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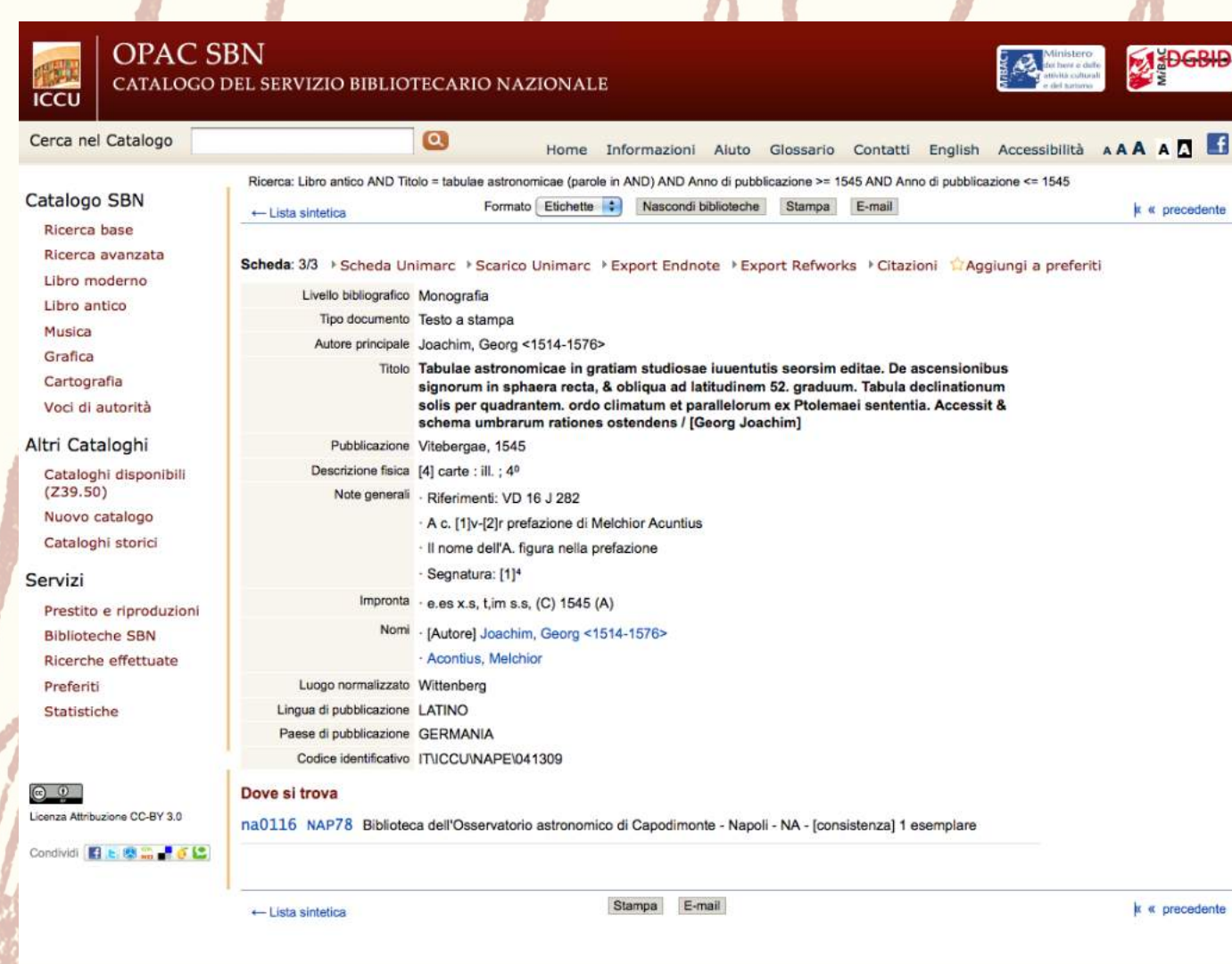


**THE RARE BOOKS COLLECTION OF CAPODIMONTE ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATORY WILL BE SHORTLY ON THE WEB:  
THE ANCIENT SCIENCE IS AFFORDABLE TO EVERYONE.**

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The library of the Capodimonte Astronomical Observatory was started by the astronomer Federigo Zuccari in 1812, when the Observatory was founded. Currently, 38.000 volumes are conserved and about 5% of this heritage is formed by ancient books of great historical and scientific value, which are hardly found in Campania and, generally, in the Southern of Italy. Thanks to the dedicated project “Recupero, valorizzazione, digitalizzazione e immissione in rete dei beni della Biblioteca dell’INAF-Osservatorio Astronomico di Capodimonte”, the Capodimonte Astronomical Observatory started in 2010 a program aimed at preserving this collection and to make it accessible to a broad user base. This project, promoted by INAF-Capodimonte Astronomical Observatory, was supported by the Campania Region through European funds (POR Campania FESR 2007/2013) in line with the goal 1:10 “Culture as a resource”.

The project concerned 120 monographic editions and 6 serials of the XV-XIX centuries and it began making order the ancient books collection, controlling, “book in hand”, authors, bibliographical descriptions, classifications and inventory numbers. The works published in many volumes with different classifications were assembled and about miscellaneous books, new works were identified inside the volumes and inventoried. Next step was the online cataloging performed by using the software SBNWeb, that the library obtained thanks to its entry into Polo NAP of SBN (National Librarian Service).



Digitization and restoration were made at the same time. The process of digitization was carried out with a planetary scanner, following the standards procedures of BDI (Italian Digital Library). The produced metadata were stored into ICCU (Central Institute for the Union Catalog of the Italian libraries and bibliographic information) digital showcase and now they are made available on Internet Culturale, the portal of the MiB-ACT (Ministry of Heritage and Cultural Activities).

The restoration was made according to the instructions of ICRCPAL (Central Institute for the Restoration and Preservation of the Archival and Books Heritage) and Soprintendenza ai beni library and concerned 85 volumes. It provided various processes depending on the condition of each volume.



The last step of the project was the publication of a bibliographical catalog, addressed to specialized users (historians of science and bibliophiles) and specifically dedicated to books of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.



The 38 editions described in the catalog, preserved in the rare collection of the Observatory Library, include 1 incunabulum and 38 Cinquecentine (one of them is in two copies). The incunabulum is the famous venetian edition of Sacrobosco’s *Tractatus de sphaera* printed in 1488, while, between the works of the sixteenth century, the reader can find many rare editions, for example: the two editions of *De Revolutionibus orbium coelestium* by Niccolò Copernico respectively printed in 1543 and 1566, the *Tabulae astronomicae* by Georg Joachim Rheticus, the *Calendarium Palaestinorum* by Uri Ben Simeon and the works of the French mathematician François Viète.

The catalog was presented during a workshop on the rare books organized by the Observatory and the Campania section of the AIB (Italian Librarian Association). The project, based on the use of new technologies and innovative contents, was fully consistent with the expected purposes, aimed at the national and international valorization and promotion of local heritage.

