The Renaissance Society of America

Annual Meeting Program and Abstract Book

> San Diego 4–6 April 2013



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20214 Marina Tower Lobby Level Seabreeze 1

STRATEGIES AND SIGNIFICANCE IN THE REUSE OF WOODBLOCKS IN ILLUSTRATED BOOKS

Sponsor: History of the Book, Paleography, and Manuscript Tradition, RSA Discipline Group

> Organizer: Andrew Pettegree, University of St. Andrews Chair: Caroline Duroselle-Melish, Harvard University

Ilaria Andreoli, Florida State University

Woodblocks on the Move: European Routes of the Illustrated Book from the Fifteenth to the Sixteenth Century

Recent historians have shown that the geography of the printed book during the sixteenth century was quite different from the political and even the religious ones. I will contend that, within this general framework, illustrated books had routes of their own, from the assembly line moment to the moment of commercialization through book fairs or the outlets that German, Italian, and French booksellers maintained in European capitals, and that the uses and reuses of woodblocks in early printed books can only be understood following this intricate network of transnational relationships. My presentation will address different cases of reuse and copy, well beyond the first century of printing.

Maria Alessandra Panzanelli Fratoni, Università degli Studi di Perugia

Woodcuts and the Early Printing Press: The Case of Perugia, 1471–1559

Perugia was a powerful medieval commune and home of a celebrated university (founded 1308) which showed a dynamic intellectual life. Its liveliness seemed to be untouched by the decadence of its political institutions in the fifteenth century and is evidenced by the early introduction of the printing press in 1471. While its output was relatively modest — 280 editions between 1471 and 1559 — a remarkable feature of printing in Perugia was the production of illustrated books. The use of printed images in books started quite early and increased during the sixteenth century. Printers and publishers developed a range of techniques to improve their printing: they copied woodcuts produced elsewhere, they sometimes reused old matrices, but they also pursued an original production. In this paper I would like to discuss this phenomenon, which so far has received only limited attention.

Francois Dupuigrenet Desroussilles, Florida State University

What Is a Visual Text? The Woodcuts of the Great Bible (Paris-London, 1538–39)

Seventy-two woodcuts illustrate the Old Testament part of the *Great Bible*, the first authorized Bible to be published in England from 1539 to 1566. I recently discovered that all of these woodcuts, copied from Lyon Vulgates of the 1520s, had already been printed in Paris in 1538, in the bookshop of Francois Regnault under the title *Historiarum veteris instrumenti, & Apocalypsis icones ad vivum expresse*, one of the first "Figures de la Bible" to be published in Europe. My presentation will focus on the different meanings that these same stylistically archaic woodcuts assume in the opposite graphic contexts of a whole Bible and of the new genre of "Figures de la Bible" where they become visual text.