teachings prove relevant to a range of cultural heritage organizations even beyond the United Kingdom. Her textbook provides a thorough and broad overview of collection management and would be a valuable classroom resource to guide and complement lesson plans.—*Patti Gibbons, Preservation Manager, University of Chicago Library.*

Bettina Wagner and Marcia Reed, eds. *Early Printed Books as Material Objects*. Berlin: De Gruyter Saur, 2010. xii, 367p. ISBN 9783110253245. \$150.00.

This book consists of the proceedings from a preconference organized by the Rare Books and Manuscripts Section of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), held in Munich 19–21 August 2009 as a satellite meeting to IFLA's annual congress in Milan, Italy. In the Introduction, Wagner sets the stage for the work included in this collection of presented papers. Although multiple copies of early printed editions may survive to the present day, Wagner emphasizes the importance of early printed books as individual objects, each with unique characteristics that distinguish it from all other copies printed in the same edition. According to Wagner, as more early printed books are available online, the materials become accessible to a greater international audience and the originals are better preserved because they require less handling. However, she emphasizes that it also becomes increasingly important to have copy-specific descriptions of these books, which can capture important details about the physical object that do not exist in every copy. This emphasis on the importance of individualized descriptions was the focus of the IFLA preconference.

A particular strength of the preconference, and thus of this compilation of the presented papers, is the participation of a variety of individuals from a wide range of disciplines. In addition to librarians and academics, there are papers from conservators and independent scholars, which offer new perspectives and provide a more comprehensive treatment of the issue. In an effort to stimulate discussion on the importance of copy-specific descriptions of early printed books, rather than relying on a single digitized exemplar of a particular edition, the contributors present compelling arguments for the evidence that can be revealed by a given book's unique characteristics. Although all of the papers provide excellent support for the topic at hand, one exceptionally striking example is Eric White's discussion of the use of fragments from the Gutenberg Bible as binder's waste, and the data they provide about the original press run of the Bible (p. 27). Including the Gutenberg Bible in the discussion may perk up the ears of those funders and administrators who might not otherwise be familiar with the intricacies of bibliography.

The book is organized into seven sections, both chronologically and thematically. The first four groups of papers progress from the earliest stages of printing through other phases of book production, including illustration, annotation, and

binding. The papers in sections five and six transition from discussions of the physical book itself into questions of context. They progress through issues associated with book distribution, provenance, and collecting during the early modern period, as well the “adaptation” of incunabula by 18th- and 19th-century collectors. In the final group of papers, the discussion turns to modern practice, specifically the methodological considerations associated with description of early printed books and comparisons of multiple copies. Each subtopic is relatively balanced in representation and addressed by two or three papers.

The book is well illustrated, particularly in the earlier portions. Given the focus of these papers on the physical characteristics of the book, one would expect that they would have a higher percentage of illustrations, including color plates, than the later ones that emphasize context and theory. Black and white illustrations persist throughout the remainder of the book, but the discussion of manuscript annotation marks the end of the full-color plates.

When reading this book, one must keep in mind that these are proceedings from a professional preconference, where like-minded individuals were sharing their perspectives on a highly specialized central issue. As a result, the text presumes a high level of familiarity with the language of bibliography. The newcomer to the field may find him- or herself lost in the level of technical detail that has been provided. One should also be aware that IFLA is an international organization, with seven official languages represented, and members may express themselves in any one of those languages. Although IFLA makes an effort to provide translations of conference materials, it is worth noting that one of the papers in the section on distribution and provenance has been printed entirely in French and is not currently available translated into English, which will prevent some prospective readers within the English-speaking audience from benefiting from its content.

Overall, the book does an excellent job of meeting its primary objective, which is stimulating discussion about the importance of creating copy-specific descriptions of early printed materials. Examples related to printing, binding, distribution, provenance, and collection are used to demonstrate the dangers associated with neglecting to provide in-depth descriptions of each existing copy when making these early printed materials available in electronic formats. This collection of papers would be useful for any library that is pursuing digitization projects and that maintains special collections containing early printed books. In particular, staff members or administrators who are in need of support for the increased investment of time and money required to conduct extensive cataloging of early printed materials would be well served to search for corroboration within this book.—*Jennifer K. Sheehan, Ph.D., Curator, Rare Books, University of North Texas Libraries.*