in 15th-century Lombardy and the provenance of Milanese incunabula. He is currently a PhD candidate in Italian Studies at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia and is a research fellow of the Bibliographical Society of America. Vacalebri has studied the history of books and libraries for many years, with a special interest in ancient collections of religious orders, and the production and commerce of Italian books in the early modern age.

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