



**Staatsbibliothek  
zu Berlin**

Preußischer Kulturbesitz

**Department of Early Printed Books**

## **The 16th Century Collection**

The Library's 16th century holdings have been separated from the main stacks and brought together in a separate collection, because this extremely valuable part of the library's stock requires special protection and adequate preservation in appropriately designed closed stacks. A significant number of these books stem from the post-incunabula period, i.e. they were printed between 1501 and 1520. Moreover, almost all the works in this collection have special features to the copy at hand, such as original bindings with their characteristic roll and panel ornaments, or handwritten remarks or entries that identify previous owners.

Despite immense losses during the Second World War, today the State Library owns about 55,000 16<sup>th</sup> century imprints. About 33,000 of these works stem from German printing locations; more than 7,000 are from France and about 6,000 are from Italy and the Netherlands, respectively. Today's acquisitions place special emphasis on the literature of the Reformation from printing locations in eastern Germany, as well as in Silesia and East Prussia, which were then part of Germany.

Searching the library's online catalogue for 16<sup>th</sup> century imprints is supported by a number of newly created search fields which allow detailed and differentiated searches with a special view to the needs of scholarship: [SBB16 - 16<sup>th</sup> century imprints of the State Library at Berlin](#) allows searches for any person associated with a given work, for genre terms, places of printing, printers and publishers, bookbinders, former owners and other provenance specific information, fingerprints, bibliographical references and shelf marks. All of these categories can be used in free combination. A search can also be limited to certain collections or even to copy-specific features such as contemporary bindings, bindings of the Great Elector or copies with manuscript notes. Moreover, it is possible to exclude copies lost during the war from your search or to restrict it to such works that have already been digitized.