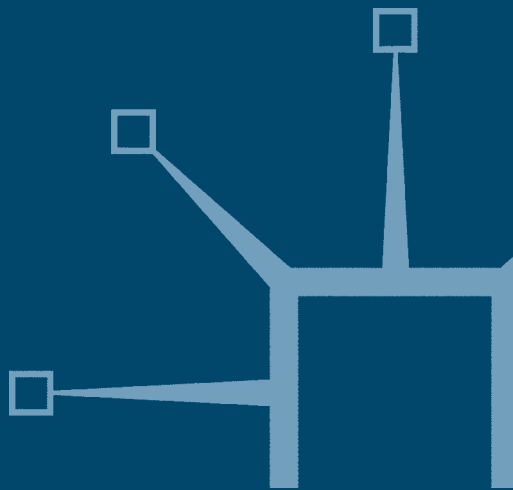# Lost Libraries

The Destruction of Great Book Collections since Antiquity

Edited by
James Raven

Lost Libraries

This page intentionally left blank

Lost Libraries

The Destruction of Great Book Collections since Antiquity

Edited by

James Raven

et sua fata habent libelli

This page intentionally left blank

Contents

List of Illustrations

List of Tables

Acknowledgements

Notes on the Contributors

Jeremy Black is University Lecturer in Akkadian in the University of Oxford, Fellow of Wolfson College, Oxford, and Director of the Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature.

Friedrich Buchmayr is the Librarian of the Monastery of Sankt Florian, Austria.

Margaret Connolly is Lecturer in Medieval and Renaissance Literature at University College, Cork.

T. Keith Dix is Associate Professor of Classics, University of Georgia at Athens.

Robert J. Fyne is Professor of English at Kean University, New Jersey, and Senior Associate Editor of *Film and History*.

Rebecca J. Knuth is Associate Professor of Library and Information Science at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Richard L. Kremer is Associate Professor of History at Dartmouth College, New Hampshire.

Clarissa Campbell Orr is Senior Lecturer in History, Anglia Polytechnic University, Cambridge.

Martyn Rady is Reader in Central European History at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University College London, and General Editor of *The Slavonic and East European Review*.

Nigel Ramsay is Senior Research Fellow, Department of History, University College London.

James Raven is Professor of Modern British History in the University of Essex, and Director of the Cambridge Project for the Book Trust.

David Rundle is James P. R. Lyell Research Fellow in Manuscript Studies and Palaeography, University of Oxford, and a Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford.

Sem C. Sutter is Assistant Director for Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Chicago Library.

Dominique Varry is Maître de Conférences habilité à diriger des recherches at the École Nationale Supérieure des Sciences de l'Information et des Bibliothèques (ENSSIB), Lyon.

Rui (Ray) Wang is Government Documents Librarian at Humboldt State University, California.

Yulin Yang is Associate Professor in the Department of Library and Information Science at Northwest University, Xi'an, Peoples' Republic of China.

This page intentionally left blank

1
Introduction: The Resonances of Loss

James Raven

In April 2003 the assault on Iraq by American and British armed forces cost not only thousands of civilian and military lives but also brought graphic reports of the destruction of much of the country's precious material heritage. Within 48 hours of the entry of American troops into Baghdad, it was claimed that looters had emptied the National Museum of more than 170,000 artefacts, while the National Library and the library at the Ministry of Religious Endowment lay in ruins. In Mosul the University Library was utterly destroyed. Interpretations of the tragedy were both immediate and problematically political.[1] Much testimony has proved to be inaccurate. According to one British commentator, writing in the heat of the moment, 'when the Mongols conquered Baghdad in 1258, they sacked the city and destroyed its library. This time, Iraqis have chosen to ransack their own capital and the legacy of their own past'.[2] By contrast, a leading British Islamic bibliographer condemned those 'who launched this invasion of Iraq . . . they may not have committed massacres or genocide, but they are responsible for the wanton obliteration of the historical memory and artistic and literary heritage, not just of Iraqis, but of all of us'.[3] In the hours following the sack of the Baghdad libraries on 14 April 2003, Robert Fisk filed another furious on-the-spot report:

> So yesterday was the burning of books. . . . The National Library and Archives, a priceless treasure of Ottoman historical documents, including the old royal archives of Iraq, were turned to ashes in 3,000 degrees of heat. Then the library of Korans at the Ministry of Religious Endowment was set ablaze. I saw the looters. . . . And the Americans did nothing. All over the filthy yard they blew, letters of recommendation to the courts of Arabia, demands for ammunition for troops, reports on

the theft of camels and attacks on pilgrims, all in delicate hand-written Arabic script. I was holding in my hands the last Baghdad vestiges of Iraq's written history. But for Iraq, this is Year Zero; with the destruction of the antiquities in the Museum of Archaeology on Saturday and the burning of the National Archives and then the Koranic library, the cultural identity of Iraq is being erased. Why? Who set these fires? For what insane purpose is this heritage being destroyed? . . .

Genghis Khan's grandson burnt the city in the 13th century and, so it was said, the Tigris river ran black with the ink of books. Yesterday, the black ashes of thousands of ancient documents filled the skies of Iraq. Why?[4]

As Philip Hensher commented of this report: 'The burning of books and the destruction of works of art is so powerful a symbol of barbarism that the stench of it hangs in the air long afterwards: it is something impossible to forgive, impossible to forget.'[5]

The Iraqi catastrophe came only ten years after another brutal cremation of national library holdings. Over three days, 25–27 August 1992, the grand nineteenth-century Moorish-style National and University Library of Bosnia and Hercegovina at Sarajevo [the Vijecnica] was bombarded by incendiary shells. More than a million books, both printed and manuscript, were destroyed. The librarian of the Sarajevo National Museum, Kemal Bakarsic, watched the library burn:

All over the city, sheets of burning paper, fragile pages of grey ashes, floated down like a dirty black snow. Catching a page, you could feel its heat, and for a moment read a fragment of text in a strange kind of black and grey negative, until, as the heat dissipated, the page melted to dust in your hand.[6]

In the same year Seymour Maclean, city trader turned Rastafarian activist, renewed his campaign against the British Crown for the return to Ethiopia of the Magdala manuscripts, royal chronicles, the books of Dengal Maryam, the ancient bibles of Ethiopia and other artefacts confiscated by Britain in the nineteenth century. Their seizure, Maclean averred, amounted to both the violation and the burial of African heritage. The refusal of modern-day authorities to react was nothing less than institutionalised racism:

I have not played the racist card, but I believe that is their motivation. What was colonialism if it wasn't racism and what are manu-
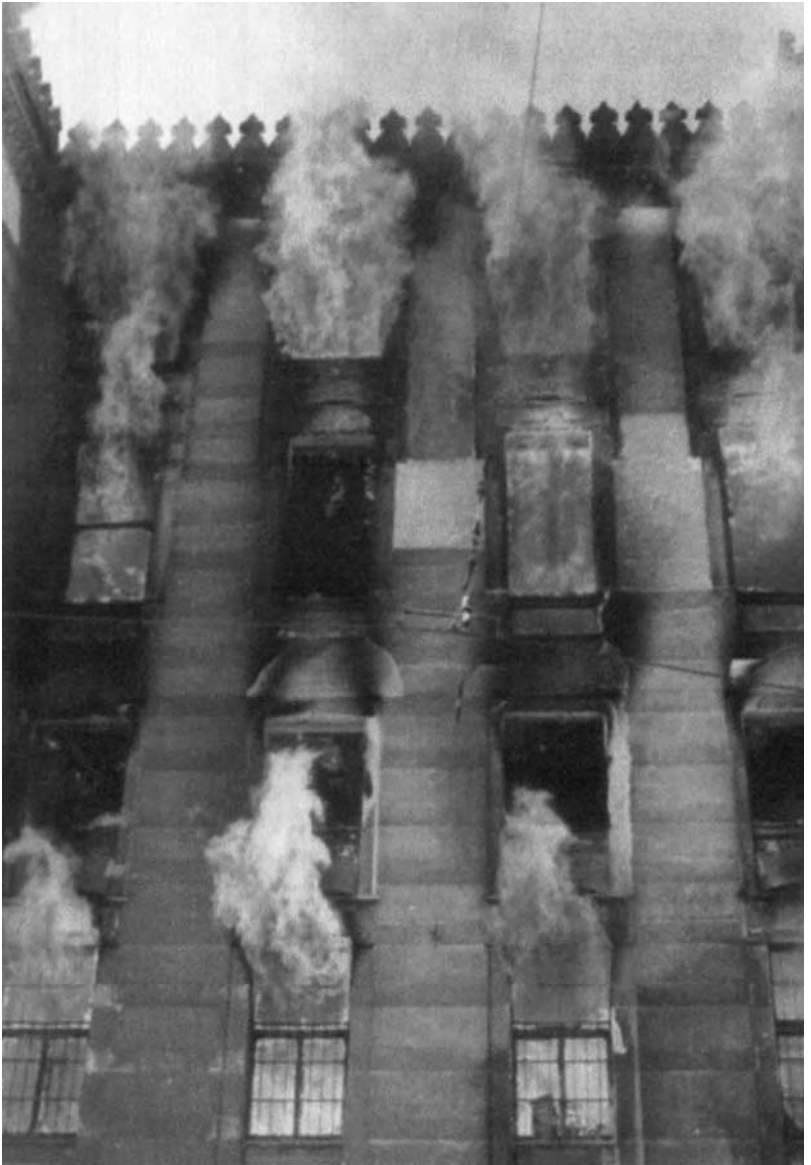
Figure 1.1   The burning of the Vijecnica, the National and University Library of Bosnia, Sarajevo, August 1992. Photograph taken by Kemal Hadzic.

scripts if they are not the spoils of colonialism? Black people are still not being allowed to learn about their history. Do you think Bob Marley or Peter Tosh ever got to see these scripts. They didn't even know they existed.[7]

This volume of essays by scholars living in and writing about diverse parts of the globe offers new perspectives on what it means to lose libraries and great book collections. We should not, of course, automatically privilege the loss of the written word (and that word as preserved by a 'library') over the loss of other forms of cultural storage. In wholly oral cultures the sudden obliteration of a people by bloody conquest or by an epidemic introduced by invaders has led to the complete eradication of indigenous knowledge and memory. Many of the pre-Conquest peoples of North and South America who lived without a written language – most notably, perhaps, the different tribes of the Iroquois – lost virtually their entire history and accrued learning when the diseases brought by Europeans decimated the population and its shamans and elders.[8] Most modern peoples, however, have in one form or another relied upon the written word to collect, preserve and provide (usually controlled) access to scholarship and cultural memory.

In recent years bibliography has found new audiences, its technical foundations underpinned by new scholarship and by archival and electronic resourcefulness. The study of books (both manuscript and printed) has been promoted successfully by spirited 'inter-disciplinary' approaches, some more sophisticated than others. At its best, new historical bibliography contributes to a repositioning of literary canons, to a fresh understanding of literary production, circulation and reception, and to a reassessment of the relationship between manuscript and print and between text and image. This history is one of the involvement of books and print in human activity, not simply a history of books that adheres only to questions of material production or physical description (a proper domain of continuing scholarship in descriptive or analytical bibliography). By comparison to the new histories of printing, publishing and literary reception, however, the wider cultural history of book conservation, of book collecting and of libraries is strikingly underdeveloped. Established journals of library history have broadened their ambit and new national histories of libraries have been planned, but historical thinking about the purpose, appeal and significance of libraries has been relatively unambitious. Existing comparative study of the loss of libraries is even more modest, and yet the questions such study begs open up challenging historical perspectives.

The following chapters are concerned with the consequences of library loss exactly because their study extends our understanding of aspects of social, political, economic, religious and intellectual history. What the authors of the different essays will not pursue, at least not directly, is the reconstruction of libraries, that is to engage in detail with provenance questions, intriguing though that is.[9] Where reconstruction is considered it is where the rediscovery and reconceptualisation of a library helps explain the significance of its demise. How books and libraries have been lost is often surprisingly unclear; many local histories are accusatory, defensive or simply (and sometimes deliberately) uncertain. Moreover, the results of library loss are many and diverse. Contributors to this volume were urged to reach beyond the basic tales of destruction in order to investigate and explain broader costs and implications. For libraries worldwide, fires, floods, and earthquakes have proved fearsome foes, but particular circumstances, such as the design of buildings, bureaucratic delay, or botched and melodramatic rescue operations, have often made the loss all the more confused or sensational.[10] Book collections have been ruined by war and by the conduct of dynastic and political struggle, but libraries have also been destroyed by deliberately targeted pillage – by what some commentators have characterized as literary genocide.[11] Some causes have been immediately explicable and the results obvious, but sometimes the consequences have taken centuries to unfold. Repercussions have not always been negative, but in many cases strangely invented histories of destruction have resulted. Exotic histories often account for a loss not nearly as catastrophic as it has been politic to represent.

There are certainly many modern examples of where the devastation of a library has been exaggerated for propagandist value. When the Bucharest University Library, located near to the Communist Party headquarters, was raked by fire in the revolution of December 1989, some 500,000 volumes were damaged or destroyed, including many manuscripts and dissertations. As dramatic reports highlighted, the losses included manuscripts of the Romanian national poet Mihai Eminescu and unique ancient Hungarian literature. More than 75 per cent of the collection did survive, however (much was outhoused), and only four of the library's incunables were lost. The catalogue also survived intact.[12] British and American academics outraged by the news footage from the Iraqi National Museum (if not the Library) were accused within weeks of absurd naïvety in accepting the interpretation of events offered by 'apparatchiks of a fascist regime'.[13] Argument over the extent and appraisal of cultural looting descended into journalistic

sniping over the Israeli–Middle-East conflict. To give another modern example, those bibliographical equivalents of the Elgin marbles, the Ethiopian manuscripts stolen from the church of Mdhanie Alem by the British in 1868, have been valued by Maclean and his supporters as worth three billion pounds (however such a valuation is achieved). This is several times the national debt of Ethiopia, but the Ethiopian government, anxious for relief of debt burdens, does not welcome the campaigning, and is apparently as eager as the British Library to point to the problems of conservation in Ethiopia, in order to stay on-side in the debt cancellation game.[14] The books and the lost, scattered library have become symbols for an ostracised group of militant exiles, in which an exiled material heritage continues to create and refuel the sense of larger loss, larger iniquities, and larger enmities.

The mysteries and the propaganda generated by library loss have certainly contributed to imaginative histories and the enthusiasms of antiquarian bibliophiles. Influential examples in the Anglo-Saxon world range from Archbishop Parker's re-assemblage of monastic salvage in the late sixteenth century (to form the nucleus of today's incomparable Parker library of medieval manuscripts), to Wilmarth Lewis's twentieth-century recreation of the eighteenth-century library of Horace Walpole in a village in the middle of Connecticut. The colonial mansion that Lewis bought in Farmington was even remodelled to include not only a shelved alcove for Walpole's own reconstruction of an eighteenth-century rare book library, but a physical recreation of an appropriately period library building. On a much weightier scale, the extended episode of monastic 'secularisation' in the Habsburg territories, France and then Spain and Portugal between the late eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries also opened up complex questions of bibliographical interpretation and of the ambiguities of destruction, dispersal and systematised preservation of books and manuscripts.[15] The Austrian and French confiscations are surveyed in later chapters, but in Spain also, seizures of private libraries during the War of the Spanish Succession were followed some fifty years later by the appropriation of the collections of expelled Jesuits, then by the sale of libraries at the end of the Peninsular war, and finally, in 1836, by the dissolution of many Spanish monasteries and the destruction or foreign sale of their book collections. In Spain, as in central Europe and France, national acquisition brought certain scholastic benefits in the wake of the much-paraded horrors of loss and seizure.[16]

The fragility of the book is never far from these considerations. Part of the popular fascination with literary loss resides with the image of

flames, inundation and other dramatic spoliation. It was Galen, in antiquity, who wrote that fire, along with earthquakes, was the most usual cause of the destruction of books.[17] The disaster inventory extends to the fires that destroyed Augustus's Palatine library in AD 64, the library in the Porticus of Octavia in AD 80, the library in Vespasian's Temple of Peace in AD 191 and (among many other burned-out ancient libraries), the Imperial Library of Constantinople founded in AD 354 and first burned down in AD 476/7.[18] Lightning destroyed the Muslim library of Medina in 1257, and the ancient Collegium Maius at the centre of the Cracow Academy burned to the ground in 1492. In 1658 the flames that consumed the Royal Library of Sweden destroyed 18,000 of its 25,000 books and 1,100 of its 1,400 manuscripts.[19] In 1671, a three-day fire overwhelmed 8,000 of the 10,000 precious Arabic books in the custody of the library of the Escorial, and another prolonged fire, in 1728, removed the library of Copenhagen University, founded in 1482.[20]

Despite the many advances in safety measures, total protection will always be impossible. In modern times, fire, earthquake and flood have continued to devastate libraries around the globe. Quite aside from the burning of the Library of Congress by British troops in August 1814 (where the actual number of lost books is in fact questionable[21]), the later formation of the library was interrupted by various accidental fires. An outbreak in 1825 was caught just in time, but a further fire in 1851 destroyed 35,000 volumes or two-thirds of the collection.[22] Among notable earlier American ravages, Harvard College Library burned in 1764, and Charleston's Library Society was gutted in 1778. A tremendous fire in October 1895 at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville destroyed the Rotunda and most of the library beneath its dome; only 17,000 volumes (of a total of more than 57,000) were rescued.[23] In the next century, fires resulting from the Great Kanto earthquake of September 1923 burned more than 700,000 volumes in the library of the Tokyo Imperial University, including almost all the records of nineteenth-century rural Japan. In total, some 30 libraries were ruined by the Tokyo earthquake and more than 12 million volumes were lost or damaged.[24] Almost twenty years later some 40,000 manuscripts and 100,000 volumes, many concerning the Spanish Conquest, were lost when a fire completely destroyed the Biblioteca Nacional del Perú in Lima in May 1943.[25] Outside the war zones, the greatest library catastrophe in recent years was probably the fire of February 1988 that destroyed some 300,000 books and seriously damaged more than three-and-a-half million further volumes at the library of the Academy of Sciences at St Petersburg.[26]

Many of these natural disasters provoked immediate heart-searching and a quest for explanation. The earthquake and consequent tidal inundation that destroyed Lisbon in 1755 unsettled Enlightenment Europe. Absolutely nothing survived of the Royal Library, the work of John V who had died five years before and who had aimed to create one of the greatest libraries of Europe. Detailed evaluation of the loss, however, was overwhelmed by a torrent of moralising. Celebrated essays by Voltaire and Rousseau accompanied less considered tracts claiming that a sinful Lisbon had generated divine retribution.[27] The outpouring made the library barely visible to subsequent historians.[28] More recent library disasters have prompted more specific accusations of human failing and after-the-event inquiries have pondered insurance liabilities and the sufficiency of defences. Bitter recriminations followed the flooding of the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, the Vieusseux and the University Library (among other libraries) by the swollen Arno in November 1966 (with damage to over two million volumes in total, including 100,000 volumes of the precious Magliabechi collection and 50,000 folios of the Palatina).[29] Similar reproaches (and old animosities between Paris and regional government) appeared after the cremation of 350,000 volumes at the bibliothèque interuniversitaire of Lyon on the night of 11 June 1999.[30] The international effort to restore Florence also found sad echoes in the appeals broadcast by Czech librarians following the central European floods of August 2002. The inundation damaged or completely destroyed 42 libraries in the Czech Republic, with an estimated 776,000 volumes lost or seriously harmed and 140,000 volumes freeze-dried for later attempts at restoration.[31]

When books burn, drown or are carted off as war booty, the images are often indelible. There are many precursors of the haunting accounts of the raining down of burning pages in Sarajevo and Baghdad that opened this essay. When, at the close of the Great Fire of London, air rushed in to the booksellers' cellars in St Faith's under the choir of Old St Paul's, it created a whirlwind of ash and burning pages, with books, in John Evelyn's words, 'all consumed burning for a week following'.[32] The loss in the same fire of the great library of Samuel Cromleholme, High Master of St Paul's school, is said to have hastened his death.[33] Other vivid early modern reports record the destruction of precious collections (including the Reinhardsbrunn) during the Peasants' War of 1524–25, and, ten years later, Charles V's mass burning of books in Tunis and Fez.[34] The central European conflicts of the next century generated graphic accounts of book collections transformed into trophies of war. The looting of libraries in north German towns and in various Jesuit

Figure 1.2(*a*) A human chain rescuing books at the Biblioteca Nazionale, November 1966

Figure 1.2(*b*) A ruined stack at the Biblioteca Nazionale, following the Florence flood of November 1966

colleges by Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden inaugurated a vast exodus of books after Swedish advances in the Baltic provinces in 1621 and in Prussia in 1626. Würzburg, Erfurt, Eichsfeld, Mainz and the Rheingau were looted in 1631. After Gustavus's death, his generals continued the plunder, seizing libraries in Silesia, Bohemia and Moravia, with the largest share of the spoils despatched to the University of Uppsala, founded in 1621.[35] Overshadowing all of these confiscations was Maximilian of Bavaria's seizure in 1622 of the Bibliotheca Palatina at Heidelberg, then the most famous library in the western world. A year later Maximilian presented 3,500 Palatina manuscripts and 12,000 printed books to Pope Gregory XV in Rome. What remained in Heidelberg was destroyed by the troops of Louis XIV in 1693 (among their other library devastations) during the Palatine War.[36]

In these and later conflicts books and libraries appeared as both victims and trophies of engagement. The ransack of the library of King's College (later Columbia) New York by British troops in 1776 was followed almost immediately by official proclamations for the books' return.[37] Some forty years later, Anglo-American reprisals continued with the burning of the parliament buildings and library of York (Toronto), Upper Canada, by American soldiers in the spring of 1813. When British troops attacked Washington in the following year, the Capitol and its library proved irresistible targets – and ones so obviously signalled in advance that many volumes, along with congressional papers and files, were evacuated.[38] In fact, the attack on the Library of Congress provided a convenient opportunity for Thomas Jefferson, retired president, and heavily in debt, to offer Congress first refusal on purchasing his 6,500-volume private library – a transaction narrowly agreed to by Congress for $23,950.[39]

In the interpretation – and defence – of such deliberate targeting, highly partial stories of the devastation of libraries, great and small, were caught up in narratives of justification and retribution. The oldest recorded book-burning order is said to be a Chinese Imperial edict of 213 BC,[40] but in modern European history the sack of the great library of Córdoba by Ferdinand III in 1236 stood out as a focus of ideological struggle. When the Christian champion breached its gates the city was the largest in Europe after Constantinople, boasting 200,000 houses and, most sources note, 700 public baths. Its intellectual culture was famed throughout the Continent and centred upon the library established by Caliph Al Hakkam II between 961 and 976 AD. It is said to have contained 400,000 manuscripts. From here between 1169 and

1195 Abu'l Walid Ibn-Rushd, also known as Averroes, began his translations and commentaries on Aristotle, rescuing him from near-oblivion in Western Europe and offering a more general defence of Greek philosophy. The library of the Grand Mosque of Córdoba, founded in 786 by the Umayyad prince Abd al-Rahmān, stood at the centre of the intellectual and social life of the city. Almost immediately the ruin of the Córdoba library (together with the city's great private libraries such as those of Abal-Mūtrif and Ibn Tufas) became both a thing of mythology in the Islamic world and a repressed memory in Christian Europe (if one revived by the great bonfires of Arabic manuscripts in Granada in 1499). In counter-Reformation Catholic realms, in particular, histories of the Reconquista continued to be mired by centuries of suspicion of Islamic culture, and especially of Islamic Europe. In the opposite camp many accounts were coloured by Protestant contempt for alleged Catholic mistrust of the book, and much was made of the nurturing of ancient philosophy and the preservation of ancient texts by Islamic Córdoba in contrast to the neglect or outright hostility of the Catholic church.[41]

The devastation of Córdoba features prominently in the long catalogue of lost medieval libraries. Amid the killing-fields and the looting and sieges, collections of books and working libraries, many of them centuries old, were sacked, torched or followed their owners and readers into religious pyres. The Mongol invasions of the Middle East between 1218 and 1220 and again in 1258 destroyed many dozens of public libraries and many hundreds of private ones. One contemporary witness reported that so many books were thrown into the Tigris that 'they formed a bridge that would support men on horseback'.[42] Such irreparable literary losses became the focus of both romantic and historical attention, even where the losses were less the result of religious conflict than the precautionary actions of worried partisans. The great library of Cathar literature, for example, amassed over forty years by Robert, count of Montferrand, was burnt on the deathbed instructions of its creator, depriving us of what would have been the greatest single assessment of Cathar beliefs.[43] In Scotland, in 1298, the terrible revenge wrought by Edward I of England after the defeat of William Wallace became established in national history, coloured by the razing of Restenneth Priory, guardian of books allegedly brought from Rome by Fergus II of Scotland.[44]

All such myth-making, however, pales by comparison with the lost library that has loomed over the European imagination for more than

eight hundred years, and is repeatedly invoked as a standard parable. Take, for example, the introductory explanation given by Edward Parsons for his 1952 book *The Alexandrian Library*:

> Deep in my study, as the outer world resounded with the havoc of war, or limped in slow recovery from its frightful toll, I thought I would write the history of the Alexandrian Library, itself the prefect victim of military madness and of the frenzy of the heart and soul of man.[45]

In another typical, but more recent lament, and one, in turn, criticised for political bias, Professor Trevor Watkins of Edinburgh concluded that 'the loss of Iraq's cultural heritage will go down in history – like the burning of the library at Alexandria – and Britain and the US will be to blame'.[46] A similar analogy is made by a leading critic of Chinese intervention in Tibet.[47]

The lost library of Alexandria is a persistent memory in both Western and Middle Eastern writing and art, reformulated by successive generations, and the debate about its fate has been vigorously contested for centuries.[48] Even by the late eighteenth century, Gibbon wrote that 'I should deceive the expectation of the reader if I passed in silence the fate of the Alexandrian Library.'[49] The European revival of classical scholarship from the mid-nineteenth century prominently featured the library,[50] as well as encouraging fresh speculation about other lost libraries of antiquity, of Thebes, Nineveh, and Baghdad.[51] The loss of the Alexandrian libraries themselves accounted for the loss not only of Greek and Hebrew texts but of writings derived from Mesopotamia – books, according to the greatest of Victorian library historians 'collected with eagerness and made accessible with liberality;- to be once more destroyed with blind and reckless barbarity'.[52] As the next chapter by Jeremy Black reminds us, the Egyptian libraries, despite the iconic fame of Alexandria, were certainly not the earliest. Many of the ancient tablets from Mesopotamia, moreover, are 'lost' to us not because too few survive (even after the Iraqi catastrophe of 2003), nor because we cannot decipher the script (although indecipherable texts do remain from other civilisations), but because we have too few modern scholars with the requisite skills readily to unlock the libraries' secrets.[53]

In the case of Alexandria much of the inspiration for the speculation and stories has derived from politically charged attacks on the alleged pillagers, corresponding to the three occupying powers of post-hellenic Egypt. Three villains in particular have been isolated: the Roman Julius

Caesar, the Christian Patriarch Theophilus of Alexandria, and the Muslim Caliph Omar of Damascus.[54] The sources here have been problematic and language has played a great part in deciding when or even whether the Alexandrian libraries were lost. Greek, Latin, and Arabic, but also diverse other languages all offer commentaries that turn on the nuance of a specific word or phrase. Most modern historians, with the exception of Alfred J. Butler, have depended on translations, including a recent (if semi-fictional) contribution by Luciano Canfora.[55] Adding to this perplexity, romantic interest in the lost library – and the difficulty in interpreting the events – has been compounded by the loss of the entire palace quarter of the ancient city. Following a series of earthquakes and floods in the middle ages the whole Bruchion (or north-east, palace quarter) of Alexandria lies beneath the harbour waters, its ruins made tantalisingly visible in recent years by the submersible searchlights of various American and European television crews (witness also to the raising of several gigantic statues and building blocks).

Much historical confusion has been caused by what was in fact a multiplicity of libraries in Alexandria: the Royal Library established by Ptolemy I (Soter) in about 290 BC,[56] the collection in the hall of the neighbouring Mouseion (also in the Bruchion, and which might even at some point have fully encompassed the Royal Library), the Daughter Library probably founded by Ptolemy Philadelphus and situated in the precinct of the Serapeion (or Serapeum) in the south-western quarter of the city (portions of which have been excavated by archaeologists),[57] the book collection of the Caesareion (with a library later founded there by Hadrian), a later history library established by Claudius, and a separate collection of 200,000 scrolls from the Pergamum library given to Cleopatra by Mark Antony, possibly as compensation for the loss of the Royal Library.[58] In chronicling the fate of these libraries three main events have been the source of mythologies: the Alexandrian war in 48 BC, the destruction of the Serapeion in AD 391, and the Arab conquest of Egypt in AD 642.[59]

Of the various colourful accusations, some of the most strident have indicted Julius Caesar whose destruction of the Egyptian fleet in pursuit of Pompey in 47–48 BC was said to have resulted in a great fire in the city itself. Caesar is charged 'with the greatest act of vandalism during antiquity' in a phrase that often establishes the benchmark for the accounts of pillage discussed in chapters below. Many commentators have pointed to Caesar's reticent acknowledgement of his burning of enemy ships off Alexandria in his *Civil Wars*, arguing that elsewhere he boasted of the consequences of his actions and so must have had

something to hide.[60] Various sources have encouraged speculation about missing accounts, especially the version of the Alexandrian war by Livy (d. 17 AD) in his *History of Rome* and a second-century *Epitome* by Florus that claimed that the royal quarter was deliberately razed by Caesar for defensive reasons.[61] Subsequent chronicles from the reign of Nero provided further accusations (and from those traditionally opposed to the imperial system). Lucan refuted the account of Caesar's lieutenant Hirtius, author of *The Alexandrian War*, who disavowed Caesar's responsibility for any library fire, insisting that all Alexandrian buildings and their roofs were fire-proof because they were constructed of stone. By contrast, Lucan's epic poem tells of buildings close to the sea catching fire: 'the wind lent force to the powers of disaster; the flames . . . ran over the roofs at meteoric speed'.[62] Seneca, put to death, like Lucan, in AD 65, was much more confident (whether or not his source was the lost Livy) but his claims have been overshadowed by dispute about the number of books that he said were burnt during Caesar's war. The Monte Cassino manuscript of *On the Tranquillity of the Mind* suggests 40,000 books, although many modern versions have corrected the 'quadringenta' to 400,000, some to match the number of scrolls cited by other scholars including the Christian Orosius (d. after 415 AD).[63]

The crucial accusation came at the end of the first century when Plutarch's *Life of Caesar* explicitly stated that 'when the enemy tried to cut off his fleet, Caesar was forced to repel the danger by using fire, which spread from the dockyards and destroyed the "Great Library"' [megale bibliotheke]. Plutarch's account, complete with apologetic tone, was repeated by historians from the second to the fifth centuries. A particularly influential broadcaster was Aulus Gellius (d. AD 180), whose second-century account insisted that the fire was an accidental consequence of Caesar's campaign, but also inflated the total of lost books and manuscripts to 700,000. This figure was repeated later in the fourth century by Ammianus Marcellinus (d. AD 395) who now also referred to the library as 'priceless'.[64]

From these authorities came claims and counterclaims of the type echoed by stories considered by other chapters in this volume. Post-Roman survival of the Royal Library of Alexandria was asserted, often in the teeth of available evidence. One debate persisted about the fire-proofing argument of the author of the *Alexandrian War* when it was pointed out that he was contradicted by one of his own later passages describing Roman oar-making from wooden roof beams lifted from

Alexandrian public buildings.[65] Another debate derived from a third-century statement by Dio Cassius (d. AD 235) that the lost books and manuscripts had in fact been stacked on the quayside for export. The dispute turned on his use of word 'apothecae' as a warehouse for books, even though, as many others contended, Galen had used the same word for 'bookstacks' in his account of the registering of books in Alexandria. Plutarch does also seem to have had personal knowledge of Alexandria which he visited, and where he wrote that the Great Library of the Mouseion was no more.[66]

The evidential gaps and silences are significant. Cicero, hardly a friend of Caesar, is silent on the loss of the library, and has therefore been claimed as a witness for the defence.[67] Similarly, Strabo (d. c. AD 24), the first writer to visit Alexandria two decades after Caesar's death, did not have a word to say about the library or its absence (and is also used by some as evidence that the Library was still in existence but situated inside the museum). 'Is it a conspiracy of silence, or an imposed ban on the subject under the Julio-Claudian family?' asks one commentator.[68] In fact, a recent claim based on Strabo's apparent allusion to those working from a greater array of books than those he found in Alexandria has bolstered claims about the importance of distinguishing between different ancient Alexandrian libraries – that the Royal library building did not survive beyond 48 BC, but that the Mouseion, further away from the sea, did survive, together with the Ceasareion and the Daughter library, safe in the precinct of the Serapeion (now the principal library of Roman Alexandria).[69] For Parsons, silences were natural: 'Athenaeus thought that there was no purpose in writing about it [the Library] because it was in all men's minds.'[70]

If, as now seems, the Mouseion did endure for another two centuries, it probably did not long survive Theodosius's decree of 391 ordering the destruction of all pagan temples in the city. Here, anti-Christian sympathies replace anti-Caesar indictments in the Alexandrian mythology. The prosecution notably includes Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* accusations. After the edicts of Theodosius, wrote Gibbon, 'the valuable library of Alexandria was pillaged or destroyed; and, near twenty years afterwards, the appearance of the empty shelves excited the regret and indignation of every spectator, whose mind was not totally darkened by religious prejudice'. Gibbon's footnote to this read: 'Though a bigot, and a controversial writer, Orosius seems to blush.'[71] It is true that fourth- and fifth-century enthusiasm for the Apostolic Constitution attempted to enforce a purely Christian course of education uncontaminated by

pagan literature and philosophy, and it resulted in a crusade against pagan books and learning throughout the Roman Christian empire. Ammianus Marcellinus wrote that 'libraries were closed for ever like the tomb'.[72] Some uncertainty remains, however, about the extent of Christian destruction and whether surviving eye-witness accounts really do confirm that the Christian Theophilus, executing Emperor Theodosius's commands, burnt the library as an unwelcome relic of pagan culture. One key source, the evidence of Aphthonius, who visited Alexandria in the fourth century, turns on the exact date of his visit, although it is now generally considered that it was before the 391 decree.[73] Modern glosses have suggested that 'Christianity slowly strangled the life out of classical culture in the fourth century' and that Theophilus yearned to destroy the pagan library so that 'the vast structure [of the Serapeion] was razed to its foundations and the scrolls from the library were burnt in huge pyres in the streets of Alexandria'.[74] The sack of the Serapeion is indeed the subject of several long fourth- and fifth-century accounts, but even the most virulently anti-Christian of these, Eunapius of Antioch, dared not claim that anything of the ancient library remained in the Serapeion when it was razed.[75] The final and most sensational image of this demonology came with portrayals of Hypatia, fifth-century mathematician of Alexandria, being dragged from her chariot by Christian monks, flayed, and then put to the torch together with the remaining books from the library.[76]

Even if the Alexandrian library, or its remnants, finally met destruction with the attack on the Serapeion in 391 (or indeed in the many attacks leading up to this[77]), the conquest of Egypt by the Arab general Amr in 642 generated another mythology of loss. The events of the invasion were recorded by Arab, Copt, and Byzantine historians, but none mentioned the loss of the library until early in the thirteenth century. Then, more than five centuries after the Arab invasion, two great Arab writers, Abdullatif of Baghdad and Ibn Al-Qifti, suddenly associated Amr with the burning of Ptolemy's ancient library. Abdullatif's *Account of Egypt* is widely discredited because of the many obvious errors in his writing, but Ibn Al-Qifti's *History of Wise Men* described Amr's orders to destroy 54,000 books of knowledge, and, most dramatically, told of the general's distribution of the books among the baths of Alexandria and their use as fuel for heating. It was said that it took six months to burn them all. Amr's actions were supposedly taken after he had been told of the value of the books by a Coptic priest, John the Grammarian, and had then consulted Caliph Omar in Damascus. Omar's response became legendary: 'if what is written in them [the scrolls] agrees with the Book

of God [that is, the Koran], they are not required: if it disagrees, they are not desired. Destroy them therefore.'[78] The story was repeated in numerous Arab chronicles, and was certainly embellished in the writings of the Christian Bishop Gregory Bar Hebraeus (d. 1286), known also as Abû 'l Faraj. 'Listen and wonder', he concluded.[79] Although these accounts do not seem to have circulated in Europe until the seventeenth century, they then prompted a controversy that lasted three centuries. Early in the twentieth century the Arabist Butler attempted to demolish the Ibn Al-Qifti history of the lost library ('a tissue of absurdities'), noting in particular that vellum did not burn. In fact, it does, and Butler's attack is notable more for its vigour than sensitivity.[80]

One result of the renewed interest in Ibn Al-Qifti has been scholarly detective work that traces his account back to fourth-century sources and establishes that the bath-time story was a twelfth-century invention.[81] Many early attempts to debunk the myth were not convincing, but more recently scholarship has extended into an exploration of its political origins. At the same time as eleventh- and twelfth-century crusades were attempting to reverse the Arab conquest of Palestine, classical learning was revived throughout Europe. A scholastic renaissance nurtured by university and monastic foundations and encouraged by monarchs contributed to a gradual desacralisation of learning, with a strong revival of interest in Greek philosophy and of Latin translations from the Arabic, including Euclid, Hippocrates, Galen, Ptolemy, and Aristotle. The search began for lost texts with a particular focus on the great cities and libraries of the Muslim world known to be depositories of the work of the ancients, especially of the Greeks.[82]

It was in consideration of this movement that Ibn Al-Qifti constructed a legend intended to demonstrate, not unreasonably, that a destruction of a library like Alexandria by an earlier Arab regime (and one pointedly different to its successor), was a lesser crime than the sale of books. What Ibn Al-Qifti was reacting to was the widespread dismantling of libraries in the Muslim world that contrasted so unfavourably with the new European interest in the origins of ancient learning. A large part of the great Fatimid Library, with more than two million volumes, had been sold by the Caliph of Egypt in 1070. A wonder of the ancient world, the library was ransacked to pay off the creditors of the regime. The disposal of hundreds of thousands of books amounted to one of the greatest dispersals of books ever seen. The crusaders' capture of Tripoli in 1109 also resulted in the further plunder of many thousands of books, while the 4,000-volume private library of Osama Ibn Munqiz,

Muslim general and poet, was carried away to Acre despite promises of safe conduct from the king of Jerusalem.[83]

As part of the propaganda battle about the care and preservation of books, of accusations and counter-accusations about the plunder and destruction of libraries, the grand fable of Alexandria was constructed. It was also exceptionally astute. Ibn Al-Qifti knew that his masters must approve. Following the overthrow of the old Shi'ite rule of Fatimids, the Sunni regime of Saladin had attempted to replenish his treasury and to continue his campaign against the Crusaders by the sale of priceless libraries. Most notable was the auction of remains of the Fatimid library in Egypt in 1171.[84] The sale lasted several years, and 120,000 volumes were transported to Syria. In 1183 another library of a million books in the Syrian city of Ahmed on the upper Euphrates was given away to Saladin's supporters in payment for services. Al-Qadi Al-Fadel loaded 70 camels with his selections, and it took Ibn Qarah Arslan a further seven years to sell off the surpluses. Ibn Al-Qifti's father had served Saladin as a judge and he was himself appointed as a judge at Aleppo. As servants of the new order, Ibn Al-Qifti and his father eagerly demonstrated support for Saladin's conduct, and the destruction of Alexandria provided a convenient imaginative gambit. In the words of the historian Mostafa El-Abbadi, 'it was in response to the exigency of these pressing circumstances, that Ibn Al-Qifti included in his *History of Wise Men* the fantastic story of Amr ordering the books of the ancient library of Alexandria to be used as fuel for heating the city baths, the implication being that it is less of a crime to sell books in an emergency than to put them to the fire'.[85]

The real interest here concerns the politically managed creation of myths about the loss of books, all spreading confusion about the character of constituent parts of a library as much as about the fate of the collection itself. In this case, the story of the loss of the greatest library of antiquity was engulfed by later debates about the origins of medieval learning, the sources of the renaissance, and the construction of the grand histories of the Enlightenment. Subsequent retellings of the Alexandrian story upheld the verdict of Athenaeus of Naucratis as early as 200 AD that 'concerning the number of books, and the establishment of libraries, and the collection in the Museum [Hall of the Muses], why need I even speak when they are all the memory of men'.[86] Sourcing all the narratives, however, was the indisputable loss of books (wherever exactly stored, whenever exactly destroyed, and exactly by whom). Lost Alexandria became a totemic story about delays to human advance-

ment, the scars in the history of civilization, and great caesuras in learning: 'the certainty that some bookshelf in some hexagon contained precious books, yet that those precious books were forever out of reach, was almost unbearable'.[87]

The sense of literary loss was clearly compelling, and, as following chapters of this volume describe, it was to be echoed by fearful consideration of literature lost during the various assaults on monasteries in Europe between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries. The loss has been much brooded over. High on the fantasy wish-lists are the missing 48 of Cicero's known 106 speeches, the lost books of Livy's *History of Rome* and of Tacitus' *Annals* and *Histories*, Varro's *Menippean Satires*, his *Dialogues*, 42 books of *Antiquities*, most of his *De lingua Latina* and all of his encyclopedia *De novem disciplinis*, and all the *Chronica* and *Exempla* of Cornelius Nepos.[88] Where acclaimed literature survives only in part or the full corpus is wanting, absence can seem more conspicuous. Suetonius's biographies of the Ceasars survive (as well as fragments of his *Illustrious Writers*), but we are tantalised by the known titles of fourteen other lost books including *Lives of the Famous Whores*, *Physical Effects of Mankind*, *Roman Festivals*, and *Greek Games*.[89] The devastation of Alexandria probably bears little responsibility for this catalogue of literary bereavement, although it almost certainly held copies of Greek writings now lost – including all 3,000 to 4,000 writings of Didymus (80–10 BC) of the Alexandrian school. The creation by reduction of a classical canon is an enduring association with lost libraries and, recurrently, with outcries against the foolishness of assembling large central literary deposits and the failure of man to learn by example. Rebecca Knuth's discussion of the great cathedral in Tibet is a case in point (and there are many others in later chapters), while the 'marginal' libraries which alone ensured the survival of certain classical literature (as opposed to centralised repositories of which Alexandria was the prime example) are the heroes of Canfora's imaginative *Vanished Library*.[90]

Certainly, the depiction of the elimination of the Alexandria library carried far-reaching influence, from its inclusion in Masonic narratives of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to its appearance in grand narratives about the erratic evolution of Western democracy (particularly as published in the early United States). Children's history books are a particularly compelling source, while the romantic imagination distorts even the most serious of intentions. Parsons concluded his dramatic post-Second World War history of the Library ['now under the blight of Islam'] with this peroration:

The curtain falls on the tragic history of man's greatest original cre-
ative effort in preserving for time the precious records of mystery,
beauty and wisdom of the divine-human mind

> The white stone roof of the Muses' Hall
> Has fallen and is no more;
> Here, on frail papyrus writ, was all that man
> Had dreamed and thought and from the heavens caught
> Of wisdom's truth and beauty's fleeting glory
>> Now, the sacred and awful treasures of the mind
>> Are scattered by the winds of yore
>>> Laus Deo[91]

Perhaps the most striking feature of the Alexandrian library story is
indeed the way that debate was energised and engaged in by so many.
The Aswan Declaration of February 1990 set out plans for a new library
of Alexandria (the Bibliotheca Alexandrina). Built under UNESCO aus-
pices 'as the first library on such a scale to be designed and constructed
with the assistance of the international community' the Declaration
hails the project as the modern successor to 'the edification of a Library
in the lineage of Aristotle's Lyceum, transposing Alexander's dreams
of empire into a quest for universal knowledge . . . the achievements of
Alexandrian science, lost to the West for over a millennium before their
partial recovery via Constantinople and classical Arabic and Islamic cul-
tures, were to be instrumental in launching the European Renaissance
on its quest for new worlds. In this and as the transmitter of Greek
civilization in general, the Ancient Library of Alexandria survives as a
vital link in a living tradition.'[92]

More exotic are the countless books, articles, and now websites
devoted to spinning further myths or offering outlandish interpreta-
tions of the lost library of Alexandria. *Alexandria*, a journal 'devoted
to exploring the philosophical, spiritual and cosmological traditions
of the Western World', is among the more respectable of these
but few are free of esoteric offerings, especially given the democracy
of the web. Mohamed Sid-Ahmed, contributing an article to
Arabic.news.com on the developing new Alexandrian library, demands
a library of interactive texts but adds also that 'first and foremost it will
have to face the challenge that Israel represents'.[93] In his more con-
ventionally popular study, *Cosmos*, Carl Sagan reflects upon the survival
of 'only a small fraction' of the literature once held at Alexandria. Sagan,
particularly regretting the loss of the writings of Aristarchus of Samos,
adds:

> If we multiply by a hundred thousand our sense of loss for this work
> of Aristarchus, we begin to appreciate the grandeur of the achieve-
> ment of classical civilization and the tragedy of its destruction. . . .
> Imagine what mysteries could be solved with a borrower's card to
> the Alexandrian Library. We know of a three-volume history of the
> world, now lost, by a Babylonian priest named Berossus. The first
> volume dealt with the interval from the Creation to the Flood, a
> period he took to be 432,000 years or about a hundred times longer
> than the Old Testament chronology. I wonder what was in it.[94]

Sagan's illustrator goes even further, offering imaginative representa-
tions of the Great Hall of the Library that update the much reproduced
but equally imaginative engravings of von Corven. The Sagan illustra-
tions, 'based on scholarly evidence', depict Alexander the Great 'with
crook and flail, and pharaonic headgear, as he might have appeared in
the Library of Alexandria', and 'the lost books of Aristarchus, as they
might have been stored on the shelves of the Alexandrian Library'.[95]
One of the many websites asserts that the library was destroyed because
it held collections on 'the sexuality of humans (subjects such as homo-
sexuality, sexual stimulation and sexual positions)'.[96] The same site
(Cypriot in origin) is clear about the early Christians' responsibility for
the destruction of the library. According to its editor, Hypatia was pulled
from her chariot 'driving home from her own lectures', before the
library 'was ransacked of any gold or silver and then put to the torch'.
The writer adds that 'today several diggings where the library stood have
revealed scientific and historical documents that would have resulted
in the industrial revolution having occurred 1500 years earlier'.[97]

   The other cause of the frequent revival and reinvention of the Alexan-
drian story derives from its currency. We would be unwise to believe
that such legends built around the brutality that destroys libraries and
book collections are part only of a distant past. Such histories are not
without contemporary significance, and many issues discussed in the
following essays could hardly be more topical. The potency of many
past images is explained by their capacity for re-use and reformulation,
sometimes in justification as much as in remonstrance.

   The war-led library destruction of the twentieth century stretches
from the opening years of East Asian conflict and the bombardments of
the First World War, to the air raids, burnings and deliberate looting of
the Second World War and the many wars in different parts of the world
thereafter. In 1900, the siege of Beijing, following the Boxer Uprising,
brought about the destruction and dispersal of the Hanlin Yuan (or

Hanlin Academy). Its precise contents remain open to speculation. No record survives of the collections in the library complex, regarded by one historian as 'the quintessence of Chinese scholarship . . . the oldest and richest library in the world'.[98] We do at least know that the library included 36,000 volumes of the Siku Quan Shu (Four Treasure Library) and the last remaining copy of the early fifteenth-century encyclopaedic Yong Lo Da Dia. Although much depleted by 1900, the Yong Lo Da Dia originally comprised 22,937 sections in 11,095 handwritten folio volumes. The original texts, kept at the imperial library in Nanjing, had already perished in a fire in 1449, and a first manuscript copy seems not to have survived the fall of the Ming Dynasty.[99] Although Chinese histories have accused the Western forces of deliberately burning the library halls, British and allied troops apparently sheltered near to the Hanlin Yuan, believing that the Chinese besiegers would not attack a site so venerated.[100]

As one authority would have it, the loss of the treasures of Hanlin came about because 'unlettered groups destroy or allow to be destroyed, books that represent to them the accoutrements of oppression' (a verdict not dissimilar to some accounts of the Baghdad looting in 2003).[101] For just these reasons the Dong-fang library, the largest in Shanghai, was fired by Japanese troops in 1923, but many twentieth-century library tragedies were also attendant upon the site of war (even if military indifference was no less shocking to contemporary commentators around the world). Metz municipal library, lost in the Great War, recalled the loss of the ancient city library of Paris during the Franco-Prussian war of 1870–71, but it was the destruction of Louvain University Library, founded in 1425, that really seized public imagination. Torched by German troops shortly after the invasion of Belgium in 1915, more than a quarter of a million volumes were consumed by the flames.[102] The loss of the Louvain library produced worldwide shock, and an international committee of scholars established at the time of the Paris Peace Conference planned its rebuilding and restocking. Most strikingly, the Japanese minister to Belgium saw the opportunity to offer Europe classics of Japanese literature and some 14,000 volumes were selected for future shipment from the Imperial University Library – only to be consumed in the fire following the earthquake of 1923. When the new Louvain library, restocked by international appeal, was again destroyed in May 1940, the city joined the dismal ranks of cities recurrently visited by the fires of war. A prominent casualty, Salonika, lost libraries in the fires of 1545, 1620, 1734, 1759, 1877, 1890 and again, in the Great War, in 1917.[103]

In Europe the Second World War was preceded by many years of book seizure. Between 1933 and 1945 more than 100 million volumes from libraries and publishing houses were destroyed by Nazi forces in Germany and occupied Europe. In many of these seizures the camera (and later the artist's studio) proved as powerful and immediate as the many evocative written accounts. Photographic images of the burning of Jewish books have been widely used to illustrate and symbolise the beginnings of the holocaust.[104] At the turn of the twenty-first century both Jewish achievement and cataclysmic loss were represented in the inverted library sculpted by Rachel Whiteread. Erected amid spectacular controversy in the Judenplatz in Vienna, Whiteread's library followed a rich tradition of art and sculpture devoted to the collected and shattered book.[105] Libraries are victims and targets for all parties in war, but as Sem Sutter records in his moving account in this volume, the Nazi confiscations are among the many violations that can never be fully assessed, while those that can be memorialised (like those that he details in Chapter 12 below) take as their sources the most poignant of personal testimony.

The bombardments and incendiary attacks of the Second World War reduced hundreds of libraries to burned-out shells. In Serbia the National Library of Belgrade was completely destroyed in April 1941 by German bombing, with 1,300 ancient Cyrillic manuscripts among the greatest losses.[106] The Polish National Library (founded in 1928) in Warsaw lost some 372,000 items from a total collection of more than 700,000, and the Warsaw Krasinski library was entirely destroyed together with the looted collections from the national and university libraries in storage there.[107] The Polish National Library was successor to the Załuski Library, founded in 1747 but removed at Partition in 1795 to be part of the new Imperial Public Library at St Petersburg (founded in 1795 with the building opening in 1814).[108] During the Warsaw Uprising the Raczyńskich library, comprising some 300,000 volumes, burned to the ground, and the main stacks of the Warsaw Public Library burned on the eve of evacuation in January 1945.[109] Many other great Polish libraries were completely destroyed, including those at Elbląg, Gdańsk, and Poznań, with the total loss of more than 70 per cent of the 1.65 million Jewish books thought to have been in Poland in 1939.[110] In Britain incendiary bombs hit the British Museum where the library lost important early collections of books and newspapers, and over 100,000 volumes burned at University College London.[111] The jacket photograph of the aftermath of one air raid has repeatedly served as an iconic illustration of the shattered library.[112]

As Allied forces entered Germany at the end of the war more libraries were lost, including the great public libraries of Bielefeld and Bochum.[113] In Italy more than 20 municipal libraries (notably Naples University Library and the Public Library of Milan) and some two million printed books and 39,000 manuscripts were destroyed by Allied and German air raids.[114] In the Soviet Union as a whole more then 100 million books are thought to have been lost between 1941 and 1944.[115] It is estimated that some 65 per cent of all Japanese public libraries were destroyed in the Second World War.[116]

More recent losses have resulted from colonial and post-colonial vandalism in Africa, the Indian sub-Continent and the Far East, but also from the lootings during the many regime-changes in Central and South America, the Middle East and even in Europe (where post-Cold War history – including the examples of Bucharest and Sarajevo – should banish any sense of superiority in terms of library guardianship). The American Library Association has established an International Responsibilities Taskforce whose reports include those on the Israeli attacks on Palestinian libraries in Ramallah and Bethlehem in the Spring of 2002. A miserable list of loss has also been constructed under UNESCO auspices.[117] The Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966–76) exacted a price that seems, for many Chinese librarians, still too painful to quantify.[118] The occupation of Tibet since 1959 has resulted in the rape of the nation's cultural institutions, as Rebecca Knuth recounts in Chapter 14 of this volume. Savage pillage accompanied the genocide in Cambodia, under the Khmer Rouge (1975–79),[119] and the establishment of the Mujahideen government in April 1992 began a series of attacks on the libraries of Afghanistan, beginning with the Kabul Public Library. The devastation of Kabul University Library by the Northern Alliance (with repeat visitations upon the Public Library) was followed, after the overthrow of the Alliance in 1996, by Taliban attempts to destroy all remaining library holdings in foreign languages (as well as most of the country's own early publications).[120] As such histories demonstrate, deliberate attempts to extinguish knowledge and cultural identity usually do little to discourage further indiscriminate looting and mutilation.

In this respect also, violence against libraries extends efforts (whether by the ban of books or by pre-publication controls) to censor knowledge and reading. Domestic attempts in the United States in 1918 to burn collections of German books echoed the xenophobic and revenge attacks of medieval and early modern book-burning,[121] but much more concerted action to dismantle cultural heritage continued to follow

military occupation or the extension of a new regime. During the 50 years of Russian occupation of Estonia in 1940–90 (and German occupation, 1941–44), for example, some 80 per cent of all Estonian books published between 1918 and 1940 were officially banned (and a 1966 Index banned 9,300 titles). By 1953 more than one-and-a-half million volumes had been taken from Estonian libraries and destroyed. In addition, as also happened in Lithuania and Latvia, all foreign publications published between 1917 and 1944, excepting classics) were gathered in six restricted-access libraries, with all duplicate copies destroyed.[122] Extending the losses by bombing and military action, between two and three million books were taken from 350 libraries in wartime Poland.[123] In the Ukraine, 19,200 different collections are estimated to have been destroyed or seized under German occupation.[124] More than 200 libraries were sacked by Nazi troops in Belarus, where the National Library was stripped of more than four-fifths of its collection. In all, between three and four million books are thought to have been destroyed or seized by invading German armies in the territories later merged as the USSR.[125] Nazi occupation of western Europe brought further seizures, notably at the behest of the ERR (Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg),[126] eagerly gathering volumes for the construction of a post-war university. ERR plunder included numerous libraries in Belgium, and, between September and October 1940, the Bibliotheca Klossiana and 92 other Masonic libraries in Amsterdam. The library of the International Institute for Social History in Amsterdam was dismantled because, according to an ERR report, it had been founded (in 1934), 'with the intention of creating a centre of intellectual resistance against National Socialism'. Many of the books were classified as 'very valuable' – confiscation not destruction proved the ERR's pragmatic objective (with, indeed, a marked intellectual enthusiasm for the task).[127]

What the ERR was doing in destroying collections in order to discard some books but reassemble others, is, of course, another fundamental aspect of 'lost libraries'. The enduring fascination with the Alexandrian story partly results from the continuing dispersal, sale, re-sale and re-formation of book collections. Even in times of peace and prosperity libraries are broken up. They can be 'lost' under the most tranquil and authorised conditions – and their remnants can acquire the sort of bibliographical trophyism described by many of the chapters below.[128] In Britain enormous excitement was caused by the redistributive sale of many early private libraries, notably those of Dr Richard Mead in 1754, of Dr Anthony Askew in 1774, of John, Duke of Roxburghe in

1812, of William Beckford in 1819 (one of many of his sales), and of Richard Heber between 1826 and 1828.[129] In the 1880s an assortment of aristocrats fallen on hard times launched a succession of illustrious sales led by the Third Earl of Sunderland in 1881–83, the Duke of Hamilton in 1882–84 and the Thorold Syston Park sale in 1884.[130]

Books and libraries have always been on the move, and quite aside from natural disaster and the looting of aggressors, library 'weeding' can be conducted on the grand scale. During the past twenty years, for example, and quite in addition to the ever-present sale of great private (and sometimes) institutional collections, the reorganization of public library systems, ill-conceived campaigns to increase literacy by rethinking the nature of the library, and over-hasty attempts to replace book stacks with information technology units have led to the destruction of public libraries across Western (and now Eastern) Europe. Particularly catastrophic has been the widespread decommissioning and destruction of old card indexes and other library catalogues (mostly in American university libraries) as a consequence of computerised library catalogues and digitised texts.

Too late were voices raised protesting about the errors introduced and the provenance and other information lost in the process, the inflexibility of new cataloguing and recording systems, and the temptation (given the promise of photographed and digitised texts) to sell off or pulp large parts of bulky collections. In March 2001 the University of Western Sydney, one of the largest universities in Australia, admitted that 10,000 books including antique editions had been buried beneath land adjoining a cricket pitch because the university 'could not afford storage costs'. It was reported that 'students who have helped to dig them up say among them are first editions and rare 100-year old works' but also that 'the unearthed books are no longer of practical use. "They are not in great shape", a university spokesman said.'[131] The following chapters are also full of pathetic accounts of abandoned books, from the rotting book rummage of Austrian monasteries described by Friedrich Buchmayr to the sadly decaying Irish diocesan library books re-evaluated by Margaret Connolly.

One of the highest-profile debates has been the furore over the selling-off of newspapers and other deaccessioning by the Library of Congress and the British Library in the late 1990s. As Nicholson Baker, David McKitterick, Henry Woodhuysen and others have made plain, the British Library administration set in chain events with international consequences. Roused by the hundreds of thousands of books sent by the San Francisco Public Library to a landfill pit, Nicholson Baker has

written devastatingly about the misattribution of irreversible brittleness to so many nineteenth- and early twentieth-century books, magazines and newspapers that were microfilmed (often very inadequately) before disposal.[132] In Britain few towns now boast the kind of reference and borrowing library first established under Victorian principles, and flourishing, together with newspaper-reading rooms for most of the twentieth century. This volume could well have included a chapter about the twenty-first-century destruction and selling-off of public library non-fiction and notably the many special collections dating from the late Victorian golden age of the municipal library.[133] More generally, though, deaccessioning as one type of library loss is itself a pertinent question about what a library constitutes, and therefore about the types of library considered in the following chapters.

There is also a certain sense in which scholarly reinvestigations of total published output led by the great national retrospective bibliography projects – and in Britain by the English Short-Title Catalogue – shadow the idea of an immense ideal library, an envisaged total resource from which libraries can be reconstructed in the imagination. As will be noted in many of the following chapters the retrospective cataloguing also provides tangible assistance in reconstructing the range of a past collection from patchy and enigmatic sources, building, for example, on the clues of a few scraps of a title line in some damaged original library catalogue. The history of scholarly reconstructions of texts from the Alexandrian Septuagint onwards, in which a working library is created despite literary loss, becomes itself a chronicle in library history – and the memory and ideas about this can range over many centuries and many types of library. Such indeed, was Goethe's elaboration of the idea of the library as the 'memory of mankind'. The medieval losses considered in the following chapters range from the Corvina and the collection of Regiomontanus to the books of Humfrey, Duke of Gloucester and the lost parish libraries of pre-Reformation England.

This indeed, goes to the heart of the memorialising of loss from Alexandria to Sarajevo (and as will surely be the case with the reconstruction of Baghdad), that the concept of a 'library', across time and across cultures, is not at all stable, and that its very mutability is bound up with the way in which the loss of books can be represented and then re-represented in memory. As all the following chapters demonstrate, libraries have their own history and practices, whatever their size, accessibility, accountability, and ownership. Given that books and pamphlets are potentially transportable, the endurance of particular collections,

brought together in one place, achieves a peculiar authority, whether as an ark of learning and conservatory of knowledge or as an established and formally sanctioned site of scholarly labour. The placement of texts together provides a type of fixity and a type of literary creation that makes the replication of an individual library almost unimaginable. As a result, while certain texts might in certain ways be copied, mass-produced (even by scriptoria) and replaced, a collection is a more inimitable assemblage and one which at once enables owners and individual users to select and create and manage a powerful uniqueness. The different features, including access, patronage, library design, architecture, and the arrangement of books and objects (and therefore of taxonomies of knowledge), are reflected in the different sense of loss explored below.

Libraries might be famed for the particularity and importance of their collections, but libraries are always far more than the sum of their holdings. Beyond their collections of books (and other possessions), libraries can be national, institutional or familial treasures in which the guardianship offered by the library is a crucial feature. As the following chapters demonstrate in different ways, from what Jeremy Black and Keith Dix recover about the ancient Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean to what Rui Wang and Yulin Yang discover about library building in modern China, the potency of the written and of the printed word gives collections obvious political force. As well as conspicuous resources for the storage of and admission to knowledge, libraries serve as cultural and political symbols. Book collections can be badges of status and office, another theme notably developed in the studies of late medieval and early modern manuscript and incunable collections by Martyn Rady, Richard Kremer and David Rundle. Questions of access and control (who uses and used the library) can be as important as the potency of the holdings. Flamboyantly stocked shelves, displays in cases, paintings or even the design of the library building could all be political charged. The assault upon ecclesiastical and monastic property, including religious book collections, is a recurrent theme in many of the following chapters, while the two studies in this volume examining library policy in modern China explore sharply contrasting political consequences.

The library, then, can be symbolic, it can serve as a collection centre for books, as a repository of knowledge, and as a focus for authority and also for dissent. The library can act as a symbol for the preservation of national language and literature, as a centre of religious observance and memory, and as a real repository of patriotic or sectarian memory. Whether national or personal, a collection might be designed to

enhance particular memories, as storehouse and as reactive repository, or as a working proactive, political or religious vehicle that can provide a rallying point – or target. Such symbolism can be construed as much after the event as before. Philip Hensher offered an account coloured by the broader politics of the conflict when he wrote of the destruction of the Baghdad Library and Museum: 'even though the Americans did not carry out the looting and burning themselves, they stood aside with complete indifference. . . . It is simply something that the American troops allowed to happen; and the entire Muslim world will be asking why, and producing a simple and incontrovertible answer: they hate Islam; they hold Islamic history and life in complete contempt.'[134] Much that was lost in the Baghdad museums could hardly, of course, be called 'Islamic', but that, indeed, gives greater colouring to Hensher's extended lament.

All these themes are developed by the contributors to this volume. As the opening chapters argue, the library can certainly be invested with literary and linguistic significance in which destruction entails the loss of language and linguistic integrity. The library might also become a power-house for dynastic accomplishment or a focus of competition, even violent competition, in which libraries appear as literary and empowering citadels. Conquest and possession – or destruction – of the library (and all that it symbolises so potently) might actually be a declared aim, quite as much as the library finding itself the victim of conflict. As a consequence, the history of the breaking up of collections and their reassembly, presents us with the image of recurrently reforming bibliographical mosaics. Successor libraries can also provide very different access and visibility to their predecessors.

What we mean, then, by a library, might involve not just the evolution but the sudden metamorphosis of a collection, and one that might be re-formed many times within a physical library building. As a consequence, the historical recovery of a lost library can force consideration of a particular collection at a particular time. This can take many forms (including life-time collections like those of Humfrey of Gloucester, Regiomontanus, or Queen Charlotte). One of the most dramatic examples concerns the various state-sponsored dissolutions of monasteries – and the consequent dismantling of their libraries – between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries. These are invariably bibliographical watersheds in the respective countries – in England in the mid-sixteenth century, in Austria and France in the late eighteenth century (all subjects of chapters by Nigel Ramsay, Friedrich Buchmayr and Dominique Varry) and of Spain and Portugal in the 1830s. In Portugal, indeed, the loss of the Royal Library in the 1755 earthquake

seems little spoken of even by 1800, but the dissolution of the monasteries in 1834, particularly involving the breaking up of the great Benedictine and Augustinian libraries in the north of the country (and followed by the Spanish dissolutions in 1836), proved a far more enduring loss. As Martyn Rady also shows below, the re-evaluation of a lost collection can offer a fresh understanding of the history of a national culture (here, that of Hungary), especially in relation to that of its neighbours.

Another way of looking at this is to consider the sale of great houses and library collections – and the tell-tale evidence of the sales catalogues – as a register of lost libraries. Extending over many centuries, the dispersal and reformation (and loss) of collections also test our definition of how public or private such losses are. Many losses remain hidden and several of the following studies consider loss as characterised by inaccessibility. Dispersal can result from public philistinism (where, for example, Clarissa Campbell Orr compares the semi-reluctant acceptance of the King's Library by the British state to the neglectful disposal of other royal libraries) to the gradual, ineluctable cultural eclipse of libraries (such as those of Irish Anglican dioceses as presented by Margaret Connolly). The piecemeal dismantling of a library (like the collection of Humfrey of Gloucester) might be compared to actual theft or accidental destruction of books where the loss might also be hidden from public scrutiny for political reasons. An obvious modern example of this is the disastrous fire at the library of the Academy of Sciences in St Petersburg in 1988 where books that survived the fire in the enclosed courtyard were actually bulldozed in and covered up within the walls of the library. For many, inappropriate sale has been as bad as theft or destruction. In Germany, for example, some years before the crusades of Nicholson Baker in the United States and Britain, campaigns were prompted by what were described as 'outrageous examples of contemporary library destruction',[135] namely the covert selling-off of major baronial and aristocratic private libraries since before Reunification. Notable among these was the sale of the Fürstlich Fürstenbergische Hofbibliothek (the Donaueschingen Court Library) between 1982 and 1999, which disposed in total of 130,000 volumes including medieval manuscripts, incunabula, and the private, 11,000-book, library of Joseph von Lassberg.[136]

The final feature of all the case-studies in this volume is the manner in which loss has been represented. The cultural resonances of the destruction and loss of particular collections are often extensive. The accidental loss of her personal library by fire inspired the artist Angela

Grauerholz to create her 'Privation 2001', an installation of 16 photographs of her burned books to 'remind us of those libraries destroyed by fire, war, and cultural hatred. . . . These series of calamitous tragedies have forever erased histories, knowledge, and identities, both personal and cultural.'[137] We can all recognise a vast and comparative literature in which a lost library or lost collection of books is featured in demonstration of a greater theme. From the library fire that induces final derangement for Lord Sepulchrave in Meryvn Peake's *Titus Groan*, to the intellectual gymnastics of Derrida in *Archive Fever*, fictive considerations embrace many different types of media. Two of the most powerful of relevant modern films, *Storm Center* and *Fahrenheit 451*, are discussed in the final chapter by Robert Fyne. 'The Librarian', as *Storm Center* was known during production, had Bette Davis sacked for refusing to take off the shelves a book entitled 'The Communist Dream', but at the end the library burns down in a symbolic representation of the failure of society to understand. The film, made at the height of McCarthyism, was released only a few years after the startling images of Orwell's *1984.* The Newspeak used by Winston Smith to rewrite back numbers of *The Times* to correct public memory was matched by the 'memory holes' that dismantled history:

> When one knew that any document was due for destruction, or even when one saw a scrap of waste paper lying about, it was an automatic action to lift the flap of the nearest memory hole and drop it in, whereupon it would be whirled away on a current of warm air to the enormous furnaces which were hidden somewhere in the recesses of the building.[138]

Flames devour truth and memory. In the imagination, a lost library might have contained a written, real truth and those who destroy book collections undermine the basis of civilisation.

Exaggeration, of course, is both the common fault and the ploy of the advocate. Earlier in the 1940s Borges ruminated on the sort of allegations that feature in so many of the following chapters. In a meditation on those blamed for 'the senseless loss of millions of volumes', the future Director of the Argentine National Library continued:

> Their name is execrated today, but those who grieve over the 'treasures' destroyed in that frenzy overlook two widely acknowledged facts: One, that the Library is so huge that any reduction by human hands must be infinitesimal. And two, that each book is unique and

irreplaceable, but (since the Library is total) there are always several hundred thousand imperfect facsimiles – books that differ by no more than a single letter, or a comma.[139]

Borges's Library might serve as a variation of the Universe, but his musings are nicely pertinent to the more earthbound exaggeration iden-tified by critics of Nicholson Baker and, in this volume, by Keith Dix, Nigel Ramsay, Martyn Rady and others, in relation to the depiction of the loss of an extraordinary variety of book collections. A generation or so after Orwell and Borges, Umberto Eco's *Name of the Rose* also crossed media forms and offered the destruction of a monastic library that was in fact made more to resemble the paradigm of the ancient library of Alexandria, of lamented memory, than anything we know of book col-lections in the middle ages.[140] In both book and film we are presented with compelling images – that the copying of manuscripts in the library represents a sort of organic process, and that all is controlled by the secret methods of successive librarians in a library that cannot fully be visited by anyone. In Eco, the library is starkly presented as a vessel of both falsehood as well as of truth, a library romantically imagined as preserving the last copy of the second book of the *Poetics* of Aristotle and offering the tantalising prospect of the lost book found (rather like the misplaced search for a Shakespeare manuscript or for the lost ancient classics from the fantasy wish-list). This is the magic of the book. 'First to posses his books', Caliban implores, ' for without them he's but a sot as I am'. Eco's library and librarian defy natural order and mis-takenly relish the guardianship of the truth, when, in fact, 'without people to read and use the signs in books, the books themselves are dumb, useless'. As one critic of this story of a lost library put it, 'all our structures, our knowledge, our multitudinous and systematic truths are symbolised by the ashes of the burned out *aedificium*, and in that word lies Eco's last laugh'.[141]

   In an essay which has proved especially influential in recent scholar-ship in the history of publishing and reading, Michel de Certeau offered the idea of the text recreated by its reading – of reading as poaching whereby texts are reconstituted every time that they are read and thereby appropriated.[142] Approaches to the images of literary loss might suggest parallels: the recreation for different ends by different people of ideas of textual unities, of working resources and practices in which memory and remembrance of books past is paramount but also highly individual. The following essays discuss libraries from ancient Mesopotamia to modern Tibet, considering very different material types of library and different

definitions of collections and very different collectors, patrons, users *and* destroyers. They treat of inadvertent and very deliberate destruction and of both its proclamation and its denial. In new ways we might learn, in the context of loss, of the potency of assembled and then frequently reshuffled collections of manuscripts and printed texts. This comparative study is full of ironies and unexpected discoveries – of how different types of loss can be neglected; of different rationales for the destruction and dispersal of collections or for letting libraries lie dormant or waste away; and of market pressures that can sometimes be helpful to survival and to access – and sometimes most definitely not. The contributors consider sudden loss, erratic loss, and often heartbreaking, evocative loss. This last is sometimes the more moving because it was politically resolvable. Certain books featured do in fact remain extant but are 'lost' because they are inaccessible (materially, or perhaps because they are imperfectly deciphered). Conversely, some collections are indeed physically lost, but they survive in memory – a memory, like that of the lost library itself, configured differently for different interests and ever liable to propaganda, to perversion, and to special pleading.

Notes

1. See the postscript by Jeremy Black to Chapter 2 below.
2. David Blair, 'Nation's link with the past destroyed in orgy of looting', *Daily Telegraph*, 14 Apr. 2003, p. 6.
3. Dr Geoffrey Roper, Islamic Bibliography Unit, Cambridge University Library, letter to *The Independent*, 17 Apr. 2003.
4. Robert Fisk, 'Library books, letters and priceless documents are set ablaze in final chapter of the sacking of Baghdad', *The Independent*, 15 Apr. 2003 (© *The Independent*).
5. Philip Hensher, 'Crimes against culture are remembered for ever', *The Independent* 22 Apr. 2003, p. 17 (© *The Independent*).
6. Cited in Adam Lebor, 'City Life: Sarajevo – Heritage reduced to ashes as Serbs tried to wipe Muslims from history', *The Independent*, 21 Aug. 2000 (© *The Independent*). See also András Riedlmayer, '*Convivencia* under Fire: Genocide and Book Burning in Bosnia', Jonathan Rose, ed., *The Holocaust and the Book: Destruction and Preservation* (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), pp. 266–91, and the video documentary by Knut W. Jorfald, *Burning Books: The Story of the Destruction of a National Library*.
7. Gary Younge, 'Rastas versus Royals', *The Guardian*, 22 Feb. 1997, p. 5.
8. See Alfred Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological Consequences of* 1492 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1972); Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* (New York: W.W.

Norton, 1997); Daniel K. Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001).

9. Recent and continuing scholarship reconstructing libraries is diverse, but notably includes the Plume Library, Maldon; David Fate Norton and Mary J. Norton, *The David Hume Library* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Bibliographical Society, 1996); the Royal Library at Lisbon, Angela Delaforce, *Art and Patronage in Eighteenth-Century Portugal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Liudmila V. Sharipova, 'The Kiev Mohyla Academy', unpublished Ph.D. diss., Cambridge University, 2000; the library of Jonathan Swift, continuing project directed by Hermann J. Real.

10. For a broad and classic account, see William Blades, *The Enemies of Books* (London, 1880); also, Suzanne Briet, *Bibliothèques en détresse* (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1949).

11. See, for example, below, Chapter 14.

12. www.romanian.voice.com; www.mihaieminescu.ro.

13. David Aaronovitch, 'Lost From the Baghdad Museum: Truth', *The Guardian*, 10 June 2003, *G2*, p. 5.

14. Younge, 'Rastas versus Royals'.

15. See, in particular, the arguments of. Jeffrey Garrett, 'Aufhebung im doppelten Wortsinn: The Fate of Monastic Libraries in Central Europe, 1780–1810', *Verbum Analecta Neolatina*, 2 (1999): 15–27, qualified by Chapters 8 and 10 below.

16. The editor is most grateful for the comments of Dr Gabriel Sanchez Espinosa; further reading is offered by Julián Martín Abad, *Los incunables de las bibliotecas española: Apuntes históricos y noticias bibliográficas sobre fondos y bibliófilos* (Valencia: Vicent García Editores, 1996); Inmaculada Arias de Saavedra, 'La biblioteca de los jesuitas de Granada en el siglo XVIII: Una aproximación', in A. Mestre Sanchís and E. Giménez López, *Disidencias y exilios en la España Moderna: Actas de la IV Reunión Científica de la Asociación Española de Historia Moderna* (Alicante: University of Alicante, 1997): 609–26; Gregorio de Andrés, 'El hispanista Obadiah Rich y la almoneda de libros españoles en Londres en 1824', *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia* 190 (1993): 285–311; Josefina Bello Voces, 'La ocupación de los bienes de los regulares (1835–1836)', *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia* 185 (1988): 54–82; Enric Mirambell i Belloch, 'Projecte de Biblioteca provincial (1820–1823)', *Revista de Girona* 136 (1989): 75–82; Manuel Sánchez Mariana, 'Los códices del monasterio de Silos', *Boletín de la Institución Fernán González* 63 (1984): 228–30; Manuel Sánchez Mariana, 'Notas sobre la biblioteca monástica de San Salvador de Oña', *Revista de Archivos, Bibliotecas y Museos* 82 (1979): 473–93.

17. Galen, *Commentary on Hippocrates*, XV, cited in Luciano Canfora, trans. Martin Ryle, *The Vanished Library* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1989), p. 191.

18. Lionel Casson, *Libraries in the Ancient World* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001), p. 92; J. O. Ward, 'Alexandria and its Medieval Legacy: The Book, the Monk and the Rose', in Roy Macleod, ed., *The Library of Alexandria: Centre of Learning in the Ancient World* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2000), p. 165.

19. David Stam, ed., *International Dictionary of Library Histories* (Chicago and London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2001), p. 656.
20. Stam, ed., *International Dictionary of Library Histories*, pp. 73, 74, 665.
21. Charles A. Goodrum and Helen W. Dalrymple, *The Library of Congress* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1982), p. 15.
22. Goodrum and Dalrymple, *Library of Congress*, pp. 16, 17.
23. Stam, ed., *International Dictionary of Library Histories*, p. 908.
24. *First Report on the Reconstruction of the Tokyo Imperial University Library* (Tokyo, 1926); 'Library Development in Japan' in www2.db.dk/pe/Japan/section3.htm.
25. *La Biblioteca Nacional del Perú* (Lima: Biblioteca Nacional, 1971), p. 13.
26. Peter Waters, 'Phased Preservation: A Philosophical Concept and Practical Approach to Preservation', *Special Libraries* 81: 1 (1990): 35–43; Stam, ed., *International Dictionary of Library Histories*, p. 676.
27. See, for example, *Serious Thoughts Occasioned by the Late Earthquake at Lisbon* (London 1756); see also Derek Beales, *Prosperity and Plunder: European Catholic Monasteries in the Age of Revolution, 1650–1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 150–1.
28. With ambassadors charged to inquire at all courts of Europe, the royal library became the finest contemporary repository of comparative library drawings and notes; John V was obsessed with Rome and the library also boasted thousands of prints (and several great panoramas) of the city; see Delaforce, *Art and Patronage in Eighteenth-Century Portugal.*
29. Carolyn Horton, 'Saving the Libraries of Florence', *Wilson Library Bulletin* 41 (1966–67): 1035–43; A. H. Goetz, 'Books in Peril', *Wilson Library Bulletin* 47 (1972–3): 428–39; the Biblioteca Nazionale was formed from the Florentine Library and the Palatina Library of the Grand Duke of Tuscany. See also *The Book Collector*, a special issue on Florence, Spring 1967.
30. Claude Francillon, 'Lyon prepare la construction d'un grand poie documentaire', *Le Monde*, 18 June 1999.
31. 'Help for the Czech Libraries', *Association of the Library and Information Professionals of the Czech Republic* (with list of lost and damaged libraries), www.nkp.cz/o_knihovnach/PovodENb.htm.
32. E.S. De Beer, ed., *The Diary of John Evelyn*, new edn, 6 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 3: 459. See also Robert Latham and William Matthews, eds, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, 11 vols (London: Bell and Hyman, 1970–83), 7: 297 (26 Sept. 1666), 309–10 (5 Oct. 1666), 9: 22–3 (14 Jan. 1768); and Walter G. Bell, *The Great Fire of London in 1666* (London and New York: John Lane, 1920).
33. Latham and Matthews, eds, *Diary of Samuel Pepys*, 7: 297 n. 5.
34. Stam, ed., *International Dictionary of Library Histories*, p. 73.
35. Otto Vilhelm Cison Walde, *Storhetstidens litterära krigsbyten, en kulturhistorisk-bibliografisk studie* (Uppsala and Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksells, 1916–20); Don Heinrich Tolzmann, et al., *The Memory of Mankind: the Story of Libraries since the Dawn of History* (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll, 2001), pp. 67, 76.
36. Tolzmann, et al., *Memory of Mankind*, pp. 75–6; Stam, ed., *International Dictionary of Library Histories*, p. 772.
37. Austin Baxter Keep, *History of the New York Society Library* (Boston: Gregg Press, 1972), pp. 94–8.

38. Goodrum and Dalrymple, *Library of Congress*, pp. 12–13, 15.
39. Goodrum and Dalrymple, *Library of Congress*, pp. 14–15.
40. Hans van der Hoeven, 'The Destruction of Libraries in the Twentieth Century', in *Lost Memory – Libraries and Archives Destroyed in the Twentieth Century*, p. 2.
41. Ribhi Mustafa Elayyan, 'The History of the Arabic-Islamic Libraries: 7th to 14th Centuries', *International Library Review* 22 (1990); Stam, ed., *International Dictionary of Library Histories*, pp. 71, 112.
42. Cited in Elmer D. Johnson, *History of Libraries in the Western World*, 2nd edn (Metuchen NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1970), p. 105.
43. Etienne de Bourbon, *Anecd. Hist.* no. 327 ed. A. Leroy de la Marche, 1877, pp. 275–7, cited in Jonathan Sumption, *The Albigensian Crusade* (London: Faber and Faber, 1978), p. 47.
44. Charles Ripley Gillett, *Burned Books: Neglected Chapters in British History and Literature*, 2 vols (New York: Columbia University Press, 1932), 1: 15.
45. Edward Alexander Parsons, *The Alexandrian Library: Glory of the Hellenic World, Its Rise, Antiquities, and Destructions* (London: Cleaver-Hume, 1952), p. ix.
46. Cited in Aaronovitch, 'Lost from the Baghdad Museum: Truth'.
47. See below, Chapter 14, note 31 (and quotation).
48. See Roy Macleod, 'Alexandria in History and Myth', in Macleod, ed., *Library of Alexandria*, pp. 1–15.
49. Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Chapter 51.
50. Three influential contributions were published in 1838: Friedrich Wilhelm Ritschl, *Die Alexandrinischen Bibliotheken unter den ersten Ptolemäern* (Breslau); Gustav F.C. Parthey, *Das Alexandrinische Museum* (Berlin); George Heinrich Klippel, *Ueber das Alexandrinische Museum* (Göttingen). The many later discussions notably included Auguste Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire des Lagides*, 4 vols (Paris, 1903–07); Everisto Breccia, *Alexandria ad Ægyptum* (Bergamo, 1914); J. B. Bury, *A History of the Later Roman Empire from the Death of Theodosius I to the Death of Justinian, AD 395 to AD 565*, 2 vols (London: Macmillan and Co., 1923); Paul Harvey, *The Oxford Companion to Classical Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940), 'The Alexandrian Library'.
51. Notably, Edward Edwards, *Memoirs of Libraries including a Handbook of Library Economy*, 2 vols (London: Trübner and Co., 1859).
52. Edwards, *Memoirs of Libraries*, 1: 58.
53. More recent public attention has also been given to the 2,600 year-old clay tablets from the ancient library of Nineveh, with planned Anglo-Iraqi projects to recreate the library of Ashurbanipal, *The Independent*, 9 Mar. 2002, p. 3.
54. The following account benefits greatly from the survey offered by Mostafa El-Abbadi, *The Life and Fate of the Ancient Library of Alexandria* (Paris: UNESCO/UNDP, 1990).
55. Alfred J. Butler, *The Arab Conquest of Egypt and the Last Thirty Years of the Roman Dominion*, ed. P.M. Fraser, 2nd edn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978; 1st edn, 1902); Canfora's ingenious *Vanished Library* reinvigorated debate, although its 'fictional' aspects are often noted (e.g. Robert Barnes, 'Cloistered Bookworms in the Chicken-Coop of Muses: The Ancient Library of Alexandria', in Macleod, ed., *Library of Alexandria*, pp. 74–5).

56. The first mention of a library in Alexandria is found in *The Letter of Aristeas* (c. 180–145 BC) in a chronicle of the translation of the Septuagint, although in about 270 BC Herodas alluded to the Museum (I am grateful to Prof. Eric Handley for this reference); the book temple of Alexandria followed the earlier establishment of Plato's Academy, Aristotle's Lyceum, Zeno's Stoa and the school of Epicurus. See Macleod, ed., *Library of Alexandria*, pp. 2–3.

57. P. M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 1: 27–9; Butler, *Arab Conquest of Egypt*, p. 412.

58. Alan K. Bowman, *Egypt after the Pharaohs* (London: British Museum, 1986), p. 225; Butler, *Arab Conquest of Egypt*, pp. 410–11. For a further chronology, see also Barnes, 'Cloistered Bookworms', pp. 61–77.

59. Canfora, *Vanished Library*, considers that the main destruction took place in AD 272.

60. El-Abbadi, *Life and Fate of the Ancient Library of Alexandria*, pp. 146–8.

61. El-Abbadi, *Life and Fate of the Ancient Library of Alexandria*, p. 153; cf. Canfora, *Vanished Library*, pp. 95–6.

62. Lucan, *Pharsalia* X lines 486–505, cited in El-Abbadi, *Life and Fate of the Ancient Library of Alexandria*, p. 150, n. 6.

63. Seneca, *De animi tranquillitate* IX.5, El-Abbadi, *Life and Fate of the Ancient Library of Alexandria*, p. 150; the Palatine page with the scholium of Alexandria from the Vatican library is reproduced in Parsons, *Alexandrian Library*, frontispiece, and with detail, opposite p. 104.

64. Plutarch, *Caesar*, 49; Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights* VII, 17.3; Ammianus Marcellinus, *History*, 22, 16.13; El-Abbadi, *Life and Fate of the Ancient Library of Alexandria*, pp. 150–1.

65. *Bellum Alexandrinum*, 13; El-Abbadi, *Life and Fate of the Ancient Library of Alexandria*, p. 151.

66. Plutarch, *Caesar*, and Plutarch, *Antony*, 28; El-Abbadi, *Life and Fate of the Ancient Library of Alexandria*, pp. 150–2, 156.

67. Canfora, *Vanished Library*; cf. El-Abbadi, *Life and Fate of the Ancient Library of Alexandria*, pp. 153, 167.

68. El-Abbadi, *Life and Fate of the Ancient Library of Alexandria*, p. 153.

69. Discussion of Strabo in El-Abbadi, *Life and Fate of the Ancient Library of Alexandria*, notably, pp. 153–4; cf. Canfora, *Vanished Library*, pp. 95–6.

70. Parsons, *Alexandrian Library*, p. ix. See also below, pp. 18, 62.

71. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Chapter 28.

72. Cited in El-Abbadi, *Life and Fate of the Ancient Library of Alexandria*, p. 166.

73. El-Abbadi, *Life and Fate of the Ancient Library of Alexandria*, pp. 162–3.

74. Cited in 'The Mysterious Fate of the Great Library of Alexandria', www.bede.org.uk/library.htm.

75. Eunapius of Antioch, *Life of Antonius*. Similar silence marks Socrates' *History of the Church* in his chapter about the destruction of the Serapeion.

76. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 1: 82, 812.

77. It had been savaged by Augustus, Caracalla had killed much of its citizenry, the city and the palace quarter were sacked by Aurelian, and the city was captured and looted by Diocletian at the start of the fourth century – all before the great earthquakes and inundations that obscured this history.

78. Butler, *Arab Conquest of Egypt*, p. 402.

79. Ibid., p. 402.

80. Butler, *Arab Conquest of Egypt*, Chapter 25 (esp. p. 404).
81. El-Abbadi, *Life and Fate of the Ancient Library of Alexandria*, pp. 176–9.
82. Cf. El-Abbadi, *Life and Fate of the Ancient Library of Alexandria*, Chapter 6.
83. El-Abbadi, *Life and Fate of the Ancient Library of Alexandria*, pp. 175–6.
84. The following account is indebted to El-Abbadi, *Life and Fate of the Ancient Library of Alexandria*, pp. 176–8.
85. El-Abbadi, *Life and Fate of the Ancient Library of Alexandria*, p. 178.
86. Athenaeus of Naucratis, *Deipnosophistai*, cited in Johnson, *History of Libraries in the Western* World, p. 65.
87. Jorge Luis Borges, 'The Library of Babel', in *Collected Fictions*, ed. Andrew Hurley (New York: Penguin Books, 1998), p. 116.
88. This particular wish-list is based on Ward, 'Alexandria and its Medieval Legacy', p. 167.
89. Ward, 'Alexandria and its Medieval Legacy', p. 167.
90. Canfora, *Vanished Library*, esp. p. 197.
91. Parsons, *Alexandrian Library*, pp. 411–12.
92. The full text (and continuing development of the library) is given in 'Bibliotheca Alexandrina – The Revival of the Library of Alexandria', http://www.unesco.org/webworld/alexandria. Another recent, colourful, speculation is offered by Robert H. Blackburn, 'The Ancient Alexandrian Library: Part of it May Survive!', *Library History* 19 (March 2003): 23–34.
93. Mohamed Sid-Ahmed, Arabic.news.com, 22 May 2001.
94. Carl Sagan, *Cosmos* (London: Macdonald Futura, 1980), p. 20.
95. Sagan, *Cosmos*, pp. 20–1; and also reproduced in Nicolas Economou Foundation, Cyprus, 'Library of Alexandria' http://members.iinet.au/~nicke/library/library.htm.
96. Library of Alexandria' http://members.iinet.au/~nicke/library/library.htm.
97. Economou Foundation, 'Library of Alexandria', 'How and why was the library destroyed?', p. 2.
98. Peter Fleming, *The Siege at Peking* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1959), pp. 121–2.
99. I am indebted here to summaries by Donald G. Davis, Jr. and Cheng Huanwen, 'Destruction of Chinese Books in the Peking Siege of 1900', *IFLA Conference Proceedings*, 25–31 Aug. 1996 (http://www.ifla.org/IV/infla62/62-davd.htm).
100. Richard O'Connor, *The Spirit Soldiers: A Historical Narrative of the Boxer Rebellion* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1973), p. 134.
101. Davis and Huanwen, 'Destruction of Chinese Books', p. 4.
102. *Encyclopaedia of Library and Information Science*, 53 vols (New York, 1968–94), 2: 310.
103. Yitzchak Kerem, 'The Confiscation of Jewish Books in Salonika in the Holocaust', in Rose, ed., *Holocaust and the Book*, pp. 59–65 (p. 61).
104. See Leonadis E. Hill, 'The Nazi Attack on "Un-German" Literature, 1933–1945', in Rose, ed., *Holocaust and the Book*, pp. 8–46.
105. Including assemblages by Arman [Armand Fernandez] (b. 1928), Christian Boltanski (b. 1944), and Anselm Kiefer (b. 1945). Consider also, 'Film Star' (1960) by John Latham (b. 1921) which appeared in his film 'Unedited Material from the Star' and now in the Tate Collection (exhibited, Tate Modern from 2000).

106. Hans van der Hoeven, 'List of Libraries and Collections Damaged or Destroyed', in *Lost Memory – Libraries and Archives Destroyed in the Twentieth Century* (UNESCO, 1996), p. 14.

107. Wojciech Siemaszkiewicz, 'National Library of Poland' in Stam, ed., *International Dictionary of Library Histories*, pp. 545–8. I am grateful to Sem Sutter for this reference.

108. Sem C. Sutter, 'Polish Books in Exile: Cultural Booty across Two Continents, through Two Wars', in Rose, ed., *Holocaust and the Book*, pp. 141–61 (p. 145).

109. Jacqueline Borin, 'Embers of the Soul: The Destruction of Jewish Books and Libaries in Poland during World War II', *Libraries and Culture* 28: 4 (Fall, 1993): 445–60 (p. 446).

110. Marek Sroka, 'The University of Cracow Library under Nazi Occupation, 1939–1945', *Libraries and Culture* 34: 1 (Winter, 1999): 1–16 (p. 12), Borin, 'Embers of the Soul', p. 445.

111. Negley Harte and John North, *The World of UCL 1828–1990* (London: University College, 1991), pp. 181, 344–6; Stam, ed., *International Dictionary of Library Histories*, p. 851.

112. Holland House Library after bombing, from the collection of the Imperial War Museum.

113. Margaret F. Stieg, 'The Postwar Purge of German Public Libraries, Democracy, and the American Reaction', *Libraries and Culture* 28: 2 (Spring, 1993): 143–64 (p. 144). See also G. Leyh, *Die deutschen wissenschaftlichen Bibliotheken nach dem Krieg* (Tübingen, 1947).

114. Van der Hoeven, 'List of Libraries and Collections Damaged or Destroyed', p. 13.

115. Van der Hoeven, 'List of Libraries and Collections Damaged or Destroyed', p. 14.

116. 'Library Development in Japan' in www2.db.dk/pe/Japan/section3.htm.

117. *Lost Memory – Libraries and Archives Destroyed in the Twentieth Century* (UNESCO, 1996).

118. Cheng Huanwen, 'The Effect of the Cold War on Librarianship in China', *Libraries and Culture* 36: 1 (Winter, 2001): 40–50 (p. 46 and table 1).

119. Helen Jarvis, 'The National Library of Cambodia: Surviving for Seventy Years' *Libraries and Culture* 30: 4 (Fall, 1995): 391–408 (pp. 402–3).

120. Report of the Afghanistan Digital Library Project, available at www.nyu.edu/its/pubs/connect/spring03/afghan_library/html

121. See Wayne Wiegand, *An Active Instrument for Propaganda: The American Public Library during World War I* (Westport Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1989).

122. Kaljo-Olev Veskimägi, *Tsensuur Eesti NSV-sja tema peremehed* (Tallinn, 1996), summary in English in www.einst.ee/literary/spring97/04censor.htm. For Lithuania in particular, see Chapter 12 below.

123. Sutter, 'Polish Books in Exile', p. 149.

124. Andrew Gregorovich, 'Word War II in Ukraine: Ukraine's Property Losses in World War II', *Forum Ukrainian Review* 92 (Spring 1995), and www.infoukes.com/history/ww2, p. 22.

125. Hill, 'Nazi Attack on "Un-German" Literature', p. 31.

126. Discussed further in Chapter 12 below.

127. S. D. Stein, comp., Report on Einsatzstab Rosenberg Working Group in the Occupied Western Territories and the Netherlands, reproduced in

www.ess.uwe.ac.uk/genocide/Rosenberg; Hill, 'Nazi Attack on "Un-German" Literature', pp. 30, 31.

128. Most directly by Richard Kremer (ch. 4), but also by David Rundle, Nigel Ramsay, Dominique Varry, and Clarissa Campbell Orr.

129. See Robin Myers, Michael Harris and Giles Mandelbrote, eds, *Under the Hammer: Book Auctions since the Seventeenth Century* (London and New Castle DE: Oak Knoll and the British Library, 2001); Gwyn Walters, 'Early Sale Catalogues: Problems and Perspectives', in Robin Myers and Michael Harris, eds, *Sale and Distribution of Books from 1700* (Oxford: Oxford Polytechnic Press, 1982): 106–25; and, classically, Edwards, *Memoirs of Libraries*, 2: 110–51.

130. Nicolas Barker, 'Bernard Quaritch', *Book Collector* 46: special no. for the 150th anniversary of Bernard Quaritch (1997): 3–34.

131. Kathy Marks, 'Cash-hit university buried old books to save room', *The Independent*, 22 Mar. 2001.

132. Nicholson Baker, *Double Fold: Libraries and the Assault on Paper* (London: Vintage, 2002).

133. See for example, Audit Commission Report on the Public Libraries of England and Wales, 2002; also considered by Nigel Reynolds, '23pc fall in borrowers at public libraries', *The Independent*, 17 May 2002, p. 7.

134. Hensher, 'Crimes against culture are remembered for ever'.

135. Klaus Graf, written communication, 4 Sept. 2001, to the CPBT 'Lost Libraries' conference.

136. The Donaueschingen Digital project has been established by Klaus Graf to reconstruct the former holdings (http://www.uni-koblenz.de/~graf/dondig_e.htm).

137. Catalogue to 'Privation 2001' by Angela Grauerholz, La Biennale de Montréal, Canada (with images reproduced on www.ciac.ca/biennale2002/en/angela.htm).

138. George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four: A Novel* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1949), p. 40.

139. Borges, 'Library of Babel', p. 116.

140. For a particular account of this, see Ward, 'Alexandria and its Medieval Legacy'.

141. Ward, 'Alexandria and its Medieval Legacy', p. 173.

142. Michel de Certeau, 'Reading as Poaching' in de Certeau, trans. Steven F. Rendall, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 165–76.

2
Lost Libraries of Ancient Mesopotamia

Jeremy Black

Ancient Mesopotamia (roughly modern Iraq) can boast an uninterrupted sequence of literate cultures over nearly three and a half millennia, from c. 3400 BC to the first century AD. Institutions which can be identified as libraries existed at several periods, and because these are chronologically the most ancient of those that will be discussed in this volume, it provides the opportunity to at least raise the question 'what makes a library?'. For the ancient pre-classical world it is convenient to distinguish between 'libraries' and what can be called 'private scribal collections', the personal assemblages of individual scribal masters or scribal families, which might include both their own work and inherited or acquired works written by others. It is also helpful to distinguish between those and 'archives', collections of legal, business or commercial documents. These several categories have discrete archaeological realities, even if individual excavated buildings might contain collections in which the distinctions were blurred.[1] The libraries discussed here were all located either within palaces or within temples, which were the two major categories of what archaeologists call 'public buildings' in ancient Mesopotamia. But this does not mean that they were in any sense publicly accessible; there is no evidence that royal libraries were available to anyone except their scholarly staff and their royal owners, while we know that temple libraries were restricted to priestly functionaries. Colophons on religious and scientific texts often carry the restriction *mudû mudâ likallim mudû lā mudâ lā ukallam* 'One who is competent (or knowledgeable) should show this only to one who is also competent, but may not show it to the uninitiated'.[2]

All the libraries of ancient Mesopotamia were lost, inasmuch as the civilisation itself ended and was largely unknown for many centuries until its gradual recovery in modern times, beginning in the early nine-

teenth century AD. But there were several different types of loss. Broadly four types of 'lost libraries' – that is, libraries lost to modern scholarship – can be distinguished for this civilisation. These are: as yet undiscovered libraries; destroyed libraries; superseded libraries; and inaccessible libraries. These are discussed below.

Cuneiform writing

Throughout the successive cultures of ancient Mesopotamia, the cuneiform script was used to write on clay tablets. The Sumerians, a people of southern Iraq, had a fully functioning writing system as early as 3400 BC and possibly earlier, indisputably the earliest world-wide. At first it was used for administrative purposes as an outgrowth of the burgeoning bureaucratic economies of the urban communities of that period, so that most of the written documents of that date are archival records of administrative or commercial transactions, issues and deliveries of agricultural and animal produce and other commodities. But already by the date of the earliest writing preserved, it was also used for systematic scribal training, limited at that early period to systematic lists of the titles of officials and the technical terms which apprentice scribes needed to learn.[3] Within a few centuries and certainly by c. 2500 BC the Sumerians were using cuneiform writing to write down poetic literature.[4]

The writing system is a combination of logographic signs (signs or groups of signs used to write whole words) and syllabic signs (signs used to spell out individual syllables). In addition, certain signs were used as 'determinatives', placed usually before or occasionally after a word to indicate the category it belonged to (e.g. personal or geographical name, wooden object). The reading of cuneiform is complicated by the fact that for historical reasons, many of the logographic signs had also acquired syllabic values in some contexts, and that large numbers of the syllabic signs could have, according to context, several quite different values (so-called homophony). As a result it was also often possible to write the same syllable in several different ways (so-called homonymy). The total number of signs used varied according to period and region, and the nature of the text (from everyday letters to scientific treatises), but in the first millennium BC a maximum of approximately seven hundred signs were in use.[5]

It is probably helpful to describe the medium of writing, since it may be unfamiliar, and also it will help to establish the claim of this writing system to be a true precursor to the culture of the book. It shares many

of the features of book culture, with the most obvious difference that its physical media are not paper and ink but clay tablets and styli. What we call 'tablets' are smooth, carefully-shaped pillow-like rectangles of clay impressed, when still slightly damp, with marks made by a reed stylus, then left to dry in the sun (and occasionally baked in a kiln afterwards, making them particularly hard). Alternatively, cuneiform could be written on writing boards made of wood or ivory, covered with wax; when these boards are found today, the wax of course has long perished, but we know that waxed boards were extensively used for certain purposes, especially for documents that needed to be added to, such as running inventories. Cuneiform could also be carved on to stone monuments or other objects. Sometimes, for commemorative or prestige display purposes, tablets shaped like those of clay were made from marble, gold or silver. The styli (called in Akkadian *qān ṭuppi* 'tablet reed') were normally made from sharpened reeds, but again, for ceremonial purposes or for the supposed styli of gods, gold was preferred. The individual cuneiform signs are made up of configurations of from one to as many as twenty strokes, the 'wedges' (Latin *cuneus*) that give the writing its name. There are about half a dozen different types of wedge strokes, in various directions; when written by an expert scribe, the writing can be extremely calligraphic. Strictly speaking, on clay the strokes only *appear* to be wedge-shaped, since the third side of the wedge is an illusory shadow: they are really formed by the joint impression of the long side of the stylus and its rectangular end. But when carved on stone they were usually represented as linear strokes with triangular heads, and it was in this form that they first became familiar in Europe in the nineteenth century AD, as inscribed stone bas-relief slabs were brought from Mesopotamia.

Cuneiform is in principle a language-independent writing system that was used to write at least half a dozen unrelated languages (Sumerian, Akkadian, Hittite, Hurrian, Hattic, Elamite; as well as, in related forms, Ugaritic and Old Persian). Individual tablets might be used to write just a few lines, like scrap paper; but a fully inscribed tablet with several columns of writing on each side can contain hundreds of lines. A large tablet might have as many as six (rarely more) columns of writing arranged like a newspaper page. On the reverse of the tablet the columns, but not the writing, are always arranged in reverse order, with column one at the right-hand side. Tablets almost invariably turn from top to bottom, so that the beginning of column one of the reverse follows immediately on the end of the last column of the obverse; con-
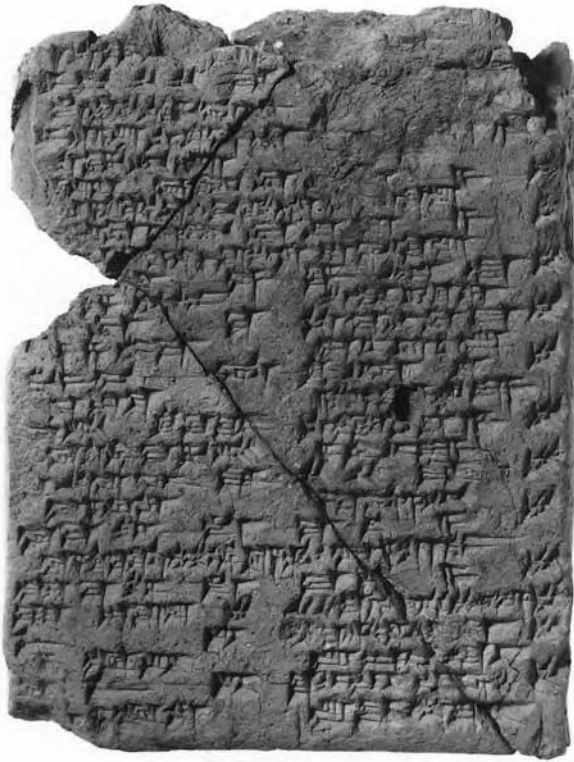
Figure 2.1 A Sumerian religious poem. Part of a fragmentary ms. from a Babylonian scholar's library c. 2nd century BC. The metrical caesura is marked by a gap in the centre of each line of verse. Each line of Sumerian is followed by an interlinear translation into Akkadian, indented slightly at the left-hand side. Reproduced by permission of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

sequently the writing on the reverse is inverted compared to that on the obverse.

Tablets were grouped together in linked 'series' to make it possible to record long literary or technical 'works' (the equivalent of multi-volume compositions). A tablet's numbered position in the series was normally recorded in the colophon (written at the end of the last column of writing), which would typically give the catch-line to the next tablet in the sequence, making it easy to locate in the box or on the shelf. A typical example is the greatest work of Babylonian literature, the *Epic of Gilgameš*, which in its standard edition runs to twelve tablets of up to c. 350 lines of verse each; usually the breaks between tablets occur at

artistically convenient places, and some literary works are composed with typical tablet lengths in mind as an element of their structure. Some technical series, on the other hand, ran to more than 100 tablets (works of astronomy-astrology, divination and so on).[6] Ancient catalogues (of which plenty survive) listed literary works almost invariably by their incipits or first lines, although it is not always clear what the purpose of these catalogues was: it is likely that, more than being simple inventories of particular collections, they incorporate some normative pedagogical views about what was suitable for collecting or studying. Many tablets have colophons, which are also crucially important as they often identify the place, perhaps even the library of origin; the textual source ('copied from an old original from Babylon'); even the day, month and year of copying, and identity of the scribe complete with up to four generations of his (genetic or scribal) ancestry[7] – this for a tablet which through unscientific excavation in the nineteenth century, or in adverse conditions today, has arrived in a museum without any contextual information at all about its pedigree or provenance.

Tablets are remarkably stable objects, as their longevity suggests. The oldest tablets are over five thousand years old. But the surface of a tablet can get abraded, which can make the writing almost unreadable. In some chemical conditions in the ground, salts may form within or around the tablet which can create crystals that force it to split apart. If dropped on a hard surface, of course, tablets are likely to shatter: ancient scribes were already familiar with working from fragmentary sources (marking the damaged section of a text they were copying *hīpu* 'break' or perhaps *hīpu eššu* 'recent break', or even attempting to sketch the damage on the source tablet).[8] Inevitably an important element of the work of scholars today involves rejoining fragments.

Ancient libraries

What is a library? For the first two millennia of writing in Mesopotamia, literacy was transmitted through scribal workshops and what we can call scribal training academies, sometimes just the private houses of scribes, where masters (Sumerian *ummia*, Akkadian *ummiānum*) would work surrounded by a group of pupils ranging from novices (Akkadian *agašgû*) to supervisors (in Sumerian times known as *šeš-gal*, lit. 'big brothers'); the job of the latter was to assist (but mostly to discipline) the youngest pupils. Plenty of vivid descriptions survive of the strict educational style practised in the early second millennium BC.[9] As far as this earlier, Sumerian literature is concerned, most of what we have

been able to recover is the rubbish thrown away in such training schools, where scribes also learnt to draft documents, and to write business or legal correspondence, and studied mathematics and music.[10] Ordinary scribal training establishments sometimes kept a fair-sized stock of work in progress on the premises; but often, tablets that were not needed were wetted, re-cycled and re-used. Several buildings of this sort have been excavated, including one probably attached to a temple dating from as early as 2600 BC (at the Sumerian city of Šuruppag), and a priest's house from c. 1635 BC with over two thousand tablets including religious hymns among administrative and other documents (at Sippar-Amnānum in northern Babylonia).[11] It is true that King Šulgi of Ur (c. 2100 BC) claims to have founded and endowed royal scribal academies in Urim (Ur) and Nibru, with the principal aim in view of preserving, especially, the royal praise poems composed about this energetic monarch.

> In the south, in Urim, I caused a House of the Wisdom of Nisaba (goddess of scribes) to spring up in sacrosanct ground for the writing of my hymns; and up country in Nibru I set one on a pedestal. May the scribe be on duty there and transcribe with his hand the prayers which I instituted in the E-kur temple; and may the singer perform, reciting from the text. These academies are never to be altered; the places of learning shall never cease to exist. This and this only is now my accumulated knowledge! The collected words of all the hymns that are in my honour supersede all other formulations. By the gods An, Enlil, Utu and Inana, it is no lie – it is true![12]

But since no such buildings have been excavated, we are at a loss to know exactly what they might have consisted of, and the only information about them is contained in the praise poetry itself. None of the other large academies has ever been found, for example those at Nibru and Isin, which from literary references we believe to have existed. A short literary composition of this period in the form of a letter (purporting to be from a former pupil from Isin) evidently wished to promote the view that the training available at Nibru was far superior to that at Isin:

> These boys should smell the scent of Nibru! Three years ago I returned to the man. There where they lived, in the master's house – in the first place, in my opinion it was not pleasant and, further, it was cramped. . . . Because of it being the house of my master, I did

not open my mouth. Now listen – there where they are living, it is not a proper academy. He cannot teach the education of a scribe there. He cannot recite even 20 or 30 incantations, he cannot perform even 10 or 20 praise songs. But in his presence, in the house of my master, I cannot open my mouth. Don't you know that the academy in Nibru is unique?[13]

However, libraries – large reference collections of copies of the 'classical' literary and scientific works – as institutions are more characteristic of the Babylonian and Assyrian civilisations of the later second and first millennia BC, the Late Bronze Age (1500–1000 BC) and Iron Age (1000 BC onwards), when temples, palaces and some private individuals had their own collections of literary classics and scientific, religious and scholarly literature. Mostly they do seem to have formed part of temples (where they principally functioned as necessary reference tools for practising priests and cultic officiants) or palaces (where they may have been envisaged partly as vivid testimonies of the ruler's power and enlightened attitudes). In both cases, they appear to have been staffed by highly trained scholars who sometimes were themselves engaged in editing, classifying and where necessary reconstructing the standard works of the literary canon, and there is plenty of evidence that they were also used as training grounds for younger scribes.

Some of these libraries will be described in a little more detail now. From Mesopotamia, cuneiform writing spread in the early second millennium BC to Anatolia, where it was adapted to write the Indo-European language Hittite. But whether the royal archive at the Hittite capital Hattusas (modern Boğazköy) should be called a library is a moot point, although it certainly included much literary as well as historiographic, legal, administrative and religious material, mostly in Hittite but also including Akkadian and even Sumerian works, often with interlinear translations into Hittite, as well as material in the Palaic and Luwian languages (both Indo-European), and Hurrian and Hattic (the last two both being unrelated languages of the region).[14]

Within Mesopotamia, at the Assyrian traditional capital Aššur in the upper Tigris valley, two notable libraries have been excavated, both including earlier material.[15] A library the bulk of which seems to date from no later than the eighth century BC, consisting of several hundred tablets of very wide-ranging contents and including some administrative documents, was excavated mostly in a Neo-Assyrian context in the temple of the god Aššur (the god Aššur was named after the city). It was in fact probably the temple library, although it appears to have

incorporated an earlier collection of between 100 and 200 tablets dating mostly from the time of Tiglath-pileser I (1155–1077 BC), which is likely to have been originally the private library of a Middle Assyrian scribal family.

The second, very extensive library of over 800 tablets belonging to a Neo-Assyrian family of *āšipū* (cultic magicians, that is, adepts in 'white' magical practices for religious and social purposes) was housed in a purpose-built library room leading off a courtyard. It had an especially wide doorway of 1.5 m to admit light, a feature found in some other libraries, although undoubtedly the actual reading and writing were done outside probably under a shaded portico, since diffuse sunlight is the best for reading tablets. This collection also contained a few Middle Assyrian tablets, one of which is securely dated to the 14th century BC, some seven centuries previously. There is also a handful of Middle Babylonian tablets, which may have been brought from Babylonia. It is interesting to speculate whether these were among the Babylonian tablets brought to Assyria as cultural booty by the tragic and enigmatic Assyrian king Tukultī-Ninurta I (acc. 1243 BC), who was the first Assyrian king to conquer Babylon and who was murdered in 1207 BC. The contemporary epic poem about his exploits actually includes explicit detailing of the tablets carried off.[16] The composition has been seen as a living proof of the very process it seeks to justify: the absorption of Babylonian culture by Assyria.

The major temple library of the second Assyrian capital city, Kalhu (modern Nimrūd), was housed in two rooms off the main courtyard of a temple of Nabû, the god of scribes, situated on the acropolis of the city along with other temples and palaces. It was more modest than the libraries of Aššur. It was probably in continuous use from c. 800 BC until the destruction of the city in 616 or later; at least one older historical inscription in its collection had been written as early as 858/7 BC. It contained relatively few poetic literary compositions, but (as might be expected from a working temple library under royal patronage) a considerable collection of religious ritual and magical material, and also copies of some historical inscriptions. Over 250 tablets or fragments have been recovered (and there are probably still more down the well in the corner of one of the rooms, which it has not been possible to excavate so far). Although there were student scribes at Kalhu, and some of their work is preserved, there appears to be a larger selection of calligraphic manuscripts, some of which are very finely written; also there are rather more in Babylonian script. It should be explained that Babylonian script and Assyrian script are styles of cuneiform writing which

can be distinguished from each other rather as Kufic and Naskh are in Arabic, or uncial and gothic in Latin. Broadly speaking, Assyrian is the script of geographical Assyria, but some scribes in Assyria could and did write Babylonian as well; it seems that Babylonian script had the greater cultural prestige and it would have been the script of many important manuscripts which were transported from the south to the libraries of Assyria.

It is known from colophons and prosopography that tablets found their way from Kalhu to the great libraries at the last Assyrian royal capital, Nineveh (a distance of some 25 km at most), and some direct connection between the scribal personnel of the two institutions can be envisaged, possibly with the implication of a special prestige accorded to the scriptorium of Kalhu. There was a library at Dūr-Šarkēn (Khorsabad), the capital built by Sargon II (also situated in a room off the main courtyard of a temple of the god of scribes, Nabû), and in the North-west (royal) Palace at Kalhu; a further library was located in a temple of the god Nergal at Tarbīṣu, the town just outside Nineveh where the *bīt ridûti* or 'House of Succession', the crown prince's official residence, was located.

The cultural primacy of Babylonia has already been described in general terms, but unfortunately there is less hard archaeological evidence for its libraries. The most important find has been that of the Neo-Babylonian temple library in the E-babbara, the temple of the sun-god Šamaš at the city of Sippar, excavated in the 1980s by the University of Baghdad.[17] The full size of this Sippar library is difficult to estimate. Perhaps because of its location in the more rarefied cultural air of Babylonia, it seems to have had a considerably better collection of poetic literature, as well as a number of more unusual and recondite works, including astronomy-astrology and mathematics. At Sippar (as also at the Assyrian library at Dūr-Šarkēn and possibly also that in the North-west Palace at Kalhu), a pigeonhole system was in use for storing the library tablets, but tragically (probably because the extraction of the tablets was extraordinarily difficult as they were heavily salinised) not enough care was taken to record which tablet came from which pigeonhole, so potential information about systematic storage systems was not recovered.

Probably the most famous of all libraries in Assyriology is that, or rather those, of Nineveh. The principal collection was located in the South-west Palace on the mound called today Kouyunjik (Turkman *qoyunjıq*, the 'place of sheep'), but there were also libraries in the North Palace and in the temple of the scribes' god Nabû (located in between

the two palaces).[18] These royal collections were amassed mainly by king Assurbanipal (668–627 BC) but had been begun already by his father Sennacherib (704–681 BC). Assurbanipal claimed, almost uniquely among Mesopotamian monarchs, to have had a training in the scribal tradition himself, and to have special talents for reading and writing: *aštassi kammu naklu ša šumeru ṣullulu akkadû ana šutēšuri aštu* 'I can read complex texts where the Sumerian is obscure and even the Akkadian is difficult to interpret.'[19] Much of this collection was retrieved by Layard in 1850 (when hunting for Assyrian sculpture) and by Rassam in 1853; these were the first great finds of cuneiform tablets to be discovered (although it must be said they were in no way scientifically excavated). Today the tablets are mostly in the British Museum. It is by far the largest ancient Mesopotamian library known (with c. 35,000 pieces).[20] At its core is a small collection of tablets written in the time of the Middle Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser I (1115–1077 BC), supplemented by the private collections of at least one Assyrian scholar, plus the appropriated libraries of Babylonian scholars as part of the reparations exacted after the anti-Assyrian revolt of 652–648 BC. Babylonian scholars were made to copy out works from their own personal collections and from the temple collections. They write obsequiously to the king: 'We shall not neglect the king's command! Day and night we shall strain and toil to execute the instructions of our lord the king.'[21] The scriptorium of Nineveh was also engaged in making new copies of texts. Some of the scholars employed there had been taken prisoner or were Babylonian youths of noble origin who were political detainees, and were kept in chains:

> Ninurta-gimillī, the son of the governor of Nippur, has completed the tablet-series. He has been put in iron fetters and is now under the supervision of Banūni in the House of Succession (the crown prince's palace). There is no work for him at present.[22]

Assurbanipal's concern was to have at his disposal the best possible sources of information, including divination and magic, to enable him to discharge his royal duties in such a way as would be satisfactory to the gods.[23] The king writes to his agents in Babylonia: 'Send me tablets that are beneficial for my royal administration!',[24] and in an often-quoted *diktat*: 'When you receive this letter, take with you these three men (their names are given) and the learned men of the city of Borsippa, and seek out all the tablets – all those that are in their houses and all those that are deposited in the temple E-zida (the temple of the

scribal god Nabû) . . . Hunt for the valuable tablets which are known to you (*ṭuppāni aqrūtu ša medâkkunūšimma*) and which do not exist in Assyria, and send them to me. I have written to the officials and over-seers . . . and no one is to withhold a tablet from you!'[25]

These libraries contain some ancient Sumerian literary compositions equipped with interlinear Akkadian translations, and much Akkadian poetic literature. But principally the range covered is the written traditions of the great religious professions, especially divination and magic, reflecting the editorial work done in the late second and early first millennia BC to expand the treatises on divination and to systematise the magical incantations and rituals of the exorcists.

Undiscovered libraries

In this focus on the *lost* libraries of Mesopotamia, the first of the four categories offered is undiscovered libraries. But I do not mean those which through the accidents of archaeological investigation have simply not yet been discovered and excavated, numerous though they may be. Instead I have in mind another category: the collections of literature which we know to have existed but have not yet been able to retrieve. Old Babylonian catalogues of Sumerian literary compositions of the early second millennium BC list the incipits of many which we cannot identify. A fascinating Middle Assyrian catalogue from Aššur of 'ballads' lists the incipits of nearly 400 compositions including 90 pastoral love songs; of all these, so far only one has been found, on a British Museum tablet.[26] The ancient editor of a catalogue from Nineveh of early Sumerian cultic songs (the repertoire called in Akkadian *kalûtu*) was himself aware that he could not get hold of all the titles he knew to exist. He writes: 'Incipits of the series *kalûtu*. Checked; all that were available. Many could not be traced (*mādūti ul amrū*) and were therefore not included.'[27]

Destroyed libraries

Second, destroyed libraries. These include the royal and other libraries of the Assyrian cities of Nineveh, Kalhu, Aššur, Dūr-Šarkēn and Tarbīsu, already described in some detail above. All of these great collections were systematically destroyed by the allied armies of the Babylonians and Medes, who combined to topple the Assyrian Empire during the years 614–612 B.C.[28] The condition in which the tablets were found, in palaces that bore wholesale evidence of smashing and firing, with

remains of burnt wooden roofbeams, is part of a widespread arch-aeological picture that vividly confirms the terse statement in the Babylonian Chronicle for the year 612 BC:

> They (the Babylonians and Medes) subjected the city to a heavy siege. On the nth day of the month Ābu . . . they inflicted a major defeat on a great people. At that time Sîn-šar-iškun, the king of Assyria, died. They carried off the vast booty of the city and temple and reduced the city to ruin mounds.[29]

This destruction marked not only the political demise of the Assyrian empire but also, at a stroke, the complete end of the intellectual tradition carried by the cuneiform writing system in northern Mesopotamia, and, more or less, of cuneiform literacy in that region. Much of the learning transmitted in cuneiform was culturally bound to its medium, its languages and its own traditions, and it never crossed the cultural boundaries to other forms of recording. The library collections lay on the floor of the chambers, many tablets shattered into fragments, beneath the accumulating debris of the collapsed buildings. At Kalhu some of the ruins of the temple of Nabû were reoccupied after a few decades. These squatters, illiterate in cuneiform writing, dug down into the library rooms to remove the paving stones and baked bricks of the Assyrian pavements, shovelling out the debris of the temple library to reach them. Once the desired building materials had been removed, the pits were refilled and the shattered remains of the library shovelled back in, mixed with a certain amount of plaster and bitumen from the later building operations, no doubt damaging the tablets further in the process. There the tablets lay, not to be disturbed for nearly 2500 years, until AD 1955.

When Layard discovered the tablets in the library of Assurbanipal in 1850, they could not yet be read properly, although the first steps in the decipherment of Babylonian cuneiform had been made in the 1840s.[30] The story of modern decipherment is a long one, but the agreed date by which full decipherment of Babylonian cuneiform had been achieved is 1857, when the Royal Asiatic Society organised a competition in London for four scholars: Rawlinson, Hincks, Oppert and Fox Talbot, the last better known as one of the pioneers of photography. They were each given the text of the same inscription to decipher, in separate rooms, and produced substantially the same version.

Superseded libraries

With the relatively sudden death of the Assyrian libraries, one can contrast the situation in the Babylonian south of Mesopotamia where, in the cultural heartland, the cuneiform tradition persisted until at least the first century AD. Babylonian libraries died a much more gradual and subtle death as new languages, alphabetic writing systems (for writing various forms of Aramaic, and Parthian and Greek) and new writing materials (papyrus and parchment) created competing modes of cultural transmission. In the last centuries BC we have the extraordinary situation where Greek-speaking residents of Babylonia send their sons to cuneiform scribal school, and the pupils learn to copy out the the traditional lists of cuneiform signs dating back over more than three millennia, and the traditional literary works, impressing the signs as usual on to the tablet with a reed stylus – and then on the reverse of the tablet use the same stylus to *write* in Greek letters a phonetic pronunciation crib of the Sumerian and Akkadian words, an exceptional case of the mingling of media.[31] Access to this literary tradition was being lost as it was gradually superseded by other writing systems. In the first century BC at Babylon a family of highly educated intellectuals deeply versed in traditional Sumerian cultic literature were still copying and carefully editing (on the basis of multiple sources, recording the variants) religious songs composed almost two thousand years earlier. But they were an isolated few, and they were surrounded by people with Hellenised names, speaking and writing Aramaic or Parthian, using coins embossed with Greek legends and worshipping new gods with Iranian or Greek names. This family's precious private library was 'lost' because as a dying tradition it was simply superseded.

As it happens it is also a good example of a library collection 'lost' through unscientific excavation. The tablets are mostly in Berlin (the only information is 'acquired in 1886', 'supposed to have been found together at Babylon') and were published in a remarkably careful publication in 1896 by George Reisner (who went on later to have a much more famous career as an Egyptologist).[32] In the 1980s it turned out that some tablets now in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, must have come (by whatever route) from exactly the same private library: the same members of the same scribal family were involved, the compositions belonged to the same genres and some of the fragments in New York actually joined broken tablets in Berlin. This was worked out both from the literary content and from photos of the incomplete

pieces; but the physical joins have not yet been effected by the two museums.

Inaccessible libraries

This brings us to the final group of 'lost libraries' of ancient Mesopotamia: those that are lost to scholarship in the sense that much remains unread in modern times in the museums of the western world. Partly this is a problem of personnel; few universities have as many as two Assyriologists on their staffs. At the annual Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale conference, there might be four hundred Assyriologists from around the world, but there simply are not enough trained cuneiformists to read and copy the available tablets.

We know that there are thousands of tablets and fragments from Assurbanipal's and other libraries in the British Museum waiting to be read, copied and published, and it is only shortage of time and manpower that delays their recovery. We know too that there are, again, literally tens of thousands of pieces awaiting study in other museums (especially in Berlin, Paris, Philadelphia, Istanbul and Baghdad). Some institutions around the world are excessively restrictive about access to their collections, limiting access to local scholars or to particular scholars who have acquired so-called 'rights' to publish particular works even though it is widely known that they are inactive or will never complete their work without assistance. (It is a pleasure to say that the British Museum has an absolutely exemplary record in this respect, since it operates an 'open-door' policy, so that any accredited specialist may see, work on and publish *any* cuneiform material.) Then there is the burgeoning trade in looted antiquities, either recently stolen from museums in their home countries or illicitly and quite unscientifically dug from the ground (one can hardly say excavated) by impoverished locals. Unfortunately since the 1990s London has become a world centre for the trade in illicit antiquities. Should one try to discourage this by refusing to have anything to do with antiquities dealers – and thereby perhaps lose the chance to see a crucial tablet which it would be possible to copy and work on – at least to know about – and which may otherwise disappear into a private collection for the next fifty years?

A number of electronic projects have developed in recent years, and these can play a particularly significant role in democratising access to these ancient written sources. The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature seeks to gather together and present a universally accessible

corpus of classical Sumerian literature.[33] Most of what has been retrieved and edited of the main body of that literature (currently over 300 compositions) is now available at this website, where it is accessed over 60,000 times per month from over 80 countries; but we are still hampered by the existence of many known but as yet unpublished sources, and even by carefully protected 'editions still in progress'. So inaccessibility is a fourth aspect of loss, and perhaps more poignant because it is a potentially resolvable problem.

Postscript

Since the above was written, the tragic events of the Second Gulf War, April–May 2003, have thrown the subject of 'lost libraries' into ghastly prominence in today's Iraq. Libraries, museums and archaeological sites have all been terribly damaged in a still unfolding epic of appalling proportions which has been compared to the looting of Baghdad by the Mongols in 1158. No one can yet assess the full extent of the losses and damage suffered, and indeed it may never be possible for historians or careful journalists to unravel the tangled web of developments sufficiently to write such a chapter – even once the innuendos and insinuations of newspapermen intent on getting scoops and making 'discoveries' have been forgotten. But at the time of going to press, it is certain that some of the cuneiform library collections of the national Iraq Museum and other museums have been damaged, some irretrievably; others have been looted and may or may not be recovered.

Notes

1. See J. A. Black and W. J. Tait, 'Archives and Libraries: Mesopotamia and Egypt' in J. Sasson, ed., *Civilisations of the Ancient Near East* (New York: Scribner's, 1995), 2197–209.
2. See H. Hunger, *Babylonische und assyrische Kolophone*, Alter Orient und Altes Testament 2 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Butzon-Kevelaer, 1968), index, p. 163 s.v. idû.
3. See H. Nissen, P. Damerow, and R. Englund, *Archaic Book-Keeping: Early Writing and Techniques of Economic Administration in the Ancient Near East* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).
4. See B. Alster and A. Westenholz, 'The Barton Cylinder', *Acta Sumerologica* 16 (1994): 15–46. For a fascinating discussion of general literacy in Mesopotamia, see most recently C. Wilcke, *Wer las und schrieb in Babylonien*

und Assyrien? Überlegungen zur Literalität im Alten Zweistromland, Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-hist. Klasse, Jahrgang 2000, Heft 6 (Munich).

5. See C. B. F Walker, *Cuneiform: Reading the Past* (London: British Museum Publications, 1987).

6. See, for a lucid account, David Brown, *Mesopotamian Planetary Astronomy-Astrology*, Cuneiform Monographs 18 (Groningen: Styx, 2000).

7. See D. J. Wiseman and J. A. Black, *Literary Texts from the Temple of Nabû*, *Cuneiform Texts from Nimrud IV* (London: British School of Archaeology in Iraq, 1996), introduction, 1–7 (p. 5); and in general Hunger, *Babylonische und assyrische Kolophone.*

8. See F. N. H. Al-Rawi, 'Tablets from the Sippar library, I. The "Weidner Chronicle": a supposititious royal letter concerning a vision', *Iraq* 52 (1990): 1–13.

9. See, for vivid detail, C. J. Gadd, *Teachers and Students in the Oldest Schools* (London, 1956); for a broader overview, S. Tinney, 'On the curricular setting of Sumerian literature', *Iraq* 61 (1999): 159–72.

10. See E. Robson, *Mesopotamian Mathematics 2100–1600 BC: Technical Constants in Bureaucracy and Education,* Oxford Editions of Cuneiform Texts 15 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999).

11. See L. De Meyer, 'Der, Tell ed-', in E. Meyers, ed., *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), with bibliography. For another example, see A. Cavigneaux, 'A Scholar's Library in Meturan', in Tz. Abusch and K. van der Toorn, eds, *Mesopotamian Magic: Textual, Historical and Interpretative Perspectives* (Groningen: Styx, 1999), 251–73.

12. A praise poem of Šulgi (Šulgi B) in Jeremy Black, *et al.*, *Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature* (1998–), 2.4.2.02: 308–19.

13. Literary letter from Nabi-Enlil to Ṣilli-Eshtar, 3.3.18 in Civil's catalogue; see J. J. A. van Dijk, 'Ein spätaltbabylonischer Katalog einer Sammlung sumerischer Briefe', *Orientalia* 58 (1989): 441–52 (pp. 448–52).

14. About 25,000 tablets have been excavated from the Hittite archives; E. Laroche, *Catalogue des textes hittites* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1971) estimated that this was one-seventh only of the original total. See Amélie Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East, c. 3000–330 BC,* 2 vols (London and New York: Routledge, 1995): 232–7.

15. See, for a general survey of these libraries, Olof Pedersén, *Archives and Libraries in the Ancient Near East 1500–300 BC* (Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 1998).

16. See B. Foster, *Before the Muses: an Anthology of Akkadian Literature*, 2 vols (Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 1996), 1: 211–30, esp. 228. Unfortunately the passage is badly damaged.

17. See Black and Tait, Archives and libraries: 2207; for details, see F.N.H. Al-Rawi and A.R. George, 'Tablets from the Sippar library, II. Tablet II of the Babylonian Creation Epic', *Iraq* 52 (1990): 149–57 (p. 149 n. 1).

18. See J. E. Reade in K. Veenhof, *Cuneiform Archives and Libraries*, Comptes Rendus des Rencontres Assyriologiques Internationales 30 (Istanbul: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 1986): 213ff.

19. M. Streck, *Assurbanipal und die letzten assyrischen Könige bis zum Untergang Ninive's,* Vorderasiatische Bibliothek 7 (Leipzig: 1916): 256, 1: 17.

20. See J. E. Reade, 'Ninive (Nineveh)', in *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* 9 (2000): 388–433 (pp. 421–27 §17 'Cuneiform records'); C. B. F. Walker, 'The Kouyunjik Collection of Cuneiform Texts: Formation, Problems, and Prospects', in F.M. Fales and B.J. Hickey, eds, *Austen Henry Layard tra l'oriente e Venezia* (Rome: «L'Erma» di Bretschneider, nd): 183–93.

21. Unpublished tablet cited by A. R. George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh: A New Translation* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1999), introduction, p. xxii.

22. S. Parpola, 'A Letter from Šamaš-šumu-ukīn to Esarhaddon', *Iraq* 34 (1972): 21–34 (p. 33).

23. George, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, p. xxiv.

24. R. Campbell Thompson, *Late Babylonian Letters* (London: Luzac, 1906), no. 1.

25. Neo-Babylonian letter of Assurbanipal, CT 22 1: 29 = L. Waterman, *Royal Correspondence of the Assyrian Empire* (Ann Arbor; University of Michigan Press, 1930–36), vol. 4, p. 213; no. 6 = E. Chiera, *They Wrote on Clay: The Babylonian Tablets Speak Today* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938): 174.

26. See J. A. Black, 'Babylonian Ballads: a New Genre', in *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 103 (*Kramer Anniversary Volume,* 1983): 25–34.

27. See J. A. Black, 'Sumerian *balag* Compositions', in *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 44 (1987): 32–79.

28. See Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East*, pp. 540–6.

29. A. K. Grayson, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles*. Texts from Cuneiform Sources 5 (Locust Valley, 1975): 94, chronicle 3: 43–5. The text is slightly restored.

30. See C. H. Gordon, *Forgotten Scripts: The Story of their Decipherment* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971); P. T. Daniels and W. Bright, eds, *The World's Writing Systems* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), esp. pp. 139–88.

31. See J. A. Black and S.M. Sherwin-White, 'A Clay Tablet with Greek Letters in the Ashmolean Museum, and the "Graeco-Babyloniaca" texts', *Iraq* 46 (1984): 131–40.

32. See G. A. Reisner, *Sumerisch-babylonische Hymnen nach Thontafeln griechischer Zeit* (Berlin, 1896), p. xi.

33. Black, *et al.*, *Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature* <http://www-etcsl.orient.ox.ac.uk/>.

3
Aristotle's 'Peripatetic' Library

T. Keith Dix

The Hellenistic age was a great age of library foundation. The Macedonian dynasts who laid claim to portions of Alexander's empire also laid claim to the cultural accomplishments of the previous Greek centuries through the construction of libraries in their new capital cities. It was also a great age of lost libraries, as dynasts competed with one another to gather up the literary resources of Greece and as Rome moved into the eastern Mediterranean, conquering individual kingdoms and moving their cultural treasures to Rome and Italy.

The story of the library of Aristotle illustrates both the intellectual culture which led to establishment of institutional libraries and the circumstances which might lead to their dissolution. The geographer Strabo, writing in the time of Augustus, gives this account of Aristotle's library (13.1.54 C 608–609):

> From Scepsis came the Socratics Erastus and Koriskus and Neleus the son of Koriskus, a pupil of Aristotle and Theophrastus, who received the library of Theophrastus, in which was the library of Aristotle; for Aristotle gave his library to Theophrastus, to whom he also left the school; he was the first we know of to have collected books and he taught the kings in Egypt the arrangement of a library. And Theophrastus gave it to Neleus; and he carrying it away to Scepsis gave it to his descendants, laymen who kept the books shut up and not carefully stored; and when they saw the eagerness of the Attalid kings, who controlled their city, in seeking books for the equipping of the library in Pergamum, they hid them in the ground in some sort of trench; but then after a long time those in the family sold the books of Aristotle and Theophrastus, damaged by damp and moths, to Apellicon of Teos for much money; but Apellicon was a biblio-

58

phile rather than a philosopher; and therefore, desiring a correction of the eaten-through parts, he transferred the writing into new copies, not restoring it well, and he put out the books full of errors. And it happened that those Peripatetics of long ago, those after Theophrastus, being entirely without the books except for a few and those mostly exoteric ones, were able to investigate nothing in a practical way, but to declaim general questions; and the later ones, from the time when these books appeared, philosophized better than those earlier ones and Aristotelized, but nevertheless were forced to call most things 'likely', because of the multitude of errors. And Rome contributed much to this; for straightway after the death of Apellicon, Sulla, who captured Athens, carried off the library of Apellicon, and the library having been brought here, Tyrannio the grammarian a lover of Aristotle had it in hand, paying court to the man in charge of the library, and some booksellers using poor copyists and not collating, which also happens with the other books written for sale both here and in Alexandria.

Strabo implies that the 'library of Aristotle' consisted of Aristotle's own works, to which Theophrastus then added his own; and the clear implication of Strabo's remarks on the decline of the Peripatetic school is that Theophrastus left to Neleus, and Neleus removed to his home town of Scepsis, unique copies (perhaps even autographs) of most of the works of Aristotle and Theophrastus. The Greek biographer Plutarch, writing in the second century C.E., gives a similar account:

And putting out to sea with all his ships from Ephesus, on the third day Sulla put in to the Piraeus, and initiated into the Mysteries he took for himself the library of Apellicon of Teos, in which were most of the books of Aristotle and of Theophrastus, then not yet well-known to the many. And it is said that when the library was carried to Rome, Tyrannio the grammarian furnished himself with most of them, and that Andronicus the Rhodian furnished with copies by him published them and composed the present lists. And the older Peripatetics seem on the one hand to have been accomplished men and scholars in themselves, on the other hand not to have met with many of the writings of Aristotle and Theophrastus nor accurately, because the estate of Neleus of Scepsis, to whom Theophrastus left his books, came to indifferent and unknowing men.[1]

Both Strabo and Plutarch view the collection as one which can be traced back directly to the hands of Aristotle and Theophrastus; both connect this collection with the alleged disappearance and rediscovery of a – perhaps *the* – major portion of the corpus of Aristotle and Theophrastus and with the revival of Aristotelian studies in the late first century BC.

Strabo's account suggests a wider significance for the 'library of Aristotle' when he describes Aristotle as πρῶτος ὧν ἴσμεν συναγαγὼν βιβλία, 'the first we know of to have collected books'. The book-collector was already a recognised type in Athens by the end of the fifth century BC, so this claim cannot be literally true; but books seem to have been particularly important to Aristotle and his school. Plato is supposed to have called Aristotle Ὁ ἀναγνώστης, 'the reader', presumably because Aristotle was a voracious reader.[2] The ἀναγνώστης was usually a slave; Plato's nickname, then, may be a matter not only of voracious reading, but also of Aristotle engaging in a pursuit normally left to slaves.[3] Aristotle recommended the consultation of written works as a first step in the process of dialectic (*Topica* 1.14.105 b 12). Aristotle began the type of literature known as doxography, that is, the collection and discussion of the views of earlier philosophers; his work in this area, illustrated in titles attributed to him such as 'On the Philosophy of Archytas', 'On the Philosophy of Speusippus and Xenocrates', and 'Problems from the Works of Democritus' (Diogenes Laertius 5.25, 26), must have required a collection of books. Indeed, Aristotle is reported to have purchased the books of Speusippus, Plato's successor in the Academy, after Speusippus' death for a price of three talents (Diogenes Laertius 4.5, Gellius 3.17.3); this exorbitant price fits the picture of a book-collector so avid that he might be called 'the first to have collected books'. The school's research activities, such as collecting constitutions and official records, would also have added to the school's store of texts. The possession of a library seems to have played a much more critical role in the development of the Peripatetic school than it did in the development of any other philosophical school; we hear nothing, for example, of the 'library of the Academy' or the 'library of the Stoics'. Aristotle's collection may have aimed to be a systematic one – indeed, that may have inspired the claim that Aristotle taught the Ptolemies the arrangement of a library – and the collection became a central element in the story of the Peripatetic school, as we shall see below. These factors may have led Strabo to designate Aristotle 'the first we know of to have collected books'.[4]

When Strabo says that Aristotle gave his library to Theophrastus, he

seems to be speaking primarily of Aristotle's own writings, as we saw above. It seems likely, however, that Aristotle would also have transmitted to his successor and the school the other works which he had collected. We cannot be certain how the library of Aristotle came into the possession of Theophrastus. Strabo alone states that Aristotle bequeathed (παρέδωκεν) his library to Theophrastus, perhaps implying a legacy. The will of Aristotle preserved in Diogenes Laertius (5.11–16), however, makes no mention of the library. John P. Lynch suggests that the executors of Aristotle's will allotted the library to Theophrastus.[5] It is more likely, perhaps, that Theophrastus gained the library of Aristotle in the same way that he gained the headship of the school: he probably took over the books and the school upon Aristotle's forced departure from Athens in 323 BC.[6]

The status and future of Aristotle's 'school' – that is, his circle of students and followers – must have been very uncertain when Aristotle left Athens: it was made up mostly of other metics (resident foreigners), lacked any building of its own, and was left by default in the hands of another metic, Theophrastus. Likewise, the fate of any possessions left behind by Aristotle, including his library, would be uncertain. Through the intervention of the Athenian philosopher and statesman Demetrius of Phalerum, Theophrastus was eventually able to acquire a property near the Lyceum (Diogenes Laertius 5.39) and thus give some physical and legal embodiment to the 'school of Aristotle'. Lynch has demonstrated that the property of the school – grounds, buildings, books, furniture, and so forth – was the property of the head of the school, the scholarch; legally, the scholarch was the school.[7]

Theophrastus, then, might leave the library to whomever he wished; and he left it to Neleus of Scepsis, one of his students. As in the case of Aristotle's bequest to Theophrastus, Strabo implies that the library given to Neleus consisted of Aristotle's and Theophrastus' own writings. The will of Theophrastus preserved in Diogenes Laertius (5.52) records the gift to Neleus of τὰ βιβλία πάντα, 'all the books', so it is possible that Neleus received the school's entire collection. It has been suggested that Theophrastus bequeathed his books to Neleus in order to indicate his choice of a successor as scholarch.[8] The will of Theophrastus, however, does not otherwise distinguish Neleus from the other members of the school: Neleus was given a slave and is named as one of ten men who are to share use of the school property and as one of the seven executors of the will (Diogenes Laertius 5.53, 55, 56). Gottschalk has suggested that Theophrastus intended Neleus to be his literary executor. He points to the wills of the two successive scholarchs, Strato and Lyco,

each of whom mentions the books that he himself had written, and in particular, to Lyco's instructions that his unpublished works be given to a member of the school for publication.[9] Gottschalk believes that Theophrastus likewise intended Neleus to be his literary executor; that the papers of Aristotle and Theophrastus formed a single mass at the time of Theophrastus' death – hence, Theophrastus' grant of 'all the books;' and that Neleus' first task as executor would have been to separate their works.[10] A third possibility is that Theophrastus wanted to make one person responsible for the care of the school's library; his designation of Neleus as one of the ten who were to share in the use of the school's property indicates that he anticipated that Neleus would continue at the school and that the books would continue to be available to other members of the school.

That was not to be the case. Perhaps in a fit of pique over the election of Strato as scholarch, Neleus left for his hometown of Scepsis in the Troad, taking the books – the badge of office, as it were – with him.[11] At Scepsis, Strabo says, Neleus left the books to his descendants, who locked the books away, even hiding them underground to frustrate the bibliophilia of the Attalid kings, only to sell them eventually to another voracious collector, Apellicon. Athenaeus, writing around 200 C.E., tells a different story, that Neleus sold the books to Ptolemy II Philadelphus in Alexandria.[12]

The departure of Neleus, books in hand, had devastating consequences for the Peripatetic school, according to Strabo. Post-Theophrastan Peripatetics had access to only a few works of Aristotle and Theophrastus, mostly 'exoteric' ones, that is, the more general works intended for publication outside the school.[13] As a result, Strabo says, they were unable to investigate anything in a practical way and could only declaim on general questions. Indeed, the decline of the Peripatetic school seems to have become a commonplace. When Diogenes Laertius sets out the succession of scholarchs in the various philosophical schools, he ends the Peripatetic line with Theophrastus (1.14–15); and Cicero says of the successors of Aristotle and Theophrastus, 'they are so degenerate that they seem to have sprung from themselves' – that is, they did not seem to be the legitimate heirs of Aristotle and Theophrastus.[14] Strato may already have been aware of declining interest and energy in the school; in his will, he designates Lyco as his successor, 'because of the others, some are too old, and some are too busy' (Diogenes Laertius 5.62).[15]

While the ancient estimate of the decline of the Peripatetic school has been confirmed by modern scholarship, the reason for decline put

forward by Strabo, namely, the loss of the works of Aristotle and Theophrastus, has been discounted. Their works, including the so-called esoteric works, seem never to have been lost, and they continued to be read, discussed, and quoted during the time when they were supposed to have been buried in Scepsis.[16] It is worth quoting the remark of H.B. Gottschalk:

> Strabo's claim looks like a fiction invented to support his explanation of the decline and recovery of Aristotle's school. Now this explanation is based on the assumption that serious philosophising must start from written texts. While it anticipates an attitude which predominated among Aristotelians in the following centuries, it has no parallel in the earlier philosophical tradition and would be more appropriate in the mouth of a grammarian than a philosopher.[17]

That the manuscripts of Aristotle and Theophrastus which Neleus inherited were the only copies in existence of their works is implausible. Other members of the school probably had copies of some works; in particular, those who left the school in Athens and thus no longer had access to the school's collection would have wanted copies. Eudemus of Rhodes, for example, seems to have taken copies of some works of Aristotle with him when he left the school; for he wrote to Theophrastus to ask about a reading in the *Physics*.[18]

The Peripatetic school itself does not seem to have been without a library as a result of Theophrastus' bequest to Neleus. When Strato bequeaths to his successor Lyco τὰ βιβλία πάντα, 'all the books', excepting only the works which he himself had written (Diogenes Laertius 5.52), presumably he is leaving the school's entire collection, including works of Aristotle and Theophrastus. When Lyco in his will disposes only of those books which he himself had written (Diogenes Laertius 5.73), perhaps he feels no need to state the obvious, namely, that the bulk of the school's collection is to remain in the school. During the scholarchate of Lyco's successor, Ariston of Ceos, the school's library contained all the works of Aristotle found in the list of Diogenes Laertius (5.22–27), at least if Moraux's thesis is correct that Ariston drew up this list, based on the school's holdings, as part of his biographies of the Peripatetic scholarchs.[19] In that case, the school either had been able to obtain new copies of Aristotle's works, or had never lost its own copies. Diogenes Laertius says nothing to suggest that the school lost its library or that the works of Aristotle and Theophrastus ever became unavail-

able.[20] Nor does Cicero, who was interested in the decline of the Peripatetic school, allege the disappearance of the library as a cause, or even seem to know of its disappearance; he cites other causes, such as a shift in the school's interests away from ethics, the lesser personal prestige of some scholarchs, and a change in the doctrine of the Highest Good (*de finibus* 5.5.13–14).

Strabo and Athenaeus offer different accounts of the fate of Neleus' collection, as we saw above. Both accounts may be true: Neleus may have sold some portion to the Ptolemies while retaining the remainder, which became the property of his family and was eventually sold to Apellicon. At any rate, the works of Aristotle and Theophrastus do seem to have been available in the library at Alexandria.

In fact, there seem to have been close ties between the Peripatetic school in Athens and the Ptolemies in Alexandria. As we have seen, Strabo even asserted that Aristotle taught the Ptolemies the arrangement of a library. This assertion is doubtful on chronological grounds: Aristotle left Athens in 323 and died in Chalcis in 322, and Ptolemy I Soter, who became satrap of Egypt in 323, is unlikely to have devoted himself to the establishment of a library during the troubles of the next year; nor is there any report that Aristotle visited Egypt after his departure from Athens. Nevertheless, while Aristotle himself probably did not take in hand the arrangement of the Alexandrian library, a pupil of the Peripatetic school may have done so. Demetrius of Phalerum, who heard the lectures of Theophrastus (Diogenes Laertius 5.75) and gained for Theophrastus the right to acquire a property in Athens (Diogenes Laertius 5.39), become governor of the city at the instigation of the Macedonian general Cassander; when another Macedonian general, Demetrius Poliorcetes, took the city, Demetrius of Phalerum fled and eventually came to the court of Ptolemy Soter in Alexandria (Diogenes Laertius 5.78). In several accounts of the Septuagint, the translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek at Alexandria,[21] Demetrius is identified as the person in charge of the library;[22] and while the story of the Septuagint may be incredible, it is hard to see how Demetrius became part of the story unless he was in fact associated with the Alexandrian library.

Ptolemy Soter also made overtures to Theophrastus (Diogenes Laertius 5.37), and Theophrastus' successor Strato served as tutor to Ptolemy II Philadelphus and received eighty talents from him (Diogenes Laertius 5.58). Thus, a connection between the Peripatetic school and the Alexandrian court had been established. It has been suggested that Strato sought to strengthen the connection through the sale to Philadel-

phus of copies of works in the school's library. Athenaeus may reflect such a sale, when he says that Philadelphus transferred the books purchased from Neleus, 'along with those from Athens and those from Rhodes', to Alexandria; the 'books from Athens' may represent a purchase from the Peripatetic school and the 'books from Rhodes' a purchase of the books taken to Rhodes by Eudemus.[23] Late commentators on Aristotle also state that Philadelphus collected the works of Aristotle.[24]

We come now to Apellicon of Teos, who by Strabo's account was responsible for restoring the 'lost works' of Aristotle and Theophrastus to the school and to the world. Strabo has Apellicon purchase the books from the descendants of Neleus in Scepsis. These are the 'laymen' (or the 'indifferent and unknowing men', in Plutarch's account) who did not take proper measures to preserve the books, yet apparently realised the powerful allure of the collection for the Attalid library-builders in Pergamum and so hid it away – only to have a later generation sell it to the bibliophile Apellicon. The philosopher and historian Posidonius, a contemporary of Apellicon who provides the fullest account of his career, confirms that Apellicon purchased a collection purported to be the 'library of Aristotle'. Posidonius says nothing of Scepsis or the 'disappearance' of the library, but does mention these interesting details: Apellicon was very wealthy and able to buy many other books, he attempted to acquire the originals of Athenian decrees, and his efforts to acquire things old and rare extended to other cities as well.[25]

Posidonius connects both Apellicon's acquisition of Aristotle's library and his support for the tyrant Athenion, who led Athenian resistance to Sulla, with Apellicon's profession of Peripatetic philosophy. Apellicon seems to have had an adoptive Athenian grandfather and brother with the name Ἀριστοτέλης;[26] his adoptive family, then, may have been connected with the Peripatetic school, and Apellicon may have come to know them through the school. Apellicon not only bought the 'library of Aristotle', he also wrote at least one book on Aristotle, concerning Aristotle's friendship with the tyrant Hermias;[27] and his interest in Athenian decrees recalls the Peripatetic interest in the 'constitutions' of Greek and other cities.[28]

Apellicon's studies in the Peripatetic school may have led him to Neleus' library at Scepsis. Strabo associates the revival of the Peripatetic school with Apellicon's purchase from the heirs of Neleus, and it has been suggested that Apellicon actually restored the books to the school.[29] It has also been suggested, however, that the entire Scepsis episode is a fabrication, invented by Apellicon to inflate the worth of

his collection or to cover his theft of books from elsewhere – perhaps from the Peripatetic school itself.[30] One may well have some doubts about the veracity of the man who apparently resorted to theft to obtain decrees from the Metroon, the Records Office in the Athenian Agora, and then escaped prosecution through flight; but it should be noted that Posidonius is openly hostile to Apellicon, and that we have little basis on which to judge his charges against Apellicon.

Strabo says that Apellicon attempted to remedy the damage done to the collection by damp and moths during its underground storage at Scepsis by making new copies of the works and apparently restoring the missing portions. Calling Apellicon 'a bibliophile rather than a philosopher,' Strabo criticises this procedure and its product, 'books full of errors' which caused new problems for Aristotelian philosophy and philosophers. Strabo's criticism, however, seems to rest on a misapprehension of the nature of the bibliophile. Surely a bibliophile like Apellicon, who sought things old and rare in Athens and in other cities, would naturally prefer the Scepsis books (which had some claim to be autographs of Aristotle and Theophrastus, whatever their damaged condition) to newly manufactured copies. Indeed, the process described by Strabo sounds like the work of a philosopher whose sincere goal, no matter how poorly realised, was the restoration to the school of the Aristotelian corpus. Apellicon's edition seems to have left no trace, however, going entirely without mention, for example, in later commentators on Aristotle. Since Strabo alone reports Apellicon's edition, Düring suggests that this detail may represent Strabo's embellishment of the hostile tradition on Apellicon.[31] On the other hand, Apellicon did conduct research on the life of Aristotle, as we have seen, and we know no reason why he could not have undertaken an edition of some of the works; the disappearance of his edition may be explained by his and the edition's poor reputation and its supersession by the later edition by Andronicus of Rhodes.

Lucius Cornelius Sulla passed through the conquered city of Athens in 84 BC, on his way from Asia to Italy. In the aftermath of his victory over King Mithradates of Pontus and the rebellious Greek cities, Sulla took a number of actions calculated to win Greek support and to express his appreciation of Hellenic values. The city of Athens, in particular, fared much better at the hands of Sulla than it had any right to expect. Sulla ordered an end to the killing during the Roman sack of Athens, praising the ancient city and saying that he forgave a few for the sake of the many and the living for the sake of the dead (Plutarch, *Sulla* 14.5). Unlike Thebes, which lost half its territory, Athens received back from

her conqueror the islands of Lemnos, Imbros, Scyros, and Delos.[32] When Sulla passed through Athens in 84, he was initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries (Plutarch, *Sulla* 26.1), and he spent a great deal of time in the company of the young Roman philhellene Titus Pomponius Atticus, apparently engaged in discussion of Greek literature (Nepos, *Atticus* 4). These actions, intended to mark Sulla out as a man of culture and refinement and to reconcile Athens to Roman dominion, apparently achieved some success, at least among some Athenians: when Sulla left Athens, he received gifts from the people which he turned over to Atticus (Nepos, *Atticus* 4), and the Athenians instituted Games in his honor.[33]

Through the acquisition of Aristotle's library, Sulla could show his love for Greek literature and learning and acknowledge the continuing dominance of Greek culture and the indebtedness of Roman culture. He may even have acted in conscious imitation of an earlier Roman conqueror of Greece, Lucius Aemilius Paullus, who took nothing for himself from the booty of King Perseus of Macedon but allowed his sons to take the king's books (Plutarch, *Aemilius Paullus* 28.6).

We can perhaps attribute another motive to Sulla in the confiscation of the library: he might have intended it as a warning to the schools of philosophy at Athens. The Athenian revolt from Rome and adherence to Mithradates began under the leadership of Athenion, a professed Peripatetic; the words of Athenion in a speech to the Athenians, 'let us not allow the schools of the philosophers to be silent,' indicate that the schools had been closed under Roman pressure and that Athenion appealed explicitly to the philosophers for their support.[34] Apellicon, also a professed Peripatetic, enlisted in the cause of his fellow-philosopher, served as mint magistrate and led the Athenian expedition against the Romans on Delos.[35] Athenion seems to have been succeeded in the tyranny by another philosopher, this time an Epicurean named Aristion (Appian, *Mithradatic Wars* 28).[36] When timber ran low during the Roman siege of Athens, Sulla ravaged the wooded areas of the Academy and the Lyceum (Plutarch, *Sulla* 14); while we do not hear of any damage to buildings owned or used by the schools, the devastation of the sacred groves must have been a visible reminder to the philosophers of the hazards of war. With his confiscation of the library of Aristotle from a philosopher who took an active role in the resistance to Rome, Sulla may have hoped to discourage any further political activity on the part of Athenian philosophers.

When Sulla returned to Italy, he seems to have installed the library in his villa on the Bay of Naples. We learn this from Cicero, who pro-

vides the only reference in a Latin author to Sulla's library. Writing to Atticus from Cumae in April 55, Cicero says *ego hic pascor bibliotheca Fausti*, 'here I feast on the library of Faustus' (*Epistulae ad Atticum* 4.10.1). Presumably Faustus Sulla inherited the library of his father, who died in 78 BC, and the library seems to have been housed in a villa near Cicero's *Cumanum*. D'Arms suggests that the villa of Faustus was the one occupied by Lucius Sulla during his Campanian retirement and that Lucius Sulla installed the library there.[37]

The Greek grammarian Tyrannio of Amisus gained access to the library some time after 68 BC. Tyrannio was taken prisoner in 71 BC in the capture of Amisus in Pontus, during the campaign of Lucius Licinius Lucullus against Mithradates. Tyrannio gained access to the library, according to Strabo, by 'paying court to the man in charge of the library' (θεραπεύσας τὸν ἐπὶ τῆς βιβλιοθήκης); this individual has been identified as Sulla's freedman Lucius Cornelius Epicadus.[38] Lucullus also may have smoothed the path to Sulla's library for Tyrannio, as Sulla had made Lucullus the guardian of his young son Faustus (Plutarch, *Lucullus* 4.4). What Tyrannio seems to have done in the library was to provide himself with copies of the works: Strabo says that Tyrannio 'had it in hand' (διεχειρίσατο), while Plutarch says that he 'furnished himself with most of the books' (ἐνσκευάσασθαι τὰ πολλά). Tyrannio was thus able to furnish Andronicus of Rhodes with copies.[39]

In 55, when Cicero 'feasted' on the library of Faustus, he was writing *de oratore*, a work which he describes as 'in the manner of Aristotle' and as embracing the whole system of ancient oratory, both Aristotelian and Isocratean.[40] Perhaps, then, Cicero was consulting works of Aristotle in the library. After saying that he is feasting on the library of Faustus, Cicero goes on to say 'malo . . . in illa tua sedecula quam habes sub imagine Aristotelis sedere quam in istorum sella curuli' (I prefer to sit in that little chair of yours which you have under the portrait of Aristotle than in the consul's chair of those men).[41] Cicero's mention of the library of Faustus, and his comment on Faustus' auction (Plutarch, *Cicero* 27.3), that he preferred the 'public notice' of Faustus (the list of goods for sale at auction) to the 'public notice' of Faustus' father (Sulla's proscription list), have sometimes been taken to mean that Cicero acquired the library of Faustus at auction and then installed that collection in his own *Cumanum*.[42] Faustus went heavily into debt because of his political career and Cicero in 49 names Faustus as one of the Pompeians who hoped for proscriptions in order to deal with their creditors.[43] Cicero's remark on Faustus' auction may imply that he

participated in the auction; and books do seem to have been among the items for sale at auction in Rome.[44] On the other hand, Cicero may simply have feasted on the library of Faustus while paying a visit to his neighbor's villa, as he did in the case of other neighbors, Lucullus at Tusculum, for example (*de finibus* 3.2.7).

Faustus joined the forces of Pompey and was killed after the battle of Thapsus in 46 (Caesar, *Bellum Africum* 95; Suetonius, *Julius Caesar* 75.3). D'Arms suggests that the Campanian villa of Faustus was then seized or came up for sale at a low price,[45] and we might assume that the library passed out of the family's hands at that same time, if not before. We learn, however, that Caesar allowed Pompeia, the wife of Faustus who had accompanied him to Africa, and their children to go unharmed and to retain all their possessions.[46] The library, then, may have remained in the hands of the Cornelii Sullae. Faustus' descendants may well have suffered some initial disabilities after his death. We hear nothing of his two children; but the family recovered and produced three consuls, two great-grandsons and a great-great-grandson of Faustus.[47] For none of these individuals, however, do we have any evidence that the library was in his possession. After Faustus Sulla, then, we do not know the fate of the library.

The details in Strabo's account are subject to question and interpretation; and the truth of the Scepsis episode in particular must remain an open question. Three elements in Strabo's story do ring true to the history of libraries in the Hellenistic age. First, there is the rise of institutional libraries, beginning with the library of the Peripatetic school. At least four of the Macedonian dynasts established libraries in their capitals, a practice which spread to other rulers on the fringe of the Mediterranean world who aspired to Hellenic culture; and a number of Greek cities established libraries in their city gymnasia, presumably for the education of their young men. Second is the bibliomania of rival Hellenistic kings, especially the Ptolemies in Alexandria and the Attalids in Pergamum. Indeed, the entire Scepsis episode may reflect wrangling between Alexandria and Pergamum over who had the better texts of Aristotle. Third is the confiscation of the cultural treasures of Greek civilisation, including libraries, by victorious Roman generals: Sulla was not the first nor would he be the last to acquire a library as spoils of war. One element is unusual: Strabo's assertion that the decline of the Peripatetic school after Theophrastus was due to the 'disappearance' of Aristotle's library. In no other ancient account of lost libraries do we find any assessment of the consequences of loss. Other ancient accounts

and modern scholarship do not seem to bear out Strabo's assertion; nevertheless, for his ability to conceive that the loss of a library might have practical and intellectual consequences, Strabo can take his place in this collective history of lost libraries.

Notes

1. Plutarch, *Sulla* 26.1–3.
2. *Vita Marciana* 6–7. For the text of the *Vita Marciana*, see Ingemar Düring, *Aristotle in the Ancient Biographical Tradition*, Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis/Göteborgs Universitets Årsskrift 63.2 (1957), also published as *Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia* 5 (Göteborg: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1957), pp. 96–106.
3. See Düring, *Biographical Tradition*, pp. 108, 109.
4. On the educational and research practice of Aristotle and the Peripatetic school and the importance of the library, see Ingemar Düring, 'Notes on the History of the Transmission of Aristotle's Writings'. *Göteborgs Högskolas Årsskrift* 56 (1950): 57–8; Düring, 'Aristotle the Scholar', *Arctos* n.s. 1 (1954): 61–77; John P. Lynch, *Aristotle's School* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), pp. 84–93, 97; Kevin Robb, *Literacy and Paideia in Ancient Greece* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 221–40.
5. Lynch, *Aristotle's School*, p. 101.
6. Diogenes Laertius 5.36; see Anton-Hermann Chroust, 'Aristotle's Flight from Athens in the Year 323 B.C.', *Historia* 15 (1966): 185–92.
7. On the metics and on the legal status of the Peripatetic school, see Lynch, *Aristotle's School*, pp. 93–6, 106–34; Tiziano Dorandi, 'Organization and Structure of the Philosophical Schools', in Keimpe Algra *et al.*, eds, *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 55–62.
8. U. von Wilamowitz-Möllendorff, 'Neleus von Skepsis', *Hermes* 62 (1927): 371; H. von Arnim, 'Neleus von Skepsis', *Hermes* 63 (1928): 103–7; K. von Fritz, *Real-Encyclopädie d. klassischen Altertumswissenschaft* (1935), s.v. Neleus (no. 4), 2280–1; Anton-Hermann Chroust, 'The Miraculous Disappearance and Rediscovery of the *Corpus Aristotelicum*', *Classica et Mediaevalia* 23 (1962): 50–1; H. B. Gottschalk, 'Notes on the Wills of the Peripatetic Scholarchs', *Hermes* 100 (1972): 335–6; Lynch, *Aristotle's School*, pp. 80–1.
9. Strato left all the books, except those written by himself, to Lyco, the man whom he named to succeed him as scholarch (Diogenes Laertius 5.62).
10. Gottschalk, 'Wills', pp. 336–7.
11. Gottschalk, 'Wills', pp. 335–6.
12. Athenaeus 1.3a–b, a list of those famous for their large libraries. While Athenaeus does not place Neleus at Scepsis, he distinguishes the books purchased from Neleus from those purchased at Athens and at Rhodes; then he too must believe that Neleus left Athens.

13. For the terms 'esoteric' and 'exoteric' and their use in ancient authors, see Düring, *Biographical Tradition*, pp. 426–33.

14. Cicero, *de finibus* 5.5.13: *ita degenerant ut ipsi ex se nati esse viderentur*.

15. See Düring, *Biographical Tradition*, pp. 393–5; Lynch, *Aristotle's School*, pp. 135–62.

16. Richard Shute, *On the History of the Process by which the Aristotelian Writings Arrived at their Present Form* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1888), p. 34; Eduard Zeller, *Aristotle and the Earlier Peripatetics*, trans. B. F. C. Costelloe and J. H. Muirhead, 2 vols (London: Longmans, 1897), 1: 152; Paul Moraux, *Les Listes Anciennes des Ouvrages d'Aristote* (Louvain: Editions universitaires de Louvain, 1951), pp. 312–21; Chroust, 'Miraculous Disappearance', pp. 56–61; Lynch, *Aristotle's School*, pp. 146–9; Felix Grayeff, *Aristotle and his School* (London: Duckworth, 1974), p. 70; Carnes Lord, 'On the Early History of the Aristotelian Corpus', *American Journal of Philology* 107 (1986): 139–42; H. B. Gottschalk, 'Aristotelian Philosophy in the Roman World from the Time of Cicero to the End of the Second Century AD', in Wolfgang Haase, ed., *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, 37 vols (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1972–96), 36.2: 1083–8; Michael Frede, 'Epilogue', in *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy*, pp. 772–5.

17. Gottschalk, 'Aristotelian Philosophy', 36.2: 1088.

18. Fritz Wehrli, *Die Schule des Aristoteles*, 10 vols (Basel: B. Schwabe, 1944–59), 8, *Eudemos von Rhodes*: fr. 6 (= Simplicius *In Phys.*, *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca* 10, p. 923.7); Lynch, *Aristotle's School*, pp. 148, 15051.

19. Moraux, *Listes anciennes*, pp. 237–47. Düring questioned his conclusions ('Ariston or Hermippus?' *Classica et Mediaevalia* 17 [1956]: 11–21), but John J. Keaney defended them ('Two Notes on the Tradition of Aristotle's Writing', *American Journal of Philology* 84 [1963]: 52–63).

20. Zeller notes the apparent silence of Hermippus, the pupil of Callimachus and Peripatetic biographer, who wrote a book on Theophrastus (Diogenes Laertius 2.55) and compiled a list of his works (see Fritz Wehrli, *Die Schule des Aristoteles. Supplementband I: Hermippos der Kallimacher* [Basel: B. Schwabe, 1974], fr. 54 [= Subscriptio in Theophrasti *Metaphysica* p. 38 Ross-Fobes] and fr. 55 [= Subscriptio in Theophrasti *Historia plantarum* 7 cod. Urbinat.]). Had Hermippus known of the 'disappearance' of Aristotle, it seems that he would have reported it, and that the report would have found its way into Diogenes Laertius, whose list of Theophrastus' works (5.42–50) probably originated with Hermippus. Hermippus is mentioned in the section of Diogenes just preceding the list (Zeller, *Aristotle*, 1: 145, and notes 2, 3).

21. The story of the Septuagint is found in a work purporting to be a letter written by one Aristeas, commander of the bodyguard of Ptolemy II Philadelphus, to Aristeas' brother Philocrates. The work is considered a forgery, written not in the third century BC (during the reign of Ptolemy II) but in the second century BC. See K. H. Jobes and M. Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2000), pp. 33–7; Jülicher, *Real-Encyclopädie d. klassischen Altertumswissenschaft* (1896), s.v. Aristeas (no. 13), pp. 878–9.

22. Demetrius is identified in Aristeas (*Ep. ad Philocratem* 9) as κατασταθεὶς ἐπὶ τῆς τοῦ βασιλέως βιβλιοθήκης. Tzetzes (twelfth century C.E.) presents

Demetrius as only an adviser who, along with other (unnamed) advisers, aided in the collection of the library (περὶ κωμῴδιας, Pb I 20 [*Comicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* p. 19], Mb I 29 [*Comicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* p. 31]. The Plautine scholion similarly speaks only of the aid which Demetrius gave in the collection of books (see F. W. Ritschl, 'Corollarium disputationis de bibliothecis Alexandrinis deque Pisistrati curis Homericis', *Opuscula Philologica*, 5 vols [Leipzig: Teubner, 1866–79], 1: 124, and W. J. W. Koster, 'Scholion Plautinum Plene Editum', *Mnemosyne* ser. 4: 14 [1961]: 29). Plutarch has Demetrius advise Ptolemy to collect books on kingship and rule (*Reg. et imper. apoph.* 189d); the anecdote may simply show Demetrius as adviser to the king, but it may also reflect that Demetrius had a hand in the library. See Fritz Wehrli, *Real-Encyclopädie d. klassischen Altertumswissenschaft* Suppl. XI (1968), s.v. Demetrius von Phaleron, 518; and Fritz Wehrli, *Die Schule des Aristoteles*, 10 vols (Basel: B. Schwabe, 1944–59), 4, *Demetrios von Phaleron*: fr. 63, 66.

23. Shute, *History*, p. 30; Gottschalk, 'Wills', p. 342; Lord, 'Early History', pp. 142–5; Gottschalk, 'Aristotelian Philosophy', 36.2: 1084–5.

24. Elias *in cat.*, *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca* 18, p. 107.11 (= Düring, *Biographical Tradition*, p. 419, T 75p 3) and p. 128.6; Philoponus *in cat.*, *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca* 13.1, p. 7.16 (= Düring, *Biographical Tradition*, p. 456, T 77c).

25. Posidonius *ap.* Athenaeus 5.214d-e; see I. G. Kidd, *Posidonius*, 3 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972–99), 2: ii, *The Commentary*: *Fragments 150–293*: 863–87, fragment 253.

26. See *Prosopographia Attica*, no. 1343, for Apellicon; and no. 1361, for family tree.

27. Aristocles *ap.* Eusebius *Praep. Evang.* 15.2.14 (= Düring, *Biographical Tradition*, T 58l = Marian Plezia, ed. *Aristotelis Privatorum Scriptorum Fragmenta* [Leipzig: Teubner, 1977], fr. 12). See Düring, *Biographical Tradition*, pp. 392–3; Plezia, *Aristotelis Epistularum Fragmenta cum Testamento* (Warsaw: Panstwowe Wydawn, 1961), pp. 116–17; Gottschalk, 'Wills', pp. 340–1.

28. Gottschalk, 'Wills', pp. 340–1.

29. Lynch, *Aristotle's School*, pp. 201–2.

30. Gottschalk believes that the library never left Athens and that the books bequeathed by Theophrastus to Neleus formed the nucleus of the collection which Strato left to Lyco ('Wills', pp. 340–2). Grayeff says that 'considerable evidence points to Pergamum as the main recipient of Peripatetic lecture records' and suggests that Apellicon invented the Scepsis story to cover his theft of the books from the booty of Pergamum (*Aristotle*, pp. 71–5). There seems to be no evidence, however, that the library at Pergamum contained the works of Aristotle; and even if it did, there should have been no booty from Pergamum, since the city did not join the revolt of Aristonicus (see Esther V. Hansen, *The Attalids of Pergamum* [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1947], pp. 142–8).

31. Düring, *Biographical Tradition*, p. 393.

32. William S. Ferguson, *Hellenistic Athens* (London: Macmillan, 1911), p. 454, n. 2; Christian Habicht, *Athens from Alexander to Antony*, trans. Deborah Lucas Schneider (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1997), pp. 311–13.

33. Antony E. Raubitschek, 'Sylleia', in P. R. Coleman-Norton, ed., *Studies in Roman Economic and Social History In Honor of Allan Chester Johnson* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951), pp. 49–57.

34. Posidonius *ap.* Athenaeus 5.211e-215b; Ernst Badian, 'Rome, Athens, and Mithradates', in D. M. Pippidi, ed., *Assimilation et résistance à la culture gréco-romaine dans le monde ancien*. Travaux du VIᵉ Congrés International d'Etudes Classiques, Madrid, 1974 (Bucharest: Editura Academiei; Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1976), pp. 510, 513–14, and n. 44.

35. Posidonius *ap*. Athenaeus 5.214d-215a. For the coinage of Apellicon and the date of its issue, see Margaret Thompson, *The New Style Silver Coinage of Athens, Numismatic Studies* 10, 2 vols (New York: American Numismatic Society, 1961), 1: 364–7, 389, 551, 587; Thompson, 'Athens Again', *Numismatic Chronicle* ser. 7: 2 (1962): 306; D. M. Lewis, 'The Chronology of the Athenian New Style Coinage', *Numismatic Chronicle* ser. 7: 2 (1962): 278; H. B. Mattingly, review of Thompson, *The Agrinion Hoard*, in *Numismatic Chronicle* ser. 7: 9 (1969): 327; Mattingly, 'Some Third Magistrates in the Athenian New Style Silver Coinage', *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 91 (1971): 85–7; Badian, 'Rome, Athens, and Mithradates', pp. 517–20.

36. Ferguson, *Hellenistic Athens*, pp. 446–52; Habicht, *Athens*, pp. 304–5.

37. J. H. D'Arms, *Romans on the Bay of Naples* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1970), pp. 31–3, 177.

38. A. Hillscher, 'Hominum litteratorum Graecorum ante Tiberii mortem in urbe Roma commoratorum historia critica', *Neue Jahrb. für class. Philol. und Paed.*, Suppl. Bd. 18 (1892): 363, n. 8.

39. P. Moraux, *Der Aristotelismus bei den Griechen von Andronikos bis Alexander von Aphrodisias*, 3 vols (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1973–2001), 1, *Die Renaissance des Aristotelismus im 1 Jh. v. Chr.*: 33–4; and notes 3 and 4, for other views on what Tyrannio did in the library.

40. *Epistulae ad Atticum* 4.10.1, 4.14.2, *Epistulae ad Familiares* 1.9.23. The 'manner of Aristotle' is long passages of exposition in the framework of dialogue: see Augustus S. Wilkins, ed. *M. Tulli Ciceronis de Oratore Libri Tres*, 3 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1890–5), 1: 2–4, and D. R. Shackleton Bailey, *Cicero: Epistulae ad Familiares*, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 1: 315.

41. *Epistulae ad Atticum* 4.10.1; perhaps Cicero was reminded of this portrait of Aristotle by works of Aristotle in the library of Faustus.

42. Münzer, *Real-Encyclopädie d. klassischen Altertumswissenschaft* (1900), s.v. Cornelius (no. 377), 1516; Carl Wendel, 'Das Griechisch-Römische Altertum', in Georg Leyh, ed., *Handbuch der Bibliothekswissenschaft*, 3 vols (Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1952–61), 3.1.2: 112; D. R. Shackleton Bailey, *Cicero's Letters to Atticus*, 6 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965–70), 2: 195.

43. Israel Shatzman, *Senatorial Wealth and Roman Politics* (Brussels: Latomus, 1975), pp. 335–6; Cicero, *Epistulae ad Atticum* 9.11.4.

44. Tönnes Kleberg, 'Book Auctions in Ancient Rome?', *Libri* 23 (1973): 1–5.

45. D'Arms, *Romans*, pp. 68, 177.

46. Julius Caesar, *Bellum Africum* 95; see also Appian, *Bellum Civile* 2.4.100, and Fr. Miltner, *Real-Encyclopädie d. klassischen Altertumswissenschaft* (1952), s.v. Pompeius (no. 54), 2263–4.

47. Faustus Cornelius Sulla, *consul suffectus* 31 C.E.: see E. Groag, *Real-Encyclopädie d. klassischen Altertumswissenschaft* (1900), s.v. Cornelius (no. 378), 1517; E. Groag and A. Stein, eds., *Prosopographia Imperii Romani*, 2nd edn, 7 vols (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1933–99), C 1459; Lucius Cornelius Sulla Felix, *consul ordinarius* 33 C.E.: see Groag, *Real-Encyclopädie d. klassischen Altertumswissenschaft* (1900), s.v. Cornelius (no. 393), 1566; *Prosopographia Imperii Romani* (2nd edn), C 1465; Faustus Cornelius Sulla Felix, *consul ordinarius* 52 C.E.: see Groag, *Real-Encyclopädie d. klassischen Altertumswissenschaft* (1900), s.v. Cornelius (no. 391), 1522; *Prosopographia Imperii Romani* (2nd edn), C 1464; for family tree, see *Prosopographia Imperii Romani* (2nd edn), 2: 362.

4

Text to Trophy: Shifting Representations of Regiomontanus's Library

Richard L. Kremer

A 1797 biography of Johannes Regiomontanus (1436–76), the most competent European astronomer and mathematician of the fifteenth century, decried the loss of the 'treasure' that Regiomontanus's library once had represented, and explained the loss by quoting a seventeenth-century bibliophile: 'The duration of private libraries is nearly momentary. They . . . die with their collectors.'[1] Recent scholarship on the cultural practices of collecting during the Renaissance offers a more nuanced explanation for the death of private libraries. Since the 1970s, an increasing number of art historians, economic historians and cultural historians have crafted a history of the Italian Renaissance as a flowering of consumerism and acquisitiveness. For scholars like Richard Goldthwaite, Lisa Jardine, Thomas Dacosta Kaufmann, Anthony Grafton and Paula Findlen, to name only a few, the Renaissance represents a new self-consciousness about things as well as words.[2]

Books, paintings, scientific apparatus, cameos and other 'collectables' became not merely measures of wealth and status, but also essential features of the culture of gift-giving that bound together courts, scholars, humanists, artists and craftsmen. In such a climate, books became consumable objects, not merely carriers of texts. As physical objects, they could mark status for an owner who possessed them (or gave them away); reflect values about the past in their display of scripts, formats and illuminations; or serve as artifacts to be bought, sold and reaggregated on the collectables market. What was collectable was of course also discardable. The personal library, writes Jardine in *Worldly Goods*, thus 'operated at two levels, that of the status symbol or ostentatious display of art collectables, and that of a serious text-bank, a systematically organized repository for recovered and original compositions – a vital resource in the new tradition of revived classical

learning'.[3] When viewed in such a context, the near disappearance of Regiomontanus's library (roughly 20 percent of the 288 original codices have been found) might reflect patterns of a European material culture established during the Renaissance that privileged consumption over preservation.

To explore these patterns, this chapter offers three different narratives about 'Regiomontanus's library', a construct best denoted here by inverted commas. The first narrative traces the history of 'Regiomontanus's library' as an aggregate named as such. A second narrative will examine the three extant sixteenth-century inventories of the library, and make some comments about the library's contents, both textual and artifactual. A third narrative will consider various 'uses' made of the library after Regiomontanus's death, its function as a source for what Jardine might describe as texts and trophies, and its role in the construction of biographical representations of Regiomontanus.

The narrative of the library as a physical collectivity of books has been well formulated in the secondary literature, with Ernst Zinner's 1938/1968 biography of Regiomontanus offering the most detail. For nearly a century after Regiomontanus's death in 1476, his library retained a semi-coherent existence, sporadically documented by records of the Nuremberg city council. After attending universities in Leipzig and Vienna, Regiomontanus in 1461 had travelled to Italy where he joined the entourage of the Greek bibliophile Cardinal Bessarion. By 1467, he apparently moved to Hungary and the court of Archbishop János Vitéz, and in 1471, Regiomontanus shifted to Nuremberg so that he could establish a printing press. When he died in Rome five years later, Regiomontanus's possessions, including his library, remained in Nuremberg. No known source produced before Regiomontanus's death mentions his library.[4] The story of 'Regiomontanus's library' thus begins in 1476, as Bernhard Walther, the Nuremberg merchant who in the early 1470s had made astronomical observations with Regiomontanus, purchased the complete library plus some astronomical instruments from Regiomontanus's heirs. News of the purchase spread quickly, and by 1478 King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary, whose library is examined in Chapter 5, tried without success to buy the books and instruments from Walther. Judging from later complaints, Walther apparently kept the books under lock and key, refusing to let anyone use them.[5]

Walther died in 1504. In his will, he specified that the lion's share of his books and instruments be sold to endow a perpetual annual mass

for the families of Regiomontanus and Walther in Nuremberg's St Sebal-
dus church. The will also specified that the books, especially those in
'mathematics, astronomy, astrology and optics', be kept together and
sold as a unit. Nearly twenty years would pass before the executors of
Wather's will achieved this goal. In the meantime, the collection started
to evaporate, via isolated sales, theft, and desultory loans of books to
local scholars. It was during this period that the first two inventories of
the library were prepared. In 1512, the Elector of Saxony, Frederick the
Wise, established a library for his newly founded university in Witten-
berg, to be directed by the young Erfurt humanist, Georg Spalatin.
Seeking both manuscripts and printed books, Spalatin wrote to at least
eight cloister libraries, asking for complete listings of their holdings. He
also wrote friends in Nuremberg, asking for an inventory of 'Regiomon-
tanus's library'. Although the final copy has not been found, a draft in
Willibald Pirckheimer's hand tersely describes six instruments and 187
books then in Walther's estate, an unspecified number of which once
had belonged to Regiomontanus. Yet for reasons not elucidated in
extant correspondence – perhaps because the asking price was too dear
– Spalatin apparently purchased nothing from Walther's heirs.[6]

In 1514 the Nuremberg City Council offered 200 gulden for the
Walther books and instruments (which would nearly have doubled the
size of the Ratsbücherei, created a century earlier). Yet not until 1519
did the Council purchase the major portion of Walther's books for their
library. A 1522 inventory in the hand of a Council official, Hieronymus
Rudolf, lists 146 books then in the collection.[7] Soon thereafter, many
books from 'Regiomontanus's library' were loaned to Johannes Schöner,
who in 1526 had been called to Nuremberg to teach mathematics at
Melanchthon's newly established gymnasium. After Schöner retired in
the late 1540s, those books were passed on to his successor, Joachim
Heller. Like Schöner, Heller operated a printing press in Nuremberg,
publishing a steady stream of astrological texts and calendars. And like
Schöner, Heller wanted to publish texts he found among the codices of
Regiomontanus's library. Yet financial irregularities and his decision to
print religious tracts written by opponents of the City Council disrupted
these plans and landed Heller in jail. In 1563, the Council charged
Heller with heresy (Flacianism), and gave him a week to leave Nurem-
berg. Eager, however, to recover the city's books before Heller left, the
Council apparently authorized an inventory of the 'Reliquiae Biblio-
thecae Regiomontanae' to be prepared.[8] This list, uncovered only in
1969, described 149 codices and printed works (including nine items

noted as 'missing'), and indicated that all the books were to be returned to the Nuremberg Stadtbibliothek.[9]

At this point, the documentary trail for the first narrative of 'Regiomontanus's Library' ends. Inge Neske's recent catalogue of *Die Handschriften der Stadtbibliothek Nürnberg* includes 33 codices and two printed books that can be traced to 'Regiomontanus's library' by an ex-libris or colophon, handwriting, bindings, or description in the three inventories. The earliest handwritten catalogue of manuscripts in the Stadtbibliothek, begun in 1627, lists only 30 codices that can be traced to 'Regiomontanus's library'. Apparently, the lion's share of codices from 'Regiomontanus's Library went missing in the half-century after 1563. The narrative of 'Regiomontanus's library' as a physical aggregate of books thus ends with dissolution and disappearance. No evidence exists that might indicate how this dispersal occurred, whether by deliberate de-accession or sale, theft, delinquent borrowers, fires, wars, or worms. Only 17 codices with materials from 'Regiomontanus's library' have been found outside of Nuremberg, in libraries scattered from St Petersburg to Vienna to New York.[10]

A second narrative of the history of 'Regiomontanus's library', which is necessarily condensed here, considers the contents of the library as revealed by the three extant sixteenth-century inventories. If we define 'Regiomontanus's library' as including any volume appearing in one of the inventories, then we have a total of 288 separate codices, 63 of which appear in all three lists. Of this total, 66 codices (or texts there-from) are extant. The 1563 inventory includes at least 13 books printed after 1504, indicating that 'Regiomontanus's library' continued to expand after Walther's death in 1504.

Judging by the texts it contained, 'Regiomontanus's library' differs markedly from other well-known fifteenth-century personal libraries. In his study of Italian libraries of the Quattrocento, Paul Rose concluded that the great humanist libraries reflected a 'marked classical bias and included numerous Greek codices', especially mathematical works in Greek by Euclid, Archimedes, Apollonius, Diophantus, Proclus, Hero and Pappus.[11] Roughly 60 percent of Bessarion's library, for example, was made up of Greek texts. Thomas Haffner's survey of six fifteenth-century Italian humanist personal libraries indicates the following distribution of their more than 2500 texts by subject: law (20%), literature (17%), patristics (15%), philosophy (15%), history (10%), natural and practical sciences (5%), other (18%).[12]

Despite his widely applauded knowledge of Greek, however, 'Regiomontanus's library' remained overwhelmingly Latin. The codices

Table 4.1   Subject distribution in Regiomontanus's library

Subject	No. vols	%
Astronomy	94	35
Geometry	32	12
Astrology	28	10
Grammar	18	7
Arithmetic	17	7
Natural philosophy	15	6
Literary	15	6
Instruments	13	5
Optics	7	3
Geography	6	2
Medicine	5	2
Liturgy	3	
Geomancy	3	
Alchemy	1	
Cabala	1	
Encyclopedia	1	
Logic	1	

listed in the inventories include 245 with texts in Latin, 34 in Greek, one in German, and one in Italian. Likewise, the subjects of his texts tilt overwhelmingly toward mathematics and astronomy, in contrast to the Italian humanist libraries. Subject classifications placed by a different sixteenth-century hand into the 1522 inventory, when applied to all 269 codices whose texts I have been able to identify, yields the breakdown of 'Regiomontanus's library' shown in Table 4.1.

Clearly, 'Regiomontanus's library' lacked the scholastic texts of the trivium and quadrivium so pervasive in medieval libraries, and the literary, legal and historical texts so prevalent in Italian humanist personal libraries. Also striking is the number of Arabian authors whose works, in Latin translation, appear in the inventories (of the 13 Arabic astronomical texts to be printed in Latin translation before 1550, for example, Regiomontanus owned manuscript copies of ten).[13] These Arabic texts on arithmetic, optics and astrology do not, as a rule, appear in Bessarion's or other well-known Italian humanist libraries. The contents of 'Regiomontanus's library' were neither typically medieval nor humanist.[14]

Additionally, the inventories confirm a conclusion one reaches after handling the extant codices from 'Regiomontanus's library', namely, that Regiomontanus (and Walther) devoted only modest means to books as physical objects. The inventories list only 34 of the 288 codices as written in parchment. According to the 1563 inventory, well over half of the books were unbound, or placed in parchment covers. Although some of the extant volumes were handsomely bound in leather-covered boards by known Viennese and Nuremberg craftsmen, the codices are almost never illuminated. Regiomontanus's was a work-a-day library of texts, with none of the highly decorated physical objects so valued by collectors like Matthias Corvinus, Vitéz, the Duke of Urbino or Francesco Gonzaga (unless, of course, all the fancy books had been stolen from Regiomontanus's library before the inventories were made).

The third narrative considers the shifting uses made of 'Regiomontanus's library' from the sixteenth to the early nineteenth centuries. The earliest biographical sketches of Regiomontanus, written in the early sixteenth century, did not mention his library. Indeed, not until a 1549 oration by Erasmus Reinhold, Dean of the Arts Faculty in Wittenberg, did the library begin to feature prominently in the public image of Regiomontanus.[15] Reinhold's remarks drew on an earlier (no longer extant) oration by the Nuremberg mathematician and instrument-maker, Johannes Schöner, and indeed it is clear that the picture of 'Regiomontanus's library' as a great treasure was created in the 1520s by scholars in Nuremberg with access to books from that library.

Not surprisingly, most of the early documented users of the library lived in Nuremberg, which confirms the conclusion of our first narrative that most of the books remained in Nuremberg throughout the first two-thirds of the sixteenth century. Shortly after Walther's death in 1504, Nuremberg astronomers like Konrad Heinfogel and Johann Werner gained access to the mathematical texts in the library, to which they referred in their own treatises. In the early 1520s, Schöner copied several astronomical tables from books once belonging to Regiomontanus, and requested from Pirckheimer a book 'of either Regiomontanus or Walther' on making instruments. Through the 1550s, examples can be found of scholars seeking to copy texts from 'Regiomontanus's library'. Notable among them were Joachim Rheticus and Johannes Praetorius, both with ties to Wittenberg, like Nuremberg a centre for mathematics and astronomy.[16]

Copying texts from Regiomontanus's manuscripts, however, was not the only option for use of the library. In 1523, Dürer purchased ten books 'useful for painting' from the collection, at a price apparently determined by Pirckheimer (ten gulden). In 1524, Pirckheimer himself purchased 'for a great price' three lengthy Regiomontanus autographs (reconsidered below).[17] The inventories confirm the disappearance of these purchased books from 'Regiomontanus's library'. Preservation, it seems, was not the only goal of the Ratsbücherei.

Others scavenged texts suitable for printing from 'Regiomontanus's library'. Not surprisingly, these editors lived in Nuremberg, and all of them except Schöner had an excellent knowledge of Greek. Werner and Pirckheimer published texts authored by Regiomontanus. Joachim Camerarius, the first rector and Greek teacher at the Nuremberg Gymnasium, published various Greek astrological texts and Theon's Greek commentary on the *Almagest* from copies found among Regiomontanus's codices. Rheticus, the first public disciple of Copernicus, tried without success in 1542 to print a Greek edition of Apollonius from a Regiomontanus codex. Thomas Venatorius, one of Nuremberg's leading Lutheran theologians during the early decades of the Reformation, published in 1540 and 1544, respectively, the first edition of Alberti's *De pictura* and the first edition of the Greek and Latin translation of Archimedes. In his preface, Venatorius lauded Regiomontanus for having copied these Latin and Greek texts during his sojourn in Rome. These editions of Greek texts helped reinforce an image of Regiomontanus as a humanist; yet medieval texts also were printed from Regiomontanus's codices. In 1542, Georg Hartmann, a Nuremberg instrument-maker, published a medieval optics from 'Regiomontanus's library'.[18]

It was Schöner, however, who became the most active publisher of texts from the library. Between 1531 and 1544, he printed ten volumes, mostly texts authored by Regiomontanus. Several of the original manuscripts used by Schöner remain in Nuremberg; others he incorporated into his own personal library, which is now partly extant in Vienna.[19] Indeed, Schöner printed so many treatises by Regiomontanus that by mid-century, printed astronomical works began to appear, attributed to Regiomontanus by their editors although no evidence points to a Regiomontanus authorship.[20]

Pirckheimer died in 1530; Schöner in 1547. During the years when these men apparently controlled access to 'Regiomontanus's library', the codices served users, mostly other Nurembergers, primarily as sources

for texts (although one of the books purchased by Dürer – an autograph copy of Euclid on parchment – was described in a 1625 inventory of the estate of an Altdorf university professor of mathematics as 'a beautiful antiquity').[21] That is, for these early Nuremberg users, a Regiomontanus autograph or ex-libris apparently did not possess value in itself as a physical object. Scattered sources, however, do hint that for several sixteenth-century users, Regiomontanus's codices had become consumable commodities or trophies to be valued as physical objects. Occurring around 1550, this shift occurred contemporaneously with the heightened reputation Regiomontanus began to enjoy after Schöner's publication of his works.

Perhaps the earliest example of a Regiomontanus codex being treated as a trophy rather than a text appears in 1538. In that year, the philologist and editor of classical texts, Georg Fabricius (1516–71), claimed to have collated a Regiomontanus autograph copy of Seneca's *Tragedies*, then owned by the mining entrepreneur, Georg Agricola of Joachimsthal, against an earlier printed version of this text. Given the many available printed and manuscript versions of Seneca, it seems unlikely that Fabricius would have sought out an autograph by Regiomontanus solely for the text.[22] Another example of trophy-collecting comes from Jakob Christmann, Dean of the Arts Faculty in Heidelberg, who in 1611 bragged that he owned autograph manuscripts by Regiomontanus, Werner and Copernicus.[23] Although the autograph of *De revolutionibus* then owned by Christmann would enjoy an illustrious career, no clues concerning his Regiomontanus codices have been found.

As noted above, most of Regiomontanus's books disappeared without a trace after 1563; they did not become valued objects to be collected and traded by later bibliophiles. When in 1575 Tycho Brahe passed through Nuremberg, he was unable to find any unpublished manuscripts of value by Regiomontanus.[24] To the best of my knowledge, only four codices from 'Regiomontanus's library' circulated as trophies after 1563 (the eight Regiomontanus codices obtained by Schöner, that subsequently passed to Georg Fugger and in 1656 to Vienna, appear to have been treated more as texts than trophies). A collection of texts on algebra and mensuration, including at least one Regiomontanus autograph and an ex-libris mark, was obtained sometime before 1908 by the American collector, David Eugene Smith. Although Smith valued the manuscript for its Arabic numerals and medieval algebraic symbols, neither he nor his friend, the New York publisher George Plimpton, to whom Smith eventually gave the manuscript, recognized its Regiomon-

tane origins.[25] Although the codex from 'Regiomontanus's library' most recently to circulate on the market, this book undoubtedly served its owners as a trophy, even if we know nothing of its provenance before 1908.

The most significant trophies to emerge from 'Regiomontanus's library' are the three longest prose works he wrote, extant in autograph copies on paper and simply bound in cardboard or parchment covers.[26] As noted above, Pirckheimer had purchased these codices by 1524, hoping to publish the texts they contained – Regiomontanus's *Annotations on Jacob Angelus's translation of Ptolemy's Geography*, *On Triangles*, and the *Defence of Theon against George of Trebizond*. Pirckheimer's edition of the *Annotations* appeared in 1525; Schöner's edition of *Triangles* appeared in 1533. The *Defence of Theon*, on 301 folios in densely written and frequently reworked prose, remained unpublished. That Pirckheimer had been willing to pay a 'great price' for these autographs, apparently the most significant items he secured from 'Regiomontanus's library', indicates their perceived value already in the 1520s. Indeed the fate of these manuscripts contrasts sharply with that of the other still extant codices from 'Regiomontanus's library', and provides the best example of Regiomontanus's books becoming trophies.

After Pirckheimer's death in 1530, his personal effects were inventoried, but the list of his large library prepared by Schöner and Venatorius has disappeared. When in 1560 Pirckheimer's grandson, Willibald Imhoff junior, inherited the still intact library, he estimated its worth at 800 gulden. With minimal losses, Imhoff and his heirs kept the library together until the economic hardships of the Thirty Years' War. In 1636, they sold the collection of printed books and manuscripts to the English collector, Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel (no inventory is extant). Yet as is well known, not all the Pirckheimeriana made its way to England. In 1564, Imhoff had purchased the large house on the Egidienplatz once owned by the first Nuremberg printer, Anton Koberger. While renovating the house, Imhoff built a secret cabinet in its chapel. Nearly two centuries later, when in 1750 the Nuremberg patrician and enthusiastic art and book collector Christoph Joachim Haller von Hallerstein (1723–92) married Anna Sibylla Imhoff and again renovated the Koberger house, he discovered the cabinet. In it Haller found a cache of hundreds of Pirckheimer letters, his diary, some clean copies of his works, and some autograph translations of Greek texts. Although not mentioned by contemporary sources, we can speculate that the three Regiomontanus autograph codices, later to appear in Haller's library, were also found in the cabinet.[27]

In 1799, another Nuremberg collector, the polyhistorian and art critic, Christoph Gottlieb von Murr (1733–1811) purchased the three Regiomontanus autographs from Haller von Hallerstein's estate for a total of only about six-and-a-half gulden.[28] As a leader in the late eighteenth-century resurgence of interest in Nuremberg's glorious Renaissance past, Murr earlier had published a short biographical article on Regiomontanus's printed work and letters by Dürer from Haller von Hallerstein's collection.[29] Likewise in the 1760s, Murr had discovered 18 volumes of unpublished Kepler papers languishing with the widow of a pawnbroker. By 1773, after failing to interest university astronomers and observatory directors in the Kepleriana (Johann Bernoulli, director of the Berlin Observatory, informed Murr that the manuscripts had no relevance for contemporary science), Murr finally persuaded Catherine I of Russia to purchase the Kepler volumes for the St Petersburg Academy of Sciences. Murr had first approached the Kepleriana as text, but soon learned that the market valued them primarily as trophy.[30]

Murr followed an identical strategy with the Regiomontanus autographs. In 1799, he indicated that he would not part with the three trophies even for 100 ducats. Yet facing financial difficulties in 1801, as Napoleon's troops occupied Nuremberg, Murr advertised his willingness to sell the three codices for 800 gulden, sending printed circulars to contemporary astronomers. At his 'trophy asking price', Murr found no buyers among either collectors or working astronomers. Finally in desperation, he gave the three codices in 1805 to Alexander I of Russia. The courtly gift-giving culture, however, did not leave Murr empty-handed; within a year the Russian Czar sent Murr a trophy in return – a jeweled ring worth 2,000 gulden.[31] Since 1805, the three Regiomontanus autographs remained almost unknown in Russia, until, in 1958, at Zinner's urging, they were found by a Russian historian, Valentin L. Tschenakal.[32] Wanting to study the autographs as texts, Zinner arranged for microfilm copies of the three codices to be made for the Nuremberg Stadtbibliothek. As the films arrived in 1960, local Nuremberg newspapers celebrated the return of these 'ornaments' [*Zierde*] to their place of origin.[33] For a city still rebuilding after the destruction of the Second World War, even a microfilm seemed like a trophy.

These three narratives of the cultural artifacts known as 'Regiomontanus's library' – as a physical aggregate, a set of inventories, and a resource for later users – tell stories not only of contingency and loss but also of reputation and representation. By the 1520s, Regiomontanus had increasingly become known not only for his astronomy but also for his extensive private library. Yet with their simple bindings and unillu-

minated folios, Regiomontanus's books, to return to Jardine's categories, were apparently consumed rather than preserved. As texts, they generally were discarded once their relevance had faded; as trophies, they only rarely passed into the large court libraries being established in the sixteenth century that might have ensured their survival. Thus did a large fifteenth-century personal library, with a unique concentration of mathematical and astronomical works, go lost after 1563. Most of the codices considered as texts disappeared. Only a very few trophies have remained extant.[34]

Notes

1. Johann Friedrich Heinrich Panzer, *Bruckstücke zu Johann Regiomontans Leben* (Nuremberg: no publ., 1797), p. 33, quoting Hermann Conring.
2. Richard A. Goldthwaite, *Wealth and the Demand for Art in Italy, 1300–1600* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993); Lisa Jardine, *Worldly Goods: A New History of the Renaissance* (New York: Doubleday, 1996); Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, *The Mastery of Nature: Aspects of Art, Science, and Humanism in the Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Anthony Grafton, *Commerce with the Classics: Ancient Books and Renaissance Readers* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1997); Paula Findlen, *Possessing Nature: Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); idem, 'Possessing the Past: The Material World of the Italian Renaissance', *American Historical Review* 103 (1998): 83–114.
3. Jardine, *Worldly Goods*, p. 191.
4. The prospectus Regiomontanus printed c. 1474, listing 45 works he intended to publish, does not indicate whether he personally owned copies of those texts. See Ernst Zinner, 'Die wissenschaftlichen Bestrebungen Regiomontans', *Beiträge zur Inkunabelkunde* N.F. 2 (1938): 89–103.
5. H. Petz, 'Urkundliche Nachrichten über den literarischen Nachlass Regiomontans und B. Walthers 1478–1522', *Mitteilungen des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg* 7 (1888): 237–62; Ernst Zinner, *Leben und Wirken des Joh. Müller von Königsberg genannt Regiomontanus* [1938], 2nd rev. edn (Osnabrück: Zeller, 1968), *passim*.
6. Franz von Soden and J. K. F. Knaake, eds, *Christoph Scheurl's Briefbuch: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Reformation und ihrer Zeit* (Postdam: Gropius, 1867–72), pp. 105–6; Gustav Bauch, 'Zu Christoph Scheurls Briefbuch', *Neue Mitteilungen aus dem Gebiet historisch-antiquarischer Forschungen* 19 (1898): 400–56 (pp. 433–6); Franzjosef Pensel, *Verzeichnis der altdeutscher und ausgewählter neuerer deutsche Handschriften in der Universitätsbibliothek Jena* (*Deutsche Texte des Mittelalters*, 70/2) (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1986), pp. vii–viii; Irmgad Höss, *Georg Spalatin, 1484–1545: Ein Leben in der Zeit des Humanismus und der Reformation* [1956], 2nd enl. edn (Weimar: Hermann Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1989), pp. 65–70; [Willibald Pirckheimer],

'Opus astronomicum incompletum', Stadtbibliothek Nürnberg, Pirckheimer-Papiere 364, Umschlag 14, Blatt 3. Zinner, *Leben und Wirken des Joh. Müller*, pp. 260–1 was the first to identify this document, to attempt to collate its contents with the other two extant inventories of Regiomontanus-Walther materials, and to suggest Pirckheimer as its scribe, an attribution confirmed by Helga Scheible, current editor of *Willibald Pirckheimers Briefwechsel*, in a personal communication to the author, June 1999. I thank the Stadtbibliothek Nürnberg for providing me with a photograph of this manuscript.

7. '1522 adi 1. Octobris sind Bernhardem Walthers seligen pucher verhanden gewest, wie Gleich volgt', Staatsarchiv Nürnberg, Reichtsstadt Nürnberg, Landpflegeamt, Gemeinakten 1522, Nr. 5, 4 folios, edited in Petz 1888, pp. 247–62. Peter Fleischmann of the Staatsarchiv Nürnberg identified Rudolf as the scribe of this inventory, in a personal communication to the author, June 1999.

8. See Klaus Matthäus, 'Zur Geschichte des Nürnberger Kalenderwesens: Die Entwicklung der in Nürnberg gedruckten Jahreskalender in Buchform', *Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens* 9 (1969): cols 965–1396 (1020–38, 1380). Documents concerning Nuremberg's legal action against Heller, preserved in the Staatsarchiv Nürnberg, Reichsstadt Nürnberg, Ratskanzlei A-Laden 182, Nr. 2, include the 'Reliquiae bibliothecae Regiomontanae', 1 June 1563, 7 folios. This manuscript was partially transcribed by Zinner 1968, pp. 252–8. I thank the Staatsarchiv for providing microfilms of the 1522 and 1563 inventories.

9. Circa 1550, the Ratsbücherei had become the Stadtbibliothek. See J. Petz, 'Urkundliche Beiträge zur Geschichte der Bücherei des Nürnberger Rates, 1429–1538', *Mitteilungen des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg* 6 (1886): 123–74; Karlheinz Goldmann, *Geschichte der Stadtbibliothek Nürnberg* (Nuremberg: F. Willmy, 1957).

10. Inge Neske, *Die Handschriften der Stadtbibliothek Nürnberg, Bd. V: Die lateinischen mittelalterlichen Handschriften, Varia, 13.–15. und 16–18. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden: Harrossowitz Verlag, 1997); M. Christoph Reich, 'Index librorum M.S. membrana ceorum, secundem auctorum nomina', 1627, Stadtbibliothek Nürnberg, AK 12; Karl Fischer, 'Die Büchersammlung des Regiomontan', *Bayerland* 37 (1936): 438–40; Richard L. Kremer, 'Regiomontanus's Library: An Edition of Three Sixteenth-Century Inventories', in preparation.

11. Paul L. Rose, 'Humanist Culture and Renaissance Mathematics: The Italian Libraries of the *Quattrocento*', *Studies in the Renaissance* 30 (1973): 46–105 (p. 48).

12. Thomas Haffner, *Die Bibliothek des Kardinals Giovanni d'Aragona (1456–1485): Illuminierte Handschriften und Inkunabeln für einen humanistischen Bibliophilen zwischen Neapel und Rom* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1997).

13. Ebernard Knobloch, 'Zur Rezeption der arabischen Astronomie im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert', in Joseph W. Dauben, *et al.*, eds, *History of Mathematics: States of the Art. Flores Quadrivii – Studies in Honor of Christoph J. Scriba* (San Diego: Academic Press, 1996): 237–61 (pp. 239–40).

14. For inventories of other fifteenth- and sixteenth-century mathematicians' private libraries, see Paul Uiblein, 'Johannes von Gmunden: Seine Tätigkeit

an der Wiener Universität', in idem, *Die Universität Wien im Mittelalter* (Vienna: WUV-Universitätsverlag, 1999), 349–98 (pp. 393–5); Barnabus B. Hughes, 'The Private Library of Johann Scheubel, Sixteenth-Century Mathematician', *Viator* 3 (1972): 417–32.

15. Cf. Georg Tanstetter Collimitius, 'Viri mathematici', in idem, ed., *Tabulae eclypsium Magistri Georgij Peurbachij, Tabula primi mobilis Joannis de Monte Regio* (Vienna: Johann Winterburger, 1514): sig. aa4r–v; Erasmus Reinhold, 'On Johannes Regiomontanus' [1549], in Sachiko Kusukawa, ed., *Philip Melanchthon, Orations on Philosophy and Education* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999): 236–47 (p. 246).

16. See Kremer, 'Regiomontanus's Library', for details.

17. Pirckheimer to Johannes Oecolampadius, 23 January 1524, in Emil Reicke, *et al.*, eds, *Willibald Pirckheimers Briefwechsel*, 5 vols (Munich: Beck, 1940–2001): 5: 112–14; Ptolemy, *Geographicae enarrationis libri octo, Bilibaldo Pirckeymhero interprete, annotationes Ioannis de Regiomonte in errores commissos a Iacobo Angelo in translatione sua* (Strasbourg: Iohannes Grieningerus, 1525), ff. 1v–2v; Regiomontanus, *On Triangles, De Triangulis Omnimodis* [1533], trans. Barnabas Hughes (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1967), p. 3.

18. For details, see Kremer, 'Regiomontanus's Library'; and Zinner, *Leben und Wirken des Joh. Müller, passim*.

19. Zinner, *Leben und Wirken des Joh. Müller*, p. 263 errs when he claims that the 'large part' of the manuscripts printed by Schöner was destroyed. See Monika Franz, 'Die Handschriften aus dem Besitz des Ph. Eduard Fugger mit Berücksichtigung der Handschriften des Johannes Schöner in der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek', *Codices manuscripti* 14 (1988): 61–143.

20. See Zinner, *Leben und Wirken des Joh. Müller*, pp. 207–9 for Jakob Ziegler's misattribution in 1548 of a text on comets to Regiomontanus.

21. Hans Rupprich, ed., *Dürers Schriftliche Nachlass*, 3 vols (Berlin: Deutscher Verein für Kunstwissenschaft, 1956–69): 1:222, 2:75, 3:54–5. For the inventory of books and instruments in the estate of Petrus Saxonius, see Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, lat. 12411, f. 13.

22. See Rudolph Peiper and Gustav Richter, eds, *L. Annaei Senecae Tragoediae* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1867); Paul Lehmann, *Eine Geschichte der alten Fuggerbibliotheken*, 2 vols cont. pag. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1956–60), pp. 200–1. No text by Seneca appears in the three inventories of Regiomontanus's library.

23. See Zinner, *Leben und Wirken des Joh. Müller*, p. 173.

24. Henricus Brucaeus to Brahe, 14 May 1576, in J. L. E. Dreyer, ed., *Tychonis Brahe Dani opera omnia*, 15 vols (Hauniae: Libraria Gyldendaliana, 1913–29): 7:33. See Zinner, *Leben und Wirken des Joh. Müller*, p. 264.

25. Paul Lawrence Rose, *The Italian Renaissance of Mathematics: Studies on Humanists and Mathematicians from Petrarch to Galileo* (Geneva: Droz, 1975), p. 93 first recognized this codex (Columbia University, Plimpton 188) as containing a Regiomontanus ex libris, autograph text and annotations. See David Eugene Smith, *Rara Arithmetica* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1908), pp. 454–6, 468, 480, 486–7; Menso Folkerts, 'Die mathematischen Studien Regiomontans in seiner Wiener Zeit', in Günther Hamann, ed., *Regiomontanus-Studien* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wis-

senschaften, 1980): 175–209, for a description of the Regiomontanus autographs in this codex.

26. Archive of the Russian Academy of Sciences, St Petersburg Branch, MSS IV-1-935, IV-1-936, IV-1-937. I thank Vladimir Sobolev, former Director of this Archive, and his staff for their assistance in September, 2000. With Michael Shank, the author is preparing a digital edition of the *Defence of Theon*.

27. For Pirckheimer's library, see William Henry Black, *Catalogue of the Arundel Manuscripts in the Library of the College of Arms* (London: Bentley, 1829); Emile Offenbacher, 'La bibliothèque de Wilibald Pirckheimer', *La bibliofilía* 40 (1938): 241–63; Arnold Reimann, *Die aelteren Pirckheimer*, ed. Hans Rupprich (Leipzig: Koehler & Amelang, 1944), pp. 173–230; Niklas Holzberg, *Willibald Pirckheimer: Greichischer Humanismus in Deutschland* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1981), pp. 18, 87–9; Horst Pohl, ed., *Williband Imhoff, Enkel Und Erbe Willibald Pirckheimers* (Nuremberg: Selbstverlag des Stadtrats zu Nürnberg, 1992). For Haller's library and discovery of the Pirckheimeriana, see Johann Heumann, *Documenta literaria* (Altdorf: Lavr. Schupeel. Acad. Bibl., 1758), sig. a3v–a4r; Friedrich Karl Gottlob Hirsching, *Versuch einer Beschreibung sehenswürdiger Bibliotheken Teutschlands*, 4 vols in 6 (Erlangen: Palm, 1786–91), 3/1: 154–8; Reicke *et al.*, eds, *Willibald Pirckheimers Briefwechsel*, 1:vii–xviii; Heinz Zirnbauer, *Die Haller von Hallerstein: Eine Nürnberbger Patrizierfamilie im europäischen Raum* (Nuremberg: Stadtbibliothek, 1961); Michael Diefenbacher and Rudolf Endres, eds, *Stadtlexikon Nürnberg*, 2nd improved edn (Nuremberg: W. Tümmels Verlag, 2000), s.v. 'Haller von Hallerstein, Christoph Joachim'; *Bibliotheca Christ. Joach. Halleri de Hallerstein . . . Publicae auctionis lege inde a mense Jul. a. 1798*, 2 vols (Nuremberg: no publ., 1798), 2:511.

28. According to prices recorded in the copy of *Bibliotheca . . . Halleri de Hallerstein*, 1798, now in the Familienarchiv, Schloss Großgrundlach, Murr purchased two printed books and 10 manuscripts from the estate, paying 1 gulden 20 kreuzer for the *Triangles* autograph, 3 gulden 15 kreuzer for *Annotations,* and 2 gulden for the *Defence of Theon*. Murr had long been well acquainted with the Haller von Hallerstein library. See Christoph G. von Murr, *Beschreibung der vornehmsten Merkwürdigkeiten in des H. R. Reichs freyen Stadt Nürnberg und auf der hohen Schule zu Altdorf* (Nuremberg: Zeh, 1778), 449–50, where he estimates the size of this library at 15,000 vols. I thank Bertold Haller von Hallerstein for kindly allowing me to consult materials in his Familienarchiv.

29. Christoph G. von Murr, 'Vertraute biedemännische Briefe Albrecht Dürers an den berühmten Rathsherrn Wilibald Pirckheimer in Nürnberg', *Journal zur Kunstgeschichte und zur allgemeinen Litteratur* 10 (1781): 3–48; idem, 'Amplissima collectio operum Iohannis Regiomontani', *Journal zur Kunstgeschichte und zur allgemeinen Litteratur* 17 (1789): 356–63. See Christian Konrad Nopitsch, *Supplement, Nürnbergische gelehrten-Lexikon* 4 (1808), s.v. 'Murr, Christoph'; Christoph von Imhoff, ed., *Berühmte Nürnberger aus neun Jahrhunderten*, 2nd expanded and enlarged edn (Nuremberg: A. Hofmann, 1989), pp. 225–7; Johann Ferdinand Roth, *Catalogus librorum quos Christophus Theophilus De Murr . . . collegerat . . . publicae auctionis lege pro parata pecunia distrahendorum* (Nuremberg: Lechner, 1811), listing over 5,800 books in Murr's estate.

30. For a detailed account of the provenance of the Kepleriana, see Martha List, *Die handschriftliche Nachlaß der Astronomen Johannes Kepler und Tycho Brahe* (Munich: Verlag der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1961).

31. Franz Xavier von Zach, *Allgemeine geographische Ephermeriden* 4 (1799), 171: 'Herrliche Autographa Regiomontani (inedita?) besitzt v. Murr in Nürnberg; er meldet uns, dass er sie im dritten Theile seines neuen Literatur-Journals beschreiben werde. 'Ich weiss nicht', schreibt v. M. 'was für Schicksale meine herrliche Autographa Regiomontani et alia haben werden, die ich nicht gern für 100 Ducaten geben würde'. Möchten sie doch nicht, wie Kepler's und Einmart's Handschriften zur Schande des Deutschen Vaterlandes wieder ins Ausland verkauft werden, oder in solche Hände gerathen, aus welchen keine Erlösung zu hoffen ist!' Christoph G. von Murr, *Notitia trium codicum autographorum Iohannis Regiomontani in bibliotheca Christophori Theophili De Murr* (Nuremberg: Wolf Penker, 1801). Murr's annotated copy of the latter, bound with pp. 509–13 from the *Biblioteca . . . Halleri*, 1798, with the three Regiomontanus MSS prominently marked, is in Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, shelfmark 4° W775. [Murr], *Iohannis Regiomontani, tres codices chartacei autographi in forma quarta, in bibliotheca C. T. de Murr Norimbergae* [Nuremberg, 1803], describes the three autographs and four bound volumes of printed works by Regiomontanus. At the end of every copy of this 4 pp. circular that I have examined is written: 'à 800 fl.' [i.e. gulden]. News of Murr's offer to sell the autographs had spread rapidly. See Joseph Jérôme LeFrançois de la Lande, *Bibliographie astronomique* [Paris, 1803], facs. reprint edn (Amsterdam: J. C. Gieben, 1970), p. 858. In his copy of 'Tres codices', GNM 4° W755, Murr wrote: 'Anno 1805 in Iulio dono misi Alexandre 1, Imp. Russ. qui me donavit in Iul. 1806 annulo pretiosissimo ultra 2600 [cancelled to 2000] flor'. For Murr's transactions with the Russian czar, see Johann Georg Lampe to Murr, 17/29 Mar. 1805, 10 Nov. 1805; Michael Nikitos Muraviev to Murr, 3 Oct. 1805, Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Murriana II; Lampe to Murr, 7 Aug. 1806, Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Hist. Archiv, Nachlaß Murr 1. To his dismay, Murr, who claimed he never wore rings, failed to sell the ring and restore his finances. See Murr to Heinrich Reichard, 15 Nov. 1809, Nuremberg, Stadtbibliothek, Autogr. 1734. Cf. Zinner, *Leben und Wirken des Joh. Müller*, pp. 264–5.

32. See Tschenakal to Zinner, 18 Sept. 1958; Zinner to Tschenakal, 29 Sept. 1958, in Frankfurt aM, Institut für Geschichte der Naturwissenschaften, Zinner Nachlaß. I thank David King and Ryszard Dyga for copies of the Tschenakal-Zinner correspondence.

33. Zinner to Tschenakal, 29 Sept. 1958 ('Ihr Fund der 3 Ms Regiomontans ist sehr wichtig, da diese 3 Ms bisher noch nicht untersucht und für die Regiomontan-Forschung verwendet worden sind. Ich selbst kann es mir leider nicht leisten, noch einmal nach Russland zu fahren und die Ms durchzusehen. Es handelt sich um umfangreiche Arbeiten. . . .'); Karlheinz Goldmann, 'Drei wertvolle wissenschaftliche Werke kehren in die Nürnberger Stadtbibliothek zurück', *Amtsblatt der Stadt Nürnberg*, 1 June 1960, p. 2; Ernst Zinner, 'Einige Handschriften des Johann Regiomontan', *Bericht des Historischen Vereins für die Pflege der Geschichte des ehemaligen Fürstbistums zu Bamberg* 100 (1964): 315–21.

5
The Corvina Library and the Lost Royal Hungarian Archive

Martyn Rady

Within a single fortnight in 1526, two of the greatest collections of Hungarian manuscripts were lost. On 29 August of that year, the Turks defeated the Hungarian army on the field of Mohács. The young king of Hungary, Louis II (1516–26), was trampled and killed in the rout. News of the catastrophe reached the capital, Buda, on the evening of the next day. During that night, the citizens of Buda loaded wagons and boats by torchlight and buried what they could not take with them. Meanwhile in the palace, the king's widow, Mary of Habsburg, ordered that the royal archive be transferred to a barge and conveyed upstream along the Danube to the relative safety of Hungary's second city, Bratislava (Pozsony, Pressburg). Shortly after negotiating the Danube bend, which is about twenty miles north of Buda, the barge sank somewhere near the archiepiscopal city of Esztergom. Almost the entirety of the Hungarian royal archive thus lies today in the mud of the Danube. Only a few fragments which were either separately transported by cart or left behind in the royal palace, survived the general ruin.[1]

In her flight, Queen Mary of Habsburg took with her a missal from the library of the royal chapel.[2] She did not, however, attempt to rescue the royal library that had been amassed by her husband's predecessor, King Matthias Corvinus (1458–90). Possibly, she was thwarted by the chains that bound the most precious volumes to the shelves. Mary's haste was not groundless, for only two days later Turkish raiders had reached the outskirts of Buda, effectively blocking the routes of escape.[3] It was not, however, until 12 September that Suleiman, the Turkish sultan, made his triumphant entry into the city. In the intervening period, some books were evidently pilfered from the unguarded library.[4] These losses were, however, as nothing compared to the ruin which followed the entry of Turkish troops into Buda and their ransack both

of the royal palace and of the library itself. Nevertheless, although the Ottoman soldiery tore off the precious gilt and enamel furnishings of many of the volumes held there, a good number were rescued for the sultan. These were taken back in Suleiman's train to Constantinople and deposited in the seraglio. There, some were given away as gifts by the sultan to visiting ambassadors. Others were stolen and sold on the open market. The remaining volumes were, however, left in a condition of neglect, their provenance forgotten until the last half of the nineteenth century.[5] Thus perished what had been at its height in the 1480s the second largest library in Christendom.[6]

We can in the case of the royal library founded by Matthias Corvinus arrive at some estimate of the loss. In its heyday, the so-called Corvina library held between 2,000 and 2,500 codices, almost entirely manuscripts. Only 216 survive today, and these are dispersed as far afield as Italy, Ireland, Spain and the United States. Perhaps some more survive given that, contrary to common opinion, not all were marked with the Hungarian royal coat of arms and with Matthias's insignia of the black raven.[7] In the case of the Hungarian royal archive, by contrast, we can only make guesses as to its contents and to the nature of the loss. Although many private archives have survived, yielding altogether the texts of well over 300,000 individual charters, we cannot be sure that these are at all representative of the type of material that was housed in the royal archive. Since these private collections mostly originate from Transylvania and the north of the kingdom, it may well be that they convey a distorted impression of medieval Hungarian institutions and practices.[8]

The loss of the royal archive and the history of the Corvina library carry additional implications for our understanding of medieval Hungarian history as a whole. Without the royal archive we have little way of assessing just how the kingdom was administered and the extent to which Hungary was effectively governed. Surviving charters are in their form, use of seals, calligraphy and language almost identical to those published in western Europe. Their number is, however, much smaller. More than 40,000 documents thus survive from thirteenth-century Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands. From Hungary we have over the same century only several hundred.[9] More specifically, from the reign of Philip Augustus of France (1206–23) over 1,200 charters are extant, but from the reign of his Hungarian contemporary, Andrew II (1205–35), a mere 300.[10] Likewise, from fourteenth-century Hungary the texts of several tens of thousands of charters remain, but from England and France at this time quantities which reach well beyond a million.

Can these discrepancies be explained simply by the loss of the archive? Or do they lie instead in a general condition of institutional backwardness where only the outward forms and appearance of royal government were adopted?

Similar uncertainties apply to the library of Matthias Corvinus. By any measure, this was a remarkable collection, second in size only to the Vatican library, and replete with manuscripts copied by leading Italian *miniatores* and, in some cases, emended by prominent humanists.[11] Nevertheless, the question remains whether the library can be considered in any way representative of Hungarian or even central European cultural achievement or whether it was instead an essentially alien importation. As one Hungarian historian has recently argued, the Corvina library and the humanists who gathered around the person of the ruler were 'not the tip of the iceberg of a generally flourishing culture, but the rather isolated initiative of an intellectual elite amidst circumstances of relative backwardness'.[12] The apparent neglect shown towards the library by Matthias's successors, Wladislas II (1490–1516) and Louis II, stands in this respect as evidence of the superficiality of Hungarian responses in regard not just to the Renaissance but also to western cultural influences as a whole.

Behind these questions lies, however, a yet larger and older issue in Hungarian historiography relating to Hungary's place in Europe and the extent to which its periods of 'westernization' and 'modernization' have had either shallow roots or distorting consequences on Hungarian development. This debate, which was revived in the early 1980s, and which is the leitmotif of the most recent survey of Hungarian history, has of course much to do with Hungary's place in Cold War Europe and with its future in the European Union.[13] Although it is not our purpose to be drawn into this discussion, we will nevertheless contribute indirectly to it through our description of the context in which the Corvina library and royal archive developed. We will argue that both the collection of manuscripts and the use of charters cannot be considered solely the activity of a small elite gathered in the court and around the person of the ruler. Collection, correction, writing, reading and record-keeping were instead larger and more decentralized activities than accounts of the Hungarian Middle Ages often allow.

Matthias Corvinus was elected as a child to the Hungarian throne in 1458. His tutors were earnest men, familiar with the intellectual and artistic movements in Italy, and his father was a humanist manqué. John Hunyadi could not read Latin, but he certainly appreciated classical texts when they were read in translation to him. During the

course of the late 1460s, Matthias began to construct his own library, at first sending off to Italy for copies of important texts. His aim was not to obtain an up-to-date summation of knowledge but instead to gather a 'complete' library which contained all the leading works in history, theology, scholastic and speculative philosophy, geography, astrology and architecture. The treason of Matthias's first tutor, János Vitéz, and of Vitéz's nephew, Janus Pannonius, in 1472 introduced a period of disillusionment which was only alleviated by the king's marriage in 1476 to the Neapolitan princess, Beatrix of Aragon. Herewith, the king resumed his activity, ordering the gathering and copying of codices, the making of translations of Greek texts, and the establishment of his own workshop in Buda. The texts that Matthias had copied were largely reproduced in a humanist cursive and were decorated with his own distinctive heraldic bearings and with the symbol of a raven shown against a blue field. Although a part of these manuscripts were copied in the Buda workshop, the overwhelming majority were the work of Florentine artists who were either employed at a distance in their home city or else induced to settle in Hungary. The total of craftsmen working on the king's behalf was later put at thirty. We have, however, no evidence that native Hungarians were in any way involved with the copying or illumination of the king's manuscripts.

Once completed, the codices were placed in the royal library which lay just south of the chapel in the palace precinct. This part of the palace is long gone, having been obliterated in the eighteenth century by the construction of a new wall. Contemporary accounts suggest, however, that the library backed on to the throne-room, and that it consisted of two vaulted rooms. In the first of these were curtained shelves and cabinets. Lying flat upon the shelves were chained the library's finest works. Those of lesser value were consigned to the cabinets. The main vault was decorated with astrological symbols, relating to Matthias's acquisition of the Bohemian crown in 1469, and with a sofa. It was lit by several stained glass windows. The second room was effectively for storage, comprising in the main Greek manuscripts that were intended for translation into Latin. These were not ornately decorated, being intended only as working material for the king's scribes. It may well be that the first vaulted chamber acted as the site of a symposium, at which Matthias presided over and participated in philosophical and other debates. We certainly know that the king had a keen interest in theology and astrology, conducted academic discussions on neo-Platonic philosophy, frequently urged (in vain) Marsilio Ficino to attend his

court, and upbraided his attendant nobles on account of their boorishness and illiteracy.[14]

Matthias explained his collection as being intended for the pleasure of the mind (*ingenii voluptati*) and for the glory of the kingdom (*pro regni decore*).[15] As far as we may gather, his library was very much a working one. In discussions with his leading men, the king might thus indicate specific volumes in which information on a point was to be had.[16] We know, moreover, that books in the library were consulted and emended by visiting scholars and that the Hungarian historian, Thuróczy, when writing his *Gesta* referred to several volumes which were kept there.[17] Nevertheless, the library was also aimed for show: hence its location next to the throne-room. It was intended to convey not only the impression of royal opulence but also to promote the political and propagandist purposes of, in the words of one historian, 'a classic Machiavellian new prince, with no dynasty'.[18] Visitors were left in no doubt as to the classical allusions and references which Matthias intended his library to suggest. The Florentine humanist, Naldus Naldius, thus compared the king with such notable collectors of antiquity as Attalus, Ptolemy, Lucullus, Caesar and Asinius Pollio. For his part, Angelo Poliziano congratulated Matthias on his endeavour to build the 'richest and most splendid library of all'. Even though by the time he visited the library in 1525 it had already fallen into disrepair, Brassicanus was equally emphatic in his praise. Again comparing Matthias to Pollio, Brassicanus wrote of his visit, 'I examined every book in the library. But why should I say books; as many books so many pieces of treasure were there. . . . Then I really felt as if I had not been in a library but – as they say – in the bosom of Jove. I saw such a plenty of Greek and Hebrew volumes which King Matthias had purchased with immeasurable money after the fall of Byzantium and many other Greek cities, releasing them from their shackles as if they had been slaves at a slave market. I saw such a plenty of old and new books in Latin . . . as there can be found nowhere else according to my knowledge.'[19] Clearly, though, some of the library's volumes also performed a narrower dynastic purpose, their decoration extolling in imagery Matthias's illegitimate son, John Corvinus, who was also his intended heir. Indeed, it may well be that the rapid expansion of the library in the late 1480s was not unconnected to this design.[20]

John did not, however, succeed Matthias. During the reigns of the Jagellon rulers of Hungary, the library built up by Matthias languished. Individual volumes were given away; others were borrowed and never returned. Indeed, avaricious scholars even sent to friends visiting Buda

lists of the volumes that they would like to have from the library. The purloiners of these volumes often painted over the royal crest or ripped out all evidence of prior ownership. The workshop founded by Matthias likewise ceased work within a few years of his death. In 1519, a visitor to the library reported how he had taken in his hands 'one book after another, desperately struggling with worms and moths'.[21] A year later, the Venetian envoy, Massario, reported back to the doge's secretary that he could not find one manuscript of any value in the library, all the good ones having been taken. Partly the explanation for this decline lies with the financial embarrassment of the Jagellon rulers.[22] They lacked the private resources and tax-revenue of their great predecessor and were, moreover, forced by the Hungarian diet to 'live of their own' – and the definition of what constituted 'their own' was repeatedly narrowed. Not only were they unable, therefore, to add to the library's stock but its individual contents were also among the few things which they could afford to give away. Partly also, however, we should note that during the reigns of Wladislas II and Louis II, the cultural orientation of Hungary shifted away from Italy and towards Germany and Bohemia. Representatives of the northern Renaissance thus squeezed Italian humanists out. The Italian connection that had sustained the library during Matthias's reign was attenuated.

Whether the reputation of Matthias's library served as an incentive to the collection of books and manuscripts in Hungary cannot be proven. We may notice, however, that from the late fifteenth century onwards there was a proliferation of manuscript and book collection.[23] In the main, this was undertaken by prominent clergymen. Nicolas Báthory, bishop of Vác after 1475, had thus a library containing a rare copy of Cicero's *Tusculanarum* as well as other books given to him by Ficino and Salvius. For his part, Francis Perényi, bishop of Várad, owned works by Vergil, Seneca, Synesius, Diodorus Siculus and Erasmus. The spread of printed books aided the growth of collections. Martin Haczaki, suffragan bishop of Várad, owned by the time of Mohács a substantial library of which no less than 93 survive, including works by Pliny and Plato as well as a 1518 edition of Thomas More's *Utopia*. In most cases, though, our information on the authorship of books in a collection is limited to the very brief entries given in wills. We know that the Archbishop of Kalocsa, George Handó, owned no less than 300 books, while the testament of Bálint Farkas, bishop of Várad, mentions a library of over 200 volumes. Further information is, however, lacking.

We do, however, have some quite remarkable evidence with regard to the library of the royal chapel. This was situated in close proximity to
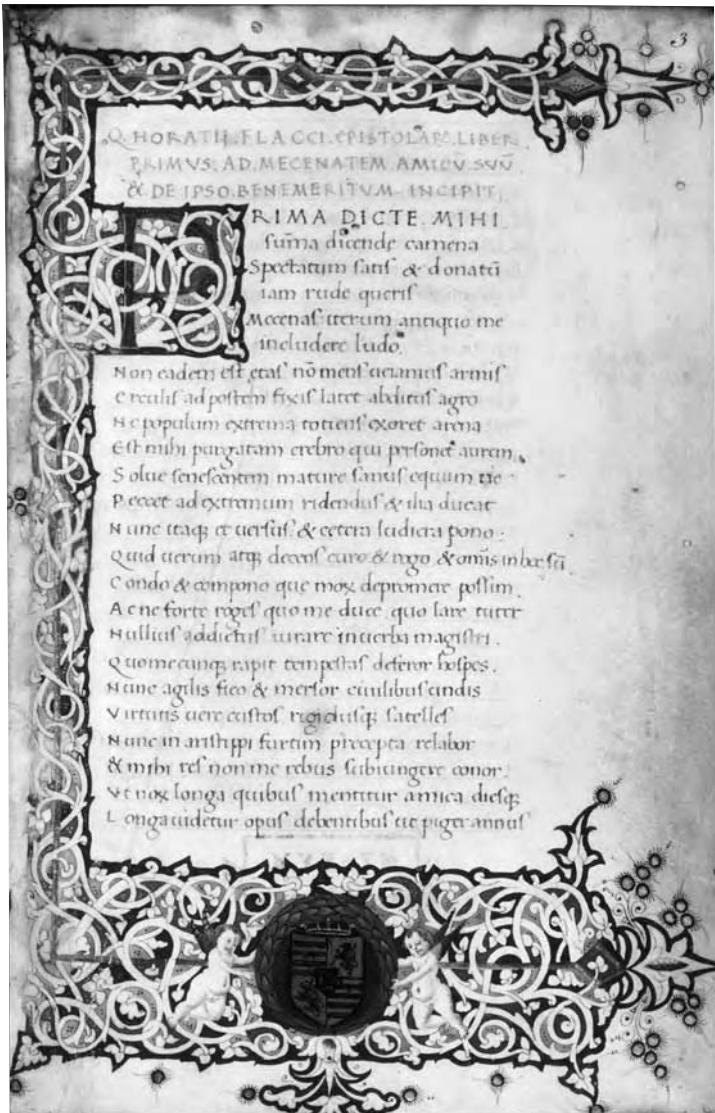
Figure 5.1 The Corvina Manuscript. British Library: Lansdowne 836. Antal Verancsics, bishop of Pecs, acquired this edition of Horace in Constantinople, at some point between 1553 to 1557. Verancsics most probably gave it to the imperial envoy, Busbeq, after which the codex made its way firstly to the Netherlands and later, in the eighteenth century, to London. See Lajos Kropf, 'A British Museum Korvin-kodexe', *Magyar Konyvszemle*, 1895, pp. 1–8.

the royal library and was intended to serve the clergy of the court. Their principal tasks were to guard the king's collection of relics, perform liturgical duties, and carry out various administrative, secretarial and diplomatic tasks.[24] The chapel library was recovered in 1686 following the recapture of Buda and was initially thought to have been the library of King Matthias itself. Shortly thereafter, the imperial commander, Marsigli, conveyed a part of the chapel library to Vienna where 265 volumes were catalogued.[25] Given the duties belonging to the staff of the royal chapel, it is not surprising that the majority of the collection so catalogued should have consisted of liturgical and devotional works. The catalogue does, however, suggest the wider interests of the royal clergy in respect both of classical literature and of the movements for religious reform in Europe. The catalogue thus includes editions of Cicero, Livy, Ovid, Plautus, Pliny, Seneca, Strabo and Terence, as well as of Erasmus and Luther. The majority of these were, however, printed editions, which may explain why the sultan did not consider them worth removing to Constantinople.

It was not, however, just the upper reaches of the clergy which amassed libraries. The will of the priest of Bártfa, George Petri, made in 1509, mentions 93 works bound in 36 volumes. These included eleven works by Aristotle, three unnamed classical Latin texts and one work by Ficino. Even more noteworthy is the contemporary collection of the Corpus Christi merchant confraternity of Bratislava which included, beside the usual devotional material, works by Cicero, Vergil, Seneca, Terence, Plutarch, Pliny and Livy. The extent to which the citizens of Hungarian towns were themselves collectors is suggested by the presence in Buda of a community of book traders of which we know the names of no less than thirteen individual merchants. Among the nobility, however, the collection of books remained still rare. Only a very few, like the jurist Stephen Werbőczy, had more than just a couple of books in their homes. The great secular libraries, like those built up by Hans Dernschwam and John Sambucus (Zsámboki), the second of which numbered 6,500 manuscripts and books, are very much a product of the sixteenth century.[26]

It may well be that these collections were inspired by the example of the Corvina library. It is, however, evident that Matthias's library owed much to already existing private libraries in Hungary. By the end of the first period of collection, in 1472, Matthias had gathered probably only several hundred volumes. The rapid augmentation that followed in the second half of the 1470s was almost certainly due to the inclusion of the libraries of János Vitéz and Janus Pannonius. The first of these came

to the king on Vitéz's death in 1472; the second with the confiscation of Janus Pannonius's possessions. Although not all of it was moved to Matthias's library, Vitéz's collection probably amounted to 500 books, mostly devoted to classical history, philosophy, astrology and law. Among these was a volume containing Regiomontanus's astronomical and logarithmic tables, the so-called *tabula directionum* and *tabula fecunda*, which included a dedication by the author to Vitéz.[27] This was very much a working library, for a number of the volumes which subsequently found their way into Matthias's collection bear traces of Vitéz's own emendations. For its part, Janus Pannonius's library held a number of important Greek texts by such authors as Xenophon, Plutarch and Homer as well as a commentary on Plato by Ficino and a copy of Pannonius's own Greek–Latin dictionary. Pannonius's library was, indeed, the first north of the Alps to include Greek and Latin texts to an equal degree of depth.[28]

As these examples suggest, the collection of manuscripts and books was not an exclusively royal or courtly activity. Nor, as we have seen, was the scope and range of Matthias's own library entirely without precedent in fifteenth-century Hungary. In these respects, it is not entirely strange to find in Hungary the second largest library of its time in Christendom. By the same token, however, the magnificence and size of this library should not obscure from view those other smaller private collections which were built either before or simultaneously with the Corvina. Similar considerations must also apply to our study of the royal archive. The making of administrative records was by no means confined to the centre. Indeed, as we shall argue, much of the routine business of government in Hungary was itself decentralized and was not concentrated at the hub of the kingdom or in the offices of the principal men of the realm. In this respect, the loss of the archive may have robbed us of much important information, but it has not deprived us entirely of a view of some of the workings of government and administration.

Almost certainly, the bulk of the material lost in the *naufragium* of 1526 consisted of treasury records. The treasury administration was large and we know of no less than 450 officials employed there between 1458 and 1500.[29] A fragment of the royal income and expenditure accounts survives for the year 1494–95. When this was first published at the end of the eighteenth century, it ran to over 160 pages of printed text.[30] Other stray pieces of information which survived the wreck of the archive in 1526 point to very detailed tax records which list the names and contributions of all noble estates and households.

Additionally, we know that the royal archive contained lists of the troop contributions owed by the counties and the leading men of the kingdom. There was also a register of traitors.[31] The royal archive contained, furthermore, charters that were bundled up and kept in leather cases. As far as we can ascertain, these charters included the title deeds of properties that had escheated to the crown on account of their owners' treason or death without heirs. The royal pardon might thus be followed by the lucky owner of a piece of confiscated land visiting the archive in order to retrieve his deeds.[32]

One of the principal resources in the royal archive consisted of the so-called *Libri Regii*.[33] None of these have survived and we may guess that they were all lost in the Danube. Nevertheless, we can reconstruct their contents. Certainly, from no later than the first decades of the fourteenth century, it was usual for a summary of the contents of all royal privileges to be entered into special volumes. The volumes were arranged by reign and might be consulted to prove the ownership of contested properties. In 1519, one family successfully applied to the king to establish the terms of a property transaction which had taken place almost two centuries before in 1331.[34] The royal books also contained register entries of royal pardons, grant of market rights, tax exemptions and permissions to build castles. Clearly though, the entries were brief. On a single folio, the contents of three or four separate charters might be distilled. In view of this, it is not surprising that the number of royal books was small. A single volume covered most of Matthias's reign. In 1486, this had 552 folio pages. In 1489, just a year before the king's death, a second volume was started. During the reign of Matthias's successor, Wladislas II, five books were compiled. The fourth of these, relating to the decade 1504 to 1514, had in excess of 675 pages. For its part, Louis II's rule saw the compilation of two books, the first of which had over 600 pages of entries. We know incidentally of the length of these books because royal privileges issued in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries often included scribal marks referring to the number of the folio on which the relevant register entry might be found.

In addition to providing a record of the most important charters published by the ruler, the royal books were intended for display and were therefore illuminated. The royal accounts for 1495 record a payment of 60 florins to a certain abbot of Madocsa, *miniatori librorum regiorum*.[35] For long it was thought that this abbot, who has been identified as Giovanni Antonio Cattaneo de Mediolano, was employed in the royal workshop as an illuminator of manuscripts destined for the royal library.[36]

The royal accounts are, however, emphatic that the abbot was paid for his work on the *Libri Regii*. It is, moreover, evident that the royal workshop had ceased functioning well before the date of payment. We may incidentally note that the sum of 60 florins is indicative of the high cost of illumination. The same accounts record the humbler sum of just a single florin paid over the same period to the historian, Bonfini.[37]

One further type of material housed in the archive is mentioned in tantalising fashion in a royal charter of 1507. This refers to 'the most full evidence possible' which was contained in 'the annals of the kings of Hungary which are kept in the halls of the archive (*in aedibus nostris thavernicalibus*) and in which the happenings of all times have been most diligently and faithfully recorded'.[38] On this occasion, the annals were inspected with a view to establishing the record of service of the Pethei family. It is one of the features of Hungarian royal privileges of donation that they include lengthy *narrationes* extolling the deeds and services of the recipient. Often the background to the events described is recorded in much the same fashion in charters given on quite separate occasions to different royal servants. According to one theory, chancellery scribes kept notes of the stories they had included and borrowed subsequently from these. It is, however, equally possible that they referred to this official record of events, adding in an element of individual colour to satisfy the vanity of the current beneficiary of the royal largesse. Possibly also, the royal annals were part of the raw material on which chroniclers relied, for there is a close correlation between the *narrationes* of individual charters and the accounts given by such fourteenth- and fifteenth-century historians as Küküllei and Thuróczy which suggests a common source.[39]

Nevertheless, only a small part of government was conducted at the centre and relied upon records kept in the royal archive.[40] From the thirteenth century onwards, a large part of the administrative and judicial business of the kingdom was effectively 'hived off' to monasteries and chapter houses. These acted in the first instance as 'places of authentication', checking up at the request of petitioners or royal judges on the veracity of documents, making copies under their own seals, and keeping their own archives in which private individuals might also store their most important papers. Beyond this, the chapters acted on behalf of the ruler and his court. They conducted inquisitions on the basis of which cases were introduced into the central courts of the realm. They additionally carried out surveys of property, investigated the complaints of neighbours that the boundaries of an estate had been incorrectly laid, saw to the installation of a new owner to his estate, issued summonses

and took depositions. Throughout the kingdom, there were altogether about fifty such religious houses which acted as these hubs of local administration and as authenticating institutions. Mostly, their competence was restricted to their localities where their seal was recognised, although a handful clearly enjoyed an authority that extended across the breadth of the kingdom.

The monasteries and chapter-houses of the kingdom kept detailed accounts in register form of the cases and actions which came before them, a few of which have survived. From these it is possible to track the progress of cases into the curia and the outcome of disputes sent for adjudication into the central courts of the realm. The records kept by religious houses were, furthermore, very much the instruments of first resort which were used to establish the veracity of claims. The records of royal privileges contained in the *Libri Regii* thus included a reference to the religious house that had performed the installation to an estate given by the ruler. Indeed, in some respects, the records kept by religious houses were a more reliable guide to the terms under which property was held than those given in the royal books. Not only did the religious houses often retain complete copies of charters but their holdings were also carefully organised. By contrast, the chronological arrangement of the royal books made it hard to establish the history of ownership of a particular property. It was therefore not unusual for the ruler to give away the same estate several times or to donate land to which no royal rights actually attached. Indeed, as we have argued elsewhere, the confusions attending royal donations and misdonations of land were so commonplace as to prompt the introduction in the early fourteenth century of an entirely new formula in royal charters.[41]

In conclusion, the decentralised nature of record-keeping in medieval Hungary suggests much the same as the history of the kingdom's libraries. In 1526 the two greatest repositories of manuscripts in Hungary were lost. The royal archive drowned and the Corvina library was plundered. The nature of this twofold calamity should not, however, hide the fact that the collection of manuscripts and charters, the composition of administrative records, and the gathering of classical and humanist texts were in Hungary not just royal or courtly pursuits. Indeed, the work of the central administration and the achievement of Matthias in building his library should most properly be seen not as foreign intrusions or excrescences but instead in the context of a larger and longer tradition of writing, studying and collecting charters and manuscripts.

Notes

1. *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 11 (1990): 102–3; János Belitzky, 'Megvolt-e a magyar királyok levéltára a török Budán', *Levéltári Közlemények*, 12 (1934): 155–8.

2. Csaba Csapodi, *The Corvinian Library: History and Stock* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1973), pp. 91–2.

3. István Sugár, *A budai vár és ostromai*, (Budapest: Zrinyi, 1979), pp. 39–40.

4. Csaba Csapodi, *Mikor pusztult el Mátyás király könyvtára?* (Budapest: A MTA Könyvtárának Közleményei, 24, 1961), p. 8.

5. In 1869, Sultan Abdul Aziz presented Franz Joseph with four Corvina MSS. Aziz's successor, Abdul Hamid II, gave a further 35 MSS to Budapest University in 1877. Of these, 12 were subsequently found to be definite Corvina MSS. The status of a further three is contested. A Hungarian expedition in 1889 yielded another genuine MS. Currently there is only one genuine Corvina MS remaining in Istanbul.

6. For the history and fate of the Corvina library, I am indebted to Csapodi, *The Corvinian Library*, and to the catalogue, *Bibliotheca Corvina 1490–1990. International Corvina Exhibition* (Budapest: National Széchényi Library, 1990).

7. This was particularly the case with Greek manuscripts which were bought with the intention of translating them into Latin. Also, in some cases, the new owners of Corvina MSS erased all evidence of prior possession.

8. Martyn Rady, *Nobility, Land and Service in Medieval Hungary* (London and Basingstoke: Palgrave – now Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), pp. 8–10.

9. István Hajnal, *Írástörténet. Az írásbeliség felújulása korából* (Budapest: Budavári Tudományos Társaság, 1921), pp. 28–9.

10. István Hajnal, *L'enseignement de l'écriture aux universités médiévales*, 2nd edn (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1959), p. 196.

11. The Vatican library had by the 1480s about 3,600 MSS: Anthony Grafton, 'The Vatican and its Library', in Anthony Grafton ed., *Rome Reborn: The Vatican Library and Renaissance Culture* (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1993): 3–45 (p. 35).

12. László Kontler, *Millennium in Central Europe: A History of Hungary* (Budapest: Atlantisz, 1999), p. 126.

13. Jenő Szűcs, 'The Three Historical Regions of Europe. An Outline', *Acta Historica* (Budapest) 29 (1983), pp. 131–84; see also Kontler, *Millennium in Central Europe*, and my review of the same in *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 78 (2000): 785–7.

14. Nándor Barna, *Jellemvonások Mátyás király életéből a szemtanu Galeotti Latin mùve utan* (Pest: Bartalits, 1862), pp. 5, 30, 67.

15. Csapodi, *The Corvinian Library*, pp. 31, 52, 468.

16. Ibid., pp. 226, 244.

17. Elemér Mályusz, 'Thuróczy János krónikája és a Corvina', *Filológiai Közlöny*, 12 (1966): 282–302.

18. Shayne Mary Mitchell, 'The Image of Hungary and of Hungarians in Italy, 1437–1526', unpublished PhD thesis, University of London, 1995, pp. 181, 196; see also, Mitchell, 'The *De Comparatione Rei Publicae et Regni* (1490) of

Aurelio Brandolini', unpublished MPhil dissertation, University of London, 1985, p. 172.

19. Csapodi, *Corvinian Library*, pp. 21–4; Io. Alexander Brassicanus, *De Salviani* (Basle: Froben, 1530), praefatio, fol. 3r.
20. Marianna D. Birnbaum, *The Orb and the Pen: Janus Pannonius, Matthias Corvinus and the Buda Court* (Budapest: Balassi, 1996), pp. 111–13.
21. Csapodi, *Corvinian Library*, pp. 57–61.
22. Ibid.
23. For this and much of what follows, see Csaba Csapodi, András Tóth, Miklós Vértesy, *Magyar könyvtártörténet* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1987), pp. 51–84.
24. L. Bernát Kumorovitz, 'A budai várkápolna és a Szent-Zsigmond prépostság történetéhez', *Tanulmányok Budapest Múltjából*, 15 (1963): 109–51 (pp. 109, 127).
25. The catalogue was published by Julius Pflugk, *Epistola ad perillustrem atque generosissimum Vitus Ludovicum a Seckendorff* (Jena: Bielckius, 1688), pp. 60–106. See also John Stoye, *Marsigli in Europe 1681–1730* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994), p. 46.
26. Csapodi, Tóth, Vértesy, *Magyar könyvtártörténet*, pp. 90–2.
27. Vitéz's library is reconstructed by Klára Csapodi-Gárdonyi, *Die Bibliothek des Johannes Vitéz* (Akadémiai Kiadó: Budapest, 1984), see especially pp. 131–5. See also E. Glowatzki and E. Göttsche, *Die Tafeln des Regiomontanus. Ein Jahrhundertwerk* (Munich: Institut für Geschichte der Naturwissenschaften, 1990), pp. 5, 70–1, 180.
28. Csapodi, Tóth, Vértesy, *Magyar könyvtártörténet*, pp. 52–6; Csaba Csapodi, 'Janus Pannonius könyvei és pécsi könyvtár', in Tibor Kardos and Sándor V. Kovács, eds, *Janus Pannonius Tanulmányok* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1975): 189–206 (p. 203).
29. András Kubinyi, 'A kincstári személyzet a xv. század második felében', *Tanulmányok Budapest Múltjából*, 12 (1957): 25–49 (p. 29).
30. Johann Christian von Engel, *Geschichte des Ungrischen Reichs und seiner Nebenländer*, 4 vols (Halle: Gebauer, 1797–1804), 1: 17–181.
31. Elemér Mályusz and Iván Borsa, eds., *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár*, 6 vols (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1951–99), 5: no 1031.
32. Ibid., 1: nos 1763, 2073; Ferenc Olexik, 'Középkori levéltártörténeti adatok', *Levéltári Közlemények*, 13 (1935): 266–74 (p. 268).
33. For this and much of what follows, see Imre Hajnik, *A királyi könyvek a vegyes házakbeli királyok korszakában* (Budapest: Értekezések a történelmi tudományok köréből VIII: 3 (1879).
34. Dezső Szabó, 'Adalékok a királyi könyvek történetéhez', *Turul*, 24 (1906), pp. 86–8.
35. Engel, *Geschichte des Ungrischen Reichs*, 1: 152.
36. Ilona Berkovits, *Illuminated Manuscripts from the Library of Matthias Corvinus*, (Budapest: Corvina, 1964), p. 97.
37. Engel, *Geschichte des Ungrischen Reichs*, 1: 91.
38. Hajnik, *A királyi könyvek*, p. 20. The royal archive is sometimes also referred to as the *domus thesaurarius* or, in the early fourteenth century, as the *regale conservatorium*.
39. Elemér Mályusz, 'La chancellerie royale et la rédaction des chroniques dans

la Hongrie médiévale', *Le Moyen Age*, 75 (1969): 51–86, 219–54 (pp. 220–6, 229–34, 239–42).

40. For this and what follows, see Franz Eckhart, 'Die glaubwürdigen Orte Ungarns im Mittelalter', *Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichts-forschung*, Engänzungsband 9 (1915), pp. 395–558; see also, Rady, *Nobility, Land and Service*, pp. 66–74.

41. Martyn Rady, 'The "Title of New Donation" in Medieval Hungarian Law', *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 79 (2001): 638–52.

6

Habits of Manuscript-Collecting: The Dispersals of the Library of Humfrey, Duke of Gloucester

David Rundle

Proceed up the south staircase of the Old Bodleian, and at the penultimate landing note the plaque, erected in the 1920s, listing the library's benefactors; the first name reads *Humphredus Dux Gloucestriae*. Continue into what is called The Arts End and there, extending to its left, is the fifteenth-century library of the University, known now (but not formerly) as Duke Humfrey's Library.[1] In this reading room are available volumes which furnish further evidence of the honour in which 'Good Duke Humfrey' has in past times been held. Look, for example, at the works of the early eighteenth-century antiquary, Thomas Hearne. In one preface, he allows himself an *obiter dictum* about 'that religious, good and learned Prince':

> whose Hand writing I us'd whenever I saw it in the Bodleian Library (where it occurs several times) to shew a sort of particular respect to as some little Remains of a truly great man.[2]

Other relics of Hearne's scholarship leave no doubt that he was acquainted with at least one manuscript that the duke had owned, but he may well have exaggerated when he suggested he had seen a series of examples of Humfrey's handwriting.[3] For, despite the duke's largesse to the university, stocking its library with around three hundred volumes – and despite Oxford's long memory of his generosity – very few manuscripts currently in the Bodleian bear manifest witness to Humfrey's ownership. Perhaps the near-complete loss of Humfrey's renowned library made for Hearne the physical proof of his presence all the more remarkable. The duke's inscription inspired reverence in this Oxford antiquary but, it must be said, by others his marks of ownership were shown much less respect. The pages that follow investigate the

processes of both remembering and forgetting former libraries by using Humfrey's signs of ownership as an entrée into late medieval and Renaissance book-collecting habits. It will, in the process, provide a short history of a library undergoing construction, destruction and partial (and often unwitting) reconstruction.

Writing in a fourteenth-century psalter that had come into his possession, Humfrey styled himself grandiloquently: *Cest livre est a moy Homfrey fiz frere et uncle de roys duc de Gloucestre comte de Pembroc grant chambellan d'Angleterre etc.*[4] Humfrey, born in 1390, was the son of Henry IV, the youngest brother of Henry V (who saved his life at Agincourt), the uncle and protector to the successively infant and incompetent Henry VI.[5] Humfrey's titles and his pedigree, however, could not disguise the fundamental frustration of his career, opposed and sometimes thwarted in his ambitions by his brother, John, Duke of Bedford and his uncle, Cardinal Henry Beaufort. His was also a life that ended in ignominy: he, the heir to the throne, was accused of treason and, in February 1447, died under house arrest. Yet, whatever his political failures, his later years were also marked by his accruing a large and prestigious manuscript collection. Some princes found a short-cut to a large library was the taking over of another's books – as, for example, John, Duke of Bedford did when he commandeered the French royal library – but this quick route to a full book-chest was not open to Humfrey.[6] Instead, the process of amassing his library was, during the 1430s and 1440s, an international enterprise with manuscripts being sent to him from Italy and from France.[7] Moreover, with the manuscripts came also recondite, if self-serving, plaudits for his ostentatious book-collecting; and, even if Humfrey was not quite (as he was once described) a new Julius Caesar, accumulating an *amplissima bibliotheca* for the benefit of his country, his library does bears comparison with the most outstanding collections of its day.[8] Humfrey's book-collection is significant not just for its size but also for the amount of evidence – still increasing – which details its history. As we shall see, Humfrey's library suffered not one but two dispersals and, yet, in contrast to other contemporary collections for which the evidence is hardly sufficient for us to appreciate the loss, the information available for the ducal library allows us to present a fuller, but still frustrating and depressing, account of its existence and its demise.

If it is the mark of a civilised Englishman to disdain discussion of money, fifteenth-century observers of substantial book-collections were frightfully unEnglish. The tendency was to describe a library not by its number of volumes but by a vague estimate of its monetary value. So,

for example, in the early 1470s, the authorities of the University of Oxford, desperate to gain possession of the manuscripts of the recently executed John Tiptoft, earl of Worcester, emphasised that his collection was reportedly worth five hundred marks.[9] Similarly, Humfrey's generosity to the same University was prodigious for it amounted 'as yt ys seyd to the value of M^l. marks.'[10] Such estimates, of course, tell us very little of substance about a collection.[11] Much more useful would have been the list Tiptoft sent to Oxford of the manuscripts he was willing to donate – but such an ephemeral document rarely survives.[12] This, indeed, is one way in which Humfrey's collection stands out: inventories of most of the books that he gave to Oxford survive in copies made by the University Registrar. These sources, known to some scholars in the seventeenth century, and first published in 1898, are invaluable, in large part for telling us how much we have lost.[13] When a manuscript does survive from Humfrey's collection, however, it often provides essential evidence for its provenance. For some significant book-owners, knowledge of their connection with a set of manuscripts comes primarily from its later history: so, for example, it is the lucky survival of the medieval library of Balliol College, Oxford, and its medieval librarian's habit of adding donation inscriptions to the manuscripts, which allow us to appreciate the book-collecting habits of William Gray, Bishop of Ely, who was himself a reticent owner, rarely adding an ownership note.[14] In contrast, other owners were keen to announce their association with a book by regularly having their coat-of-arms prominently placed on its first leaf. Though a few of Humfrey's manuscripts bear his arms, this was not his habit. Instead, his most frequent method of declaring his ownership was by adding his distinctive *ex libris*. In many cases, however, this inscription was later erased – and it was only during the twentieth century that these were recovered through the use of that invention the French call 'la lampe de wood' but which we more prosaically know as UV light.

Many owners of manuscripts, if they revealed their identity at all, were happy simply to write their name; Humfrey was exceptional. His inscriptions took, in the main, two forms. The sixteenth-century antiquary, John Leland, studying manuscripts in the University library, commented that *Humfredus multotiens scripsit in frontispiciis librorum suorum Mon bien mondain.*[15] At the beginning of the twentieth century, scepticism was expressed about whether Humfrey actually used this motto, but since then four instances have been recovered (using ultraviolet) – none of which occurs in one of Humfrey's Oxford manuscripts.[16] This detail might give us pause to consider not just the level

of loss this library has suffered but also how atypical what survives may be. As it stands, much more frequent in Humfrey's manuscripts is the presence of his *ex libris*, like that which I have quoted from his Psalter. Written in his distinctive, large gothic script, the *ex libris* always opens with the formula *Cest livre est a moy Humfrey duc de gloucestre*. Such a formula was by no means Humfrey's invention: a generation earlier, another duke of Gloucester, Thomas of Woodstock, marked his ownership of a volume with a similar inscription.[17] If Humfrey was unaware of that precedent, it could not have escaped his attention that his style of *ex libris* had a royal pedigree, having been used by Charles V of France (1364–80) when adding his name to some of his own codices. Indeed, one of those manuscripts reached Humfrey's collection and he inserted his own formula just above that of the French king.[18]

Charles V had rarely confined himself to just noting his ownership, usually adding to his inscription a brief statement of the volume's origin; and Humfrey occasionally did likewise. Sometimes the duke notes that the author of the work had provided him with this presentation copy; in other instances, he records who had owned the volume before him. In other words, such an *ex libris* reveals something about what might be called the pre-history of a Humfrey manuscript – they remind us that behind his collection lie the lost libraries of other bibliophiles. In some instances, indeed, it is now the case that the evidence of an earlier owner's association with the manuscript is more visible than Humfrey's handwriting. In the unique copy of Coluccio Salutati's *De Laboribus Herculis*, for example, Humfrey's motto and inscription have both been erased with such thoroughness that they were only recovered (again, with the use of ultra-violet light) in the 1930s; meanwhile, the first leaf still proudly displays the coat-of-arms of the volume's earlier but less illustrious English owner, the royal proctor at the papal court, Andrew Holes. Holes, it seems, bought the manuscript from the late Salutati's library and brought it back to England among the many books which were so many he had (it is said) specially to hire a ship. After his return to his homeland, Holes presented this codex to the Duke of Gloucester.[19]

That Holes gave to Humfrey what must have been one of his more prized books suggests the manner in which he expressed his respect for the royal protector's stature; in some measure, that respect was reciprocated by Humfrey, who did not remove the signs of Holes' ownership and who recorded the gift in his *ex libris*. Other owners might not have been so considerate; some were assiduous in their defacement and replacement of earlier signs of provenance – as the fate of some of

Humfrey's own manuscripts will indicate. Humfrey himself positively celebrated the 'pre-history' of his manuscripts and the human associations they had. To borrow a phrase familiar from Renaissance art history, each of his books was the deposit of a social relationship.[20] The evidence from these books suggests the range of relationships: from familial to professional, from intimate to long-distance. I want here to highlight one of these types of relationships or associations: Humfrey's connections with the dead.

In three of Humfrey's extant manuscripts, the duke records that he came into possession of the codex after the death of its former owner. In a French chronicle, for example, he records: *Cest livre est a moy humfrey duc de gloucestre du don les exsecuteurs le seigneur de Faunhope.*[21] This Fanhope is identifiable as Sir John Cornwall (d. 1443), sometime gaoler to Charles duc d'Orléans and one of the commissioners who investigated Humfrey's wife, Eleanor Cobham, for sorcery.[22] If, in this instance, Humfrey was given the manuscript from the estate of a secular colleague on the royal council, in both the other cases the dead man was a significant clerical figure and the book was bought from his executors. So, Humfrey records in his copy of Seneca's *Epistulae: . . . le quel Je achatay des executres maistre Nicholas Bildeston jadis doyen de salisbury*; Bildeston, a royal diplomat (like Holes) and an acquaintance of humanists like Poggio Bracciolini, died in 1441.[23] Similarly, eight years earlier, Humfrey had purchased from the estate of the late bishop of Worcester, Thomas Polton, a manuscript of the Acta of the Council of Constance.[24] Taken together, these incidents reveal something about the habits of the book-market and of book-collectors in late medieval manuscript culture.

Richard of Bury, the early fourteenth-century Bishop of Durham, maintained in his *Philobiblon* that to buy books is enjoyable, to part with them always a sorrow.[25] In describing the range of methods he employed to amass his library, he mentions regular visitors to book-sellers but he does not refer specifically to receiving manuscripts from the executors of the recently deceased. As it happens, however, his own book-collection provides evidence that this was familiar practice: this is how Michael Mentmore, abbot of St Alban's, gained possession of one of the manuscripts formerly in Richard's hands, as an *ex libris* in the manuscript explains.[26] Even for a bibliophile like Richard of Bury, the posthumous fate of his collection could be piecemeal dispersal. Richard's intention had been to bequeath his manuscripts to a college of his own foundation but that companion of many bibliophiles, poverty, restrained him; some book-owners, however, were more suc-

cessful in avoiding the fragmentation of their collection by donating it to an institutional library, as in the example of William Gray already mentioned. It would seem, though, that executors regularly saw their role as distributing the manuscripts of the deceased, presumably to raise the cash for the financial bequests (or the paying of debts) required by the dead man's will. To put it another way, the posthumous dispersal of a collection – as it were, the loss of the library – was not as often accident as habit. The corollary of this is that a significant element of the book-market must have been the trade in second-hand manuscripts: the valuation of them and the subsequent finding of purchasers for them.[27] As the examples from Humfrey's library suggest, there would seem to have been no assumption that 'second-hand' equalled 'second-rate' or that such purchases were beneath the dignity of those who could afford resplendent new codices. Moreover, Humfrey's example might allow us to detect further social factors at work in this posthumous trade in manuscripts.

The dispersal of a collection might have been piecemeal, but that did not mean it was arbitrary. In the case of all three codices Humfrey received from the executors, the previous owner was well known to him, though none of the characters could be described as an unquestioning political ally of his. Fanhope's relations with the duke were the most ambivalent: he had played his role in the fall of Eleanor Cobham, but he had also been a participant in Humfrey's rather geriatric Calais campaign of 1436.[28] As the Duke of Gloucester was not mentioned in Fanhope's will, it is possible that the idea of giving Humfrey a manuscript was the initiative of one of his executors.[29] In contrast, Humfrey does appear in the last testament of Thomas Polton; and if Polton owed some of his clerical advancement to the duke's main rival, Cardinal Beaufort, that did not bar him from assisting Humfrey's machinations against his former patron. In death, Polton displayed respect to the duke by bequeathing him one hundred marks, and advising his executors that, should they face difficulties in performing his will, they should turn to Humfrey as their *protector et defensor*.[30] It is in this context of a constructive connection that Humfrey decided to spend some of his bequest on purchasing a manuscript from Polton's library. Similarly, Nicholas Bildeston may have been a member of Beaufort's household but he was also familiar to Humfrey, having in his lifetime made a gift to the duke of a manuscript of his own favourite author, Petrarch.[31] Bildeston's will does not survive but, once again, patently Humfrey's purchase of a manuscript from his estate continued an association beyond the grave. The reason for this might, in some part, be practical:

the death of an acquaintance provided a convenient method of increasing one's own library in an unpredictable book-market. However, Humfrey's concern to record how he came to own the manuscript might suggest another aspect: that such a purchase was considered a method of remembering the deceased, a type of relic of the departed. In other words, buying a manuscript from the executors of an acquaintance's will could, I would suggest, be a way of expressing respect for the dead.

This sense of manuscripts as objects invested with human associations is reflected in the fate of Humfrey's own library – or, rather, it is demonstrated, sometimes ironically, in the multiple fates of his collection. For, Humfrey's manuscripts did not follow one route of dispersal. A large proportion of his manuscripts went, of course, during his lifetime to Oxford University. There, the signs of his ownership were retained and sometimes augmented. In some cases, like that of a rather plain copy of a work of William of Ockham – which Humfrey perhaps had bought specifically for donation to Oxford – the duke had not added his usual *ex libris*. The University, however, supplied the manuscript with a bookplate, replete with Humfrey's coat-of-arms and a note of the gift.[32] Such marks of donation, as well as Humfrey's own inscriptions reminded later readers of the manuscripts' provenance. Thomas Hearne was by no means the first Oxonian to remark on Humfrey's ownership of a codex. He was preceded, for example, by Thomas Gascoigne, sometime Chancellor of the University, who, writing in the decade after Humfrey's death, recorded a citation from Richard of Saint Victor, noting that the work:

> est oxonie in libraria universitatis ex dono humfridi lancastris quondam ducis gloucestrie qui obiit in parliamento quod fuit in villa de bery ibi arestatus mandato regis henrici sexti.[33]

That manuscript is not now identifiable, a consequence perhaps of the dispersal of the University library during the first half of the sixteenth century. In a few instances, however, the presence of Humfrey's inscription did assist the manuscript's survival. But this is to anticipate matters; we should next look at what was chronologically the first dispersal of his library.

While Humfrey's donations to Oxford were impressive, they were not the sum-total of his library. Until his death what we can assume was a sizeable collection remained at his palace of Placentia at Greenwich. It would seem that Humfrey had no considered plans about what should happen to his manuscripts after he died, although Oxford University

later claimed that he had promised to them one section of his collection, his Latin manuscripts.[34] As it was, death found Humfrey unprepared: arrested at Bury St Edmunds on suspicion of plotting against his nephew, the son, brother and uncle of kings died (murdered, some said) while in custody.[35] In the aftermath of his demise, it was declared that he had died intestate, the crown took control of his goods and appointed a group of commissioners to dispense with them.[36] While Oxford wrote to as many notables as it could muster importuning them to help in securing for Oxford the manuscripts they had been promised, Henry VI's own foundations of Eton College and King's, Cambridge petitioned the king to have first refusal of books from Humfrey's library.[37] King's, at least, came to own a few of Humfrey's manuscripts – two survive, one with the *ex libris* intact, both however damaged – but the college certainly did not gain possession of all the late duke's Latin books.[38] The immediate fate of Humfrey's library appears to have been piecemeal dispersal by subterfuge.

If underhand activities did occur, the person responsible was John Somerseth, the king's physician and one of the commissioners who had charge of Humfrey's goods. In at least one case Somerseth was able to present a Humfrey manuscript to a Cambridge college as his own gift. The college in question, Gonville Hall, recorded its gratitude in an inscription at the front of the volume without apparently recognising its earlier provenance; if they had turned to the last folio, they may have just made out the shadow of an inscription which, while it must have been in Somerseth's hands, had been erased by rewashing. It is only in the last decade that the inscription has been read under ultra-violet light – this is the manuscript of Seneca bought by Humfrey from Bildeston's executors.[39] Yet, this is by no means the only instance of the inscriptions being erased – in a series of the extant codices, Humfrey's handwriting was removed by rewashing soon after his death. So, for example, in Humfrey's copy of a set of works by the Florentine humanist Coluccio Salutati, the outline of his motto remains visible *beneath* the illuminated border of the first folio of *De Fato et Fortuna* – in other words, the border appears to have been added after Humfrey's inscription was erased.[40] Presumably, the illumination was ordered by the next owner, William Witham, the future dean of Wells who played his own role in the dispersal of Humfrey's library. Witham was one of those appointed in 1450 to investigate the alleged abuses of their position by the commissioners handling Humfrey's goods. The investigation focused on Somerseth's activities; perhaps it is unsurprising that the commission including Witham, who had somehow come into possession of a

Humfrey manuscript, eventually acquitted him. All the same, it is clear that I would not be the first to wonder whether Somerseth was guilty of some sleight of hand.

To summarise this part of the tale: it appears that a series of Humfrey manuscripts had their signs of provenance thoroughly removed and were then distributed to various individuals and institutions. Thus, in marked contrast to the Oxford manuscripts where lustre was added by the visible association with the late 'Good Duke', these books were cleansed of their links and circulated without recognition of their origin. With some manuscripts, this erasing of their history verges on the improbable: for example, in the presentation copy of one set of humanist works where the text refers to Humfrey, the border, painted by an artist associated with the duke, included his coat-of-arms, and the final folio had a three-line *ex libris*, all signs of ownership were altered or removed – and successfully so, as this manuscript travelled incognito, as it were, for four hundred and fifty years.[41] Fortunately, however, Somerseth's attention did not fall equally on all Humfrey's manuscripts: being a scholarly type, he was interested in his Latin manuscripts. Humfrey's library also included a number of French works and a smaller quantity of English texts. Some of the French books, as well as a psalter, entered Henry VI's royal library and remained there in Edward IV's reign when they would not have been out of place alongside his own Burgundian commissions.[42] Yet, the English royal library in Henry's time (as in previous reigns) was not a collection expected always to increase in size and never to diminish; on the contrary, there seems to have been an expectation that royal largesse would extend to giving away books. This is what appears to have happened with the collection of John, Duke of Bedford and it may similarly have occurred with those manuscripts of Humfrey's that were in royal hands.[43] This, for instance, might explain how Philip the Good of Burgundy came by a copy of part of the French Arthurian romances which had passed through Humfrey's hands.[44] If this is the case, it would reflect, once again, that the second-hand manuscript, with the human associations it evoked, was considered a valuable possession and a worthy gift.

A further comment should be added. It is naturally impossible to judge how many manuscripts in Humfrey's possession at his death have been lost following their dispersal and removal of provenance evidence. At the same time, it is a remarkable fact that the majority of his manuscripts which are now known were actually ones which followed the route of dispersal immediately after his death. To put this another way: of the forty or so extant codices, only about a quarter were among

the two hundred and seventy four named items in the Oxford lists. There are two possible implications of this. It may be that the number of manuscripts that Humfrey did not give to Oxford and that remained in his hands at the time of his death originally exceeded seven hundred – if, that is, we assume that all parts of Humfrey's library have suffered similar levels of loss. However, that is surely a questionable assumption: the alternative explanation would be that the rate of survival of the Oxford manuscripts is much lower than that of the manuscripts not given to the University. This, then, would suggest that the more devastating dispersal may not have been that which was partially engineered by John Somerseth but that which occurred in sixteenth-century Oxford.

There is an established, evocative narrative of the demise of the old University Library, one most vividly told in the late seventeenth century by Antony à Wood. That historian of Oxford had no doubt what or who was to blame for the loss of the University's manuscript collection: the Reformation and, in particular, the Visitors of 1549, sent to extirpate superstition from the University. In their godly zeal, they burnt or stole or sold the venerable books so that, in the following reign of Mary, a further Visitation found that only one manuscript remained from the former renowned Library.[45] Yet, this tale of cataclysmic loss is as exaggerated as it is compelling: what shards of evidence do exist suggest a rather different history of decline by mundane neglect dating back to before the Reformation.[46] The printing-press, God's greatest act of grace to reform, was also a divine disservice to the old manuscript culture: it probably made some handwritten books seem, for a while, obsolete or out-dated, and thus liable to be neglected or discarded. Yet, the process of reclamation, of attempting to save from loss those manuscripts, was nearly simultaneous with the process of destruction. Some books survived by travelling only a few streets into college libraries, while others were dispersed into private hands.[47] At this stage, respect might be shown for the old manuscript but not necessarily for the memory of Humfrey: some of the manuscripts formerly in the university library had their *ex libris* removed probably while they waited to be sold by the book-trade.[48] Others, however, were sold with their *ex libris* still visible. It may, for example, have been precisely because of its clear assocations with 'Good Duke Humfrey' that William Cecil, Lord Burghley, bought a humanist manuscript of the *Panegyrici Latini*; certainly, in the following century when his collection was eventually sold and suffered its own dispersal, the auction catalogue thought it worthy of note that this had once belonged to the Duke of Gloucester.[49] It was, similarly perhaps, the

evidence of its provenance that ensured a large volume of medieval philosophical translations caught the attention of the book-collector and astrologer, John Dee; undoubtedly, it was soon after he purchased the manuscript that he noted Humfrey's *ex libris* by drawing a pointing-hand next to it and adding beneath in imitation: *et a ceste heure voyre en L'an de notre seigneur 1557 a moy Jehan Dee Angloys: lequel ie achetay par le poys. . . .*[50] Dee's note implicitly contrasts his own interest in the volume's illustrious provenance with the dismissive attitude of the bookseller who thought the volume only worthy to be sold by weight. This, it might be remembered, occurred in the reign of Mary, when, according to Antony à Wood's narrative, the desolation of the previous decades was decried. Even in that time of fervent re-establishment of the old religious order, it was patently only the few who prized the remnants of the former manuscript culture.

For a collector like Dee, the demise of the old Library presented an opportunity, and a manuscript bought from it probably constituted a sort of trophy. While for earlier generations, a second-hand book could perpetuate a personal connection with the recently departed, Dee's imitative note symbolised the desire to create a fresh association with the long-since dead. Though himself a Cambridge man, Dee may have considered his purchase an act of reverence towards a university patron; for others, removed in time and place, the *ex libris* was surely less resonant. In one manuscript, an autograph copy of works by Nicolas de Clamanges, given to Oxford in 1444, the presence of Humfrey's notes evoked a more ambivalent response.[51] In this volume, the duke had not confined himself to one mark of ownership: his *ex libris*, motto and notes appear on five separate occasions. At some point in the sixteenth century, two of these inscriptions were erased, while the others were left intact: this was no attempt to deny the book's provenance but rather, it would seem, a wish to moderate what was considered its excessive presence. The person responsible for these erasures may have been the volume's late Elizabethan and early Stuart owner, one Henry Holford (d. ?1617). If so, he did not just remove Humfrey's *ex libris*; he also imitated the duke, both by adding his own ownership notes repeatedly through the volume and by emulating the ducal inscription, writing directly beneath one example of it: *Cest Levre et* [sic] *a moy henry holford de Long Stanton in La Countie de Cambridge esquier & a ses assignes.*[52] Like Dee, Holford evoked an association through imitation, but the combination of notes added and removed, as well as the inaccurate transcription of the inscription's opening, suggests that his impulse was different: perhaps for him the book's provenance was less a spur to

reverence than a source of curiosity. However this might be, Holford visibly reacted to the signs of its former ownership; in contrast, in the next generation there is no evidence they continued to arouse interest: the volume passed into the hands of his relative, Christopher, first Baron Hatton (1605–70), and, having travelled from Oxford to Cambridgeshire in the sixteenth century, it returned home, as it were, in 1671, arriving as part of the purchase of the late baron's library. Even then, this manuscript's provenance went unnoticed and remained so until the very first years of the twentieth century.[53]

In the case of that volume of Clamanges works, in other words, its return to the University was unwitting, but in another instance, a manuscript came back to Oxford precisely because Humfrey's *ex libris* remained. At the foot of the first folio of Humfrey's manuscript of Pliny's *Epistulae*, there is an inscription dated 1620 recording that Robert Master, himself an Oxford man, 'restored' this manuscript to the university, noting *olim ad Humphredum Ducem Gloucestriae pertinentem ut videre est propria ipsius manu scriptum in ultima pagina huius Libri*.[54] It is unclear whether there was any evidence of Oxford's association with the manuscript or if Master merely assumed that as it had been owned by Humfrey its rightful place must be Oxford. If the latter, it was a serendipitous act of loyalty to the *alma mater*; it moreover ensured that this volume was available in the library to be consulted a century later by Thomas Hearne.

There is, however, a counter-point to this example of Pliny's *Epistulae*; and it involves a book-collector more famous than Robert Master. Like Master, Sir Robert Cotton expressed his piety to Oxford University and its refound Library by presenting the Bodleian with a gift of books.[55] It is not clear how he selected the manuscripts he chose to give to Oxford, but one which he certainly kept for himself was the sole volume he owned which had once belonged to Humfrey. Cotton may not have realised that the fifteenth-century contents note in his copy of the *Acta* of the Council of Constance demonstrates that it was formerly in the University Library; he was, however, well aware that it had belonged to Humfrey. Cotton's librarian, Richard James, noted the presence of the duke's *ex libris*; he was not interested (as we have been) in the fact that this book had belonged to Thomas Polton, but he did comment with pride on Humfrey's autograph:

Liber iste olim pertinebat ad Humphredum illustrem studiosorum Maecenatem bonum Ducem Glocestriae, sicut patet ex propriae manus testimonio ad finem codicis.[56]

It would seem that this manuscript was considered too significant to be donated to Bodley's library; there were, after all, limits to piety.

In other cases, piety, or its absence, had nothing to do with it. Other manuscripts from Humfrey's collection reached Oxford, even though they had neither previous connection with the university town nor remaining signs of the duke's ownership. My final example provides one such case. The London lawyer, Edward Fleetwoode, was an acquaintance of Thomas Bodley and accordingly donated to his new library a series of books, including seven manuscripts.[57] One of those manuscripts was an early fifteenth-century copy of poems by John Gower.[58] This manuscript had had its Humfrey inscriptions erased – they were noticed only at the beginning of the 1980s – and it was therefore given without recognition of its associations. There is an added irony in this case as Humfrey's original donation had not, of course, included any English manuscripts. That this book was considered an appropriate acquisition for a university library highlights the distance in outlook between Humfrey's donations to the first University Library and Bodley's foundation of its successor.

Other chapters in this volume tell of wholescale destructions, where nature or malevolence have caused the loss of complete libraries. The nearest parallel in my story are the events of mid-sixteenth-century England, when – supposedly – in the quads of Oxford parchment blew in the wind or was consigned to the bonfire. Yet, as I have suggested, even in that period neglect might have been as severe an opponent to survival as what might be called biblioclasm. More generally, an intention of this chapter has been to emphasise in contrast to cataclysmic moments that process of loss which is unexeceptional or quotidian. Some medieval collectors might have avoided the immediate dispersal of their manuscripts by donating them to an institution (perhaps fondly assuming that a college or monastery would not, like humans, grow weak or die); similarly, Elizabethan bibliophiles like William Cecil might have entrusted their collections to their heirs – but even such a strategy could not guard against one's own kin being wastrels or bankrupts, and thus having to let the prized collection be dispersed. More usual, at each stage, was the habit of piecemeal dispersal, where the integrity of a library might be lost but individual manuscripts gained their own life or history. In manuscript culture, these dispersals were an element of the book-market in which newly produced codices jostled alongside old tomes freighted with human associations. For some collectors (early modern as well as medieval), such associations were a distraction and marks of previous ownership were to be eradicated. For others, such associations – the sociability, as it were, of

the manuscript – were an integral part of its identity. Those associations and the significance they held for later owners have their own history. As we have seen, Humfrey Duke of Gloucester with his inscriptions often stressed the human associations of his manuscripts; the fate of his *ex libris* shows how some, but by no means all, paid him, in Hearne's phrase, 'a particular respect'.

Notes

1. D. S. Porter, *The Bodleian Benefactors' Tablet* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 1990), p. iii; S. Gillam, *The Divinity School and Duke Humfrey's Library at Oxford* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 1998), p. 2.

2. T. Hearne, ed., *Peter Langtoft's Chronicle*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1725), 1: xx.

3. The one Humfrey manuscript which Hearne certainly studied in detail now has the shelfmark Oxford: Bodleian, MS. Duke Humfrey d. 1. It is a manuscript of the eight-book tradition of Pliny the Younger's *Epistolae* which Hearne cited as 'Bod. 1' in his edition of *C. Plinii Caecilii Secundi Epistolae* (Oxford, 1703). He does not mention the presence of Humfrey's *ex libris* in that edition but comments on it in his notebooks: see C. Doble, ed., *Remarks & Collections of Thomas Hearne*, vol. 2 [Oxford Historical Society, 7] (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1886), p. 339 & vol. 3 [Oxford Historical Society, 13] (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1889), p. 355. For recent discussion of the manuscript, see A. C. de la Mare, 'Manuscripts given to the University of Oxford by Humfrey, Duke of Gloucester', *Bodleian Library Record*, 13 (1988–89): 30–51, 112–21 as no. 9, also above, p. 117.

4. London: British Library, MS. Yates Thompson 14, fol. 173^r.

5. For the biography of Humfrey, see K. Vickers, *Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester* (London: Archibald Constable, 1907).

6. On Bedford's coming into possession of the French royal library previously at the Louvre, see J. Stratford, *The Bedford Inventories* (London: Society of Antiquaries, 1993), pp. 91–6. For Charles V's library, the indispensable work remains L. Delisle, *Recherches sur la Librairie de Charles V*, 2 vols (Paris: H. Champion, 1907).

7. A. Sammut, *Unfredo duca di Gloucester e gli umanisti italiani* (Padua: Editrice Antenore, 1980).

8. The comparison was Antonio Beccaria's, alluding to Suetonius, *Iulius*, 44: Sammut, *Unfredo*, p. 163, ll. 22–6.

9. H. Anstey ed., *Epistolae Academicae Oxon* [Oxford Historical Series, 35–36] (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1898), 2: 390. On John Tiptoft generally, see R. J. Mitchell, *John Tiptoft* (London: Longmans, Green, 1938), with his library discussed at pp. 150–71. Further work on reconstructing his library, based on the identification of his marginalia, only really began in the second half of the twentieth century: see, in particular [Bodleian Library exhibition catalogue], *Manuscripts at Oxford* (Oxford, 1980), pp. 99–101, and [Bodleian Library exhibition catalogue] *Duke Humfrey's Library and the Divinity School, 1488–1988* (Oxford, 1988) [hereafter *DHL*], pp. 70–80. I have in hand a new study of Tiptoft's library.

10. J. G. Nichols, ed., *The Boke of Noblesse* (London: J. B. Nichols and Son, 1860), p. 45. See also *Epistolae Academicae*, 1: 184.

11. For an attempt to measure the contemporary value of manuscripts, see H. E. Bell, 'The Price of Books in Medieval England', *The Library*, 17 (1936–37): 312–22.

12. Reference to this list occurs at Cambridge: Corpus Christi College, MS. 423, fol. 65ᵛ (*hos libros quorum indices vobis mitto*), discussed at *DHL*, p. 73.

13. Anstey, *Epistolae Academicae*, 1: 179–84, 204–5, 232–7. The lists were edited by Sammut, *Unfredo*, pp. 60–84 and are being edited again in the Corpus of Medieval British Library Catalogues series. See also H. Craster, 'Index to Duke Humphrey's gifts to the Old Library of the University of Oxford', *Bodleian Library Quarterly*, 1 (1914–16): 131–5.

14. On Gray's book-collecting see R. Mynors ed., *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Balliol College* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), pp. xxiv–xlv and *passim*.

15. J. Leland, *De Rebus Britannicis Collectanea*, ed. T. Hearne, 6 vols (Oxford, 1715), 3: 58; for an image of the relevant page from Leland's notebooks, see *DHL*, p. 120. Another motto that Humfrey wrote in some of his manuscripts is *Loyale et belle a gloucestre*; e.g. see Oxford: Bodleian, MS. Hatton 36, fol. 120 (cf. fol. 119ᵛ), and London: BL, MS. Sloane 248, fol. 230ᵛ.

16. Scepticism was expressed by Vickers, *Humphrey*, p. 410. The four manuscripts are London: British Library, MS. Royal 19. A. xx (fol. 2); Manchester: Chetham's Library, MS. Mun. A. 3. 131 (fol. 2, 91); Oxford: Bodleian, MS. Bodley 294 (fol. 1); Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Urb. 694 (fol. 1).

17. London: British Library, MS. Royal. 19. B. xiii, fol. 2.

18. London: British Library, MS. Royal 19. C. iv, with the inscriptions, now both erased, at fol. 247ᵛ. For Charles' *ex libris*, see also Delisle, *Recherches*, 1: 142, 143, 155, 156, 218, 229, 275, 281, and [Bibliothèque Nationale de France, exhibition catalogue] *La Librairie de Charles V* (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1968), nos 163, 176, 182.

19. The provenance of Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Urb. lat. 694 was identified by Berthold Ullman: see his 'Manuscripts of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester', reprinted from *English Historical Review*, 52 (1937), in id., *Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 2nd edn (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1973) pp. 345–56. For Holes' career and book-collecting, see M. Harvey, 'An Englishman at the Roman Curia during the Council of Basle', *Journal of Ecclesiatical History*, 42 (1991): 19–38. For the comment about hiring a ship, see Vespasiano da Bisticci, *Le Vite*, 2 vols, ed. A. Greco (Florence, 1970), 1: 311–13.

20. The phrase comes from the opening sentence of Michael Baxandall's *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).

21. London: British Library, MS. Royal. 16. G. vi, fol. 445, with the last letters, now illegible, supplied by G. Warner and J. Gilson ed., *Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Old Royal and King's Collections* 4 vols (London: British Museum, 1921), 2: 212.

22. This corrects the identification of Fanhope as Sir John Chandos (d. 1428) suggested at Warner & Gilson, *Catalogue of . . . Royal . . . Collection*, p. 212. While Chandos had a residence at Fownhope, he was never given a title to

that place nor known by that name; see J. Roskell et al., *House of Commons, 1386–1421*, 4 vols (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1992), vol. 2, *sub nomine*. For Cornwall's biography, see A. C. Reeves, *Lancastrian Englishmen* (Washington DC: University Press of America, 1981), pp. 139–202; and on a possible bookish aspect to his life, see N. Rogers, 'The Artist of Trinity B. 11. 7 and his Patrons' in id., ed., *England in the Fifteenth Century* [Harlaxton Medieval Studies, 4] (Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1994), pp. 170–86. On Eleanor Cobham's fall, see R. A. Griffiths, 'The Trial of Eleanor Cobham: an episode in the fall of Duke Humphrey of Gloucester' in id., *King and Country: England and Wales in the Fifteenth Century* (London: Hambledon Press, 1991), pp. 233–52 [reprinted from *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 51 (1969): 381–99].

23. Cambridge: Gonville & Caius College, MS. 183 / 216, fol. 151; on this codex, see D. Rundle, 'Two Unnoticed Manuscripts from the Collection of Humfrey, Duke of Gloucester, Part II', *Bodleian Library Record*, 16 (1998): 299–313.

24. London: British Library, MS. Cotton Nero E. v; on which, see de la Mare, 'Manuscripts given to the University', no. 7 (pp. 112–15).

25. R. de Bury, *Philobiblon*, ed. M. MacLagan (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1960).

26. London: British Library, MS. Royal 13. D. iv; on this manuscript, see Warner and Gilson, *Catalogue of the . . . Royal . . . Collection*, ii, pp. 109–10, and R. Thomson, *Manuscripts from St. Albans Abbey 1066–1235* (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 1982), no. 34 (pp. 97–8).

27. On the second-hand market, see K. Harris, 'Patrons, Buyers and Owners: the evidence for ownership and the rôle of book owners in book production and the book trade', in J. Griffiths and D. Pearsall, eds, *Book Production and Publishing in Britain, 1375–1475* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 163–200 at pp. 170–7; also C. P. Christianson, 'The Rise of London's book trade' in L. Hellinga and J. Trapp, eds, *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, vol. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 128–47 at p. 133. On valuations, see C. P. Christianson, *A Directory of London Stationers* (New York: The Bibliographical Society of America, 1990), pp. 66, 68 (for example).

28. Reeve, *Lancastrian Englishmen*, pp. 173–4.

29. The will survives as London: Lambeth Palace, Register of Archbishop Stafford, fol. 119ᵛ–120ᵛ (it is partially printed in H. Jenkinson & G. H. Fowler, 'Some Bedfordshire wills at Lambeth and Lincoln', *Bedfordshire Historical Record Society*, 14 (1931), pp. 79–131 at pp. 108–12).

30. The will is printed at E. F. Jacob, ed., *The Register of Henry Chichele*, 4 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937), 2: 485–95 (reference to Humfrey, p. 493). On Polton's political connection with Humfrey, see G. L. Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), p. 214 (noting, however, his earlier close connexion with Beaufort: ibid., p. 156).

31. Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS. lat. 10209; on which see R. Weiss, 'An Unnoticed Manuscript of Humfrey, Duke of Gloucester', *Bodleian Library Record*, 5 (1954–56), pp. 123–4, and [Bodleian Library, exhibition catalogue] *Duke Humfrey and English Humanism* [hereafter *DH&EH*], no. 15. There is no evidence for the recent hypothesis that Humfrey extorted this manuscript from Bildeston, as suggested by J. Trapp, 'Il libro umanistico tra Italia e Inghliterra dal '400 al primo '500', *Scrittura e Civiltà*, 22 (1998): 319–37 (pp. 323–4).

32. London: British Library, MS. Harl 33; on which see de la Mare, 'Manuscripts given to the University', no. 3 (pp. 40–2). On the university book-plates, see also N. R. Ker, 'The Chaining, Labelling, and Inventory Numbers of Manuscripts belonging to the Old University Library' in id., *Books, Collectors and Libraries* (London: Hambledon Press, 1985), pp. 321–6 [reprinted from *Bodleian Library Record*, 5 (1954–56): 176–80.

33. Oxford: Lincoln College, MS. lat. 117, fol. 292vb (p. 586), noted at *DHL*, p. 30. For another notice of Humfrey's death by Gascoigne, see J. E. T. Rogers ed., *Loci e Libro Veritatum: passages selected from Gascoigne's Theological Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1881), p. 17.

34. *Epistolae Academicae*, pp. 258, 295.

35. I briefly outline what follows in this and the next paragraph in 'Two Unnoticed Manuscripts: Part II', pp. 306–10.

36. T. Rymer, *Foedera* [3rd edn] (The Hague, 1741), 5 / i, p. 57; *Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1446–1452* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1909), p. 45. It was, however, Oxford University's increasing conviction that he had made a will: see in particular, *Epistolae Academicae*, p. 285.

37. *Epistolae Academicae*, pp. 258–61, 285–7, 295–8, 300–3; A. Munby, 'Notes on King's College Library in the Fifteenth Century', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, 1 (1951): 280–6; P. Clark, ed., *The University and College Libraries of Cambridge* [Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues, 10] (London: The British Academy, 2002), pp. 283–4.

38. The two manuscripts are Cambridge: King's College, MS. 27 (lacking its first leaf) and London: British Library, MS. Harl. 1705 (*ex libris* at fol. 96^v; initials cut out at fol. 1, 1^v, 22, 25^v). On both manuscripts, see *DH&EH*, no. 8–9 (p. 5); for a technical description of the Harley manuscript, see D. Rundle, 'Of Republics and Tyrants: aspects of quattrocento humanist writings and their reception in England, c. 1400–c. 1460' (unpublished D.Phil. thesis, Oxford University, 1997), pp. 379–92. The assumption that King's gained most of Humfrey's Latin manuscripts is common but unsupported by the evidence: for examples of recent restatement of this assumption, see Hellinga and Trapp, *History of the Book*, pp. 266, 295, 322.

39. Cambridge: Gonville and Caius College, MS. 183 / 216, on which see above, p. 110.

40. Manchester: Chetham's Library, MS. Mun. A. 3. 131, on which see *DH & EH*, no. 27 (pp. 9–10) and Rundle, 'Of Republics and Tyrants', pp. 424–6. On Witham, see *BRUO sub nomine*.

41. The manuscript is Cambridge: University Library, MS. Gg. i. 34 (i), discussed by D. Rundle, 'Two Unnoticed Manuscripts of Humfrey Duke of Gloucester: Part I', *Bodleian Library Record*, 16 (1998), pp. 211–24.

42. J. Stratford, 'The early royal collection and the Royal Library to 1461' in Hellinga and Trapp, *Cambridge History of the Book*, pp. 255–66. An earlier version of that paper appeared in N. Rogers, ed., *England in the Fifteenth Century* (Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1994), pp. 187–97. On Edward IV's library, see J. Backhouse, 'The Royal Library from Edward IV to Henry VII' in Hellinga and Trapp, *Cambridge History of the Book*, pp. 267–73 at pp. 267–70, and S. McKendrick, 'The *Romuléon* and the Manuscripts of Edward IV', in Rogers, *England in the Fifteenth Century*, pp. 149–69. For those manuscripts of Humfrey's identifiable in the royal library in Henry VIII's reign, see J. Carley,

The Libraries of King Henry VIII [Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues, 7] (London: The British Academy, 2000), pp. 17, 69, 77, 185.

43. J. Stratford, 'The Manuscripts of John, Duke of Bedford: library and chapel' in D. Williams ed., *England in the Fifteenth Century* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1987), pp. 329–50 at pp. 340–1.

44. Brussels: Bibliothèque Royale, MS. 9627–8. For a full description of this manuscript, see C. Gaspar & F. Lyna, *Les Principaux Manuscrits à Peintures de la Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique*, 2 vols (Bruxelles: Bibliothèque Royale, 1937 [reprint 1984]), 1: 163–6.

45. A. Wood, *Historia et Antiquitates Universitatis Oxoniensis*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1674), 2: 49–50; for a modern restatement of this narrative, see C. E. Wright, 'The Dispersal of the Libraries in the Sixteenth Century', in F. Wormald and C. Wright, eds, *The English Library before 1700* (London: The Athlone Press, 1958), pp. 148–75 (esp. pp. 164–6). Wood's allusion to one remaining manuscript refers to what is now Oxford: Bodleian, MS. Auct. F. inf. 1. 1 (a book which did not come from from Humfrey's collection, despite an eighteenth- and nineteenth-century assumption that it did); on this manuscript, see D. R. Howlett in [Bodleian exhibition catalogue] *Manuscripts at Oxford* (Oxford: The Bodleian Library, 1980), p. 86.

46. N. Ker, 'The Provision of Books' in J. M. McConica, ed., *The Collegiate University* [T.H. Aston, ed., *History of the University of Oxford*, 3] (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), pp. 441–519 (esp. pp. 465–6); A. Watson, 'The Post-Medieval Library' in J. Catto *et al.*, *Unarmed Soldiery: Studies in the Early History of All Souls College* (Oxford: All Souls College, 1996), pp. 65–91 at pp. 70–3. On early-sixteenth-century 'borrowing' from the university library, see *DHL*, pp. 119–21.

47. Examples of manuscripts that travelled early from the University Library to college collections are Oxford: Magdalen College, MS. lat. 37 (ii) and Oxford: Oriel College, MS. 32. On the former, see *DHL*, no. 38 (pp. 43–5); on the latter, see de la Mare, 'Manuscripts given to the University of Oxford', no. 4 (pp. 43–5).

48. An example of this is London: British Library, MS. Harl. 3426, on which see *DHL*, no. 37 (p. 43) and for a technical description, Rundle 'Of Republics and Tyrants', pp. 415–20.

49. Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS. lat. 7805, on which see de la Mare 'Manuscripts given to the University', no. 8 (pp. 115–18). The manuscript is number 63 in the 1687 auction catalogue: *Bibliotheca Illustris sive Catalogus variorum librorum* (London, 1687).

50. Oxford: Corpus Christi College, MS. 243, on which see de la Mare, 'Manuscripts given to the University', no. 2 (pp. 35–40). On Dee's book-collecting generally, see J. Roberts and A. Watson ed., *John Dee's Library Catalogue* (London: The Bibliographical Society, 1990), with this manuscript being M117.

51. Oxford: Bodleian, MS. Hatton 36; on this manuscript, see *DHL*, no. 36 (pp. 40–3).

52. Oxford: Bodleian, MS. Hatton 36, fol. 134ᵛ; the other signs of Humfrey's ownership are at fol. 39ᵛ (erased), 119ᵛ, 120, 135ᵛ (erased).

53. It is first commented on at *Pietas Oxoniensis in Memory of Sir Thomas Bodley, Knt. and the Foundation of the Bodleian Library* (Oxford: s.n., 1902), p. 11n.

54. Oxford: Bodleian, MS. Duke Humfrey d. 1, fol. 1.
55. On Cotton's gift of 1602–3, see C. G. C. Tite, ''Lost or Stolen or Strayed': a Survey of Manuscripts Formerly in the Cotton Library' in C. J. Wright, ed., *Sir Robert Cotton as Collector* (London: The British Library, 1997), pp. 262–306, at pp. 263–4.
56. London: British Library, MS. Cotton Nero E v, fol. 1*.
57. On Fleetwoode's connection with Bodley, see G. W. Wheeler ed., *Letters of Sir Thomas Bodley* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927), p. 10.
58. Oxford: Bodley, MS. Bodl. 294.

7

'The Manuscripts flew about like Butterflies'[*]: The Break-Up of English Libraries in the Sixteenth Century

Nigel Ramsay

The destruction of England's monasteries has long been seen as a critical trigger for the perception of the Middle Ages as a fundamentally distant and irrevocably different age: the ruins of the monasteries have stood as the most vivid reminders of a world that is past.[1] A sense of poignancy is enhanced by the fact that one man, John Leland, took it upon himself – albeit with the aid of a royal commission, granted in 1533 or 1534 – to search the libraries of the monasteries and colleges for half a dozen years, in the run-up to the dissolution of the monasteries and then afterwards.[2] He had been to the university of Paris, and may well have known of contemporary French scholars' quests for ancient and rare texts in French royal abbeys;[3] for England, however, his travels were without precedent. He made a vast number of notes, especially about books by English authors or concerning English history, as well as about English topography, and these were almost all printed in the early eighteenth century. By their long availability they have given Leland a status in the sixteenth-century book-world equivalent to that of the painter Sir Anthony Van Dyck as artist at the court of Charles the First: the role of premonitory genius who delineated what was so soon afterwards to be lost forever.

Leland was a Tudor patriot, loyal in the extreme to Henry VIII, and he looked for manuscripts that would provide evidence for his vision of British history. In England's monasteries, he realised, he would find the crucial documentation. The great Benedictine abbeys and cathedral priories had the largest libraries in the country – there were probably over 2,000 books at Christ Church Cathedral Priory, Canterbury, and certainly over 1,800 at St Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury – and their

collections had their beginnings long before the Norman Conquest. The Benedictine tradition of respect for antiquity meant that ancient books and charters were preserved even if they were in Old English and no longer comprehensible to anyone. No private libraries of any antiquity existed – even the royal collections only dated back two or three generations – and the university and collegiate libraries at Oxford and Cambridge (of which the very earliest only dated back to the late thirteenth century) had never had the role of acting as repositories of historical writings. It was in the monastic libraries, and the monastic libraries alone, that British history could be rediscovered.

The libraries of the religious houses

When the Crown's commissioners travelled around England in 1535 with the task of checking up on the merits and failings of each monastic community, they had the opportunity to make other enquiries too.[4] Relics, such as acted as the focus of pilgrimage, are sometimes noted in their reports. Books are never mentioned. Did the commissioners know of Leland's activities, or did they believe that the Crown's potential interest in books had already been satisfied in other ways? Archives are occasionally referred to, if they were found to contain historically significant documents. At Ramsey Abbey, Huntingdonshire, the Crown's visitor, Thomas Bedyll, wrote to Thomas Cromwell that in his reading of the charters and muniments he had found one of King Edgar, 'writen in a very antiq Romane hand, hard to be red at the first sight', which was subscribed at the end 'Signum Ædgari incliti et serenissimi Anglorum Imperatoris +', as well as a charter of King Edward the Confessor exempting the monastery from episcopal exactions. These he reported as precedents for Henry VIII's own imperial and ecclesiastical claims.[5]

The original foundation charter of each house – if such could be identified – was also sought out. A central royal register of foundation charter texts seems to have been maintained, and some of the extant foundation charters and other very early charters have endorsements which indicate that they were taken for copying into this register. The justification for this exercise was presumably the fact that a foundation charter was likely to indicate the identity of the founder. The foundation of a monastery gave a hereditary right of patronage to the founder's heirs, and at the time of the dissolution, a year or so later, some monastic patrons sought to use their right, either as an argument for staying the suppression of a particular house or else for their being granted

a prior option to buy its site. The historical motivation for copying foundation charters was perhaps stronger. The operation seems to have been initiated or at least managed by Sir John Prise, a historically-minded lawyer who was married to Thomas Cromwell's niece. The register has perished, but its collection of texts no doubt lies behind the books of copies of foundation charters that were made and added to by antiquaries over the next hundred years.[6]

The Crown's surveys of monastic income (the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*) and of monastic morals (the *Compendium Compertorum*) were followed in 1536 with the start of the wholesale dissolution process – initially limited to houses worth less than £200 a year, and then made universal in its scope, so that by 1540 every single religious house – whether of monks, regular canons or friars – and by 1548 almost all (non-university) colleges and many hospitals had been dissolved.

The Crown conducted the whole process of monastic dissolution through a specially created office or department, the Court of Augmentations (so called because it was responsible for this source of enhancement or increase of the Crown's revenues). It generated and preserved a vast amount of documentation of the entire process of seizure, administration and disposal of the monastic possessions. This material remains relatively little used, but in principle it would be possible for a researcher today to track the fate of every bell and every lead roof from every dissolved house. But the monastic books, being generally regarded as without financial value, simply do not feature in the Augmentation records.[7]

Exceptionally, a library may be mentioned in the dissolution inventory of a house, but that is likely to be because of the value of the library furniture. For instance, the inventory of the Grey Friars (or Franciscans) of Chichester has a sub-heading 'The Lyberary', which is followed simply by this: 'Item in the library four stalls and a half substantially new made with divers old books. Item a goodly new press with almers [i.e. cupboards or closed shelves] for books'.[8]

One, but only one, royal commissioner took an acquisitive interest in the libraries of the houses whose surrender he was receiving: Sir John Prise.[9] He formed a fairly miscellaneous collection of historical and theological manuscripts from the houses in the west of England which he dissolved in late 1539 and early 1540. His theological manuscripts show a focus upon the works of Bede, but it is unclear how far he was interested in them; in his will, he left 'all my written Bookes of Devinite' to the library of Hereford Cathedral, and some of them are still there. His historical books remained in his family, and are identifiable from the notes that he wrote in the margins.

The other commissioners seem to have been indifferent about the books in the houses for which they were responsible. At the London Charterhouse – notorious, one might have thought, for its community's unwillingness to swear to the Act of Succession in 1534, and still more for its objections to acknowledging the royal supremacy over the Church in 1535 (resulting in the execution of its prior and, later, of seventeen other monks) – the Crown's visitors 'took all the beds in the guest chamber and gave them and books to the brethren who dwelt in the said cells'.[10]

At the sale of the goods of the Benedictine priory of Monk Bretton, Yorkshire, held a few weeks after its surrender (which was on 21 November 1538), the prior and two of the monks acquired 148 books that had been in its library, as well as a cartulary. Into the latter was entered a list of all the books, grouped under the name of each former monk who now owned them and in whose chamber at Worsborough they were kept, on 21 July 1558.[11] Their chambers may or may not have been in the same house, but their books served as a tangible reminder of what they had once shared and – possibly – of what they might one day share again.

A similar post-dissolution scenario, of a substantial collection of books serving as a focus for a group of ex-religious, can be recounted or at least hypothesised for a few other monastic libraries. A former monk of the Cistercian abbey of Kirkstall, near Leeds, issued a direction at his deathbed, in August 1558, that all the books in his custody which had belonged to Kirkstall should be looked after carefully by his executors and be returned to the abbey 'if it go up in their times'.[12] Likewise, it is very tempting to suspect that the 160 or more printed and manuscript books bequeathed by the last warden of the Franciscan convent at York, Dr William Vavasour, to another former member of the convent, had once formed part of their conventual library.[13]

The books of the Cistercian abbey of Byland, Yorkshire – about a hundred and fifty volumes, some of them perhaps printed, but including 40 which were 'olde written bookes which ar of small valewe' – seem to have passed to its last abbot, who conformed to the new religious order sufficiently that he became vicar of Driffield, and who requested in his will (1581) that the books be kept by two quasi-trustees 'untill suche tyme as some one or moe of my naturall blood be able to understande them'.[14]

The low values, if any, that were set on books at the time of the dissolution must sometimes have encouraged the keeping together of collections of books, in that they made it possible for anyone who was

on the spot at the time of a house's surrender to obtain a great quantity of books. Manuscripts were doubtless particularly ill-valued, modern printed editions being seen as having greater value in the market. Monks, however, were not the only local people who might have at least a passing interest in a house's library. The building's new purchaser, for instance, might light upon its books, and his interest in them might be for other reasons than simply reading them. Sir William Sidney, who in 1539 purchased Robertsbridge Abbey and its estates, subordinated the abbey's remains to his ironworks: some of the early account-books of the latter (from 1542) are bound with 'pages from Psalters and Service-books, which had presumably belonged to Robertsbridge Abbey'.[15] If a monastery was acquired by some landowner who had no use for its books but who at least troubled to lock it up against petty pilferers, its books might remain undisturbed for many years. This was perhaps the case at Rochester Cathedral Priory, where the Crown acquired part of the cloister buildings and the books may have remained for some time before being removed to one of the royal libraries,[16] and it is certainly what happened at another site that initially was retained by the Crown for its own uses: St Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury. Here, as late as 1602, there would appear still to have been a significant number of books *in situ*, for Sir Thomas Bodley wrote in that year to his librarian in Oxford that 'My L[ord] Cobham hath giuen £50 to the librarie, and promiseth diuers MS. out of St Augustines Librarie in Canteb.'[17]

Service-books

If manuscript books *qua* texts were treated with indifference by the Crown, it was emphatically otherwise in the case of books that had valuable bindings. With texts that were being made redundant, service-books and the other books that monasteries had had most expensively embellished were doubly at risk. The silver or gold and the semi-precious stones that had been used to decorate their covers were now these books' undoing; upon them, the Crown's commissioners fastened, and with or without the books themselves, whatever was valuable was sent up to London. Even base metal covers, such as might be left behind at the monasteries, were at risk. The lament of Thomas Fuller in his *Church-History of Britain* (first published in the unpropitious year of 1655) represents the apogee of the literary history of the destruction, but is hardly over-coloured:

As Broakers in Long-Lane, when they buy an old suit, buy the line-ings together with the out-side: so it was conceived meet, that such as purchased the buildings of Monasteries, should in the same grant have the Libraries (the stuffing thereof) conveyed unto them. And now these ignorant owners, so long as they might keep a Lieger-Book or Terrier, by direction thereof to find such stragling acres as belonged unto them, they cared not to preserve any other Monuments. The covers of books, with curious brass bosses, and claspes, intended to protect, proved to betray them, being the baits of covetousness. And so, many excellent Authors, stripp'd out of their cases, were left naked, to be burnt or thrown away.[18]

Biblical and liturgical books were most liable to mutilation or destruction in this way, since they had had the most expenditure lavished upon their covers; they are also the books whose loss the art historian will most regret, since their pages are likely often to have been decorated with figural illustrations. The early eleventh-century Harley Psalter from Christ Church Cathedral Priory, Canterbury (British Library, MS Harley 603), is an exceptional survival. It was saved, perhaps, by the extreme beauty of its coloured drawings. The presence on its endleaves of a few green stains, doubtless caused by copper oxidation, is today the only tangible evidence that it once had an elaborate binding.

Service-books accordingly were likely to be assessed as of considerable financial worth, for both their current (if passing) use and, above all, their decoration. At Beeleigh Abbey, Essex, for instance, the dissolution inventory includes 'ij greate antiphoners in parchment, wretten of theere owne [that is, Premonstratensian] use, worth to be sold to men of their own religion', valued at £4, and 'a greate masse bok of their [Premonstratensian] use, lymned with gold', at £3 6*s*. 8*d*.[19] There was little consistency in pricing, however – partly, no doubt, because it was realised that the market for liturgical books that had been written for a particular religious order or house, and which lacked intrinsically valuable decoration, was limited to the former members of that order: if they did not want to buy the books, then a market would not exist. Hence, for instance, at Stafford the service-books ('old bokes in the vestry') sold for just 8*d* – a sum comparable to the 2*s*. paid for old books and a coffer in the library.[20]

What was to change matters catastrophically, and not just for the market but for the very existence of all service-books with Latin texts, was the subsequent development of the Crown's religious outlook. The commissioners who had dissolved the monasteries had sometimes been

scornful of aspects of the monastic way of life,[21] but there was nothing illegal about the religion that the monks, friars, canons and nuns had practised; and by the standards of the day, the ex-religious were pensioned off generously. The development of Protestantism under Edward VI resulted in the publication of the *Book of Common Prayer* (1549) and, to give it force, both an Act of Uniformity (1549) and then an Act against Superstitious Books and Images (1550). The latter declared that 'all books called antiphoners, missals, grails, processionals, manuals, legends, pies, portases, primers [books of hours] in Latin or English, couchers, journals, ordinals or other books or writings whatsoever heretofore used for service of the Church, written or printed, in the English or Latin tongue . . . shall be by authority of this present Act clearly and utterly abolished, extinguished and forbidden for ever to be sued or kept in this realm'.[22] All the old service-books and all books of hours (such as the laity most commonly owned) were now rendered not just redundant but illegal. The Crown was hardly ever concerned to prosecute anyone for mere possession of old service-books, but clearly their open market value was nil (save for the intrinsic value of their parchment) and only a minute number of them was to survive, preserved perhaps by those who clung to the form of religion in which they had been brought up.

   The scattered service-books from the monasteries had negligible prospects of survival now, particularly if they were merely workaday copies written in the last century or so; the parish churches systematically disposed of their service-books, being checked up on by archdeacons to ensure that they complied with the law. The market had no need for such vast quantities of parchment as were now available, and it may be that some books were simply burnt, although others were purchased by parishioners or tradesmen. In some parts of the country, parishioners were required to bring their books to the archdeacon or other representative of diocesan authority. For instance, the churchwardens' accounts for South Littleton, Worcestershire, recorded that 'all our church books of Laten were taken away and carried to Worcester, and then we had all our prayers in English'.[23] Missals, which had been the commonest of all liturgical books, were now rendered among the scarcest. The service-books of the parish churches were never particularly well documented, but must have greatly outnumbered those of the religious houses. A mid-fourteenth-century archidiaconal survey of the 350 or more churches in the Archdeaconry of Norwich shows them to have had a total of about 4,000 books; not a single one is known to be extant.[24] Ker's *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain* and its *Supplement* list

barely 154 books (including 44 missals) as certain or likely survivors from the 10,000 or more parish churches and chapels of England, Wales and Scotland.[25]

The early death of Edward VI and the accession of Mary Tudor were of little effect in so far as books from the religious houses were concerned. Hardly a single house was re-established under Mary; what had been broken up could not be put together again. In the parishes, the old service-books regained their validity for a few years, and a considerable number of the books (and vestments and ecclesiastical ornaments) that had been sold to parishioners were now bought or given back. Such re-acquisitions of old books were necessary because Mary simply relied on market forces to refurbish the Catholic church. No attempt was made by Mary's government to ensure that the books which it now insisted that each parish church should possess were in fact available and in print.[26]

Libraries and the universities

The constituent colleges of the universities of Oxford and Cambridge were for the most part unaffected by the Crown's decision to dissolve the religious houses. The exceptions were the monastic colleges, notably Canterbury College and Durham College at Oxford, maintained by the eponymous cathedral priories. Such monastic colleges were all dissolved with their parents. Durham College's library probably had many printed books, which would have found ready buyers. Canterbury College's substantial collection seems always to have principally comprised manuscripts (311 manuscripts and just 12 printed books, when catalogued in 1521), some dating back to the twelfth century and including two civil law books that were believed to have belonged to St Thomas Becket; it seems to have perished almost totally.[27]

The scholars of Oxford and Cambridge were not sentimentalists nor – with rare exceptions – were they possessed of a love of books for antiquity's sake. Their concern was to have access to books for working purposes, and the method of shelving books which was then current throughout England did not encourage the retention of old books. Whether chained or not, books were kept on lectern-type desks and on the shelves above and below these desks; overall, there was relatively little space for books, and none for expansion once these shelves were full. The acquisition of new books almost automatically meant the discarding of old ones.

It was almost certainly in the reigns of Edward VI and Mary that the university and college libraries of Oxford and Cambridge suffered their severest phase of book-destruction. The way had at least been prepared, however, by commissioners appointed by Henry VIII, who visited each university in 1535. Their precise remit is not known, but their aim – which they seem to have had considerable success in achieving – was nothing less than the imposition of the new learning. Direct study of the Bible was substituted for the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, and lectures on civil law were ordained, to replace those on canon law. Each college was visited, and one of the commissioners, Richard Layton (the same who wrote from Bath Abbey to Thomas Cromwell) gleefully asserted to his master that

> We have sett Dunce [John Duns Scotus, the scholastic philosopher] in Bocardo [an Oxford gaol], and have utterly banishede hym [from] Oxforde for ever, with all his blinde glosses, and is nowe made a comon servant to evere man, faste nailede up upon posts in all comon houses of easment . . . And the seconde tyme we came to New Colege, affter we hade declarede your injunctions, we fownde all the gret quadrant court full of the leiffes of Dunce, the wynde blowyng them into evere corner.[28]

Layton was presenting his own actions in a self-congratulatory light and did not expect to be believed *ad litteram*. Nevertheless, the university's change of direction – which was doubtless mirrored at Cambridge – must have had drastic effects for each college's book-stock over the next few years. The continued use of the lectern-type desks and shelving will have meant that as new books were acquired, old ones were disposed of; but the latter were doubtless acquired by the local stationers for use in bindings rather than for the purposes suggested by Layton.[29]

Institutionally, the university of Oxford was poorer than its constituent colleges, and lacked the resources to update its own library. It had a large collection of manuscripts, including over 280 given by Humfrey, Duke of Gloucester (d. 1447), all kept in a library-room that had been finished as recently as 1488.[30] Without money or gifts, this collection rapidly began to seem out-of-date. It was far from being replete with scholastic philosophy or theology, and it seems to have escaped the attentions of Layton and his colleagues, but the fact that it was limited to manuscripts was to prove fatal in the age of the printed book. In 1549 Oxford and Cambridge universities were each subjected once more to a visitation by royal commissioners, with consequences

every bit as far-reaching as that of 1535. Merton College now sold plate to the value of £70 in order to buy books;[31] the university still was not ready or able to buy books, but, according to anecdotal evidence, the visitation did result in the utter purging of the university library. One tale even has it that books were burnt, and it is certainly the case that startlingly few of the university's fairly diverse and interesting manuscripts have survived in any form; about a dozen books remain from Duke Humfrey's gift. The late N. R. Ker, the principal historian of Oxford's libraries in this period, commented that 'a bonfire would help to explain why no pastedown [that is, a manuscript fragment used in a book's binding] has been found which looks as if it might be from a university library book: if the books had been sold for what they would fetch one might expect binders to have got some of them and perhaps also that rather more would have survived in private hands'.[32]

A third visitation of each university took place in Mary's reign, at Oxford in 1556 and at Cambridge in 1556–7. These investigations included far closer examination of the libraries, perhaps partly because the government was specifically concerned with heretical books. Mary issued proclamations against Protestant theology on 13 June 1555 (to enforce the Statute against Heresy) and again on 6 June 1558, and the first included a long list of prohibited authors.[33] The visitors to Oxford received articles of enquiry from Cardinal Pole which specifically directed their attention to books, both those dispersed in the time of schism [that is, now recoverable] and heretical books publicly or privately retained in the university.[34] Catalogues survive from the time of the visitations for six college libraries at Oxford and for four college libraries and the university library at Cambridge,[35] and the compilation of these suggests that the visitors' enquiries were rigorous. Heretical books seem to have been detected at seven colleges. On 6 February 1557 'a greate sorte of bookes that were condemned' was burned in Cambridge marketplace; on 13 February there was another fire, of 'ii greate baskettes full of bookes'.[36] On the other hand, it is not apparent that the college libraries – or at least those chained collections that comprised the colleges' main reference libraries – will have included much that the visitors could have objected to. Most of the editions of the Protestant reformers that had so far been published were in small (that is, octavo) format, whereas the colleges at this date always preferred to acquire folio editions, so as to make the fullest possible use of their lectern-desk furniture.[37]

For all three sets of university visitations, the historian's difficulty remains the classic problem of assessing losses when such details as the

documentation yields are almost exclusively of libraries' gains. The colleges at Oxford (other than the new foundation of Corpus Christi) seem to have acquired few books in the years 1510 to 1535; Merton even in 1540 appears still to have had virtually no printed books.[38] The impact of the Henrician visitors may therefore be taken to have been principally in the laying-down of future book-purchasing policies, rather than in the disposal of the works of the medieval schoolmen. On the other hand, the acquisition of printed editions, and especially of the reader-friendly editions of patristic texts, Greek and Latin classical literature, and civil law texts and commentaries, such as were published in Basle and Lyon in the 1530s to 1550s, had the effect of making both manuscript and early printed versions of these and other works seem so old-fashioned as to be redundant. Ker has suggested that 'we shall probably not be far wrong if we think of 500 volumes as about the capacity of a library-room of ordinary size containing lectern-desks: and this not only in the Middle Ages, but throughout nearly the whole of the sixteenth century'.[39] Consequently, the purchases that it was essential for the libraries to make in order to remain up-to-date resulted in the large-scale disposal of books. Merton College's belated purchase of nearly 200 printed books in the 1540s and 1550s will thus have meant the discarding of as many manuscripts from its chained library. Rejected books such as these might nevertheless have been kept as part of a college's secondary or lending collection had they not been stigmatised as outdated. The Edwardian and Marian visitations were probably significant more in accelerating changes that were already underway than in leading to wholly new directions – let alone to destruction for destruction's sake. But preservation for posterity's sake (or because of a more inclusive approach towards past scholarship) was the policy that was adopted from the end of the sixteenth century, once the stall system of library shelving made this possible.

Contemporary scholars' reactions to book losses

The purging of the university libraries was matched by a cull of the King's own collections. In February 1551 the Privy Council was told that the royal library at Westminster was itself to be purged of 'all superstitious bookes, as masse bookes, legendes and such like'; their precious bindings, of gold or silver, were to be delivered to Sir Anthony Aucher, Master of the royal Jewel-house.[40] No doubt, too, some private individuals felt it prudent to comply with the Act against Superstitious Books and Images (1550), and dispose of their Latin service-books and books

of hours. But the Crown's interventionist attitude towards the ownership of old books was not maintained for long. Mary's government was far more zealous in pursuing (and even burning at the stake) heretical people than it was in hunting for heretical books; that of her successor, Elizabeth, was troubled almost as much by fanatical Puritanism as by Roman Catholicism. As in pre-Reformation days, indifference soon proved to be as great a threat as the activism of governmental agents to the survival of medieval manuscripts. Those who valued ancient texts for their historical value found that it was entirely safe to raise their voices in an attempt to secure the preservation of what still survived.

John Leland in 1546 wrote in his New Year's Gift to Henry VIII that out of the monastic and collegiate libraries, he had 'conservid many good autors, the which other wise had beene like to have perischid to no smaul incommodite of good letters, of the whiche parte remayne yn the moste magnificent libraries of yowr royal Palacis. Parte also remayne yn my custodye.'[41] Certainly, the royal libraries increased in the early 1540s from about 910 to 1450 books, and of the 540 additions nearly 200 were manuscripts which are still in the Royal Library (now in the British Library) and many of which can be shown to have come from monastic collections. Leland was not the sole contributor or agent, since a list of manuscripts in Lincolnshire religious houses (now British Library, MS Royal Appx. 69) which is *not* in Leland's hand nor, apparently, compiled by him, was marked up and used as the basis for selecting additions to the royal collections.[42]

Leland was not even a priest when he began his campaign to preserve the historical literature housed in the monasteries, and after the Reformation he was always careful to stress his Protestantism and his opposition to 'al manner of superstition and craftely coloured doctrine of a route of the Romaine bishopes'.[43] After he fell ill, in 1547, the preservationist cause was taken up with great vigour by John Bale, once a Carmelite friar, but long an outspoken enthusiast for the Reformation. In 1549 he published Leland's New Year's Gift, as *The Laboryouse Journey & Serche of John Leylande, for Englandes Antiquitees*.[44] In a colourfully written preface to this, he pointed out what historical treasures the monasteries had contained, and lamented that

in turnynge over of the superstycyouse monasteryes, so lytle respecte was had to theyr lybraryes for the savegarde of those noble and precyouse monumentes. . . . If there had bene in every shyre of Englande, but one solemyne library, to the preservacyon of those noble workes, and preferrement of good lernynges in our posteryte,

it had bene yet sumwhat. But to destroye all without consyderacyon, is and wyll be unto Englande for ever, a most horryble infamy amonge the grave senyours of other nacyons.[45]

Bale's own reaction was both to publish accounts of all British writers over the previous centuries, with some indication of how to identify their works, and to form a private collection of medieval manuscripts. The latter was plundered while he held a bishopric in Ireland, and is in part lost forever; but his bibliographical publications remain invaluable.[46]

In Mary's reign, Bale took refuge on the Continent, and the cause of the ex-monastic books was taken up by John Dee. He drew up a petition to the Queen, in January 1557, lamenting 'the spoile and destruction of so many and so notable Libraries wherein lay the treasure of all Antiquity', and proposing both the appointment of a commission to collect and copy manuscripts dispersed from the monastic libraries, and the establishment of a royal library; he himself would be paid to travel abroad to buy printed books for this library. Mary turned as deaf an ear to Dee's entreaty as her brother Edward had to Bale's, but it appears that Dee set about fulfilling part of his programme himself and it may be that he received financial support from Edmund Bonner, until the latter's removal from the bishopric of London in 1559.[47]

Dee's efforts came to nothing, and his own collection of medieval manuscripts and charters was dispersed after his death. The most effective preserver of the ex-monastic manuscripts proved to be Matthew Parker, once dean of the college of canons at Stoke-by-Clare, in Suffolk (dissolved in 1548), and, from 1559 until his death in 1575, archbishop of Canterbury. Parker used his own pre-eminent position in the Church to ask the cathedral deans and chapters for gifts of manuscripts, and he was also a skilful collector, selecting with great discrimination from the massive amount of material that must have been available on the market. In 1568 he secured authorization from the Privy Council to take possession of 'auncient recordes or monumentes', so that they could be perused and recorded.[48] He secured his collection in perpetuity, by drawing up a quadripartite indenture with three university colleges at Cambridge, whereby the books were held by Corpus Christi College, but subject to audit by the other two colleges, and with a series of provisions for the collection's transfer to one of them in case of default; the result was that Corpus Christi College was always at pains to look after it.[49]

Parker's ingenious provisions may have been needed most in the years immediately after his death. In the time of his successor as archbishop, Edmund Grindal (1576–83), there was a strongly Puritan atmosphere which was every bit as inimical to medieval service-books as the late 1540s had been; Elizabeth I's government had to steer a careful path between appeasement and repression, in order to retain control. Further destruction of medieval books undoubtedly took place. At Canterbury, for instance, twelfth-century passionals, which Bale himself had saved or at least appropriated from the cathedral priory's library (taking advantage of his position as a canon of the new-founded cathedral chapter, 1560–63) were in the 1570s and early 1580s cut up and used for bindings.[50] At St Christopher le Stocks parish church, London, it was decided at a vestry meeting in January 1578 'to berne serten olde papest bookes which remayned in yᵉ vestery'.[51]

This Puritan phase had reached its high watermark by the time that Grindal died (1583); the collecting of medieval manuscripts by antiquaries was by now a well-established phenomenon, and the greater financial value that this gave to such manuscripts will have helped more than anything else to secure their survival. Institutional libraries, and especially those of the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, were once more on their way to being seen as repositories where ancient writings might be accumulated. Grindal left his own library to Queen's College, Oxford. Like other Protestant libraries of the time, it contains some books putting the modern Catholic point of view, and in addition to works on theology it includes historical texts, such as the chronicles of Matthew Paris and William of Tyre.[52]

Quantifying the loss

That the dissolution of the monasteries was a catastrophe for the books in their libraries is indisputable. From the eight hundred or more monasteries, friaries and other religious houses of England, only about 5,200 library and service-books survive. If one subtracts the 1,800 that belonged to the cathedral priories (such as Durham and Worcester) that in 1541 were refounded as secular cathedrals, then the total is reduced to 3,400. That tens, even hundreds, of thousands of library books and service-books were destroyed in the course of a few years is undeniable. What cannot be measured, however, is how much was lost which was unique and – in textual terms – irreplaceable. First the new technology of printing and then the publication of editions which were more accurate, easier to read (being in a roman typeface) and easier to use (being well indexed) were already making older copies redundant. Even the

largest monasteries could not and would not have wished to retain all that was in their libraries, had they remained in existence for another century or more. Thanks in part to such men as Leland, Bale and Parker, but thanks also to the more general interest in history that was becoming prevalent, it may be doubted if many texts were wholly lost. Very few of the works of British authors which were recorded by Bale cannot be located in at least one copy today.[53] A great many people must in fact have taken care to preserve whatever was deemed of historical value in the 1530s and 1540s. Virtually no chronicle or biography from medieval England can be stated to have been wholly lost in the last four and a half centuries. Most medieval English chronicles survive in multiple copies, and although it might be said that it would have been difficult to destroy them all, it is nevertheless striking how many survive even as authorial holograph copies. All of the chroniclers whose work is recorded as having been searched at Edward I's direction are extant today – Roger of Howden, Henry of Huntingdon, Ralph of Diss, William of Malmesbury, and so on. The account of Richard I's captivity, by his chaplain Anselm and almoner Milo, or the chronicle by William Pakington, are among the more serious losses – but they may yet turn up.[54] Many manuscripts that contain historical texts survive, and yet lack their author's name: identifications will continue to be made for years to come.

Overall, it is evident that historical, patristic and biblical books survived best from the monastic libraries, and that a strikingly large proportion of these survivors dates from the twelfth or thirteenth centuries. The books which survived least well were those containing scholastic theology and philosophy, as well as canon and civil law, written in the later Middle Ages. The works of Aquinas and of Duns Scotus are to be found in the Royal Library as only a handful of volumes.[55] Were it not for the survival of at least a few late medieval catalogues of monastic libraries, one might seriously underestimate the intellectual strength of later medieval monasticism.[56]

It might also be said that the dispersal of the monastic and other institutional libraries came at an opportune moment for those scholars who were interested in the source materials out of which the history of Britain might be written. The dispersal of institutional libraries coincided with the rise of the private scholar who worked from a book-collection which he built up for himself. Learning could no longer be pursued so effectively within the walls of a monastic precinct. Historical knowledge was better advanced by a temporary scattering of books, followed by their gradual regrouping in libraries in London, Oxford and Cambridge. By this argument, it was less important that nine-tenths of

the manuscripts in Old English may have perished (though that would probably be a gross over-estimate), than that the surviving one-tenth provided the materials out of which knowledge of Old English – which had been wholly lost for four centuries – could be regained.[57]

Notes

* 'In my grandfather's dayes the Manuscripts flew about like Butterflies', O. L. Dick, ed., *Aubrey's Brief Lives* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1949), p. xxxvi.

1. The importance of monastic ruins for the 17th-century historical imagination was eloquently brought out by Margaret Aston, 'English Ruins and English History: The Dissolution and the Sense of the Past', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 36 (1973): 231–55, reprinted in Margaret Aston, *Lollards and Reformers: Images and Literacy in Late Medieval England* (London: Hambledon Press, 1984): 313–37. The consequences of the dissolution for monastic libraries were ignored by D. Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, III, *The Tudor Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), and were never directly examined at any length by N. R. Ker, although he has some pertinent remarks in his introduction to *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain. A List of Surviving Books*, 2nd edn (London: Royal Historical Society, 1964), pp. x–xv, and in 'The Migration of Manuscripts from the English Medieval Libraries', *The Library*, 4th ser. 23 (1942–3): 1–11, reprinted with additions in N. R. Ker, *Books, Collectors and Libraries*, ed. A. G. Watson (London and Ronceverte, W. Va.: Hambledon Press, 1985), pp. 459–70. The most extended treatments of the subject remain those by C. E. Wright: 'The Dispersal of the Libraries in the Sixteenth Century', in F. Wormald and C. E. Wright, eds, *The English Library before 1700* (London: The Athlone Press, 1958), pp. 148–75; and 'The Dispersal of the Monastic Libraries and the Beginnings of Anglo-Saxon Studies', *Trans., Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, 1 (1949–53): 208–37. General studies include R. H. Fritze, ' "Truth hath lacked witnesse, tyme wanted light": The Dispersal of Monastic Libraries and Protestant Efforts at Preservation, ca. 1535–1625', *Journal of Library History*, 18 (1983): 274–91; and K. W. Humphreys, 'The Loss of Books in Sixteenth Century England', *Libri*, 36 (1986): 249–58. A recent case-study is C. F. R. de Hamel, 'The Dispersal of the Library of Christ Church, Canterbury, from the Fourteenth to the Sixteenth Century', in J. P. Carley and C. G. C. Tite, ed., *Books and Collectors, 1200–1700. Essays presented to Andrew Watson* (London: The British Library, 1997), pp. 263–79. This essay is concerned with England alone. For Scotland there are some comments by D. McRoberts, 'Material Destruction caused by the Scottish Reformation', in D. McRoberts, ed., *Essays on the Scottish Reformation, 1513–1625* (Glasgow: J.S. Burns, 1962): 415–62 (pp. 457–9).

2. See T. D. Kendrick, *British Antiquity*, corrected reprint (New York: Barnes & Noble; London: Methuen & Co., 1970), pp. 45–64; May McKisack, *Medieval History in the Tudor Age* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), pp. 1–25; A. B. Emden, *Biographical Register of the University of Oxford, A.D. 1501 to 1540*

(Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), pp. 350–1, 723–5; and J. P. Carley, 'John Leland and the Contents of English Pre-Dissolution Libraries: Lincolnshire', *Trans., Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, 9, pt. 4 (1989): 330–57; and see also Caroline Brett, 'John Leland, Wales and Early British History', *Welsh History Review*, 15 (1990): 169–82, for one such scholar.

3. See André Jammes, 'Un bibliophile à découvrir, Jean de Gagny', *Bulletin du Bibliophile* (1996): 35–81.

4. For the visitation of 1535–36, see e.g. Knowles, *Religious Orders in England*, III, ch. 12 (pp. 268–90).

5. Letters of 13 and 15 January [1536], printed from British Library, Cotton MS Cleopatra E.iv, ff. 203 and 204, by John Wise and W. M. Noble, *Ramsey Abbey, its Rise and Fall . . .* (Huntingdon, etc.: Edis & Cooper, [1882]), pp. 140–3.

6. Prise's collection of 'transcripts (or possibly originals)' of foundation charters is discussed by N. R. Ker, 'Sir John Prise', *The Library*, 5th ser. 10 (1955): 1–24 (pp. 2–3); reprinted with addenda in Ker, *Books, Collectors and Libraries*, pp. 471–95, at 472–3. See also a brief note in *Charters of St Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury, and Minster-in-Thanet*, ed. S. E. Kelly, Anglo-Saxon Charters, 4 (Oxford, 1995), pp. lix–lx. On one or two pre-Conquest charters at Bury St Edmunds Abbey, Prise also wrote endorsements of the usual sort: 'Relat' in regium registrum ad verbum. J. Rheseus, Registr[arius]' [or 'Regestor']; see C. W. Goodwin, 'On Two Ancient Charters, in the Possession of the Corporation of King's Lynn', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 4 (1855): 93–117 (p. 93). 'Rheseus' is the Latinised form of 'Prise' or 'Ap Rice'.

7. The fullest but nevertheless not wholly satisfactory treatment of the court is by W. C. Richardson, *History of the Court of Augmentations, 1536–1554* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1961). In the first decade of its existence, the court handled receipts totalling £1,304,859: Richardson, p. 77.

8. Anon., 'Inventories of Goods of the Smaller Monasteries and Friaries in Sussex at the Time of their Dissolution', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 44 (1901): 55–72 (pp. 71–2); spelling modernised. No book is known to survive from this library.

9. See Ker, 'Sir John Prise' (cit. in n. 6).

10. *Letters & Papers, Foreign & Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, XIII, pt 2, no. 903, at p. 376. For the history of the Charterhouse in the 1530s, see the succinct account by D. Knowles, in VCH *Middlesex*, 1: 159–69, at pp. 166–7.

11. Rose Graham, in Rose Graham and R. Gilyard-Beer, *Monk Bretton Priory, Yorkshire* (London: HMSO, 1966), pp. 4–5; and cf. Claire Cross, 'Community Solidarity among Yorkshire Religious after the Dissolution', in *Monastic Studies: The Continuity of Tradition*, ed. Judith Loades (Bangor, 1990): 245–54 (p. 247). The list of books is printed in Joseph Hunter, *South Yorkshire . . .*, 2 vols. (London, 1828–31), II, pp. 274–6, and, partly in translation, in J. W. Walker, ed., *Abstracts of the Chartularies of the Priory of Monkbretton,* Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series, 46 (1924), pp. 5–9. Only two books are known to survive from the Monk Bretton library.

12. Cross, 'Community Solidarity', p. 247.

13. Cross, 'Community Solidarity', pp. 250–1. In similar vein, Anthony Wood records that John Young, a monk of Ramsey Abbey, 'being well skill'd in the Hebrew tongue, saved many books of that language that were in the library

of that monastery when 'twas dissolved in 1535, or thereabouts': A. Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*, 3rd edn, ed. P. Bliss, 4 vols (London and Oxford, 1813–20), 2: col. 727.

14. Claire Cross, 'A Medieval Yorkshire Library', *Northern History*, 25 (1989): 281–90; to be supplemented by M. A. Hicks, 'John Nettleton, Henry Savile of Banke, and the Post-Medieval Vicissitudes of Byland Abbey Library', ibid., 26 (1990): 212–17.

15. C. L. Kingsford, in *Report on the Manuscripts of Lord De L'Isle & Dudley*, 6 vols (London: Historical MSS Commission, [77], 1925–66), 1: 307.

16. See J. P. Carley, ed., *The Libraries of Henry VIII*, Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues, 7 (London: The British Library, 2000), p. xli.

17. G. W. Wheeler, ed., *Letters of Sir Thomas Bodley to Thomas James, First Keeper of the Bodleian Library* (Oxford, 1926), pp. 47–8, no. 41. It is stated by Carley that nearly 30 books from St Augustine's 'dribbled in [to the royal library at Westminster] over a number of years': *Libraries of Henry VIII*, p. xli.

18. T. Fuller, *Church-History of Britain* (London, 1655), pp. 334–5.

19. M. E. C. Walcott, 'Inventories and Valuations of Religious Houses at the Time of the Dissolution, from the Public Record Office', *Archaeologia*, 43 (1871): 201–49 (pp. 242–3). The valuations were doubtless optimistic; at the Benedictine priory of Hatfield Regis (Essex), officials recorded: 'sold to a monke the orgaynes in the Quire for v s.; a Masse booke of Monks' use, xij d.' [ibid., p. 243].

20. T. Wright, ed., *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries* (Camden Society, o.s. 26, 1843), p. 269.

21. E.g. Richard Layton, DCL, had written from Bath Abbey to Thomas Cromwell in 1535: 'Ye shalle receve a bowke of our lades miracles well able to mache the Canterberies Tailles. Such a bowke of dremes as ye never sawe wich I fownde in the librarie' [Carley, *Libraries of Henry VIII*, p. xli, citing *Letters & Papers, Foreign & Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, IX, no. 42].

22. Statute 3 and 4 Edward VI, c. 10; *Statutes of the Realm*, IV (1819), pp. 110–11 (with spelling and punctuation modernised).

23. A. H. W. Ingram, 'The Ecclesiastical History of Evesham and its Neighbourhood in the Sixteenth Century, Illustrated by Entries in the Churchwardens' Account Books of Badsey and South Littleton', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 32 (1876): 215–24 (p. 218).

24. Aelred Watkin, *Archdeaconry of Norwich. Inventory of Church Goods temp. Edward III*, 2 pts. (Norfolk Record Society, 19, 1947, 1948), 2, p. cii.

25. Ker, *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain*, pp. 219–24; *Supplement*, ed. A. G. Watson (London: Royal Historical Society, 1987), pp. 72–4.

26. D. Loades, 'Books and the English Reformation Prior to 1558', in *The Reformation and the Book*, ed. Jean-François Gilmont, ed. and transl. Karin Maag (Aldershot, Hants.: Ashgate, 1998), pp. 264–91, at 285.

27. N. R. Ker, 'The Provision of Books', in J. McConica, ed., *History of the University of Oxford*, III: *The Collegiate University* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 441–519, at 463–4. Untypically, Ker comments: 'It is sad to think that these books would have had a better chance of surviving if they had not been transferred from Canterbury to a seat of learning.'

28. Wright, ed., *Three Chapters of Letters*, pp. 70–2, at 71.

29. The use of horizontal shelves (instead of the sloping lectern desks) was initiated only in 1589, at Merton College: Ker, 'Provision of Books', p. 441; cf. p. 457.

30. See the illustrations in Stanley Gillam, *The Divinity School and Duke Humfrey's Library at Oxford* (Oxford: Clarendon Press in association with the Bodleian Library, 1988), pp. 27–9.

31. Ker, 'Oxford College Libraries in the Sixteenth Century', *Bodleian Library Record*, 6 (1957–61): 459–513 (pp. 483–4); reprinted with additions in Ker, *Books, Collectors and Libraries*, pp. 379–436 (at pp. 403–4); see also Ker's introduction and catalogue entries in *Oxford College Libraries in 1556: Guide to an Exhibition held in 1956* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 1956).

32. Ker, 'Provision of Books', p. 466, n. 3.

33. For the texts of the proclamations, see P. L. Hughes and J. F. Larkin, eds, *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, 3 vols (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1964–9), 2: nos. 422 (13 June 1555), 443 (6 June 1558).

34. Claire Cross, 'Oxford and the Tudor State from the Accession of Henry VIII to the Death of Mary', in McConica, ed., *History of University of Oxford*, III: 117–49 (pp. 146–7). See also C. H. Cooper, *Annals of Cambridge*, 5 vols (Cambridge, 1842–1908), 2: 121–8, with details of visitors' actions and individual colleges.

35. The Cambridge catalogues are printed in Peter D. Clarke, ed., *University and College Libraries of Cambridge*, Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues, 10 (London: The British Library, 2002); those for Oxford will be published in a similar volume in the same series.

36. Cooper, *Annals of Cambridge*, 2: 119, 120.

37. Ker observes that there is no evidence that multi-volume editions of the works of e.g. Melanchthon, Zwingli, Luther and Pellicanus had yet entered any college libraries, but that there is 'also no certainty that they were not to be found there', 'Oxford College Libraries in the Sixteenth Century', p. 493; reprint at p. 413.

38. Ker, 'Oxford College Libraries in the Sixteenth Century', pp. 474, 475; reprint at pp. 394, 395.

39. Ker, 'Oxford College Libraries in the Sixteenth Century', pp. 474, 470; reprint at pp. 394, 390.

40. G. F. Warner and J. P. Gilson, *British Museum. Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Old Royal and King's Collections*, 4 vols (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1921), 1: xv.

41. Printed as 'The Laboriouse Journey and Serche of Johan Leylande for Englandes Antiquitees', in L. T. Smith, ed., *The Itinerary of John Leland*, 5 vols (London: George Bell and Sons, 1906–10), 2: xxxviii.

42. Carley, 'Leland and the Contents of English Pre-Dissolution Libraries: Lincolnshire', pp. 331–3, 354–7; Carley, *Libraries of Henry VIII,* pp. xxxiii–v.

43. 'Laboriouse Journey and Serche', in L. T. Smith, ed., *Itinerary of John Leland*, 1: xxxviii.

44. ([London], 1549); A. W. Pollard and G. R. Redgrave, *Short-Title Catalogue . . . 1475–1640*, 2nd edn, 3 vols (London: The Bibliographical Society, 1976–91), no. 15445. Conveniently available as a reprint, *Leland's New Year's Gift*, ed. W. A. Copinger (Manchester: privately printed at the Priory Press, 1895).

45. Copinger, ed., *Leland's New Year's Gift*, pp. 15, 18.

46. See also the modern publication of one of his notebooks, as *Index Britanniae Scriptorum*, ed. R. L. Poole and Mary Bateson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902); reprinted with an introduction by Caroline Brett and J. P. Carley (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1990).

47. R. J. Roberts and A. G. Watson, eds, *John Dee's Library Catalogue* (London: The Bibliographical Society, 1990), pp. 194–5, appx. 3 (petition), and p. 5.

48. The Privy Council's order is printed in J. Bruce and T. T. Perowne, eds, *Correspondence of Matthew Parker, D.D., Archbishop of Canterbury* (Cambridge: Parker Society, 1853), pp. 327–8.

49. See e.g. R. I. Page, *Matthew Parker and his Books* (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications, 1993).

50. N. L. Ramsay, 'The Cathedral Archives and Library', in P. Collinson, N. L. Ramsay and Margaret Sparks, eds, *A History of Canterbury Cathedral*, corrected reprint (Canterbury: The Chapter of Canterbury, 2002): 341–407 (p. 377).

51. Edwin Freshfield, ed., *Minutes of the Vestry Meetings and Other Records of the Parish of St Christopher le Stocks, in the City of London* (London: privately printed, 1886), p. 8.

52. Ker, 'Oxford College Libraries in the Sixteenth Century' (p. 500; reprint at p. 420).

53. Compare, e.g., Richard Sharpe, *Handlist of the Latin Writers of Great Britain and Ireland before 1540*, Publications of the Journal of Medieval Latin, 1 ([Turnhout:] Brepols, 1997).

54. Such points were cogently made over a century ago by Richard Howlett: 'Observations on the Alleged Loss of Historical MSS. after the Dissolution of the Monasteries', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 42 (1886): 263–71.

55. Ker, 'Migration of Manuscripts' (p. 6; reprinted at p. 464).

56. All the surviving book lists and catalogues from England's medieval institutions are being edited as *The Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues*, under the general editorship of Richard Sharpe.

57. For the rediscovery of Old English see Wright, 'The Dispersal of the Monastic Libraries and the Beginnings of Anglo-Saxon Studies' (cited in n. 1).

8
Secularization and Monastic Libraries in Austria

Friedrich Buchmayr

More than 700 monasteries were dissolved under emperor Joseph II in the lands of the Habsburg monarchy between 1782 and 1787. The number of regular clergy declined from an estimated 25,000 to just over 11,000.[1] With dissolutions proceeding in distinct phases, this extraordinary undertaking brought about an immense movement of books and proved to be of critical importance in the history of both private and public libraries in Austria. Today's public libraries, in particular, derive their basic stock of manuscripts and incunables from the dissolved monastic libraries.

There are many modern accounts of Joseph's monastic policy and ecclesiastical reforms, including those by Elisabeth Kovács (1980), Ludwig Raber (1983), Karl Gutkas (1989), Rudolph C. Blitz (1989), P.G.M. Dickson (1993), Floridus Röhrig (1994), T. C. W. Blanning (1994), and Derek Beales (1997).[2] Together, they offer an extensive contextual history to Joseph's anti-monastic actions. The fate of the monastic libraries is largely incidental to these broad-ranging histories, however. The first study to focus on the dispersal and destruction of the libraries appeared in 1881, when Simon Laschitzer collected together the relevant imperial decrees and regulations. Laschitzer also was the first to turn his attention to individual cases. He described the history of the dissolved monastic libraries of the Austrian province of Carinthia.[3] Similar studies have been slow to appear, apart from a treatise on monastic libraries in the provinces of Moravia and Silesia published in 1900.[4] Several generations after Laschitzer, other specialist accounts were written about the libraries of the Tyrol (1956), of Croatia (1970) and of Lower Austria (1983).[5]

In all these studies we often read about the carelessness of the authorities in dealing with the old monastic libraries. The Josephine legal

instructions were in fact by no means all translated into action – or at least not with sufficient attention. Dozens of examples can be given here, but one of the most significant concerns the library of Waldhausen in the province of Upper Austria. Founded in 1147, the Augustinian monastery was put under administration by Joseph in 1786. A library catalogue of that year records some 2,300 volumes, not counting the great number of liturgical manuscript books (mostly breviaries and hymnbooks), but the Hofbibliothek, or Court Library in Vienna, which had the right to select the most precious books of the closed monastery libraries, took not a single manuscript or incunable from Waldhausen.[6] The evidence points to an official decision to refrain from seizing parts of the collection for Vienna in order to save carriage costs. The next stage was equally lackadaisical. According to the administrative protocols, the Waldhausen library was to be given to the newly created Linz public library. When Joseph II died in 1790, the suppression of monasteries was stopped, but some dissolutions in progress continued, taking a long time to complete. Even by 1792, when the monastery of Waldhausen was officially dissolved, the books had not yet been transported to Linz. For years after, the library remained unguarded and suffered serious losses from the raids of antique dealers, book lovers, papermakers and other plunderers who went in and out with ease. In 1806, 14 years after the dissolution, the celebrated historian Franz Kurz visited Waldhausen, and was astonished to find the library – or rather its remnants – still there. In a letter to the provost of his monastery in St Florian he lamented its state:

Den 4ten Junius vollendete ich unter dem unglaublichsten Staube meine archivarische Arbeit in Waldhausen. [. . .] In der Bibliothek zu Waldhausen sieht es aus, als wenn die Russen in selber gehauset hätten: es ist fast alles zerrissen. Jetzt befinden sich Mäuse und Ratten noch ein, um die Uiberbleibsel aufzuzehren. Da so viele bereits das Bessere für sich ausgesucht haben, so ist es ein bloßer Zufall, wenn man noch jetzt in einem Winkel ein prächtiges Manuscript vom 10ten oder höchsten 11ten Jahrhundert findet, welches Bedae historiam Anglorum et vitam S. Augustini enthält. Wäre es nicht unweis, so ein Buch dem Schicksale zu überlassen, welches schon einige hundert Bände getroffen hat?

(On 4 June, I finished my archival work in Waldhausen amidst a most incredible dust. [. . .] The library at Waldhausen looks as if the Russians had lived there: almost everything is mutilated. Now the mice and rats

Figure 8.1 Joseph II by Jakob Adam, 1782. Reproduced by permission of the monastery of St Florian, Austria.

are there, eating up the remnants. Because so many people have already picked out the better things for themselves, it is pure luck if you find a splendid tenth- or eleventh-century manuscript left in a corner containing Bede's *Historia Anglorum* and a *Vita* of St Augustine. Wouldn't it be unwise to leave such a book to the fate that has struck hundreds of volumes already?)[7] Today we know the location of no more than 30 manuscripts formerly belonging to the monastery library of Waldhausen. Ten of them are in the British Library.

Not surprisingly, Joseph II and his civil servants were held responsible for such losses, and it became a widespread and repeated stereotype that they wilfully destroyed precious monastic manuscripts, books, and works of art. As a result, we really do have to keep to verifiable evidence in order to avoid the emotionally charged prejudices that mark so many earlier accounts. Great care is required to distinguish between imperial thought and deed.

This essay will first consider the procedure whereby monasteries were dissolved in the era of 'Josephinism', focusing on those regulations concerning the monastic libraries. After that, a few typical individual cases will be surveyed in order to get an idea of the parts played by the different institutions such as the Court Chancellery, the Court Library, the provincial governments and the university libraries. It should also be possible to give approximate figures for the losses of monastic books during the reign of Joseph.[8]

It all started on 12 January 1782 with an imperial decree. Joseph II ordered the dissolution of all monasteries dedicated solely to the contemplative religious life and also of a few others found to be in financial difficulties. In accordance, it seems, with Voltairian philosophy, Joseph harboured unfriendly attitudes towards monks and nuns from contemplative orders. The emperor regarded them as parasitic and idle social elements, blinded by superstition and controlled by vows of obedience to superiors and church hierarchy. In a second phase, starting on 23 May 1783, all other monasteries were dealt with in relation to their capacity to provide parish priests and certain other services such as educating youth or looking after the sick. This second and extensive anti-monastic action was a real 'Klostersturm' lasting until 1787. More than 700 monasteries were dissolved and all orders were affected. Joseph II planned a third wave of dissolutions for the year 1791. The emperor wanted to dissolve another 449 monasteries, but his death in 1790 foiled his intention.[9]

The procedure with the monastic libraries was almost the same throughout the different phases. In every province commissioners were

Figure 8.2 The Monastery of Waldhausen with Provost Laurentius Voß by Matthias Küsell after Clemens Beuttler, c. 1670. Reproduced by permission of the monastery of St Florian, Austria.

appointed to survey the dissolutions. They were charged with closing the monastic libraries, but also with sealing them to prevent the removal of books. Only a few days after Joseph's decree, Gottfried van Swieten, the director of the Court Library (today's National Library), expressed great interest in the medieval manuscripts and incunables of the closed monastic libraries. As a result, the dissolution commissioners were ordered to send catalogues of each library to the Court Library, to which the emperor had granted the first choice of the books. Where a monastic library catalogue was missing or did not exist, the commissioners were told to draw one up.

A few months after the imperial decree, most of the commissioners turned out to be unable to read medieval handwriting and early printing and therefore to be incapable of cataloguing manuscripts and incunables. Where attempts were made at compiling library inventories most were sparse, inaccurate and of very little use. Only a few of such inventories survived, most of them dating from later years. The inventory of the monastery library at Unterranna (in Lower Austria, 1783) reads: 'In der Bibliothek: befindet sich ein Vorrat von beiläufig 4,000 Stück Bücher, worunter sehr viele kleine, sämtlich aber meist alte Prediger und Aszeten, übel kondizioniert, ohne Katalog und ohne Ordnung' (the library has approximately 4,000 books in stock, including very many small ones. Most of them are old [books by] preachers and ascetics, in bad condition, uncatalogued and disordered). Of the Capuchin monastery at Waidhofen (also in Lower Austria, 1784) we learn that: 'In der Bibliothek: darinnen befinden sich 16 theils groe theils kleine Bücherstellen . . . in welchen beyläufig 6–700 Bände Bücher verschiedener Größe und Gattungen vorhanden sind' (in the library, there are 16 bookcases, large ones and small ones, containing approximately 600 to 700 volumes of different sizes and genres).[10]

Such inventories were less than helpful. Their uselessness led directly to Joseph II's order of 5 May 1782 that all monastic libraries were to be sent to the university (or lyceum)[11] library in the capital of their respective provinces. The lyceum librarians were further commanded to create a catalogue and then send it to the Court Library. In a further, formalising edict of 23 September 1782, Joseph II decided that the contents of all suppressed monastic libraries – apart from the books and manuscripts chosen by the Court Library – were to become the property of the respective university (or lyceum) library of the province. The duplicates were to be auctioned off to raise monies for the purchase of new books.

The profusion of regulations[12] clearly shows that the Court Chancellery was conscious of the importance of the dissolved monas-

tic libraries. In 1786, however, Joseph's II civil servants arranged for the provincial university librarians to decide the future of great parts of the monastic libraries. The librarians were told to auction off not only the duplicate books, but also books deemed to be of no use in university lessons, those deemed to be insignificant, 'alte Ausgaben aus dem 15. Jahrhundert' (old editions from the fifteenth century – or, in other words, all incunables), and those books said to 'bloß Phantasie oder Gelehrtenluxus zur Schau [tragen]' (only to show off imagined or self-indulgent learning).

Unfortunately, the university librarians were also ordered in 1786 to destroy whole sections of the monastic libraries by selling them to papermakers who then sent them to the paper mill and pulped them down: 'der ganze Wust unbrauchbarer Gebets- und Andachtsbücher, Legenden und übrigen theologischen Ungereimtheiten [war] ohne Weiteres in die Stampfe zu geben' (the pile of useless prayer books, spiritual guides, legends and other theological absurdities are to be pulped straight away).[13] In such ways university librarians became the helpmates and executors of an Enlightenment ideology that investigated the printed heritage of the past but then separated the wheat of 'progressive rationality and utility' from the chaff of 'religious superstition'.

The selection lists of the Court Library clearly show that van Swieten, the director, usually took the most precious manuscripts (and a few incunables) from those monastic libraries (unlike Waldhausen) that caught official attention. We do not know how many books in total were taken by the Court Library, and, unfortunately, there were certainly many monasteries where the Court Library failed to seize its opportunity and chose not a single manuscript, incunable or early printed book. In the whole province of Moravia, for example, the Court Library took away only 24 manuscript books and 120 incunables from a total of 96,000 monastic books.[14] In Croatia, where about 30 monasteries were dissolved, with the largest library at Lepoglava accounting for some 5,000 volumes, the situation was even worse. The Court Library, obviously disregarding all manuscripts, chose only a single incunable from the whole of Croatia, a *Confessionale* by Augustine printed in 1472.[15]

When the Court librarians looked through the catalogues of the monastic libraries to make their first selection, they seem not always to have kept their mind on the job. When examining the catalogue of the Carthusian monastery library of Schnals (in South Tyrol, now Italy), for example, one of the librarians managed to miss the whole section of manuscripts, comprising some 335 volumes. The catalogue divided the books into five categories from A to G and listed the manuscripts (E)

amid the printed books. Quite clearly, the Court librarian had his eyes only on group A (the incunables). He signed 136 incunables with the abbreviation 'H' ('Hofbibliothek', Court Library) and ignored the rest of the catalogue. The librarian at the Innsbruck lyceum library immediately noticed the mistake. Instead of making any effort to report the incident, however, he silently confiscated the whole stock of manuscripts for his library. Later, he sold a third of them.[16]

It would, nevertheless, be wrong to characterize this history as entirely one of incompetence and deviousness. There were also many examples of responsible and careful dealings in what, after all, was a chaotic and complex national undertaking. The Benedictine cloister of Mondsee in the province of Upper Austria, founded in 748, was dissolved shortly after Joseph's II death in 1791. The precious manuscript books of the library were transported to Vienna in 1792, packed into 35 cases and 22 barrels. Although the Court Library retained only seven incunables it did keep all 663 manuscripts. Even so, several manuscripts were lost in transit. The famous psalter of the Bavarian duke Tassilo III dating from the eighth century was one of those that never reached Vienna. It finally arrived in the Montpellier University Library. The remaining books of the Mondsee library were packed into 33 cases and transported to Vienna to be auctioned in 1796.[17]

The university (or lyceum) libraries also received many books from the dissolved monastic libraries. There are, however, no exact figures. We can only offer estimates. In the Tyrol, the Innsbruck lyceum library is supposed to have chosen about 8,000 volumes out of 40,000.[18] In other words, four-fifths of the monastic books of that province were auctioned or pulped. In the provinces of Moravia and Silesia, the Olmütz lyceum library (Olomouc, now in the Czech Republic) retained 25,000 of 96,000 volumes, or about a quarter of all the books.[19] In Croatia, all monastic books had to be transported abroad to the university library at Pest (now part of Budapest, Hungary). In 1779 empress Maria Theresia had brought the Croatian self-administration to an end and submitted the province to the Hungarian government. The librarians at Pest took 1,552 of the 5,000 volumes from Lepoglava, the largest dissolved monastery library in all Croatia, but only 160 of the 2,200 volumes from Remete, 146 of the 1,200 volumes from Svetice, and 169 of the 1,000 volumes from Novi.[20]

Why so few books were retained is unclear. Perhaps the lack of room prevented the university libraries from taking more books. Such libraries were also very undermanned and their 'working hours' very limited. In most cases, however, the librarians probably considered the old monas-

tic books to be simply useless and outdated. The example of Waldhausen suggests that university librarians were often completely uninterested in the books from the monastic libraries and tried to get rid of them as quickly as possible. The library of the Dominican monastery in Bozen (in the South Tyrol, now Italy) was dissolved in 1785 when it then housed 300 incunables, but the Innsbruck lyceum library was interested in only 24 of them. In all, 335 volumes out of 6,400 volumes came to Innsbruck. The remaining 276 incunables and 6,000 printed volumes were sold to the owner of a tavern who paid 600 gulden in total for the books and the bookcases. That was a remarkably high price – equivalent to the annual salary of a university professor. Sadly, the landlord bought the 'worthless old books' only for their value as pulp. All were destroyed.[21]

More happily, it seems that in general the auctions of the monastic books were well organized. Printed catalogues were sent out to libraries and book-lovers all over Europe – 'von Madrid bis Petersburg, von Neapel bis Stockholm' (from Paris to Petersburg, from Naples to Stockholm). The profit from these auctions exceeded all expectations. In the province of Lower Austria alone three auctions of books from monastic libraries in the years 1787 and 1788 brought in almost 30,000 gulden.[22] Evidence remains problematic, however. Only a few printed auction catalogues survive, although one survival is particularly helpful. A copy of a catalogue held at the University Library at Innsbruck was marked up by the librarian who recorded both the estimated and realised prices of the 2,700 listed books. A comparison shows that most of the books did in fact find a buyer, not a few of whom paid well over the estimated price.[23]

To save carriage costs, many small monastic libraries were never in fact transported to the respective university library, but instead auctioned at the monastery. This has led to some particularly embellished myths about lost libraries. The monastery of Ardagger in the province of Lower Austria was dissolved in 1786. According to oral tradition, all its books were thrown into a ditch where the librarian of the nearby monastery of Seitenstetten found and saved them. On further inspection, however, this story proves to be one of the innumerable fictions that grew up around the dissolution of monasteries. Surviving official records relating to the imperial directives reveal that the books, said to total 582 volumes, were certainly first catalogued. The surviving lists show that the library contained at least 42 medieval manuscripts, the oldest one dating from the eleventh century, and 94 incunables. From these the Court Library took not a single book. The Vienna University

Library also considered the books to be 'useless'. To save carriage, an auction at the monastery was ordered. Those deemed too insignificant to auction were offered to a cheese-maker who used them as wrapping paper. The rest of the library, containing at least 42 medieval manuscripts, went under the hammer on 20 August 1786. The sale was not a success. Only two prospective customers turned up, a priest and the librarian of the nearby monastery of Seitenstetten. Bidding opened at 20 gulden, and the librarian finally secured the whole library for 27 gulden. This sum amounted to one-month's salary for a grammar school teacher – in other words, a ridiculously low price. A few months later, the librarian was delighted to learn that a copy of one of his 94 incunables, the *Epistolae Petrarchae* printed in 1473, was sold at another auction for 11 gulden.[24]

Responsibility for the execution of the monastic dissolutions rested squarely with the provincial governments. They were confronted with the Court Chancellery's steadfast insistence on sparing time and money by doing the work quickly and without the help of additional staff. It is not clear whether particular revenues were estimated and expected to be derived from the library sales, but if they had been then the unexpectedly high returns of the early auctions in the years 1786 and 1787 were not sustained. As the number of monastic dissolutions increased, so did the supply of the surplus old books, and even giveaway prices failed to excite interest. In many smaller towns it was impossible to find a buyer for philosophical or theological books. As a result, the university libraries began to refuse to do the cataloguing and auctioning, claiming, with good reason, that it was too expensive. Selling the books *in situ* for the price of waste paper made greater economic sense. The only alternative seemed unscrupulous private deals.

The Dominican library in Steyr in the province of Upper Austria suffered a similar fate to the Ardagger library. After the dissolution in 1785 neither the Court Library nor the Linz public library were interested in the books. A certain Kaspar Schiefer bought the whole library for 161 gulden, a high price compared to the 27 gulden for the Ardagger library. The Dominicans appealed against this sale without an auction. In their letter to the Court Chancellery they protested that a peasant would have bid more, and that they themselves would have outbid the peasant. The Court Chancellery did in fact reprimand the provincial government, but Schiefer kept the books – and then pulped them. The imperial government justified the action in a letter. The collection of the Dominican library had been so miserable, the civil servants maintained, that they had considered a glance at the books to be fully sufficient. The com-

missioning of a cataloguing would not have been worth the wage of the scribe.[25] The Dominican library in Krems suffered the same fate. Instead of auctioning the library, the commissioner secretly sold it to a paper-maker who pulped down the books. In the province of Styria, the Graz lyceum library declared some 20,000 monastic books as duplicates, but finally auctioned only 2,000 of them. Some 18,000 books weighing 18 tons were sold to papermakers and eventually pulped.[26]

The example of the Carthusian monastery Aggsbach in Lower Austria further reveals how the transport of the books was carried out. The commissioner arranged the books with regard to their subject, packed them into wooden boxes, and noted the number of volumes per box so that the university librarian in Vienna was able to confirm the completeness of the consignment.[27] Nevertheless, for all the apparent precautions, many books were lost on the way to the Court Library or to the respective university library. The estimated 5,000 books of the Benedictine library at Ossiach in the province of Carinthia were transported to Klagenfurt lyceum library on 18 December 1783. Peasants were ordered to manage the transportation on this cold winter's day. They arrived at the monastery with a two-horse carriage and loaded the books on the cart 'gleich Holzbündeln' (like bundles of wood). As there was no civil servant to escort the eight different conveyances, the peasants stopped each time they passed the nearby lake Ossiach and relieved the cart's load by throwing many of the book-bundles into the water.[28]

The library at Gaming, containing some 20,000 books, was the largest Carthusian monastery library in Europe. After the dissolution in 1782, the Court Library took 15 manuscript books and 106 incunables. Some 12,719 volumes were transported to the university library in Vienna, packed into 79 cases, but between 6,000 and 7,000 books remained in Gaming. Some of them were auctioned off, but thousands of books were given away by the commissioners or left behind and carried off by peasants.[29]

Certain of these horror stories did not go unreported and the authorities did not always turn a blind eye. In 1782, for example, it was reported to Joseph II that manuscripts from the Carthusian monastery Mauerbach (in the province of Lower Austria) had come into private possession. After an examination, it turned out that several books had been overlooked and then auctioned by mistake, together with the bookcase in which they were locked. The government located the unsuspecting buyer and ordered him to return the books.[30] It is at least one example of where the authority tried hard to avoid losses and to remedy things that went wrong.

All these movements and losses of books were carried out against the broader dissolution of the monasteries. The announcement of the dissolution decree in 1782 and Joseph's II church policy in general led Pope Pius VI himself to travel to Vienna and to mount resistance. For a whole month he tried to persuade the emperor to reverse his policies, but without success. Joseph made no concessions. He remained a practising Catholic, in the grace of the church, but at the same time continued to dissolve monasteries. In his propaganda, he even presented the anti-monastic actions as religious reforms. Under such circumstances, resistance would have been a lost cause for the affected monks and nuns. The only practical and relevant resistance was the attempt to hide away books and manuscripts from the commissioners. The Augustinian canons at Ranshofen (Upper Austria), for example, dreamed of a future resurrection of their monastery and hid some of their manuscripts.[31] Such actions were not without risk. 'Whoever administered the economic affairs of a monastery, whether a worldly bailiff or a member of the monastery was obliged to swear to the commissar that no assets had been concealed or diverted. False swearing would expose the individual to prosecution.'[32] In a few cases also, armed peasants tried to prevent civil servants from taking away precious objects from the monastery churches and their treasure chambers. Opposition ended when the civil servants returned accompanied by soldiers.

Paradoxically it was Joseph II himself who saved some monasteries from suppression by reining in extremists such as Johann Valentin Eybel, the ecclesiastical commissioner in Upper Austria. In the years 1784 and 1785 Eybel kept on recommending that the old and rich monastery of St Florian should be dissolved to endow the new bishopric of Linz. The monastery escaped the dissolution with the help of a last-minute-intervention of the Court Consellor Matthias Wilhelm von Haan. Joseph II ordered Eybel never again to raise the question of suppressing the foundation. It was too useful as a provider of parish priests.[33] In Bohemia, the emperor was asked to suppress the rich Premonstratensian house at Strahov on the castle hill in Prague. The canons there built themselves a second 'philosophical' library to match its 'theological' library by using accommodated books from dissolved monasteries. They even placed a bust of Joseph II in the pediment of the new building. As a result, the emperor declared the monastery too useful to destroy.[34]

In total, the closure of approximately one-third of the Austrian monasteries under Joseph II had an enormous effect on both private and public libraries in Austria. The Court Library gained a great number

of splendid medieval manuscripts and incunables. The university libraries built their collections largely from the volumes recovered from the dissolved monastic libraries. Perhaps as important were the large sums of money these libraries made from auctioning off the 'useless' monastic books or from selling them to papermakers. On the other hand, there is no doubt that the dissolution of the monasteries led to the dispersal and outright destruction of numerous collections of books and manuscripts. By and large the authorities seem to have been concerned about preventing theft and destruction. But much was carried out with too much haste. Many civil servants and librarians were put under intolerable strain; and the easy route of giving away the books for their waste paper price often proved too tempting.

It is also important to recognise that the loss of books from the monastic dissolutions went beyond the quantitative. Each monastery library amounted to an irreplaceable cultural inheritance, reflecting centuries of religious and intellectual development not only of the particular monastery but also of the whole province. From a modern perspective, it was an appalling mistake to break up those precious collections and allow the dispersal of the surviving manuscripts and books. Reconstruction of most of the libraries is now impossible. In Croatia, the secularization brought about particularly tragic consequences. Each of the dissolved monastic libraries had many printed volumes in the Croatian language and books written by Croatian authors. As neither the Court Library in Vienna nor the university library in the distant Hungarian town of Pest were interested in these books most of them failed to survive. Eva Verona remarked of the tragedy: 'Es ist klar, daß der Verlust der einheimischen Werke für das kroatische Kultur- und Bibliothekswesen einen besonders schweren Schlag bedeutete.' (It is obvious that the loss of those locally printed works represented a great misfortune for the Croatian libraries and the culture of the country.)[35]

It is hard to estimate the total number of books taken away from the dissolved monasteries between 1782 and 1787. Reported figures exist only for a few provinces, such as Lower Austria (125,000 volumes), the Tyrol (24,000 volumes), and Moravia and Silesia (together 96,000 volumes).[36] By projecting these figures to the monarchical lands as a whole we can assume that between two and two-and-a-half million volumes were confiscated from the monasteries. But even this enormous figure is based on the catalogue schedules and does not include the 'worthless' liturgical manuscript books (breviaries, hymnbooks etc.), spiritual guides, books of homilies, and dogmatic treatises, all just listed

without enumeration or, in most cases, we have to assume, omitted from any cataloguing at all.

Similarly, we will always be unsure of exactly how many of the confiscated volumes were destroyed in the course of the dissolution of the Austrian monasteries. A clue, however, is provided by one surviving estimate for the province of Lower Austria. The director of the Court Library, van Swieten, reported in 1789 that the weight of all the books transported to the Vienna University Library and then officially pulped amounted to 57 tons.[37] Making a cautious projection from the 37 dissolved monasteries of that province to the Habsburg monarchy as a whole, we get the fearful weight of 1,200 tons of pulped books, although, most significantly, even this total does not include the huge number of monastic books that were sold *in situ* to the papermakers.

On 5 December 1788, the Hungarian authorities ordered the preservation of a single copy of each title pulped. This remarkable order, however, was not only far too late for the already pulped books, but it was, in fact, never put into action. In her account of the Croatian monastic libraries Eva Verona remarks: 'Diese Verfügung war ihrer Zeit weit voraus, aber wegen Mangels an zuverlässigem Bibliothekspersonal und bibliographischen Hilfsmitteln leider nicht durchführbar.' (This instruction was far ahead of its time, but unfortunately impracticable for lack of reliable library staff and bibliographical aid.)[38]

Ultimately the books were destroyed not just because the civil servants involved were negligent or corrupt (we shall ignore the estimated number of unreported cases), but because of the primary actions taken in accordance with the fundamental political and philosophical convictions of Joseph's Enlightenment. This has resulted in problematic historical claims. Some historians have gone so far as to claim that the whole action against the monastic libraries was an act of deliberate censorship. As Hermann Hauke remarked of the secularization in Bavaria: 'Es ging also darum, das geistige Potential, das die Klosterbibliotheken darstellten, unter Kontrolle zu bringen und für die Ziele des Staates einzusetzen' (the point was to get the intellectual and spiritual potential represented by the monastic libraries under control and to use it for the state's purposes).[39] A more balanced verdict has been offered by Jeffrey Garrett in his recently published study on the fate of monastic libraries in Central Europe during the Enlightenment period. Drawing on the ambivalence of the German word 'aufheben' (to dissolve) which can mean to destroy as well as to preserve, Garrett concluded that:

> We must observe on the one hand that many thousands of books were destroyed, and the artifactual values associated with individual

copies of books – bindings, provenance remarks, etc. – have been lost forever. On the other hand, however, much of the intellectual and cultural value attached to the content of these works has not only been preserved, but also become more universally available through the centralization and concentration of these resources in Munich, Vienna, and other large libraries.[40]

The verdict could be extended. This essay has tried to assess new evidence of the form and range of the libraries lost by Josephine secularization and, certainly, the lost monastic libraries of the Habsburg lands remain an incalculable privation that continues to haunt not only the accounts of Joseph's rule, but histories of Austria's cultural and intellectual heritage. Nevertheless, many of the destroyed books must have been duplicates, and the monastic libraries that did survive included many of the largest and richest. The recently published four-volume *Handbuch der historischen Buchbestände in Österreich* gives an impressive survey of the history, the size and the significance of 80 monastic libraries in modern Austria.[41] In his essay 'Joseph II and the Monasteries of Austria and Hungary' Derek Beales has pointed to the much more tragic fate of the monasteries in other European countries:

> By contrast, almost everywhere in Western Europe monasteries were eradicated either by the Reformation, by the French Revolution, or under the aegis of Napoleon. Further east, in the Czech Republic for example, many lasted into the twentieth century but succumbed to communist regimes after the Second World War. The almost unique continuity of monastic life in many of the great Austrian foundations was breached only for a few years, during the Nazi regime.[42]

By such standards, at least, the indiscriminate survival of certain Austrian monastic libraries and the preservation of at least some of their contents seems a rare marvel in the otherwise wretched modern history of European monastic libraries.

Notes

1. P. G. M. Dickson, 'Joseph II's Reshaping of the Austrian Church', *Historical Journal*, 36 (1993): 89–114 (p. 101).
2. Elisabeth Kovács, 'Josephinische Klosteraufhebungen 1782–1789', in *Österreich zur Zeit Kaiser Josephs II* (Vienna: Amt der Niederösterreichischen Landesregierung, 1983), pp. 169–73; Ludwig Raber, *Die österreichischen*

Franziskaner im Josefinismus, Maria Enzersdorf: Zentralbibliothek der Franziskaner [1983]; Karl Gutkas, *Kaiser Joseph II: Eine Biographie* (Vienna: Zsolnay, 1989), pp. 303–10; Rudolph C. Blitz, 'The Religious Reforms of Joseph II (1780–1790) and their Economic Significance', *The Journal of European Economic History*, 18: 3 (1989): 583–94; Dickson, 'Joseph II's Reshaping of the Austrian Church', pp. 89–114; Floridus Röhrig, 'Die Klosteraufhebungen Josephs II', in *11.–13. Symposon der Internationalen Kommission für vergleichende Kirchengeschichte Subkommission Österreich* (Vienna: Institut für Kirchengeschichte, 1994), pp. 114–22; T. C. W. Blanning, *Joseph II* (Harlow: Longman, 1994); Derek Beales, 'Joseph II and the Monasteries of Austria and Hungary', in N. Aston, ed., *Religious Change in Europe, 1650–1914: Essays for John McManners* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 161–84.

3. Simon Laschitzer, 'Die Verordnungen über die Bibliotheken und Archive der aufgehobenen Klöster in Österreich', *Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung*, 2 (1881): 401–40 and 'Geschichte der Klosterbibliotheken und Archive Kärntens zur Zeit ihrer Aufhebung unter Kaiser Joseph II', *Carinthia*, 73 (1883): 129–48, 161–87, 193–208.

4. Anton Schubert, 'Die ehemaligen Bibliotheken der von Kaiser Josef II. aufgehobenen Mönchsklöster in Mähren und Schlesien, sowie die der Exjesuiten zu Teschen und Troppau', *Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen*, 17 (1900): 321–36, 401–23, 449–68 (pp. 322–4).

5. Franz Karnthaler, 'Das Schicksal der Tiroler Klosterbibliotheken in den Jahren 1773–1790', *Biblos*, 5 (1956): 123–9; Eva Verona, 'Die Aufhebung der kroatischen Klosterbibliotheken unter Josef II', in: *Festschrift Josef Stummvoll*, ed. by Josef Mayerhöfer and Walter Ritzer, vol. 1 (Vienna: Hollinek, 1970), pp. 439–49; Christine Tropper, 'Schicksale der Büchersammlungen niederösterreichischer Klöster nach der Aufhebung durch Joseph II. und Franz (II) I', *Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung*, 91 (1983): 95–150.

6. Cf. Rudolf Hittmayr, *Der Josefinische Klostersturm im Land ob der Enns* (Freiburg i. B.: Herder, 1907), p. 285; Konrad Schiffmann, *Die Handschriften der öffentlichen Studienbibliothek in Linz* (unpublished manuscript at the Oberösterreichische Landesbibliothek, Linz 1935), pp. 22–5; *Mittelalterliche Bibliothekskataloge Österreichs*, vol. 5: *Oberösterreich*, ed. by Herbert Paulhart (Vienna: Böhlau, 1971), pp. 116–17.

7. Stiftsarchiv St. Florian, Franz Kurz to Michael Ziegler, 9 June 1806. The manuscript mentioned in the letter is still in the Stiftsbibliothek St. Florian (XI 247).

8. I wish to thank Prof. Derek Beales and Prof. James Raven for their valuable comments and suggestions. For Josephinism, see Derek Beales, 'Joseph II. und der Josephinismus', in Helmut Reinalter and Harm Klueting, eds, *Der aufgeklärte Absolutismus im europäischen Vergleich* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2001): 35–53.

9. Kovács, 'Josephinische Klosteraufhebungen 1782–1789', p. 172.

10. Tropper, 'Schicksale der Büchersammlungen niederösterreichischer Klöster', pp. 106–7.

11. Joseph II downgraded many provincial universities (e.g. in Linz, Graz, Innsbruck) to 'Lyceen'. A 'Lyceum' was a preliminary stage of a university generally consisting of only one or two faculties.

12. Laschitzer, 'Die Verordnungen über die Bibliotheken und Archive'.
13. Ibid., p. 431.
14. Schubert, 'Die ehemaligen Bibliotheken der von Kaiser Josef II. aufgehobenen Mönchsklöster', pp. 322–4.
15. Verona, 'Die Aufhebung der kroatischen Klosterbibliotheken', p. 444.
16. Walter Neuhauser, Beiträge zur Bibliotheksgeschichte der Kartause Schnals, *Analecta Cartusiana*, 83 (1980): 48–126.
17. Hittmayr, *Der Josefinische Klostersturm*, pp. 457–8; Schiffmann, *Die Handschriften der öffentlichen Studienbibliothek in Linz*, pp. 16–17; *Mittelalterliche Bibliothekskataloge Österreichs*, vol. 5: Oberösterreich, pp. 66–70. The Linz Public Library (today's Oberösterreichische Landesbibliothek) kept 40 incunables from Mondsee.
18. Karnthaler, 'Das Schicksal der Tiroler Klosterbibliotheken', pp. 125, 128.
19. Schubert, 'Die ehemaligen Bibliotheken der von Kaiser Josef II. aufgehobenen Mönchsklöster', p. 322.
20. Verona, 'Die Aufhebung der kroatischen Klosterbibliotheken', pp. 445, 441f.
21. Karnthaler, 'Das Schicksal der Tiroler Klosterbibliotheken', p. 127.
22. Tropper, 'Schicksale der Büchersammlungen niederösterreichischer Klöster', p. 122.
23. Johann Duellinger, *Catalogus librorum qui publicae auctioni exponentur in Bibliotheca universitatis Oenipontanae VII. Maii et sequent. M.DCC.XCII* (Innsbruck:Wagner, 1792), University Library Innsbruck n. 30.354; cf. Sieglinde Sepp, 'Die Bibliothek entsteht und wächst', in *Vom Codex zum Computer: 250 Jahre Universitätsbibliothek Innsbruck* (Innsbruck: Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum, 1995), p. 42.
24. See Benedikt Wagner, 'Der Religionsfonds versteigert eine alte Stiftsbibliothek', in *Translatio Studii: Manuscript and Library Studies honoring Oliver L. Kapsner* (Collegeville, Minnesota: St John's University Press, 1973), pp. 235–43.
25. Hittmayr, *Der Josefinische Klostersturm*, pp. 214–15.
26. Franz von Krones, *Geschichte der Karl Franzens-Universität in Graz* (Graz: Karl Franzens-Universität, 1886), p. 488.
27. Tropper, 'Schicksale der Büchersammlungen niederösterreichischer Klöster', pp. 106–8.
28. Laschitzer, 'Geschichte der Klosterbibliotheken und Archive Kärntens', pp. 193–7.
29. See Brunhilde Hoffmann, Die Aufhebung der Kartause Gaming, *Analecta Cartusiana*, 58 (1981): 45–8, 91–101.
30. Tropper, 'Schicksale der Büchersammlungen niederösterreichischer Klöster', p. 108.
31. Cf. Kurt Holter, *Buchkunst – Handschriften – Bibliotheken: Beiträge zur mitteleuropäischen Buchkultur vom Frühmittelalter bis zur Renaissance*, ed. by Georg Heilingsetzer and Winfried Stelzer, vol. 2 (Linz: Oberösterreichischer Musealverein 1996), p. 893.
32. Blitz, 'The Religious Reforms of Joseph II', p. 590.
33. Hittmayr, *Der Josefinische Klostersturm*, pp. 253f.
34. Beales, 'Joseph II and the Monasteries of Austria and Hungary', pp. 178f.
35. Verona, 'Die Aufhebung der kroatischen Klosterbibliotheken', p. 449.

36. Tropper, 'Schicksale der Büchersammlungen niederösterreichischer Klöster', p. 121; Karnthaler, 'Das Schicksal der Tiroler Klosterbibliotheken', p. 125; Schubert, 'Die ehemaligen Bibliotheken der von Kaiser Josef II. aufgehobenen Mönchsklöster', p. 322.

37. Tropper, 'Schicksale der Büchersammlungen niederösterreichischer Klöster', p. 122, n. 127.

38. Verona, 'Die Aufhebung der kroatischen Klosterbibliotheken', p. 446.

39. Hermann Hauke, 'Die Bedeutung der Säkularisation für die bayerischen Bibliotheken', in *Glanz und Ende der alten Klöster: Säkularisation im bayerischen Oberland 1803*, ed. by Josef Kirmeier and Manfred Treml (München: Haus der Bayerischen Geschichte, 1991), pp. 87–97 (p. 87).

40. Jeffrey Garrett, 'Aufhebung im doppelten Wortsinn: The Fate of Monastic Libraries in Central Europe, 1780–1810', *Verbum Analecta Neolatina*, 2 (1999): 15–27 (p. 26).

41. *Handbuch der historischen Buchbestände in Österreich*, ed. by Helmut W. Lang, 4 vols (Hildesheim: Olms, 1994–97).

42. Beales, 'Joseph II and the Monasteries of Austria and Hungary', p. 161. For the Nazi policy against Austrian monasteries, see *Österreichs Stifte unter dem Hakenkreuz: Zeugnisse und Dokumente aus der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus 1938 bis 1945*, ed. by Sebastian Bock, *Ordensnachrichten*, 35 (1995): Heft 4A.

9
Lost Royal Libraries and Hanoverian Court Culture

Clarissa Campbell Orr

Anyone visiting the new British Library will be aware that, physically suspended in its stairwell, is the King's Library assembled by George III and sold to the nation by his son, George IV, in 1827 – visible evidence of one Hanoverian monarch's bibliophilia. Yet most other eighteenth-century Hanoverian libraries have been lost, and George III's collecting is only a part of the story.

According to Peter Barber, of the British Library and the authority on George III's personal library collections, the sale of the king's library was mainly the result of George IV's desire to concentrate on his building projects. George hoped that the government would take more kindly to the indebtedness accumulated from his architectural mania if it had the *quid pro quo* of the former king's library. George III's will had left the collection to his favourite and second son, the Duke of York, who was dead by 1827. His other sons, especially the Duke of Clarence, next in line to succeed George IV, were vehemently hostile to their father's collection leaving the royal family, though without necessarily wanting the books for their own interest. Apart from a sense of dynastic possessiveness, the sale also raised constitutional issues. There was no clear separation between state papers and what might be deemed the king's reference material. Did not the sale amount to depriving present and future monarchs of the necessary instruments of government?[1]

The real bibliophile among George III's sons was Augustus, Duke of Sussex, whose poor health prevented him from assuming the military or naval careers of the other royal princes, and who initially aspired to a career in the church. Very much in imitation of his father he amassed a scholarly collection of rare Bibles, as part of a collection totalling 50,000 volumes.[2] Sold after Augustus's death in 1846, the hoard ranks as a lost Hanoverian library, although some items were bought back for

the Royal Collection by George V's consort, Queen Mary. Among George III's daughters, Princess Elizabeth accumulated a considerable library, also sold much later, in the 1860s, and reflecting scientific and literary interests very similar to her mother's.[3]

The whole question of Hanoverian libraries needs to be explored in the wider context of royal patronage of the arts, sciences and literature, and against the shift from the personal collecting habits of monarchs to the creation of national collections which began through Europe after the French Revolution, when the dynastic states of the early modern period gave way to nation-states. The immediately preceding period, between the accession of the Hanoverians in 1714 to the end of the Regency in 1820, will be the chief concern of this chapter. Yet the court culture of the Hanoverians from George I to George III is a relatively neglected subject.[4] John Beattie long ago studied the court of George I, but there has been little follow-up. He was mainly concerned with the personnel and finance of the royal Household and not with the additional question of court culture or royal patronage. George II is one of the most neglected of British monarchs, largely because the historiography begins to shift toward the story of monarch and ministries and away from the court as a focus for political, diplomatic, social, cultural, and fashionable activity.[5] But it may be that George I's court was an anomaly, as he disliked ceremonial, and also had no official wife or young children when he came to Great Britain, and it was left to the Prince and Princess of Wales to provide a royal *family* as part of court life. Recent assessments by Christine Gerrard and Andrew Hanham prompt a reconsideration of court life in George II's reign and highlight Caroline of Ansbach's role in reviving and enhancing court culture.[6]

Although individual studies for the later period exist – for instance of Sir William Chambers, George III's architect[7] – we have not yet begun to look at Hanoverian court culture in a truly systematic way. This is changing, though, and the great resource all court historians now have is the thorough prosopography of royal household officials from the least to the great compiled by Robert Bucholz and Sir John Sainty, and the further lists for the consorts and the household of Frederick and Augusta of Wales available on the Institute for Historical Research website.[8] The only omissions now are the attendants of royal siblings and children. A full picture of Hanoverian libraries and related activities in connoisseurship, scholarship and the education of royal children can only be completed if *all* the adult royal households at any one time are taken into consideration. This has the especial advantage of integrating into the story the contribution made by royal women,

whose patterns of learning and self-improvement fit into a particularly German tradition, underlining the German dimension of the Anglo-Hanoverian monarchy. Tracing lost Hanoverian royal libraries opens a window on to Hanoverian court culture, and its links to the aristocratic families who provided it with courtiers, as well as to people from the middling ranks who were employed for their professional expertise.[9] Given that both political and cultural history in the eighteenth century still tends to underestimate the importance of the monarchy as the fulcrum of political and social life, an avenue which helps us to understand the court better is also an avenue reopening consideration of the institution of the monarchy.[10] These lost libraries do not represent a cultural genocide of the order of magnitude described in other chapters in this book; but they do provide new historical perspectives on an institution that functions evermore frequently in contemporary political debate.

The following offers an outline of the current state of research on Hanoverian lost libraries, drawing heavily on the work of others who have generously allowed me to discuss their work in progress. Of particular interest is the female tradition, from Caroline of Ansbach, consort of George II, to her daughter Princess Anne of Hanover and Orange, the Princess Royal, but allusion is also made to Anne's brothers, Frederick Prince of Wales, and William Duke of Cumberland, respectively father and uncle of George III. Most attention is given to Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, consort of George III. Throughout, my interest is in the social and cultural practices and the intellectual tastes associated with these lost libraries, rather than in material bibliography.

We know next to nothing about the libraries of either George I or George II, though presumably they had them in Hanover. Gottfried Leibniz's role as Historiographer to the House of Brunswick is well known, and the library of the elder branch at Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel remains an invaluable resource to historians. George I was a soldier-prince and diplomat who cut his teeth at the age of fifteen in charge of a company assisting at the relief of the Turkish siege of Vienna. He was also the dedicatee of *La Ligue*, Voltaire's epic poem on Henry IV.[11] The king must have at least owned dynastic histories, and plans and views of military fortifications, and Peter Barber believes that some of this material may yet exist unrecognised and uncatalogued at Windsor.[12]

In a contrast to this apparent bibliographical inactivity which underlines the importance of looking at royal women as well as men for a full picture of a court culture is the example of George I's mother, Sophia

Dorothea, Electress of Hanover, grand-daughter of James I and heiress to the British throne 1701–13. She had the leisure for intellectual pursuits, and conversed with Leibniz on philosophical, theological and ecumenical matters.[13] She was the addressee of the *Letters to Serena* by John Toland, the maverick intellectual and deist, advocate of rational religion and pantheistic interpreter of Newton.[14] It is also important to notice that two of Sophia's unmarried sisters became abbesses, enabling them to pursue a life devoted to cultural pursuits as much as piety. This is an option we will notice again in the story of Hanoverian women and it was adopted by Queen Charlotte in her private retreat at Frogmore. Louise Hollandine shocked her family by running away and converting to Catholicism; Louis XIV rather enjoyed being able to arrange for her to become abbess of Maubisson, to spite the Protestant Hanoverians who were allies of William of Orange in successive coalitions aimed at hindering French power. Meanwhile Louise was able to pursue her talents as a painter during her tenure as abbess.[15] Sophia's other abbess sister was in charge of the Imperial Abbey of Herford, and remained a Lutheran. Usefully for the unmarried royal and noble women of the Holy Roman Empire, the Lutheran church retained female abbeys in semi-secularized form. Their members lived in a community but took no vows and did not have to lead especially austere lives.

Sophia's longevity meant that as Dowager Electress she was able to form a strong bond of friendship with her grandson's bride. George Augustus, electoral prince, Prince of Wales after 1713, and then George II, married Caroline of Ansbach in 1705. With her grandmother-in-law she shared interests in theology and philosophy, and had already refused to convert to catholicism in order to qualify as bride to the Habsburg Archduke Charles, later Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI. This decision made her a popular choice for Hanover-Great Britain, and she retained a taste for theological discussion to the extent that she was suspected of being a free-thinker. Caroline certainly employed a Rational Anglican, Samuel Clarke, as her chaplain, whose views veered perilously close to deism. But the catalogue of her 'lost library' contains only one text by the free-thinker John Toland, and there are no volumes such as the *Life of Spinoza* which would be an indication of true free-thinking sympathies. On the other hand there are many volumes discussing protestant objections to catholicism, explaining the teachings of minority protestants such as the quakers, explicating the doctrines of the Church of England, and exploring the relations between theology and the new natural philosophy of the early eighteenth century, and the tenor of these discussions was to confirm the idea of nature as God's design.[16] There are also many volumes of sermons and of scrip-

tural exegesis. The largest category of books other than divinity and philosophy was history, which included travel, topographical description, and the plans of noteworthy buildings. Peter Barber speculates that the queen's library was really *the* royal library; the queen was purchasing books suitable for the monarchy as a whole. It is otherwise hard to explain why the collection included books on military fortifications, one of which was a book chosen by her from the collection of Hans Sloane. Given that Caroline was offered her pick of Sloane's extensive and varied collection, would she have taken a book on this topic if she were simply building a collection based on her own interests, rather than a collection useful to the monarchy as a whole and its soldier-princes, such as her husband and favourite son, William Duke of Cumberland?[17]

The queen's restored apartments at Hampton Court give us just a glimpse of the physical setting for the queen's theological studies in Britain. In the oratory a reading lectern suggests how her chaplain would have read sermons and services to her, with a book of prayers dedicated to her in 1728 open on the stand. Her private drawing-room is displayed to indicate other interests, with card tables and books of engravings, including one of views of Houghton Hall, home of Sir Robert Walpole.

Before her marriage and settlement in Hanover, Caroline had been brought up at two of the most cultivated courts of the Holy Roman Empire, at Dresden and Berlin. Her mother, Eleonore of Saxe-Eisenach, was widowed when Caroline was three, and she then married John George IV of Saxony. The princely collections in Dresden, including the treasures of the Green Vault, had been among the most lavish in Europe since the Renaissance. Johann Damian Major (1636–93) arranged the collection, founded in the 1580s, according to the latest theories of arrangement. These derived from classical sources, mainly, and stressed organizing objects by type, to include artistic and natural wonders, and to be accompanied by an authoritative catalogue. Ideally such collections were to be housed in a dedicated building, seen as a temple of the Muses. The Kunstkammer at Dresden included tools, scientific instruments and books, and was seen as an important resource for Saxon craftsman, scientists and scholars assisting Saxony's material production.

When Caroline's mother died, her new guardian was the Elector Frederick III of Brandenburg, after 1701 styled the first King of Prussia. Her guardian's consort was Sophia Charlotte of Hanover, sister of George I, and co-patron with her mother Sophia of Leibniz. While the new king in Prussia concentrated on diplomatic aggrandisement, his wife

Figure 9.1   St James's Palace, Queen's Library; an image (by Charles Wild, 1781–1835) of Caroline of Ansbach's library from W. H. Pyne's *Royal Residences* (1817–20), The Royal Collection, 2003 © HM Queen Elizabeth II. Reproduced by permission of the Royal Collection Picture Library.

concentrated on the cultural infrastructure. It was Charlotte who helped give a new elegance to the urban design of Berlin and she was the foundress of its Academy of Sciences. In 1703 the art collection reassembled after the Thirty Years' War by Frederick William the Great Elector, together with antiquities, and exotic rarities, were arranged in new galleries in the Berlin royal palace, which also housed a large library. These continental contexts have been stressed by Joanna Marschner as crucial for understanding Caroline's role as a collector and connoisseur once in Britain.[18]

Caroline's libraries must therefore be seen as part of collections devoted to art, technology and nature, and intended to support these collections, following the continental models. The queen had several libraries. The most important was the one designed for her by Kent at St James's Palace. At Kensington the queen reorganised the picture col-

lection, reassembling what remained of the paintings owned by Charles I, the greatest connoisseur king, including a set of Holbein drawings, creating a Kunstkammer or art gallery; her library there included a Wunderkammer or cabinet of curiosities. Finally, there was her rustic retreat at Richmond, Merlin's cave, also designed by Kent, which had gothic bookcases to which some of her books were moved. Stephen Duck, the 'thresher poet' was made her 'cave-keeper' and was also care-taker of the nearby rustic Hermitage.

In looking at a queen consort's library we must not ignore Caroline's rival, George II's mistress Henrietta Howard. Her exquisite Palladian villa, Marble Hill House, housed a library of almost 900 volumes. One of them was Colen Campbell's *Vitruvius Brittanicus*, for which she had been a subscriber, as she was for Kent's edition of *Designs of Inigo Jones*; she was an informed participant in the designs for her villa. She was also highly regarded for her literary taste by friends such as Pope, Swift, and the Earl of Chesterfield.[19] This example of an intellectually sophis-ticated royal mistress suggests French parallels such as Mme de Montespan, patroness of Racine and La Fontaine in the reign of Louis XIV, and Mme de Pompadour, patroness of the Enlightenment, whose library amounted to over 4,000 volumes, including prints and music scores.[20]

A rival in a different sense to Caroline was her eldest son, Frederick Prince of Wales. As the research of Frances Vivian shows, he was set to be a connoisseur king in the mould of Charles I, while his frenetic acqui-sition and decoration of buildings was repeated in the career of his grandson, George IV. Both shared the fate of Princes of Wales excluded from military careers who became centres of political opposition and poured their energies into connoisseurship while awaiting power. But while Queen Charlotte was indulgently fond of her son George, Queen Caroline seems to have had an aversion to her son Frederick; perhaps they were too alike. Both employed Kent as their architect and garden designer, and both competed to reconstitute the collections of Charles I. Frederick's library was assembled by his chaplain Caspar Wettstein: the collection had a strong bias toward the classics, history, and English and French literature, art and architecture. The mathematician and philosopher Desaguliers had a room at Frederick's home at Kew, the White House, where he had telescopes and other scientific instruments, and where he gave Frederick and a few friends private lectures. Frederick died in 1751 without a will but his draft will left all his books and pictures to Augusta, his wife.[21] Curators at the Royal Collection assume that the books became part of George III's library, but

apparently it is very difficult to identify any specific books that passed from the father to the son: another 'lost library'.[22]

The Hanoverians had notoriously dysfunctional family relations, and in addition to the vexed relationship between Frederick and his parents, much sibling rivalry was apparent. George II preferred his second son, William Duke of Cumberland, who was groomed for a successful military career. The duke's success in suppressing the second Jacobite rising of '45 – he was the 'conquering hero' of Handel's march – has earned him the title Butcher Cumberland. Yet Cumberland was not a thug. Like his mother he was interested in landscape design, and his creation of Virginia Water and the attendant classical landscape was not just for aesthetic purposes, but to provide employment for his discharged soldiers. He employed Paul and Thomas Sandby as military draftsmen and painters of topographical views; and his maps and topographical pictures certainly were incorporated into George III's collection.[23] We would probably take a rather different view of this soldier-prince if Cumberland's Chinese junk had survived, used for fishing expeditions on the lake, and, judging from the sketches, rivalling the most extravagant versions of Chinoiserie to be found in the continental German courts.[24]

Cumberland's elder sister Anne, Princess Royal, was an extremely talented musician, the pupil and patron of Handel. The extent of her financial support for Handel has recently been established by Richard King.[25] She and her brother patronised rival companies of singers. Her eagerness to marry the hunch-backed prince of Orange – a marriage that turned out very happily in personal terms – was partly fuelled by her disinclination to hang around as an unmarried sister of the future king, playing second fiddle to his role as a patron. In the Netherlands she made her court at Leeuwarden a centre of musical excellence, swapping both music and musicians with her cousin and former suitor, Frederick the Great of Prussia. Music historians such as Richard King would dearly love to be able to reconstitute her lost music library, one of the best in eighteenth-century Europe. As to her two unmarried sisters, Amelia and Caroline, unusually, given the good education given them by their mother Caroline with her strong intellectual interests, they apparently had little time for intellectual and artistic culture. They seem to have left no libraries behind them. Caroline enjoyed her invalid status and made it her occupation; but she does not seem to have lain upon her sofa reading books. Amelia was a formidable horse-woman and could out-distance her father on the hunting field.[26] Had these unmarried German princesses actually lived in Germany perhaps they would have

entered a Lutheran convent like Sophia's sisters and devoted themselves to learning or music, or like their cousin Amelia, sister of Frederick the Great. Amelia, who became Abbess of Quedlinburg, was also a talented musician, and *her* lost music library is being traced by Serge Rivière, who has also catalogued her books.[27]

At the time of her death, when her library was sold, Queen Charlotte's collection comprised over 4,000 books in four languages, English, German, French and Italian, with the classics well represented in translation.[28] Her children were offered a choice of volumes from it before the sale. The reason given for its dispersal was that apparently her philanthropic expenditure always outran her income,[29] but it also seems that her library was not perceived as that of a connoisseur; it did not possess rare editions or manuscripts. Rather, it was a library for use.

These uses may be divided into both private and public. It was a library for her edification and pleasure, and especially for the education of her daughters. Its eventual location in her retreat of Frogmore underlines this private character. However as a consort she was also a prestigious figure for literary dedication, connecting her with the highly commercialized system of literary production of late Hanoverian Britain as well as to more traditional methods of literary patronage.[30] In addition, through the personnel associated with her library she was seen as a focus for intellectual endeavours that link her with the Bluestockings in England and also made her a figurehead for a Protestant Enlightenment of Britain and the continent. There were clear links to parallel constellations of intellectual and moral concern in Switzerland, the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark.[31]

How and what did Charlotte read? Alas, few really private papers remain. A handful of diaries at the Royal Archives in Windsor have sparse specific literary references, though one name does stand out – a mention in the entry for 16 January 1794 of the death of Gibbon, noted as an unbeliever. There are also some notes in the archives from her reading of *The Spectator*, and from *La Lycée* (1799), LaHarpe's introduction to French literature.[32] Nonetheless we can infer that the queen was often a conscientious reader, who would read for information, moral instruction, and self-improvement. Charlotte knew French but not English when she came to England, but she was quick to learn her adopted language.

We can gain some light on the way in which Queen Charlotte read by exploring her interest in botany. One book from Queen Charlotte's collection still at the Royal Library, Windsor, is the set of botanical tables compiled by the Earl of Bute and dedicated to her. The set is contained

in a mahogany case with flower painted decorations, done probably by her flower painter, Mary Moser, who had also worked on the decorations at Frogmore. Bute had been appointed by Charlotte's mother-in-law as a kind of mentor to George III when Prince of Wales. He had also been director of the gardens at Kew commenced by George's father and continued by the widowed Augusta. When Bute was ousted from politics, he busied himself with science. He laboured for years over his own botanical tables and in 1784 was given permission to dedicate them to Queen Charlotte, noting that the work was composed 'solely for the Amusement of the Fair Sex under the Protection of your Royal name'.[33]

The association of botany with female cultivated leisure hinted at in this dedication was a real one, and the 'amusement' which has been examined very skilfully by Anne Shteir was not trivial but serious and systematic.[34] One of the gains to be had from researching Charlotte's lost library is the way it opens out into a consideration of the queen's friends and their overlapping patronage networks. Among the royal couple's closest friends was the leading female collector, connoisseur and scientific amateur of her day, the Duchess of Portland (1715–85). She was the daughter of the noted bibliophile, the second Earl of Oxford, whose manuscript collection was to become part of the new British Museum. At the Duchess's death, when her collections were auctioned, they amounted to over 4,000 lots, in categories including collections of minerals, fossils, shells, insects, birds, and their nests and eggs.[35] The Duchess's household, which included the Anglo-Saxon scholar Elizabeth Elstob, rescued from obscurity and made governess to the daughters of the house, was the matrix in which Elizabeth Montagu, the Queen of the Bluestockings, developed her own literary leanings and learnt how a household could become a centre for female intellectuality.[36] The friendship of the queen, the Duchess of Portland, and their mutual protégé Mrs Delany is one way the queen's links to the Bluestockings can be plotted.[37] Another Bluestocking link is the queen's acquaintance with Elizabeth Carter, to whom she lent German books.[38]

A protégé of the Portlands was the clergyman naturalist John Lightfoot, (1735–88), who was appointed domestic chaplain to the widowed Duchess in 1767. Lightfoot was principally involved with arranging and cataloguing her natural history collections. When Lightfoot died George III bought his herbarium for the queen and it was installed at Frogmore. When it needed repair the task was given to the botanist J. E. Smith, author of the thirty-six-volume *English Botany* and a co-founder with Lightfoot of the Linnaean Society.[39] Women were not

formal members of the society, but their botanical interests were nour-
ished by the lectures Smith gave at his house in Chelsea, and which the
Duchess of Portland, among others, attended.

Once Smith was working at Frogmore, the queen asked him to provide
some private sessions for her and the princesses. His account of these
occasions suggests the methodical attention Charlotte gave to her
botanical studies. The repair of the herbarium, he explained,

> led to his frequent invitation as a visitor at Frogmore, and to a regular
> course of conversations, rather than lectures, on botany and zoology,
> which her majesty, and the Princesses Augusta honoured with their
> diligent attention; the queen regularly taking notes of every lecture
> which she read over aloud at its conclusion, to prevent mistake. . . .
>
> The plan of this exemplary mother, on which she has often been
> heard to decant, was, in the education of her royal offspring, to open
> as many resources to them as possible, in a variety of studies and pur-
> suits; out of which they might subsequently make their own choice,
> and thus be independent of circumstances for occupation and
> amusement.[40]

Smith's cordial relations to the royal family and the guided reading in
botany he provided were however severely strained when it became
apparent that he was a critic of the Bourbon monarchy.[41]

Charlotte was someone who hated to waste time, so some of her
reading was done by listening to another read out loud to her when she
was being formally dressed and coiffeured. Indeed she appointed
'Readers' who had a stipend in her household to do this. One of them,
Jean-André DeLuc, a retired watchmaker and scientific enthusiast from
Geneva, helped foster her scientific study as well. In 1782 DeLuc helped
make arrangements for Mme de Genlis, the childrens' novelist and royal
governess to the Orléans branch of the royal family, to visit Windsor,
and she described DeLuc's duties this way:

> It is well-known that in general the title of reader to a prince is merely
> an honorary title; but the Queen of England really loved reading, and
> at Windsor, where that princess lived in complete privacy, M. DeLuc
> was daily summoned to read for three or four hours; he always found
> the queen alone in her cabinet, and read while she embroidered or
> worked tapestry . . . he was constantly on his legs in one spot, reading
> for three or four hours, as I have stated; and the queen listened and
> embroidered tranquilly, without paying any attention to the painful
> situation in her unhappy reader.[42]

As a scientist, DeLuc was developing a critique of geology and what we would now call cultural anthropology. DeLuc was concerned that the circle of encyclopédists in Paris, including his friend Rousseau, was giving a mistaken direction to theories of when human beings first appeared on the globe. These were not in harmony with the Scriptural account, and were liberally and not literally interpreted. DeLuc's critique and exposition of his own geological theories was published in successive editions from 1778, dedicated to Queen Charlotte, and explicitly described her as a pious monarch who would welcome this enlightened and Christian version of earth's history.[43] DeLuc also connected Queen Charlotte with the Protestant continental Enlightenment in other ways. He introduced to the royal household another Reader, Mme de la Fite, the Hamburg-born widow of a Dutch pastor. She and her husband had been editors of a Dutch-based review journal *Bibliothèque des Sciences et Beaux Arts*, whose editorial policy was to provide critiques of Deist works. Mme de La Fite taught the princesses German, wrote playlets and morally instructive dialogues dedicated to them, and also translated Hannah More into French, and works by the Protestant moralists Gellert and Lavater. One of her most interesting translations from German is of the memoirs of Munther, the Danish court chaplain, who had effected the conversion of Struensee, the Danish favourite and lover of Charlotte's sister-in-law, Caroline Matilda, Queen of Denmark. The spectacular mistakes of poor Caroline Matilda – she narrowly escaped execution for adultery – only threw into relief Charlotte's success as a virtuous, conscientious, and intelligent consort and mother.[44]

A number of books in Queen Charlotte's library testify to her interest in education, and there can be no doubt that the library served as a rich educational resource for her six daughters, who were all educated at home. The queen was what we would now call a lifelong learner who educated herself alongside her daughters: Frances Burney noted that 'the Princesses have no masters except the *maître de danse*, from whom she does not occasionally receive instructions – so indefatigable and humble is her love of knowledge'.[45] Sarah Trimmer, the Beatrix Potter of her day, whose *History of the Robins* was reprinted right up to the 1960s, had connections to the royal family through her father Joshua Kirby, Clerk of the King's Works at Kew and teacher of perspectival drawing to George and Charlotte. Nearly all Trimmer's twelve children had royal godparents and her stories and Scriptural commentaries were dedicated to various members of the royal family. She also advised the queen on the running of charity schools. Queen Charlotte lent several of her books to Fanny Burney.[46] Mme de Genlis was a friend of Mme de

la Fite, and had a high opinion of Charlotte as a monarch and mother; and this was reciprocated when Charlotte strongly recommended to her widowed brother Charles of Mecklenburg-Strelitz that he bring up his daughters according to Mme de Genlis's principles.[47] Following through these women's connections to Charlotte's library offers new insight into the educational literature of royal courts throughout Europe, either sponsored by Enlightened rulers in their educational projects or dedicated to them.[48]

The queen was a talented keyboard player and the music at court was supported mainly by her Household budget. It was natural as well as prestigious for Charles Burney to win permission to dedicate his encyclopaedic world history of music to Queen Charlotte, with the dedication composed by Samuel Johnson (who had advised the king on the arrangement of his library). Inspired alike by the famous Diderot/D'Alembert *Encyclopédie* and by Johnson's *Dictionary*, Burney's history was the most significant work of the English Enlightenment. Its dedication underlines the significance of Charlotte's public role as a figurehead.[49]

Modern readers are likely to be more aware of the fame of Burney's daughter Frances, whose time as the Queen's Second Keeper of the Robes was unhappy, debilitating, and inimical to her writing talents. But the queen did not want the novelist to be worn out by menial tasks; she wanted her as a kind of Reader, too, just as Burney herself believed.[50] The problem for both the queen and Burney was that she was insufficiently high in rank to be given a courtier position which would have highlighted her literary importance; there was no obvious vacancy in the royal schoolroom and one had instead occurred in the royal wardrobe.

The Diary contains frequent references to the books and occasions when she acted as Reader. Burney liked discussing books with the queen: 'the excellence of her understanding and acuteness of her observation never fail to make all discourse with her lively and informing'.[51] Sometimes the queen read aloud to Burney rather than vice versa, for instance with *Observations and Reflections on France, Italy and Germany* by Burney's friend Mrs Thrale: 'she loves reading aloud, and in this work finds me an able commentator'.[52] This mutual reading was especially consoling to the queen during the first weeks of the king's frightening illness of 1788, which was taken to be madness but was almost certainly porphyria. The queen also consulted Burney on the suitability of reading material. The Bluestocking Cornelia Knight, a protégé of Johnson, wanted to dedicate her novel *Dinarbas* – a continuation of Johnson's

Rasselas to the queen; Burney was able to say that it was suitable for the princesses to read. On the other hand she advised against *John Bull*, then attributed to Swift but probably by Arbuthnot.[53]

It was a useful marketing strategy for authoresses making a debut in the competitive late Georgian literary market to dedicate books to the queen if they could. Burney's profits, about £2,000 from *Camilla* which was so dedicated, were enough to enable her to build a small house for herself and her husband, Camilla Cottage, near to the home of Frederica Lock, daughter of Sir Luke Schaub who had advised Frederick Prince of Wales on his picture collecting. Helen Maria Williams dedicated her first book, a volume of poems, to Charlotte, but progressed in her career to become a member of the *avant garde* circle welcoming the French Revolution, settling in France, and writing successive accounts of the Revolution from a liberal perspective.

The queen seems to have acquired her books through various means. When she was a young woman sitting for her portrait to Allan Ramsay, who spoke German, they discussed books and he got some from Germany for her.[54] In her correspondence with her brother Charles there is frequent reference to books she wants from Germany or which she recommends to him.[55] At Windsor, she had a maid who looked for books for her on the town's bookstalls and retrieved them for her. She also had an official librarian, Edward Harding, who looked after the books at Frogmore. With his brother Sylvester he had been a bookseller and specialist in prints by luminaries such as Bartolozzi. The queen's scrapbook index of prints of her favourite actors and actresses is one of the few items from her library still in the library at Windsor; several of the engravers working for the Hardings as well as Sylvester himself were failed actors.[56] Frogmore also possessed a printing press and the queen was conscientious in obtaining a licence in Harding's name. The few items printed include poems by Cornelia Knight, who successfully played down her friendship with Emma Hamilton and Nelson to become a Lady Companion to the queen and her daughters.

The solace and pleasure given to Queen Charlotte by her library and her books can be seen in a personal glimpse of her on a sunny summer day, when in August 1803 she wrote to her brother Charles, conjuring up a picture of her pastoral idyll, 'J'ai passé les matins en Companie de mes filles à Frogmore, mon petit Paradis Terrestre, en nous amusent avec une bonne lecture, y travaillant autour d'un grande Table dans le jardin sous l'ombre des beaux arbres & moyennant quoi la temps s'est passé plus vitesse que nous n'l'avons même souhaite'. [I've been spending the mornings in the company of my daughters at Frogmore, my little

Earthly Paradise, amusing ourselves with a good read, working there around a large table in the garden under the shade of some beautiful trees, and marvelling that the time goes by much more quickly than we would have wished.][57]

When these daughters wrote to their brother the Prince Regent they referred rather less enthusiastically to Frogmore as a nunnery.[58] Instead, the queen was modelling her rustic retreat on the lines of the German Protestant nunneries already mentioned; before her marriage Charlotte had been a canoness at Herford, and had probably not expected to marry at all but spend her life there, as she was the younger daughter of a relatively poor cadet duke of the Mecklenburg dynasty. Charlotte's lost library therefore connects her to this German institution for royal and noble spinsters. But bibliophiles today, who even in the age of electronic retrieval find it blissful to be in a library, would doubtless prefer to think of Charlotte's library and its setting as a paradise lost.

Notes

1. I am extremely grateful to Peter Barber for discussing this with me and for showing me his unpublished study 'Royal Geography: The Development and Destiny of George III's Geographical Collections'. See also John Brooke, 'The Library of George III', *Yale University Library Gazette*, 52 (1978): 33–45.

2. *Bibliotheca Sussexiana: A Descriptive Catalogue . . . of the Manuscripts and Printed Books . . . in the Library of HRH the Duke of Sussex*, 2 vols (London, 1827–39).

3. Roger Fulford, *Royal Dukes* (London, Collins, 1973); I am grateful to the staff of the Royal Library, Windsor, for making available their copy of *A Catalogue of the Valuable and Choice Library of HRH The Princess Elizabeth* (London, 1863).

4. John M. Beattie, *The English Court in the Reign of George I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967).

5. Most recently, John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Harper Collins, 1997), continues to minimise the role of the court in cultural and social matters.

6. For George I, see Ragnhild Hatton, *George I, Elector and King* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978). On Caroline of Ansbach, see Christine Gerrard, 'Queens-in-waiting: Caroline of Anspach and Augusta of Saxe-Gotha as Princesses of Wales' in Clarissa Campbell Orr, ed., *Queenship in Britain 1660–1837: Royal Patronage, Court Culture and Dynastic Politics* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002); and Andrew Hanham, 'Caroline of Brandenburg-Ansbach and the "Anglicisation" of the House of Hanover', in Clarissa Campbell Orr, ed., *Queenship in Europe 1660–1815*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming 2004.

7. John Harris and Michael Snodin, eds, *Sir William Chambers: Architect to George III* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).

8. R. O. Bucholz and J. C. Sainty, *Officials of the Royal Household 1660–1837*, 2 vols (London: University of London: Institute of Historical Research, 1997); Institute for Historical Research, *History: The Website*, http://www.ihrinfo.ac.uk/office/index.html.

9. Some of these patronage networks are explored in Clarissa Campbell Orr, 'Queen Charlotte as Patron: Some Intellectual and Social Contexts', *The Court Historian*, 6:3 (2001): 183–212.

10. The opportunities and challenges of studying Anglo-Hanoverian court culture, and its intersection with the history of women and gender, are discussed more fully in Clarissa Campbell Orr, 'Introduction: Court Studies, Gender and Women's History', in Campbell Orr, ed., *Queenship in Britain*.

11. Hatton, *George I*.

12. Barber, 'Royal Geography'.

13. Maria Kroll, *Sophia, Electress of Hanover* (London: Gollancz, 1973).

14. See Margaret C. Jacob, *The Newtonians and the English Revolution* (Hassocks: Harvester Press, 1976).

15. Christopher A. Kerstjens, 'A Princely Painter: Princess Louise Hollandine of the Palatinate, Abbess of Maubisson', in *The Court Historian*, 4: 2 (1999): 161–6.

16. BM Add MSS 11511. Thirty-six pp. of the 216–pp. handwritten catalogue are occupied with Divinity, a further six with Moral Philosophy, and nine with Natural Philosophy. History occupied 101 pages (including a section on Ecclesiastical History). The Toland text was *Nazaremus: or Jewish, Gentile & Mahometan Christianity*.

17. Barber 'Royal Geography'.

18. This and the next paragraph are based on Joanna Marschner, 'Queen Caroline of Ansbach and the European Princely Tradition', in Campbell Orr, ed., *Queenship in Britain*.

19. Julius Bryant, *Henrietta Howard, Woman of Reason* (London: English Heritage, 1988).

20. On Mme de Montespan, the most recent English study is Lisa Hilton, *Athénaïs: The Real Queen of France* (London: Little, Brown, 2002); on Mme de Pompadour, Elise Goodman, *The Portraits of Mme de Pompadour: Celebrating the Femme Savante* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000). The libraries of French royal and aristocratic collectors from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries are discussed by Ernest Quentin-Bauchart, *Les Femmes Bibliophiles de France*, 2 vols (Paris, 1886).

21. The discussion on Frederick is based on Frances Vivian, revised by Roger White, *Frederick, The Connoisseur Prince* (provisional title), forthcoming from Edward Mellen. I am indebted to Dr Vivian and her literary executor Jane Clark for letting me see this in manuscript. See also Kimerly Rorschach, 'Frederick, Prince of Wales as Collector and Patron', *Walpole Society*, 55 (1989–90) [1993]: 1–76.

22. I am indebted to Peter Barber for this information.

23. For the Sandbys' work for William Augustus and his nephew, William, Duke of Cumberland, see Jane Roberts, *Views of Windsor: Watercolours by Paul and Thomas Sandby*, ex. cat. (London: Merrell Holberton, 1995).

24. Rex Whitworth, *William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland* (London: Leo Cooper, 1992).

25. Richard M. King, 'Anne of Hanover and Orange: Connoisseur and Practitioner of the Arts', in Campbell Orr, ed., *Queenship in Britain*, and Veronica Baker-Smith, A *Life of Anne of Hanover, Princess Royal* (Leiden, 1995).

26. Veronica Baker-Smith, 'The Daughters of George II: Marriage Choices and Dynastic Politics', in Campbell Orr, ed., *Queenship in Britain*.

27. Personal communication from Serge Rivière, University of Limerick: Serge Rivière and A. Volmer, *The Library of an Enlightened Princess* (Berlin: Verlag, 2002).

28. *A Catalogue of the Genuine Library, Prints, and Books of Prints, of An Illustrious Personage, Lately Deceased* (London, 1819).

29. For the sale, described as a 'bibliographical tragedy', see Olwen Hedley, *Queen Charlotte* (London: John Murray, 1975), p. 304.

30. For the coexistence of patronage and commercialism, see Dustin Griffin, *Literary Patronage in Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

31. See Clarissa Campbell Orr, 'Queen Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Queen of Great Britain and Electress of Hanover: Northern Dynasties and the Northern Republic of Letters' in Campbell Orr, ed., *Queenship in Europe*.

32. Royal Archives Windsor, RA GEO/Add 43/1–3; 43/10; 43/18.

33. Cited by Hedley, *Charlotte*, p.138. I am grateful to the Librarian of the Royal Library, Windsor, for permission to inspect the set of tables, which are still in their original case. See also David P. Miller, '"My Favourite Studdys": Lord Bute as a Naturalist', in Karl W. Schwiezer, ed., *Lord Bute: Essays in Re-interpretation* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988).

34. Anne Shteir, *Cultivating Women, Cultivating Science: Flora's Daughters and Botany in England 1760–1860* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1996).

35. Queen Charlotte's library included the catalogue for this collection, sold at the Duchess' death.

36. Sylvia Harcstark Myers, *The Bluestocking Circle* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1990).

37. The queen's botanical interests are discussed more fully in Campbell Orr, 'Charlotte, Scientific Queen', in Campbell Orr, ed., *Queenship in Britain*.

38. This connection was furthered by the fact that the son of Lady Charlotte Finch, Governess to the royal princesses, George, 9th Earl of Winchilsea, was Governor of the Cinque Ports, and resident in Deal, Carter's home town. On June 8 1782 the queen wrote to Lady Charlotte Finch at Deal Castle 'Mrs Carter I hope is less troubled with Her Head Aeck since she is settled in her Native Air . . .' Royal Archives Windsor, RA GEO/Add 15/8160.

39. *English Botany*, 1790–1814, 36 vols, illustrated by James Sowerby.

40. Abraham Rees, ed., *New Cyclopaedia or Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences . . . Biography, Geography and History*, 45 vols (London, 1802–20), vol. 21, (1819), entry on John Lightfoot by J.E. Smith.

41. See Campbell Orr, 'Charlotte'.

42. Mme de Genlis, *Memoirs*, vol. 3, p. 285, note; London, 12 vols, 1825.

43. *Lettres physiques et morales sur les Montagnes et sur l'Histoire de la Terre, addressées à la Reine de la Grande Bretagne* (The Hague, 1778).

44. Campbell Orr, 'Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz'.

45. *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay*, ed. by Charlotte Barrett, 6 vols (London: Macmillan, 1904), 3: 72.

46. *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay*, 3: 110, 327–8.

47. Letter of Queen Charlotte to Charles of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, 4. 3–2, Hausarchiv des Mecklenburg-Strelitzochen Fürstenhauses/Briefsammlung Nr. 874, Landeshauptarchiv Schwerin. De Genlis paid public tribute to Queen Charlotte in her novel *Rash Vows* (London, 1799).

48. Some aspects of this educational literature for royal children, especially princesses, and for the courts of George II and George III, is explored in Clarissa Campbell Orr, 'Aristocratic Feminism, The Learned Governess and the Republic of Letters' in Sarah Knott and Barbara Taylor, eds, *Women and Enlightenment: A Comparative History* (Palgrave Macmillan, forthcoming 2005).

49. Charles Burney's aims in his *General History of Music* are explored by Roger Lonsdale, *Dr. Charles Burney* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965). Despite this book's importance to the English Enlightenment, it is barely discussed in Brewer, *Pleasures of the Imagination*, or in Roy Porter, *Enlightenment: Britain and the Creation of the Modern World* (London: Allen Lane, 2000).

50. 'From the time that the queen condescended to desire to place me in imme-diate attendance upon her own person, I had always secretly concluded she meant me for her English reader.' *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay*, 3: 5.

51. *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay*, 4: 100.

52. *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay*, 4: 300.

53. For the queen and Cornelia Knight, see Roger Fulford, ed., *The Auto-biography of Cornelia Knight* (London: William Kimber, 1960); for Burney's disapproval of Swift, *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay*, 3: 361.

54. Alastair Smart, *Allan Ramsay, Painter, Essayist and Man of the Enlightenment* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

55. For example, as soon as regular communication with Mecklenburg was restored after Prussia joined the allies, the queen was desperate to receive some fresh German books from her brother: Letters from Charlotte to Charles of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, 2 Aug. 1813 and 26 Nov. 1813, 4.3–2, Hausarchiv des Mecklenburg-Strelitzochen Fürstenhauses/Briefsammlung Nr. 5/4, Landeshauptarchiv Schwerin.

56. 'A Catalogue of Theatrical Portraits Collected by me in the Years 1808–9', Royal Library, Windsor Castle. For the Hardings, see *DNB*.

57. Letter from Queen Charlotte to Prince Charles of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, 3 Aug. 1803, 4.3–2, Hausarchiv des Mecklenburg-Strelitzochen Fürstenhauses/ Briefsammlung Nr. 880, Landeshauptarchiv Schwerin.

58. Hedley, *Queen Charlotte*, p. 263.

10
Revolutionary Seizures and their Consequences for French Library History

Dominique Varry

This chapter considers the long-term consequences of actions against libraries originally taken under the exigencies of revolution.[1] Political decisions of the revolutionary governments of the final years of the eighteenth century culminated in the destruction of a French diaspora of private libraries, some of which had been opened to the public, little by little, during the previous centuries. In the space of fourteen years, from 1789 until 1803, millions of volumes were dispersed, raided, or otherwise jumbled up. At exactly the same time, other central directives aimed to ensure that public libraries were opened and made accessible to the greatest possible number of people.

These open-access ambitions were achieved only slowly during the nineteenth century, but today the organization of the French civic library network is broadly the result of operations begun in the revolutionary years. The French librarian still labours under both the benefits and the confinements of measures bestowed by the Revolution. There are several paradoxes here. The first is that the nationalisation of the libraries was the consequence of fiscal and political measures which had nothing to do with books. The second is that libraries put 'under the hand of the Nation' were with very great difficulty organised into collections fully open to the public. A third and final problem concerns the way in which new types of librarianship developed during what was in fact only a back-door process of professionalisation.

The first years of the French Revolution were characterised by three waves of property seizures, all of which included books as proper objects for surrender. Each seizure resulted from a very particular political context and struck at clearly identified categories of owners. Books and libraries were again targets when the later revolutionary years of the

Consulate and of the Empire launched 'artistic conquests' against defeated, occupied and annexed countries.

The first tranche of seizures,[2] establishing what historians have called the 'biens nationaux de première origine', was the result of decrees issued between 2 and 4 November 1789. Under these decrees all the possessions of monastic communities were 'put at the disposal of the Nation'. The measures resulted in the sales which began in May 1790. The next seizures, 'de seconde origine', were of the possessions of individuals, both laymen and clerics who left France as 'emigrés' or 'déportés'. These seizures began in 1792. The flight of the émigrés, which had begun in July 1789, offered obvious political and military dangers. As a result, 1792 was punctuated by a succession of confiscations which peaked in the summer, at the same time as the abolition of the monarchy and the proclamation of the Republic. A decree of 9 February 1792 first placed the possessions of the émigrés 'under the national hand', although the seizures in fact became effective only under a further series of promulgations issued between 27 July and 6 September. Once seized, the 'national possessions' were to be put up for sale. The third wave of seizures began on 15 September 1793, when the universities, academies and corporations of the *ancien régime* were abolished, and their possessions acquired by the state. On 18 September, another decree declared the confiscation of the possessions of political suspects and condemned people. Finally, the law of the 29–30 vendémiaire year II (20–21 October 1793) declared as émigrés those clerics who had refused the oath of 'liberté-égalité' and had been obliged to leave France. Their property was now also seizable.

The so-called 'artistic conquests' were effected later, and although most of the spoils of war were given back after 1815, some of the seized books have remained in national collections to this day. Two great phases mark this movement. The first, directed at the Austrian Netherlands and territories of the left bank of the Rhine, in the years 1794–95, proved somewhat anarchic. With the Italian campaign,[3] a new phase opened in which Paris, capital of the 'Great Nation', was promoted as the central repository for the best pieces of European art. In 1797, Bonaparte declared that he wanted to make Paris 'the richest deposit of human knowledge'. While some artists, like Quatremère de Quincy, condemned this practice in 1796,[4] others welcomed it. According to Marie-Pierre Laffitte, about 1,600 manuscripts (90 per cent of which were restored in 1815), together with countless printed volumes, were brought back from Italy. Later, other art objects were taken from Egypt and the rest of Europe.

These seizures and purchases were based on lists drawn up after the examination of library and museum catalogues, while various mechanisms were adopted to accomplish and legitimise the 'artistic conquests'. Peace treatises stipulated the number of books and manuscripts that every state had to surrender. Demands were made for 'gifts' or exchanges – most notably with Mainz.[5] So-called 'missionaries' were sent with catalogues that had been annotated to facilitate the seizures, and the missionaries included the young Henri Beyle, later known as Stendhal, who was despatched to the great library at Wolfenbüttel. Also used were a dubious cast of intermediaries and touts, who dealt in bibliographical loot or at least indicated where raids might best be made. One of the most notorious of these dealers was the ex-Benedictine monk Dom Jean-Baptiste Maugérard, active in Germany between 1802 and 1806.

At the head of the national operations to retrieve the foreign spoils were Dominique Vivant Denon (1747–1825), director of the Louvre Museum, and Joseph Van-Praët (1754–1837),[6] acting for the Bibliothèque nationale. Still surviving in the archives of the Bibliothèque nationale are the lists of intended confiscations in Great Britain and Greece following their conquest. After 1815 and the Restoration, Van-Praët also succeeded in hiding some important seized volumes as well as returning to their country of origin some second-best copies. During Labrouste's rebuilding of the Bibliothèque nationale begun in 1859 and continuing until his death in 1875, various of Van-Praët's hiding places were discovered. It is, today, impossible to be sure of the extent of these seizures. The only available figures are those that Marie-Pierre Laffitte gave for Italy, in a masterly but sadly unique study.

When confiscations were first considered, books were not singled out. It was only in the aftermath of the first seizure edicts of November 1789 that clerical appropriations made books and libraries conspicuous. Within days, on 14 November 1789, another decree ordered all monasteries and convents to deposit their library catalogues with local administrations. This, however, appears not to have been obeyed, except by the canons of Sainte-Geneviève of Paris. Other edicts followed, ordering the municipalities on 20 March 1790, and then the districts one month later, to draw up inventories of 'nationalised' possessions. At first, all the seizures were conducted under formal procedures. A room-by-room search was recorded in a more or less detailed inventory, before the rooms were sealed. Corruption, however, was soon in evidence. To frustrate the commissioners, objects were removed before and after official visitations and various objects were falsely claimed as their belong-

Table 10.1 Seizures of French libraries, 1791–92

Destroyed libraries of the 83 départements (biens de première origine, 1789, religious communities)	February 23 1791 (research on monastic inventories remains unfinished)	4,168,439 printed books 25,973 manuscripts 37 medal and classical antiquity cabinets
Reports on the volumes of 102 districts (of 545) from 40 départements (biens de première origine)	September 30 1791	1,489,322 printed books 4,377 manuscripts
Catalogues sent to the Bureau de la bibliographie générale (biens de première origine *and* seconde origine, 1792, lay and clerical émigrés)	Year III (dates unspecified)	2,348 book collection inventories 884,127 titles, at least

ings by zealous servants. Other successful obstructions were practised by the owners' mothers or wives, who claimed property to be part of their dowry or as a portion in a property separation or a convenient divorce. Perhaps as a consequence of this, or at least in recognition of the special value of books, later decrees specified intentions with regard to both the fate and the protection of books. The decree of 23–28 October 1790 on the national properties for sale, for example, excluded objects like weapons, lint and books. The long technical instruction of 15 December 1790 gave great detail about the seizure – and conservation – of manuscripts, charters, and printed books. A further decree of 10 October 1792 prohibited the sale of books, scientific or artistic objects belonging to émigrés.

Unfortunately we lack a national study which both contextualises and offers estimates of the total number of seizures. Particular monographs do consider the appropriations for Paris,[7] the Pyrénées,[8] the South-East,[9] Belfort,[10] and various other regions such as the Loire,[11] Bas-Rhin,[12] and the Eure.[13] But apart from these, all we have are three unreliable statistical series published in volume three of the *Histoire des bibliothèques françaises*,[14] each of which appears seriously to underestimate the number of impounded books and manuscripts.

Perhaps the best way to appreciate the volume and range of the seizures is to examine the history of two départements, the Eure and

the Bas-Rhin. In Eure, the decree of February 1791 resulted in the confiscation of 31,133 printed volumes and 102 manuscripts. The decree of September is silent for this département, but recent research has suggested a total of 80,364 printed volumes (including 53,530 from the monastic communities), together with at least 282 manuscripts. In the case of Bas-Rhin, the decree of February 1791 targeted 24,637 printed volumes and 651 manuscripts. The decree of September also ignored this département, but Sylvie Gueth's calculations for the religious communities alone suggest 70,225 printed volumes and 1,551 manuscripts.

It is misleading to venture much beyond these summaries. The return of books under the Convention thermidorienne and later under the Consulat, in favour of the émigrés, transported convicts, and their heirs, was carried out with little order or record, and certainly, there are no accompanying book lists. Domestic inventories are also often terse – certainly in comparison to the later ones drawn up for the literary repositories considered below. In spite of the unequal quality of the domestic inventories, however, they do offer a unique type of documentation.[15] They allow us to visualise places of residence and libraries at a particular moment, and to look back at how the collections might have been arranged. The libraries of the monastic communities often ranged over centuries, while private collections might represent the accumulations of several generations.[16] In addition to recovering the state of libraries, such sources can also be used to follow the approach first developed by Daniel Roche on the cultural history of clothing in the eighteenth century.[17]

Ever since the first seizures, and the rediscovery of monastic libraries, various proposals for the future of the books have been aired in pamphlets published by individuals and by different local authorities. A particular and very public debate focused on the use of the so-called 'national books'.[18] Many different kinds of writer eulogised about making use of the new bibliographical wealth to spread enlightenment to the people, and to lift French men and women out of ignorance and obscurantism. In January 1794, for example, two members of the Convention wrote of Corsica that 'it is necessary that enlightenment arrives there by torrents'. For their part, the administrators of the Maine-et-Loire wrote to the same assembly, in October 1792:

> Legislators, we ask you, we ask you in the strongest terms to allow us to collect together, in a public establishment, all the books which in our department are at the disposal of the Nation. All our fellow

citizens demand it of you as a benefaction; it would be a joy for us to ensure for our people a monument where, by the reading of Plato, of Sidney and of Rousseau, they might be able to be strengthened in the love of good laws, and in the hatred of tyrants.[19]

Individual suggestions multiplied. In 1795, in his *Overviews on the Organization of Rural Instruction in France*,[20] the former duc de Béthune-Charost, an agriculturalist and member of the Black People Friends Society, recommended the creation of a model farm in every canton, each endowed with a small agricultural library. Another project, and the most serious (although ultimately unsuccessful), was that proposed by the last royal librarian. He wanted to build a network based on one national library in each département, all of which were to be linked to the national library in Paris. However inchoate, the debate was at least considering the future of library organisation throughout the country.

Once the seizures had been made, books were moved from the store-houses to make ready for sale. Volumes were gathered in premises pompously called 'dépôts littéraires', which had been opened in each of 545 districts of the country. The keeper of the Belfort dépôts, the abbé Bevalet, penned a somewhat apocalyptic picture of what these dépôts might be:

Imagine a formless heap of more than ten thousand volumes of every size, thrown into baskets and jumbled together in the middle of a bare room, without any means of allowing me to examine them. Imagine half, or more, of these books torn from the former Capuchin and Franciscan friars of Thann, arriving during a driving rain, in coal wagons, uncovered, piled up on high without order, almost wet through, giving off a noxious smell, and saved from complete decay only by my spreading them with great (and sickening) difficulty over some faggots and returning to them a hundred times, and then by putting them under a stone-press to restore them to their original form. Given the depth of this pollution, I required several months to dry them out. Most of the books, unopened for more than a century, gave off poisonous fumes which constantly obliged me to go out of the room, and which left me feeling the mortal blows for a long time. Several times I was brought back home unconscious, suffering from the cruellest of stomach pains. . . .[21]

These literary dépôts were transmuted to 'district public libraries' by a decree of 8 pluviose year II (27 January 1794). Theoretically the libraries were open to the public, but in most cases they remained stores where books were piled up and only gradually put in order. It is significant that article 4 of the decree proclaimed that 'the libraries of the great municipalities are maintained for the public; nothing more will be developed for the present'.

In fact, only the libraries established by private donation well before the Revolution, and then enriched by the seizures, really succeeded in welcoming readers. And even here, the Lakanal law of February 1795 served to hinder the process by creating secondary schools named 'écoles centrales' in each département. In fact, of the 108 planned écoles centrales, only 32 actually opened. Each was endowed with a library to be available to the pupils but also more widely to the public. Each was given a librarian with the rank of schoolteacher. From year VII, these librarians were obliged to undertake a course in bibliography. The venture did not last long. The écoles centrales were abolished in May 1802 and replaced by the lycées, in which no library establishment was anticipated. A new decree of 8 pluviose year XI (28 January 1803) transferred the libraries of the former écoles centrales and literary dépôts to the municipalities. Their books, remaining state property, were 'put at the disposal and trust of the municipalities'. The text might be regarded as the official birth certificate of the new city libraries.[22] The only major exception to this development was Paris where most libraries, existing well before the Revolution, continued to develop and where, when the literary dépôts of the capital emptied little by little, the old libraries became the main beneficiaries.[23] The last dépôt closed in 1811. In just a few years, the Bibliothèque nationale doubled its collections from 300,000 to 600,000 volumes.

These various, sometimes contradictory, measures of the revolutionary years, coupled with the laziness or dishonesty of some and the patriotic ardour of others, led to important consequences for the historic continuity of individual collections. Some books were taken away or hidden by servants or members of the deprived families – although the exact effects of the restorative decrees at the end of this period are unknown. Other collections were put on the market before or in spite of legislation forbidding their sale. In particular – and as has been much discussed – the revolutionary period promoted the development of an important market in antiquarian books. All through the nineteenth century the tubs of the Parisian second-hand booksellers were full of

books of doubtful origins. One well-studied case is that of Pierre Dubrowski, a young diplomat at the Russian Embassy in Paris, who 'bought' numerous manuscripts and books, including many from St-Germain des Prés. Dubrowski arrived in Paris in 1785 and left in 1792, and his library was sold to the tsar in 1805.[24] A more recently discovered example is that of Étienne Dambreville,[25] a keeper of the Parisian Franciscan friars' literary dépôts. Some 9,000 stolen volumes were found in his apartment, but no one knows how many had already been sold. Compunding such losses was the vandalism denounced in abbé Grégoire's three reports.[26] They described the long and difficult problems in the transportation of the impounded goods from their places of seizure to the literary dépôts, the creation of great gaps in the literary dépôts and the district libraries made by the écoles centrales in forming their own collections. Also described were the Parisian seizures and the gaps they made in provincial collections, especially those created by the Bibliothèque nationale (and in particular by the plundering of precious manuscripts and of geographical maps needed for military operations), numerous oddly managed restorations, particular library allocations to political leaders of the Consulate and of the Empire, and to the bishops after the Concordat, the neglect of temporary dépôts, the abandonment of certain collections in the attics of city halls, the sale of duplicate (or allegedly duplicate) books to pay for arrears in salaries to the librarians under the Consulate and the Empire (notably at the Andelys and in Belfort), and finally the sales of 'books of rubbish' by weight of paper for pulping.

Even the more progressive city libraries opening throughout the nineteenth century failed to offer sufficient protection to the remaining parts of the seized collections. At least until the July Monarchy 'copies' were sold without proper assessment. In Normandy, for example, unsupervised sales and exchanges meant that the libraries of Evreux and Louviers lost half the collections given to them since the Revolution. In summary, the result was nothing less than the complete redistribution of book collections throughout French territories, and, more disastrously, the destruction of countless volumes.

The third great consequence of these seizures is their contribution, however involuntarily, to the appearance of the modern librarian in France.[27] The first concern of the legislator was the provision of a guard for each of the literary dépôts in the 545 different districts. The choice fell mostly on those who had given political satisfaction rather than on those commanding any understanding of books. Armed only with their willingness to serve, these individuals became 'librarians'

when the decree of 1794 transformed the dépôts into public district libraries. It was their responsibility to put into practice the conservation measures for the collections as promulgated by the Parisian authorities.

At least the minority with some book experience included some distinguished names and there were, among these librarians, several former prelates or librarians of monastic communities, including the abbé Joseph-Jean Rives, former librarian of the duc de la Vallière in Marseille, and father François-Xavier Laire, recently of the Frères Minimes and former librarian of Loménie de Brienne in Auxerre. Their ranks were further increased by Dom François-Philippe Gourdin of Rouen, Dom Germain Poirier of St Germain des Prés and later of the Arsenal, and Dom Hugues Mazet of Poitiers. A few former booksellers also numbered among the new librarians, including Van Thol at Corbeil and later at Paris. Some of them, like Delaistre at Reims, sometimes confused their old and new professions, using the literary dépôts and libraries to provide good editions for sale in their shops. Many of the librarians, however, were trained in very different crafts and served as members of municipal bodies. In Saar-Union librarian Masson was a disabled former serviceman. In Aix librarian Jacques Gibelin was a former physician. In Cambrai, librarian Houillon had been a clock-maker. In Douai, librarian Monteville had been a jurist. In Lyon, Antoine-François Delandine, who had ruled the library with some interruptions from 1791 until 1820, had been something of a polymath, writing extensively in many different fields.

In establishment of the literary dépôts and of the district and écoles centrales libraries, political considerations had determined the sidelining of the more awkward individuals. They included non-juring priests like the abbé Hooke in the Mazarine just before the passing of the laws of deportation; married priests and clerics who renounced their priesthood, such as the infamous Barbier in Paris, Bévalet in Belfort, and Colnet in Sélestat; former constitutional priests and bishops after the Concordat (including Torné, bishop of Cher, in the école centrale of Tarbes; Oloron, bishop of Laval, in the same city; and Grégoire at the Arsenal); and ex-girondins and ex-montagnards, all consigned to oblivion – for the moment.

From the outset, the guardians of the literary dépôts and district libraries were mostly amateurs, but the librarians of the écoles centrales were required to demonstrate greater competence. They were even recruited by competition. As a result, their ranks included real professionals, like Laire in Sens. His own course in bibliography is known

today by his surviving personal papers, as well as by the notes of one of pupils, both records kept in the city library of Besançon. Someone like Gabriel Peignot,[28] a former barrister who became librarian in Vesoul, and one of the most famous bibliographers of the period, is also a good example of people brought to run the libraries on the strength of their own skills and experience.

Under the pressure of events, both the improvised and the confirmed librarians were forced to work rapidly, all with derisory means and irregular salaries. As a salary a 'professional common minimum' was imposed on them from Paris. Other edicts from the centre included numerous circulars and technical notes on conservation. These documents were drawn up by committees of Parisian *ancien régime* librarians. Their names varied according to political circumstances, and each committee worked under the direction of successive parliamentary assemblies. Among them sat Hubert-Pascal Ameilhon, Gaspard Michel Leblond, and Dom Germain Poirier. All contributed to give the first professional varnish to the work of their provincial and isolated colleagues.

A national campaign also contributed to unify practices through circulars and correspondence. It was the first project of a national collective catalogue, the 'Bibliographie universelle de la France'. This project had first been introduced by the last royal librarian in 1790. It aimed to culminate, after five years, in the publication of a printed catalogue in about sixty volumes indexing all the 'national books' of the country and registering their locations. Because of the political and economic situation the project faced many adversities and delays, and in April 1796 it was indefinitely abandoned by order of the home secretary, Bénézech.[29] It had nevertheless resulted in a harmonisation of classification and cataloguing practices to which every literary dépôt and every library had to submit, under the direction of a 'Bureau de la bibliographie', working in Paris and pooling all bibliographical information from the départements. Such work had to begin with a phase of 'triage', intended to put in order the piles of books collected in the dépôts. Work then moved on to the regrouping of the scattered volumes, and to inserting into every title a numbered fichet cut from a playing card. This done, the work of cataloguing could begin. This involved providing a resumé, one after another, of all the titles and giving a precise bibliographical description of them: author, title, place of edition, printer and bookseller, date of edition, size, number of volumes, and copy-specific notes. To make the resumés the cataloguer used the back of the playing cards (see Fig. 10.1). Once the description was finished, the cards were

Figure 10.1 Playing cards used to catalogue books during the French Revolutionary seizures. From the Arbois Library. Photograph taken by the author

then classified alphabetically by authors, or by titles for anonymous works. The playing cards were then linked together by string so that no card could be lost. Once all this was done, the details from the cards had to be copied out in a register intended to serve as an on-the-spot catalogue of the library. After that the playing cards were all sent to Paris, to the bibliographical office, to feed the national catalogue in progress.

In spite of the 1796 abandonment of this project, and indeed, of the destruction of almost all of the biblio-playing cards,[30] every one of which would have been most useful to us today, the operation was not without results. It contributed to standardising professional practices throughout French territory, and it transformed the kindly amateurism of the dépôts into something that resembled competent bibliography. It also encouraged the publication of bibliographical works, some of which are still used today, such as Antoine-Alexandre Barbier's *Dictionnaire des anonymes*. Finally, the project helped to create an indispensable link between the last librarians of the so-called 'literary republic' such as Rives, Laire, Van-Praët, and newcomers such as Barbier, Peignot, and Charles Nodier, all of whom fought their book battles among the shelves of the revolutionary seizures.

The professionalization of the librarians was far from over, however. It continued with the creation of the école des chartes (1821), of the general Libraries Inspectorate (1822), and more than fifty years later, in 1879, of the first professional examination, the 'certificat d'aptitude aux fonctions de bibliothécaire'. Originally created for the service of university libraries, it was later also adopted by other institutions.

In all of this (as in so much French social and political history) bibliographers look back to the revolutionary period as a critical juncture. The fifteen years which separate the storming of the Bastille from the coronation of Napoleon I represent an essential turning point in French library history. The authors of the decree of November 1789, from which everything followed, certainly did not anticipate the long-term consequences of their actions for the future of the nation's libraries. Yet these years obliterated almost all traces of the former network of monastic, princely and great individual collections. The revolutionary decrees inaugurated a huge transfer of property, certainly, and with this, an even more immense transfer of books.

No one will probably ever know what the many millions of seized volumes, the spoils of war, and the restorations actually add up to. Of greater importance is the broad debate which opened up about the future of the 'national books'. The successive creation of different types of library both delayed and thwarted the project of opening the collections to the public. But the new creations prepared the way for the long struggle to create city libraries, and, later, university libraries, an endeavour which marked the next two centuries. The last unexpected effect of the whole affair was the emergence of a new professional body for librarians.

Fifteen years might appear to represent little in the life of a nation. But at the dawn of the third millennium, the French libraries are still widely dependent, in their daily life, upon measures taken during the Revolution, and upon the immediate consequences of those measures. The ancient collections of France, most of them built up from lost libraries and revolutionary seizures, are still state property entrusted to the care of the municipalities. Although their content is still not yet exactly known, their conservation, development, and public accessibility still constitutes the daily work of today's professionals, the distant heirs of the first guards of the literary dépôts.

Notes

1. This chapter partly derives from 'Le livre, otage de la Révolution. Conséquences bibliographiques des saisies politiques', in Dominique Bougé-Grandon, *Le Livre voyageur: Constitution et dissémination des collections livresques dans l'Europe moderne 1450–1830* (Paris: Klincksieck, 2000), pp. 207–26.

2. Dominique Varry, 'Les confiscations révolutionnaires', in Dominique Varry, ed., *Histoire des bibliothèques françaises: tom. 3: Les bibliothèques de la Révolution et du XIXe siècle 1789–1914* (Paris: Cercle de la Librairie, 1991): 9–28.

3. Anthony Hobson, 'Appropriations from foreign libraries during the French Revolution and Empire', *Bulletin du bibliophile* 2 (1989): 255–72; Marie-Pierre Laffitte, 'La Bibliothèque nationale et les 'conquêtes artistiques' de la Révolution et de l'Empire: les manuscrits d'Italie (1796–1815)', *Bulletin du bibliophile* 2 (1989): 273–323; *1789, Le patrimoine libéré. 200 trésors entrés à la Bibliothèque nationale de 1789 à 1799* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale, 1989), pp. 258–74.

4. Quatremère de Quincy, *Lettres à Miranda sur le déplacement des monuments de l'art de l'Italie (1796): Introduction et notes par Edouard Pommier* (Paris: Macula, 1989).

5. 'Nous nous empressons cependant de satisfaire aux désirs de la Bibliothèque nationale en autorisant le citoyen Fischer bibliothécaire de vous envoyer sans le moindre délai de belles éditions des épistres de Cicéron imprimées par Jenson à Venise. Nous vous prions de nous laisser l'édition de Bechtermünze qui, quoiqu'incomplète, conserve à Mayence, au vrai berceau de l'art de l'imprimerie, le souvenir de Gutenberg, dont elle n'a plus d'autres monumens. Nous vous saluons avec respect', Letter from Mainz to Van Praët (6 germinal an X; 27 March 1802), Bibliothèque nationale, N.A.F. 3230, correspondance bibliographique.

6. Dominique Varry, 'Joseph Van Praët', in Varry, ed., *Histoire des bibliothèques françaises*, *tom. 3*, pp. 302–3.

7. Jean-Baptiste Labiche, *Notice sur les dépôts littéraires et la révolution bibliographique de la fin du dernier siècle d'après les manuscrits de la bibliothèque de l'Arsenal* (Paris: Parent, 1880); Hélène Dufresne, *Erudition et esprit public au XVIIIe siècle : le bibliothécaire Hubert-Pascal Ameilhon 1730–1811* (Paris: Nizet, 1962); Simone Balayé, 'La Bibliothèque nationale et le progrès des Lumières sous la Révolution', in *Colloque Livre et Révolution, Mélanges de la bibliothèque de la Sorbonne* 9 (1989): 245–55; idem, 'De la Bibliothèque du Roi à la Bibliothèque nationale, 1789–1795', in *La Carmagnole des muses: l'homme de lettres et l'artiste dans la Révolution*, Jean-Claude Bonnet (ed.) (Paris: Armand Colin, 1988), pp. 37–48; idem, 'La Bibliothèque du Roi en 1790, ou l'idéal et le réel d'après deux textes inédits', in *Revue de la Bibliothèque nationale* 23 (Spring 1987): 56–64; idem, *La Bibliothèque nationale des origines à 1800* (Genève: Droz, 1988); idem, 'Les enrichissements de la Bibliothèque nationale', in *Patrimoine parisien 1789–1799. Destructions, créations, mutations* (Paris: Ville de Paris, 1989), pp. 48–63; Simone Balayé and Kinga Kantorska, 'Un sanctuaire des sciences : projets d'architecture pour la Bibliothèque nationale à l'époque révolutionnaire', in *Bulletin des bibliothèques de France* 34 (1989): 191–200; Françoise Bléchet, '1789 à la Bibliothèque du Roi', in *L'année 1789, Dix-huitième siècle* 20 (1988): 151–60; idem, 'De la Bibliothèque du Roi à la Bibliothèque nationale: permanence et rupture', in *Mélanges de la bibliothèque de la Sorbonne* 10 (1990): 139–51;. idem, 'Le vandalisme à la Bibliothèque du roi/nationale sous la Révolution', in *Révolution française et 'vandalisme révolutionnaire': Actes du colloque international de Clermont-Ferrand (15–17 décembre 1988) recueillis et présentés par*

Simone Bernard-Griffiths, Marie-Claude Chemin et Jean Ehrard (Paris: Universitas, 1992), pp. 265–76; François Fossier, 'Les confiscations d'émigrés entrées au Cabinet des estampes pendant la Révolution', in *Nouvelles de l'estampe* 106 (July-Aug. 1989): 4–13; Michèle Sacquin, 'Comment le manuscrit de *la Nouvelle Héloïse* a échappé à la B.N. pendant la Révolution', in *Revue de la Bibliothèque nationale* 32 (Summer 1989): 70–2; *1789, Le patrimoine libéré. 200 trésors entrés à la Bibliothèque nationale de 1789 à 1799* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale, 1989).

8. Christian Desplats, 'Bibliothèques privées mises sous séquestre dans le département des Basses-Pyrénées pendant la Révolution française', *Revue française d'histoire du livre* 56 (1987): 439–62.

9. Marie-Hélène Froeschlé-Chopard and Sylviane Albertan-Coppola, 'La Révolution et la constitution des bibliothèques municipales. L'exemple de Grasse', *Archives et Révolution: création ou destruction? La Gazette des archives*, 146–7 (1989): 225–53; Marie-Hélène Froeschlé-Chopard, *Una biblioteca francese alla fine del XVIII secolo (Grasse)*, (Florence: Centro editoriale toscano, 1991); idem, ed., *Livres et culture du clergé à l'époque moderne. Actes du colloque de Marseille (31 mars–1 avril 1995), Revue d'histoire de l'Eglise de France* 83 (special no., 1997).

10. Dominique Varry, 'Aux origines de la bibliothèque publique de Belfort', in *Bulletin de la société belfortaine d'émulation* 80 (1989): 49–58.

11. Fabienne and Gérard Aventurier, *Livres et Révolution dans la Loire*, *Bulletin du Patrimoine de la Médiathèque départementale de la Loire* 5 (special no., 1994).

12. Sylvie Gueth, 'La constitution des bibliothèques publiques dans le département du Bas-Rhin (1789–1803)', Mémoire ENSB, Villeurbanne, (1991).

13. Dominique Varry, *Recherches sur le livre en Normandie: les bibliothèques de l'Eure à la fin du XVIIIe siècle, d'après les saisies révolutionnaires*, thèse de 3e cycle, université Paris 1, 1985; and a further version, *Sous la main de la Nation* (Ferney-Voltaire: Centre d'étude international du 18e siècle, 2004); Dominique Varry, 'Aperçu sur les bibliothèques privées de l'Eure confisquées sous la Révolution', *Annales de Normandie* 45 (1995): 327–51.

14. Dominique Varry, 'Les confiscations révolutionnaires', Varry, ed., *Histoire des bibliothèques françaises*, 3: 9–28 (esp. pp. 20–3).

15. These two types of documents are kept in the series Q and L of the departmental archives and in the series T and F[17] of the National Archives.

16. Dominique Varry, 'Les saisies révolutionnaires: une source inexploitée', *Transactions of the VIIIth international Congress on the Enlightenment*, 3 vols (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1992), 2: 1011–15.

17. Daniel Roche, *La Culture des apparences. Une histoire du vêtement, XVIIe-XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 1989); English trans., *The Culture of Clothing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Daniel Roche, *Histoire des choses banales. Naissance de la consommation dans les sociétés traditionnelles (XVIIe–XIXe siècle)* (Paris: Fayard, 1997); English trans., *A History of Everyday Things* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

18. Dominique Varry, 'Il faut que les Lumières arrivent par torrents: la Révolution française et la création des bibliothèques publiques, projets et réalités', *Bulletin des bibliothèques de France*, 34 (1989): 160–5.

19. Archives nationals (Paris): F17 1186 (3 Oct. 1792).

20. Armand Joseph duc de Béthune-Charost, *Vues générales sur l'organisation de l'instruction rurale en France, présentées aux Comités d'instruction publique et d'agriculture de la Convention nationale et à la Commission d'agriculture et des arts par le C. Armand-Joseph Béthune-Charost . . .* , A Paris, de l'imprimerie de la feuille du cultivateur, an III, 26 p.

21. Dominique Varry, 'Aux origines de la bibliothèque publique de Belfort'.

22. As examples on this succession of contradictory texts and their consequences, let us indicate: Nathalie Bercet, Patrick Daubignard, Jean-Paul Sauvage, *La Création de la bibliothèque municipale de Blois 1789–1799* (Blois: Bibliothèque municipale, 1989); Elisabeth Chopin and T. Girard, *Naissance d'une bibliothèque* [Chaumont] *1789–1803* (Chaumont: Bibliothèque municipale, 1989); Guy Thuillier, *Histoire d'une bibliothèque: la bibliothèque municipale de Nevers 1789–1940* (Nevers: Bibliothèque municipale, 1983); Michel Vernus, 'Les bibliothèques des écoles centrales en Franche Comté (1795–1803)', in *Travaux 1991 de la Société d'émulation du Jura* (1992): 1690–91; *Patrimoine public et Révolution française, constitution des collections toulousaines* [Exhibition] réfectoire des jacobins 29 mai–29 septembre 1989 (Toulouse: Ville de Toulouse, 1989).

23. Jean Baptiste Labiche, *Notice sur les dépôts littéraires . . .* , op. cit. Alfred Fierro, ed., *Patrimoine parisien 1789–1799. Destructions, créations, mutations* (Paris: Ville de Paris, 1989); Maurice Piquard, 'Une bibliothèque parisienne sous la Révolution: la Bibliothèque Mazarine', in *Öffentliche und Private Bibliotheken im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert, Raritätenkammern Forschungsinstrumente oder Bildungstätten?*, edited by Paul Raabe (Bremen and Wolfenbüttel: Jacobi, 1977), pp. 187–208.

24. Patricia Z. Thompson, 'Biography of a library: the western European manuscript collection of Peter P. Dubrovskii in Leningrad', *Journal of Library History* 19 (1984): 477–503; T. P. Voronova, 'Western manuscripts in the Saltykov–Schchedrin library', *The Book Collector* 5 (1956): 12–18; T. P. Voronova, 'P. P. Dubrovskii, 1754–1816, and the St Germain manuscripts', *The Book Collector* 27 (1978): 469–78.

25. Dominique Varry, 'Une ténébreuse affaire: les curieux agissements du citoyen Dambreville', *Bulletin du bibliophile* 1 (1994): 82–101.

26. Abbé Henri Grégoire, *Rapport sur les destructions opérées par le vandalisme et le moyen de le réprimer . . . Séance du 14 fructidor l'an II . . .* (Paris: 1794); idem, *Second rapport . . . Séance du 8 brumaire l'an III* (Paris: 1794); idem, *Troisième rapport . . . Séance du 24 frimaire l'an III . . .* (Paris: 1794). Françoise Bléchet, 'Le vandalisme à la Bibliothèque du roi / nationale sous la Révolution', loc. cit. Dominique Varry, 'Vicissitudes et aléas des livres placés sous la main de la Nation', in *Révolution française et 'vandalisme révolutionnaire'*, op. cit., pp. 277–84.

27. Dominique Varry, 'La profession de bibliothécaire en France à l'époque de la Révolution française', *Le Commerce culturel des nations: France-Allemagne XVIIIe–XIXe siècle, Revue de synthèse* 1–2 (Jan.–June 1992): 29–39.

28. Hélène Joannelle, *Le Bibliographe Gabriel Peignot (1767–1849)*, DEA, ENSB, 1990.

29. Pierre Riberette, *Les Bibliothèques françaises pendant la Révolution (1789–95): recherches sur un essai de catalogue collectif* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale, 1970).

30. A very few survive in the files of series F17 of the archives nationales. A few have also been discovered by the author in the library at Arbois, cards that were never despatched to Paris apparently because they lacked certain imprint information. Other fichets cut from cards also turn up in volumes in public libraries – the attic of the city-hall of Conches in Normandy was a recent supplier.

11

A Plague of Books: The Dispersal and Disappearance of the Diocesan Libraries of the Church of Ireland

Margaret Connolly

The loss of ecclesiastical libraries has made it more difficult for us to recover the relationship between church and books, between clericism and scholarship. In Britain and Ireland many church and monastic libraries have been lost or dispersed (as earlier chapters in this volume have discussed), but various survivals enable us to reconstruct the nature and contents of medieval ecclesiastical collections. In England, despite the upheaval of the Reformation and the dissolution of the monasteries, there are still some locations where books and manuscripts have remained *in situ* since the Middle Ages as, for example, at the libraries of the cathedrals at Durham, Exeter, and Lincoln, at York Minster, and at Southwell Minster. More frequently, manuscripts and books which belonged to monastic foundations and cathedrals may be identified in the collections of the major research libraries.[1] In Ireland, where the impact of the Dissolution was also felt, the picture is somewhat similar, although on a smaller scale. In particular, different historical developments during subsequent centuries contributed to a tradition of book collecting and library foundation in the Church of Ireland (the Anglican church in Ireland).

The Church of Ireland has a rich and varied book heritage ranging from very small collections of books which belonged to individual parish churches and schools to the much larger libraries which developed at its cathedrals.[2] Individual members of the church – usually bishops, but also archdeacons and ordinary-ranking clergymen – accumulated their own private book collections which over time frequently found their way by bequest or donation into more institutional libraries. A significant number of these larger institutional collections, both cathedral and diocesan libraries, remain in existence, although they rarely now enjoy much security, investment, or even attention. There

are also two public libraries which have strong connections with the Church of Ireland, and the church's own theological and reference library, the Library of the Representative Church Body (see Table 11.1)

The particular focus of this chapter is the 'lost' diocesan libraries of the Church of Ireland, their foundation, history, current situation, and especially their prospects for the future.[3] There is an initial difficulty in identifying these libraries. In particular the distinction between a cathedral library and a diocesan library is often blurred, and the two categories may frequently overlap. There are thirty-one Church of Ireland cathedrals, eleven of which have some sort of library, but these are not all, strictly speaking, *cathedral* libraries.[4] The library of Christ Church Cathedral in Dublin may be taken as a clear example of the cathedral library.[5] This library has a notable collection of music which is still used in worship, and extensive manuscript records dating from the twelfth century. However, only a tiny proportion of the books and papers connected with the cathedral still remain there; current records are kept at the cathedral, but the much more extensive parish archives have been moved to the library of the Representative Church Body. The move was necessitated by a lack of proper accommodation at the cathedral. There are now plans to develop an area of the crypt as a dedicated facility for archives; previously the library was originally housed in the chapter room, with more valuable items kept in the strong room, but neither of these places had the benefit of modern conditions.

Generally speaking, a cathedral library supports the needs of the cathedral and its chapter. As at Christ Church it usually contains service-books and music, and is a repository for cathedral records; its management comes under the control of the dean. But cathedral libraries might also serve as lending facilities, and evidence has recently been unearthed to demonstrate that just such a working library existed at Christ Church at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and that it was used by both lay and clerical readers.[6] A diocesan library, on the other hand, exists for the benefit of the clergy of the diocese and comes under the control of the bishop. However, to confuse matters, a diocesan library may physically exist at a cathedral, as in the case of Lismore, or may have long ago been attached to a cathedral collection, as at Kilkenny. Conversely, Cork had both a cathedral library and a parish library which were eventually joined together to form a diocesan library which was kept at the cathedral. Another example of a place which had more than one type of library is Derry, which had a library at St Columb's Cathedral in addition to its diocesan library. Most unusually the Chapter House Library at St Columb's is a twentieth-century founda-

Table 11.1 Church of Ireland diocesan libraries

Diocese (and location)	Foundation date	Founder	Other principal benefactors and collections	No. vols
Ossory (Kilkenny)	1693	Bishop Thomas Otway	Bishop Edward Maurice	3,000
Marsh's (Dublin)	1701	Archbishop Narcissus Marsh	Rev. Elias Bouhereau	25,000
			Rev. Godfrey Everth	
			Dudley Loftus	
			Bishop John Stearne	
			Bishop Edward Stillingfleet	
Cork	1720	Bishop Peter Browne	Archdeacon John Pomeroy	4,500
			Bishop Peter Crow of Cloyne	
			Bishop Charles Crow	
			Bishop Thomas Stopford	
Derry*	1726	Archbishop William King	Bishop Ezekiel Hopkins	7,000+
			William Clarke	
Cashel	1730	Archbishop Theophilus Bolton	Charles Broderick	11,000
Raphoe*	1737	Bishop Nicholas Forster	Bishop George Hall	4,000
Waterford	1745	Bishop Charles Este	Robert Dobbyn	3,000
			Henry Alcock	
			Rev. Robert Bell	
			William Downes	
			Rev. Joseph Wilson	
			Rev. Thomas Gimlette	
Clogher	after 1745		Charles Talbot, 8th Lord Blaney	3,000
			Rev. Benjamin Moffat	

Table 11.1 Continued

Diocese (and location)	Foundation date	Founder	Other principal benefactors and collections	No. vols
Armagh	1770	Archbishop Richard Robinson		34,000
Lismore	1845	Archdeacon Henry Cotton		3,500
Down, Connor, Dromore	1854	Rev. Thomas Drew Archbishop Robert Knox	Bishop Reichel Bishop Reeves Rev. William Carmody Rev. James Jackson Rev. William McIlwaine	
Kilmore, Elphin Ardagh	1860	Archbishop Marcus Beresford	Bishop Thomas Carson Bishop Samuel Shone Bishop Alfred G. Elliott Archdeacon William Creek	
Tuam	1881	Rev. Joseph Henry		3,000
Ross	unknown		Canon Edmond W. Beatty Rev. Charles A. Webster	
Representative Church Body Library (Dublin)	1932	Rosamund Stephen	Rev. Hugh J. Lawlor Rev. James B. Leslie Sir James F. Stephen	15,300

* amalgamated in 1878.
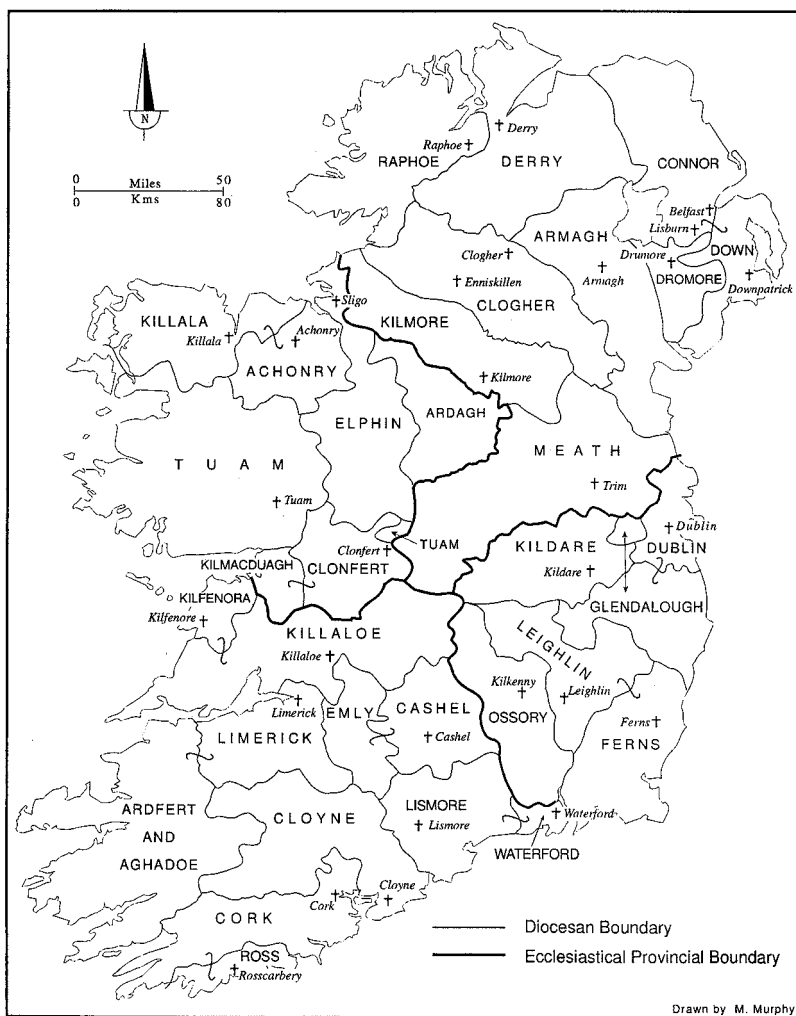
Figure 11.1 Map of the Church of Ireland Dioceses

tion, begun by the Rev. R.G.S. King, Dean of Derry from 1921 to 1946, with the intention of amassing a collection of works relating to the history of the cathedral and the city.

Also beyond the scope of this discussion are Marsh's Library in Dublin and Robinson's Library in Armagh. From the outset these were intended

as public libraries. Marsh's Library was built in 1701 by Archbishop Narcissus Marsh (1638–1713), its public status established by legislation in 1707.[7] In 1770, following Marsh's example, Primate Richard Robinson, Archbishop of Armagh (1709–94) established a library in Armagh for the use of the clergy and the residents of the city; once again the library's public status was enshrined in law by an act 'for settling and preserving the Publick Library in the city of Armagh for ever' (1773).[8] These are large-scale collections, with some 25,000 books and 300 manuscripts held in Marsh's Library, and 34,000 volumes including manuscripts in Armagh. In contrast to the haphazard development of the diocesan collections, Marsh's and Robinson's libraries were planned foundations whose requirements (accommodation, staffing, finance), were considered and met from the beginning. Indeed, both of these libraries are still housed in their original buildings, now rare architectural examples of the physical expression of eighteenth-century scholarship. As a result of their founders' visions, and the efforts of subsequent custodians, they are comparatively secure, well-known, well-documented and accessible. Both libraries enjoy ongoing administrative connections with the Church of Ireland. At Marsh's the governing body initially consisted of the Church of Ireland archbishops of Armagh and Dublin, the deans of Christ Church and St Patrick's, the Provost of Trinity College, and four other governors whose offices became extinct with the establishment of the State in 1922; one of the latter was the Lord Chancellor, a fact which is reflected in the current appointment of the Chief Justice as a Governor. The governing body of the Armagh Public Library consists of the Archbishop of Armagh, the Dean and Chapter of St Patrick's Cathedral, and two lay members.

By contrast, the origins of the diocesan libraries are sometimes obscure.[9] The history and development of each of these libraries is different, but they are broadly similar in terms of foundation and original purpose. It seems that there may have been an early attempt to create such a library at Ferns, but absolutely no trace of this has survived.[10] The majority of the diocesan libraries were founded during the eighteenth century, although the earliest, the Ossory diocesan library, is slightly earlier in date. This library, which was attached to St Canice's Cathedral, Kilkenny, was founded in 1693 by the will of Bishop Thomas Otway (1616–93), and vastly augmented by another important bequest in 1756 from Bishop Edward Maurice (1690–1756).[11] The library at St Finbarr's Cathedral in Cork was founded in 1720 by Bishop Peter Browne (1666–1735), and three years later the Cork Parish Library was

endowed by Archdeacon John Pomeroy (1650–1725) who bequeathed to it £60 worth of his own books. These two libraries were merged in 1892 to form a diocesan library, meaning that the Cork diocese was one of the last to benefit in this way.

Elsewhere in Munster the clergy were more fortunate. The library at Cashel was founded in by Theophilus Bolton (1678–1744), in 1730 shortly after his appointment as archbishop. Bolton's own private collection of *circa* 6,000 volumes, and his purchase of the equally large library of his friend, Archbishop William King (1650–1729), formed the core of the library which is the largest and broadest in scope of the eighteenth-century diocesan libraries.[12] King himself established a library in 1726 for the use of the clergy of Derry, although it was the book collection of a former bishop, Ezekiel Hopkins (1634–90), which formed the nucleus of the library. The library was initially housed in the old Derry diocesan school (now Foyle College) and later transferred to the Diocesan Synod Hall in Derry. In the first half of the nineteenth century the diocese of Derry was joined with that of Raphoe, and in 1878 their libraries too were combined (Raphoe had its own smaller diocesan library which was founded by Bishop Forster in 1737 and was kept in Raphoe Royal School).[13] By the middle of the eighteenth century a library had also been founded in Waterford by the will of Bishop Charles Este (1696–1745). This is the last eighteenth-century diocesan library whose date of foundation may be identified with certainty. It is probable that the library at Clogher was begun during this period, but its beginnings are obscure. It seems that the library did *not* exist in 1745, because when in that year the Bishop of Clogher, John Stearne (1660–1745), died, he left his substantial collection of books (of about 3,000 volumes), to Marsh's Library in Dublin. His instruction that the remainder of his collection should be given to, or sold for the benefit of, the curates in his diocese, strongly suggests that there was no local library to which he could bequeath his books.

Four further libraries were started during the mid to late nineteenth century, in the dioceses of Lismore; Down, Connor and Dromore; Kilmore, Elphin, Ardagh; and finally at Tuam. At Lismore the library was founded in 1845 by the archdeacon Dr Henry Cotton (1789–1879), a former sub-librarian of the Bodleian Library in Oxford, who presented his own collection of theological books and had a room built to house them next to St Carthage's Cathedral. In the north, a library was established for the use of the clergy in the combined diocese of Down, Connor and Dromore in 1854, at the initiative of Bishop Robert Knox

(1808–93), although the actual work of forming the collection was done by Rev. Thomas Drew (1800–70). Space to house the books seems to have been a problem; the books were kept first in the Old Clerical Rooms in Belfast, later transferred to the Diocesan Rooms in Clarence Place, and eventually to the crypt of St Anne's Cathedral. A library was started at about the same time (1860) in another combined diocese, that of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh at the initiative of Archbishop Marcus Beresford (1801–85). The last of the nineteenth-century library foundations was that at Tuam. Physical provision for a library was made as early as 1861 at St Mary's Cathedral, when the building which had previously been the cathedral church was restored and refurbished as a chapter room and library; this later became the Synod Hall. A diocesan library was not established until twenty years later when the Rev. Joseph Henry (1820–85) bequeathed his own collection of books for this purpose. One further library whose date of foundation is not known is that which survives at the cathedral church of St Fachtna in Rosscarbery, a comparatively remote Cork village situated eight miles west of Clonakilty. Many of the books in this library derive from the bequest of Canon Edmond W. Beatty (1863–1931), which suggests that its establishment may have been comparatively recent.

It will already be apparent that in the main these libraries were formed from the private book collections of local bishops. The development of the library at Kilmore may be taken as a typical, if late, example. The library was founded in 1860 by Marcus Beresford, who was bishop of Kilmore between 1854 and 1862, and built up gradually over a period of fifty years from the personal libraries of three subsequent bishops: Thomas Carson (1805–74; bishop 1870–74), Samuel Shone (1821–1901; bishop 1884–97), and Alfred G. Elliot (1828–1915; bishop 1897–1915), and an archdeacon, William Creek (1837–99; term of office 1884–99). Its growth was thus somewhat haphazard, dependent upon irregular bequests rather than a policy of regular buying, and in general lacking direction or much form of management. The collection grew serendipitously, and its shape was formed by the interests and predelictions of its various donors. The library was situated in the See House, initially in the bishop's study, and eventually all over the house as the number of books grew. This lack of proper housing is also typical. The founders and benefactors of the diocesan libraries thought mostly in terms of books rather than the needs of book collections. They were men who valued learning and scholarship, and who were motivated largely by altruism in transforming what had been private book collections built up at personal expense into resources for the poorer clergy within their

dioceses. It seems likely that the men who founded the diocesan libraries had long been in the habit of lending their books on an informal basis to their junior colleagues. However, such informality characterised their thinking, and for the most part when they bequeathed their books there was no accompanying gift of money to provide accommodation for the collection, nor to pay for its upkeep. Thus as the libraries grew they sometimes also outgrew their accommodation, and ended up being split between different locations – as at Clogher where some of the books were kept in the board room of the diocesan hall at Clones, and others in the former bishop's residence; the library of Down, Connor and Dromore was similarly spread over different sites in Belfast including diocesan property and St Anne's Cathedral.

In terms of housing, the library at Cashel shows similarities with that at Kilmore, albeit on a larger scale. Initially the library was kept at the Archbishop's Palace, but the sheer size of Bolton's collection demanded proper housing provision, a requirement which quickly became even more pressing when he acquired the books of his friend William King. Consequently, Bolton had a long, two-roomed building constructed beside the palace, modelling the format of the library on that of the Long Room at Trinity College, Dublin where he had received his education. These premises sufficed for the first century of the library's existence, but when the archbishopric of Cashel was suppressed by the Church Temporalities Act of 1833, the palace ceased to be the home of the Bishop, and the library was also left homeless. During the eighteenth century the cathedral had been relocated from its historic site on the Rock of Cashel first to the church of St John the Baptist on John Street in the 1740s, and then to the new Cathedral of St John which was completed in 1784. In 1835 a new Georgian-style library building was erected within the churchyard of the new cathedral, designed to accommodate the chapter room on the ground floor and the library on the upper floor. The collection thus continued to benefit from purpose-built accommodation – a situation which rarely obtained in the case of the other diocesan collections.

Exceptionally at Kilkenny the founding bishops had left money to pay a librarian. Bishop Otway allocated £200 for the furbishment of a library building, both within and without: 'for the flooreing of which, with substantiall timber and boards, and roofeing and slateing it, for desks and shelves and chaines for every particular book', and also allowed '£5 for coals for a weekly fire for the Library to preserve the books'. Bishop Maurice pragmatically bequeathed not just his books but also his bookcases: 'ten double cases of one form made of Dansick oak'.

In making these arrangements for the library's physical housing and well-being, the bishops in Kilkenny were unusually far-sighted; the bequests which created or augmented the diocesan collections more typically consisted of books and not money. Testators rarely understood the requirements of a working library, and did not often leave endowments to support their bequests. Some of the nineteenth-century founders were more realistic in this regard, perhaps because by this stage the needs of such collections were becoming more apparent. Thus in establishing the library at Tuam, Joseph Henry offered his bookcases as well as his books, and also left money for the library in his will; at Lismore Henry Cotton had a room built to accommodate the library, and also allocated a salary for a librarian. Cotton had been a librarian, and might therefore be expected to have possessed a superior level of understanding of the needs of book collections and the workings of a library. In terms of the diocesan collections he may well have been influenced by what he saw elsewhere. He had moved to Ireland in 1822 in the company of his father-in-law, Richard Laurence, who had been appointed archbishop of Cashel. Cotton set about recataloguing the books and reorganising the library more professionally, eventually overseeing its translation to new premises, but his comments are revealing of the precarious state into which Bolton's library had descended:

> as the Archbishop [Bolton] left no funds for the enlargement or even the preservation of the Collection, not only has it received no increase since his death, except by a few accidental donations, but [it] has fallen into such great neglect, that many of the books have been lost, many utterly spoiled by damp, and very many more left in such a state as to be useless without previous repair.

His allocation of £10 per annum for new purchases at Lismore may have stemmed from his experiences at Cashel, and also from his realisation, on a visit to the library at Derry in the 1830s, that there was no fund provided for sustaining and adding to that library either.[14]

With the exception of the libraries founded by Archbishop Marsh in Dublin and Archbishop Robinson in Armagh, which were intended from the outset to be *public* resources, these Church of Ireland libraries were begun for the benefit of local clergy. The founders' bequests usually emphasise this. Archbishop Theophilus Bolton left his books to Cashel 'for the use of my successor in the said see and the Clergy of the said Diocese for the time being'; and Thomas Otway's bequest was intended

'for the beginning of a Library for the Cathedral of St Canice and for the use of the Clergy about it'. Because of this it might be assumed that these collections are purely theological in nature and dominated by Latin texts, but neither of these assumptions is correct. A brief perusal of the contents of the Cashel library reveals a breadth of scope and depth of coverage which go far beyond what might be expected.[15] The library contains substantial numbers of volumes which deal with mathematics, astronomy, architecture, the natural sciences, medicine, and law, as well as literature, travel, geography, history, heraldry, military matters, and politics. About two-thirds of the stock was printed in the British Isles, with about nine hundred examples of Irish printing; there are also significant examples of continental printing.

The wide-ranging nature of the library's contents reflects the fact that its early collectors were essentially scholarly gentlemen. It might be objected that, as this library is by far the largest of the diocesan collections, it might therefore be expected to be more comprehensive than the others; however, all the diocesan collections are surprisingly varied in terms of their contents, deviating both from what might be imagined to be the norm for a clerical collection, and from each other. Their variety stems largely from the piecemeal manner of their development. In general the fields of literature, history, and classics are well represented, as are travel and the natural sciences; ephemera, such as pamphlets, are particularly numerous. Additionally, the interests of local benefactors (who were not always clergymen), influenced the nature of individual collections. For example, the St Finbarr's collection in Cork contains long runs of parliamentary journals and statutes and some early encyclopaedias which were acquired from the Earl of Bandon, and the Waterford library contains a large number of law books (amounting to almost one-third of the total stock), which were donated by Robert Dobbyn, the city's Recorder.[16]

The amassing of a fine private library was a favourite pastime among members of the aristocracy, but before the late nineteenth century there were very few public libraries in Ireland. The Public Libraries (Ireland) Act of 1855 did not initially improve this state of affairs. The diocesan collections were therefore important resources for the laity, and as early as the mid-eighteenth century, Bishop Maurice envisaged that the Ossory collection would be used by lay readers as well as the clergymen for whom it had been established. There is specific evidence of lay usage at several other libraries, such as at Waterford, where records of lay borrowing have survived, and at Cork which by 1849 was open to the clergy

'and all other respectable people'. Admission was not always free; in Clogher, for example, both clergy and laity paid an annual fee of 2*s*. which entitled them to borrow up to three books for a maximum loan-period of two months. Similarly, arrangements for access were not always very user-friendly. In Kilkenny the librarian was 'to give due attendance to such clergymen and gentlemen as may be disposed to study there from 6 o'clock in the morning to the tolling of the bell for morning prayer'. Library users in Waterford fared somewhat better after a reorganisation in 1857 when it was agreed that the library would be open every weekday between 12 noon and 4pm, but in Cork during the same period the library was open only on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. It is difficult to determine whether such restricted opening hours led to low usage, or whether they already reflected a lack of readerly interest. The observations of Washington Irving on a visit to Westminster Library in England in the early 1820s suggest the latter. His verdict on the books was that they were 'much more worn by time than use', and on the library that it was 'a kind of literary catacomb, where authors, like mummies, are piously entombed, and left to blacken and moulder in oblivion'.[17] Certainly where borrowing records exist for the Irish diocesan libraries they suggest that these collections were rather under-used, but it should be noted that their patterns of usage correspond more or less exactly to those recorded by the Royal Commission in their 1854 survey of English cathedral libraries.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the clergyman as gentleman scholar was a common (if not universal) association, but the connection between scholarship and the work of the clergy has, to a large extent, withered away, and the contemporary clergyman bears little resemblance to 'the man that in his study sits'.[18] As churches of all denominations struggle to be perceived as 'relevant' to the modern world, social, pastoral, and ecumenical concerns take precedence over learning and erudition. Accordingly the collections of books accumulated by the Church have now mostly outlived their usefulness. Their original purpose as educational resources for the diocesan clergy is lost, as is their incidental attraction to parishioners in an Ireland starved of accessible reading material. It is hard to find new reasons to justify their continued existence in provincial locations where Church of Ireland membership is falling rapidly. Consequently the future of these libraries is very much in jeopardy: they now face the very real dangers of being forgotten, ignored, or worse – threatened with extinction from neglect, lack of investment, and general lack of interest.

During the twentieth century these libraries have become increasingly problematic to the Church for whose benefit they were founded. These are not, and have never been, 'living' libraries; ever since their foundation these collections have become increasingly antiquarian, with few attempts ever made to keep them up-to-date in terms of ecclesiastical scholarship. Increasingly the libraries have fallen into disuse, and they have become, in effect, expensive white elephants. One problem relates to space, a precious and pressured commodity in many churches and cathedrals. Thus the library at Tuam was displaced in 1985 when the Synod Hall at St Mary's Cathedral where it had been housed was returned to its original purpose. The books are now in Galway, in the north transept of St Nicholas's Collegiate Church.[19] In Cork the former library building at St Finbarr's Cathedral is currently being redesigned as a visitor centre. Where space is available, it is often ill-suited to the well-being of the books, which are vulnerable to fluctuations in temperature, and which in almost all cases have suffered in the past from damp. Beyond the problem of physical accommodation, old books are demanding in terms of money – especially old books which have not always been well-kept. Even the smaller diocesan libraries contain significant numbers of books (typically about 3,000 volumes), and collections of this size represent a serious challenge in terms of cataloguing, conservation, and security. Their demands bear out the words of the eighteenth-century bishop, Robert Howard, who complained that 'a great number of books, unless one hath very convenient room for them, are a greater plague than I ever imagined'.[20] The Church has scant resources to commit to their preservation, and the upkeep and modernisation of its ageing building stock is higher in its list of priorities. At a time of declining membership, the Church faces ever-increasing demands on its diminishing financial resources, an economic reality which is equally true in the North where Church of Ireland membership has fallen less disastrously than in the South. The current situation in some ways resembles the disruption suffered at the time of disestablishment, at which point the Church very properly saw its very survival as of greater importance than the preservation of books, and its libraries came quickly to be viewed as a burden rather than a resource.[21]

An asset which is no longer regarded as an asset by its owner is usually sold. This was the fate of the diocesan library at Clogher which was sold in the 1950s. Some of the books were bought by other libraries in Ireland, including the National Library, Trinity College, the Royal Dublin Society, King's Inns, and Queen's Belfast; a substantial number

were bought by the John Rylands Library in Manchester.[22] In this way some of the contents of the Clogher collection were saved but scattered, and some were alienated beyond the bounds of the State. In this respect it might be noted that there is still no legislation in Ireland to prevent rare books from being exported, in contrast to the restrictions on paintings or archaeological artefacts. Indeed, some of the rarer items from the Clogher library were auctioned in London, rather than Dublin, in the hope of raising higher prices. Other books were simply sold in lots to second-hand booksellers and private dealers, a quarter of the stock was donated to societies and hostels, and some 500 volumes were sold as wastepaper. The sale raised only £200, of which £50 went on sale costs.[23]

The lack of success of the Clogher sale perhaps prevented the Church from selling any more of the libraries. Selling a large library is both expensive and time-consuming – especially if no catalogue of the collection exists. In 1980 a much simpler arrangement was reached in Cork where the St Finbarr's collection was sold in its entirety to University College. This development may be regarded as one of mutual advantage; the books have remained within the locality where they belong (the university lies only half a mile from the cathedral), and the collection has passed into the hands of a body which can appreciate its scholarly value and is well-positioned to exploit it. A basic conservation and cataloguing process has been ongoing since 1996, and the books are now accessible via the library catalogue.[24] The Church has made only one other serious attempt to sell a diocesan collection. In 1989 the Representative Church Body set in motion plans to dispose of the Ossory diocesan library, proposing to use the revenue for the restoration and maintenance of St Canice's Cathedral. They argued that the original charitable trust which had bequeathed the books for the benefit of the clergy had failed, and that according to the legal doctrine of *cy-près* the charitable gift should therefore be rededicated to a purpose which would be close to the benefactor's original intent. The subsequent legal wrangle became a *cause célèbre*, and although judgement was initially given in favour of the sale, in the end the application was overturned and the library has remained at St Canice's.[25] An alternative to selling off an entire collection is to sell some of the books, using the proceeds to protect the rest. This policy was pursued at Cashel in the 1960s and early 1970s by Dean Wolfe, resulting in the sale of some hundreds of volumes, mostly to the Folger Library in Washington. Wolfe had the best of intentions: he used the income to refurbish the library building which was then opened to the public; he

began a programme of book restoration, and produced a new catalogue of the books.[26] Inevitably, however, his actions disturbed the integrity of the collection, although he had taken advice as to what items might be sold without doing so. The library was mistakenly perceived to be primarily ecclesiastical in content and it was concluded that works of science, mathematics, and history, as well as maps, might be removed with impunity. There were repeated threats of further such cherry-picking during the 1990s as the library at Cashel struggled to keep its head above water, but none has taken place to date.[27]

During the first half of the twentieth century Cashel pursued a less irreversible policy of removing books and manuscripts to the safekeeping of first Marsh's Library in Dublin and later to the Library of the Representative Church Body. This was in direct contravention of the wishes of the founder, Theophilus Bolton, who expressly stated in his bequest that 'none of the said Books be removed from thence', and the books were eventually brought back. As a temporary solution this strategy undoubtedly protected the collection at Cashel. But the permanent transfer of material from other collections to the Church's reference library merely raises other problems. Problems of money, space, upkeep, and restoration are transferred to the Representative Church Body Library, which does not of course have unlimited resources.[28] Problems of access are compounded because often the material is placed in storage. Even if it is made accessible it is *de facto* less accessible to the community to which it belonged, and the inestimable value of a collection which is still *in situ* is lost. In 1999 the diocesan library, in Waterford was closed down and the contents transferred to Dublin; ironically this library had been commended only the year before as 'another example of rescue'.[29] A similar fate has recently befallen the diocesan library of Down, Connor, and Dromore. In both cases there has also been a certain amount of dismemberment. Prior to the removal of the books from Waterford, certain items of local interest were selected to remain at the cathedral with the intention that eventually they would be put on display. At Down because of a lack of adequate storage, the Reichel collection of books had already been transferred to the Union Theological College in Belfast (Presbyterian) and the Reeves collection of manuscripts to the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland. The Down diocesan library was still acquiring material from bequests in the mid-1990s, notably Hugh Alexander Boyd's extensive Irish ecclesiastical library, including much of his own unpublished work on parishes, particularly in Connor Diocese; but this material is now to be

transferred to the Public Library in Armagh, and the rest of the library is destined for the Representative Church Body due 'to lack of space and also considerable lack of interest'.[30]

As already noted, a positive solution has been reached in Cork where the diocesan collection is now in the hands of the university. Collaboration with institutions of higher education has been fruitful in other cases as well. In 1980 the Tuam diocesan library was catalogued by staff from the library at University College Galway. In the early 1990s the collection at Waterford underwent remedial conservation while in temporary accommodation at St John's College (a Roman Catholic seminary). Currently the library at Cashel is exploring the possibility of a 'special relationship' with the University of Limerick, and in the north the University of Ulster is acting in an advisory capacity to the Derry and Raphoe diocesan library.[31] University libraries have the advantage of trained and specialised staff, and – one hopes – an interest in rare books, but they too are under financial pressure, especially in the current climate where the greatest emphasis is on applied research. In several cases including Tuam, Waterford, and Cork, funding for basic conservation and cataloguing has been forthcoming from FÁS, the state body for training and employment. Commercial sponsorship does not seem a very realistic option. Alone of all the diocesan libraries, Cashel has explored this possibility, to some effect. In the 1980s Dean Woodworth was successful in attracting money from several major sources; indeed, the generosity of one sponsor, Guinness-Peat Aviation, is now permanently recorded in the library's name.[32] However, as Cashel has found, it is difficult to provide enough money to sustain the demands of a large collection of old books; similarly, attempts to market the Cashel library as a tourist attraction have not met with great success.

A recent article on Irish cathedral libraries expresses the opinion that the future of such libraries is 'brighter than it has ever been'.[33] This seems an overly optimistic assessment, since the future of the closely related diocesan libraries looks bleak. Of the fourteen original libraries, several (Armagh, Cashel, Derry and Raphoe, Kilmore, Marsh's Library, and Ossory) continue to exist as libraries in their original locations, albeit with varying degrees of stability. Two (Cork and Tuam) have been moved to new locations; two more (Waterford and Down) have been closed and their contents transferred to the Library of the Representative Church Body in Dublin; and one (Clogher) has been utterly destroyed.[34] My enquiries about the state of the Kilmore diocesan library prompted the following response:

> There are many valuable and useful books of historical interest, classical commentaries and works of reference. . . . There is also a lot of dated stuff that would be better employed on one of those second hand bookstalls on the Dublin quays.[35]

This rather chilling statement underlines the fact that these libraries are no longer of meaningful use to the Church. Now that they have manifestly outlived their original purpose, potential interest in these Libraries is now most likely to come from academics, local historians, antiquarians, and book-collectors, but such interest will only be generated if the collections are more widely publicised and made more accessible. Even among interested parties, these collections are scarcely known. Of course, greater publicity may lead to interest of a more unwanted type, as the recent robbery at the Armagh Public Library demonstrates. In December 1999 manuscripts, printed books and artefacts which had been on display in the eighteenth-century reading room were stolen by two armed men. The items stolen included an ancient miniature version of the Koran, a 1611 Geneva Bible, and a first edition of *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) annotated by Jonathan Swift; not all of these have been recovered, even though they are practically unsaleable.[36]

Although individual rare items might achieve high prices in a legal market, the real value of these collections is a collective one, and much will be lost by the continuing demise of these diocesan libraries. Most obviously these collections are of intrinsic interest in relation to the study of library history, the history of printing (in general, and in Ireland in particular), and the history of the book. While only the largest of these collections have manuscript holdings, most have a sprinkling of incunabula, and eighteenth-century printing in particular is very well represented. In general their contents bear out the judgement made by the nineteenth-century bibliographer, Beriah Botfield, on the value of the English cathedral libraries he had visited: 'Among much that is obsolete there is more that is valuable, and amid much that is trifling there is more that is important.'[37] Beyond this, these collections are of significant historic and cultural interest, at both a local and a national level. The diocesan libraries are without doubt important regional resources. The Dobbyn collection of early law books in the Waterford library constituted the finest collection of such material in Ireland outside the King's Inns in Dublin. Since 1999 the Waterford books have been in Dublin, but the capital has many fine libraries, and such continued centralisation should, if possible, be resisted. The Dobbyn books

represent a private collection which was built up over three generations in the same family *in Waterford*; the value of keeping these books in the place where they belong should not be overlooked. Each of these collections offers valuable materials for the study of local history; they have more meaning and a greater potential for use if they remain *in situ*, so long as their contents can be kept reasonably secure and accessible. In terms of ecclesiastical history, these collections constitute important primary resources for research into the history of the Church of Ireland, specifically on the episcopates of numerous eighteenth- and nineteenth-century bishops. To date there have been very few studies of individual dioceses, and the history of the Anglican communion, and the Anglican tradition in Ireland generally, have been comparatively neglected.[38]

A final point is that the existence of these diocesan collections counterbalances the loss of other libraries, both medieval and modern.[39] In Ireland, ancient cathedral libraries (which were never as numerous as in England), are mostly no longer in existence outside Dublin. Collections such as those of St Mary's, Limerick, are now known only from inventories and a few surviving books in other locations. But it is possible that remnants of the ancient cathedral collections at Cork and Kilkenny may survive, in an as yet unidentified form, through the contents of their later diocesan libraries. In particular, materials used in later bindings might usefully be investigated; preliminary studies in Cork have yielded some interesting discoveries in this regard.[40] More broadly, the diocesan libraries make up in part for the dearth of private book collections in the Republic of Ireland. In Northern Ireland there are several substantial early modern collections of books associated with country houses, some of which are now in the hands of the National Trust as, for example, at Springhill House and The Argory, Co. Armagh, and at Castle Ward, Co. Down.[41] But in the Republic the private family libraries of the Anglo-Irish gentry largely disappeared after 1921, along with the owners and big houses to which they belonged. The more or less total loss of this type of library in the south of Ireland means that our knowledge of the reading habits of a whole section of pre-twentieth-century Irish society is deficient. The eighteenth-century Anglo-Irish 'Protestant Ascendancy' library was undoubtedly one of the means by which ideas of the French enlightenment entered Ireland, so this is a serious gap in our knowledge. An examination of what contemporary Anglican bishops and clergymen were reading and lending to their better-educated parishioners may help us to reconstruct criteria of taste and education among the Anglo-Irish

gentry. More generally a sense of the role played by reading and scholarship in the political and cultural development of Irish society might be more fully recovered by a detailed analysis of the Anglican diocesan collections.[42]

Notes

1. See N. R. Ker, *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain*, 2nd edn (London: Royal Historical Society, 1964), and A. G. Watson, *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain, a List of Surviving Books, edited by N.R. Ker: Supplement to the Second Edition* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1987); and also the Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues series, published by the British Library and British Academy.

2. In Cork, for example, books from St Luke's in Summerhill, and from the Green Coat Hospital School in Shandon, have survived; most of these are now in the Boole Library, University College Cork. For Cork book collections, see J.P. MacCarthy, 'In Search of Cork's Collecting Traditions', *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, 100 (1995): 29–46.

3. For previous surveys, see Maura Tallon, 'Church of Ireland Diocesan Libraries', *An Leabharlann*, 17 no. 1 (1959): 17–27, and 17 no. 2 (1959): 45–63; also independently published (Dublin: Library Association of Ireland, 1959). See also the more recent but less reliable account by Mary Casteleyn, *A History of Literacy and Libraries in Ireland* (Aldershot: Gower, 1984), pp. 71–83.

4. The distinction is noted by Harry Carson, 'Cathedral Libraries in Ireland', *An Leabharlann: The Irish Library*, 14.2 (1998): 59–64.

5. For a general survey of Christ Church see Kenneth Milne, *History of Christ Church Cathedral* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2000); on the library and contents see E. H. Lewis-Crosby, *The Ancient Books of Christ Church Cathedral* (Dublin: 1947), and more recently Barra Boydell, *Music at Christ Church before 1800* (Dublin: Four Courts, 1998).

6. Raymond Gillespie, 'Borrowing Books from Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, 1607', *Long Room*, 43 (1998): 15–19.

7. Irish Statutes 6 Anne, c. 19. The library's history and contents are described by Muriel McCarthy, *All Graduates and Gentlemen* (Dublin: O'Brien Press, 1980). The library's website is *www.kst.dit.ie/marsh*.

8. Irish Statutes 13 & 14 George III, c. 40. For biographical information see G. O. Simms, 'The Founder of Armagh's Public Library: Primate Robinson among his Books', *Irish Booklore*, 1.2 (1971): 139–49. See also D. R. M. Weatherup, 'The Armagh Public Library 1771–1971', *Irish Booklore*, 2.2 (1976): 269–99; and John Thompson, 'William Reeves and the Medieval Texts and Manuscripts at Armagh', *Peritia*, 10 (1996): 363–80. The library's website is *www.armaghrobinsonlibrary.org*.

9. The following uses the authorities cited in note 3 above but also the more up-to-date W.N. Osborough, 'On Selling Cathedral Libraries – Reflections on

a Recent Cy-Près Application', *The Irish Jurist*, n.s. 24 (1989) 1: 51–86. Other sources which pertain to particular collections are noted.

10. Henry Cotton, *Fasti Ecclesiae Hiberniae*, 6 vols (Dublin, 1845–78), 2 (Leinster): 336.

11. See David Woodworth, 'St Canice's Library', *Old Kilkenny Review: Journal of Kilkenny Archaeological Society*, 22 (1970): 5–10, and the unsigned note 'St Canice's Library is 300 Years Old', published in the same journal (1965): 47–8. A new catalogue is currently being prepared by Hugh Campbell.

12. See R. Wyse Jackson, 'The Ancient Library of Cashel', *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, 7 (1947): 128–34. On King's books, see Robert S. Matteson, 'The Early Library of Archbishop William King', *The Library* 5th Series, 30 (1975): 303–14, and 'Archbishop William King and the Conception of his Library', *The Library* 6th Series, 13 (1991): 238–54.

13. For the foundation of the Raphoe library and some of its contents see Angélique Day, 'Pamphlets, Protestants and Pragmatics: A Comparison of Collections', *Book Collector*, 35 (1986), pp. 443–62.

14. Quoted by Osborough, 'On Selling Cathedral Libraries', p. 73.

15. For an indication of its contents see Frederick Alderson, 'Unfamiliar Libraries XIV: Cashel Cathedral', *Book Collector*, 17 (1968): 322–30.

16. On the latter see Julian C. Walton, 'The Library of Christ Church Cathedral, Waterford', *Decies*, 41 (1989): 5–21.

17. *The Sketch-Book of Geoffrey Crayon* (1823), pp. 227–9, quoted by Edward Edwards, *Memoirs of Libraries Including a Handbook of Library Economy*, 2 vols (London, 1859), 1: 687–8.

18. Christopher Marlowe, *The Tragicall History of Dr Faustus*, chorus line 28.

19. On the collection's refurbishment see Alice Downing, 'Conservation of an old Cathedral Library', *Conservation Administration News*, 46 (1991): 4–5, and 'Work Well Done in Galway', *Conservation Administration News*, 51 (1992): 3.

20. In a letter to his brother, Hugh, 22 May 1729, National Library of Ireland PC 227, quoted by Toby Barnard, 'Learning, the learned and literacy in Ireland, c. 1660–1760', in Toby Barnard, Dáibhí Ö Cróinín, and Katharine Simms, eds, *'A Miracle of Learning': Studies in Manuscripts and Irish Learning. Essays in Honour of William O'Sullivan* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998): 209–35 (p. 209).

21. The Irish Church Act 1869 disestablished and disendowed the Church of Ireland.

22. The John Rylands Library acquired over a thousand items dating from 1531 to 1884, including a large number of eighteenth-century items and 176 pre-1700 titles; most are of a theological nature, and many are of Irish interest. See *http://rylibweb.man.ac.uk*, where the Clogher Diocesan Library is listed under Special Collections.

23. The true value of these collections is not simply the open-market one. In the 1980s the Tuam Library of 4,500 volumes was valued at £3,000 by a bookseller. See 'Bibliophile's Diary No. 7', *Long Room*, 40 (1995): 6–18 (p. 13).

24. Available on line at *http://booleweb.ucc.ie*.

25. See Osborough, 'On Selling Cathedral Libraries', and the note in 'Bibliophile's Diary No. 5', *Long Room*, 38 (1993): 4–19 (p. 9).

26. *Catalogue of the Cashel Diocesan Library, Co. Tipperary, Ireland* (Boston, Mass.: G. K. Hall, 1973).

27. See the reports in 'Bibliophile's Diary', *Long Room*, 36 (1991), p. 9, and 'Bibliophile's Diary no. 6', *Long Room*, 39 (1994): 6–17 (p. 9).

28. This library was established in 1931 when the RCB accepted the library of the Irish Guild of Witness (c. 5,000 items). Since 1939 it has been the principal repository for the archives of the Church of Ireland, necessitating its relocation to a larger site; see Raymond Refaussé, ed., *A Library on the Move: Twenty-Five Years of the RCB Library in Churchtown* (Dublin: RCB Library, 1995).

29. Carson, 'Cathedral Libraries', p. 60.

30. For information about the Down, Connor and Dromore diocesan library I am grateful to J. F. Rankin.

31. For information about the latter I am grateful to Joseph McLaughlin, Sub-Librarian to the Faculties of Science and Informatics, University of Ulster at Coleraine. Cashel's relationship with the University of Limerick is noted in 'Bibliophile's Diary no. 9', *Long Room*, 42 (1997): 6–15 (p. 8).

32. The Bolton Library was initially renamed as the GPA-Bolton Library. It has since reverted to its original name, with the library *building* designated as the GPA building.

33. Carson, 'Cathedral Libraries', p. 64.

34. I have not determined the current state of the library at Lismore. The library at Rosscarbery continues precariously, housed in the Chapter Room and open to the public on Saturday afternoons, but under redevelopment as a resource for modern Christian literature. I am grateful to the present dean, the Very Rev. Christopher Peters, for information about the library.

35. Personal letter from the then bishop, the Right Rev. M. H. G. Mayes, 16 Apr. 2000.

36. See reports in *The Irish Times*, 15 Dec. 1999 and 22 Dec. 1999, and also in 'Bibliophile's Diary no. 12 (2000)', *Long Room*, 44–5 (1999–2000): 13–19 (p. 13). The two antique silver mace heads, valued at £25,000 each, were abandoned a week later outside Balbriggan Garda station in north County Dublin; five of the missing books were later discovered in the suitcases of two men *en route* to San Francisco. See also 'Bibliophile's Diary no. 13', *Long Room* 46 (2001): 7–17 (p. 9).

37. Beriah Botfield, *Notes on the Cathedral Libraries of England* (London, 1849), p. viii.

38. For recent work surveys see Alan Acheson, *A History of the Church of Ireland 1691–1996* (Dublin: Columba Press, 1999), and Alan Ford, James McGuire, and Kenneth Milne, eds, *As By Law Established: The Church of Ireland since the Reformation* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1995).

39. For a more general survey, see Thomas P. O'Neill, 'Libraries in Ireland', *An Leabharlann*, 13 (1955): 67–80; and Barbara Traxler Brown, 'Library History Research in Ireland: 1918–1988', *Libraries and Culture*, 25 (1990): 86–102.

40. See Margaret Connolly, 'Books Connected with Battle Abbey before the Dissolution: Some New Discoveries', *The Library*, 7th ser. 1 (2000): 119–32.

41. I am grateful to Mark Purcell of the National Trust for supplying information about these and several other country house libraries in the north, and to Peter Hoare for alerting me to their existence in the first place.

42. See Bernadette Cunningham and Máire Kennedy, eds, *The Experience of Reading: Irish Historical Perspectives* (Dublin: Rare Books Group of the Library Association of Ireland, and Economic and Social History Society of Ireland, 1999).

12
The Lost Jewish Libraries of Vilna and the Frankfurt Institut zur Erforschung der Judenfrage

Sem C. Sutter

This is the story of several libraries lost during the Second World War. Though geographically disparate and philosophically antithetical, their fates became inextricably linked with one another and with the course of the war. It is a tale of dismembered collections and bloated accumulations, of library villainy and library heroism. If you had the chance to ask them, most of its heroes would have told you that they were simply in the right – or wrong – place at the right time and did what they had to do. Ironically, under interrogation its villains made similar claims. It is a story of two communities of readers who constructed radically different meanings from the same texts.

A nation mad for books

A Jewish school principal in Warsaw writing in his diary in December 1939 presciently described the heart of the matter:

> We are dealing with a nation of high culture, with 'a people of the Book'. . . . Germany has become a madhouse – mad for books. Say what you will, I fear such people! Where plunder is based on an ideology, on a world outlook which in essence is spiritual, it cannot be equalled in strength and durability. Such a nation will not perish. The Nazi has robbed us not only of material possessions, but also of our good name as 'the people of the Book'.[1]

This essay presents a small portion of my research in progress on the book confiscations carried out by a network of Nazi organisations under the control of the party ideologue Alfred Rosenberg. Between 1940 and 1945 Rosenberg's units accompanying German armies raided libraries

of many kinds from Paris and Amsterdam in the west to Smolensk and Kiev in the east, from Tallinn and Riga in the north to Rome and Salonika in the south. They removed their loot to three libraries that they had established in Germany and distributed some volumes to existing state and academic institutions. This chapter concentrates on one Nazi library, that of the Institute for the Study of the Jewish Question (Institut zur Erforschung der Judenfrage, hereafter IEJ) in Frankfurt, and on a single cluster of Jewish libraries among the many that this anti-Semitic library absorbed, those of Vilna.

Alfred Rosenberg was among Hitler's early collaborators and by 1929 had established himself as a major party spokesman on cultural issues. In 1930 he published his magnum opus, *The Myth of the Twentieth Century*, widely distributed though less widely read (at the Nuremberg Trials Rosenberg suffered the humiliation of hearing several of his erstwhile party comrades profess that they had never been able to make much sense of it or to read it all the way through). In 1934 Hitler named Reichsleiter Rosenberg to a position with the pompous title of the Führer's Deputy for the Supervision of All Intellectual and Ideological Education and Training of the Nazi Party, and Rosenberg began to build a complex organization of offices covering all fields of the arts, culture and science.[2]

By 1937–38 Rosenberg had begun drafting plans for a party university to be called Die Hohe Schule. He aimed to construct a major complex in Chiemsee, Bavaria, and a library in Berlin but to begin by establishing a series of specialised branch institutes in cities across Germany. Rosenberg therefore immediately sensed a confluence of interests in November 1938 when Rudolf Hess forwarded to him a letter from the mayor of Frankfurt. Bürgermeister Friedrich Krebs offered to place the 40,000-volume Judaica collection of the Frankfurt City Library at the disposal of the party and the Reich if a national anti-Semitic institute were established in the city. In the mayor's words:

> The collection developed in a time when Frankfurt's political and cultural life stood under Jewish influence, but in our day it offers a unique opportunity for research on Judaism and the Jewish question.[3]

Frankfurt's collection was outstanding, strongly supported by gifts and bequests from Jewish citizens since the nineteenth century, augmenting an eighteenth-century core collection.[4] It enjoyed an international reputation buttressed by a catalogue edited by its highly knowledgeable

curator, Dr Aron Freimann, and published a year before his dismissal in 1933. This volume remains one of the pillars of Judaica bibliography.[5] Upon the library director's recommendation the mayor had closed the Judaica collection to the public in February 1937, permitting use only by scholars who would guarantee that their work did not subvert the Nazi state.[6]

The mayor's hope of using the Judaica collection to boost the prestige of his city gave Rosenberg the opportunity to found the first of his branch institutes. After meeting with one of Rosenberg's deputies, the mayor presented his colleagues with a plan whereby the party would establish an Institute for the Study of the Jewish Question and the city would provide its library, to be supplemented if possible by books and archive materials expropriated from Jewish institutions throughout Germany in the wake of the Kristallnacht several weeks earlier.[7] Thus, from its very foundation the acquisitions plan for the Institute's library rested in part on confiscations from other libraries. Fierce competition among Nazi entities kept these particular collections out of the final agreement between the party and the city in April 1939,[8] but the fortunes of war and of Alfred Rosenberg were to bring books from hundreds of other Jewish libraries to the Frankfurt institute.

In the weeks that followed the German entry into Paris on 14 June 1940, Rosenberg secured Hitler's approval for 'a thorough examination of the items left behind by Jews and freemasons which is to provide a basis for future study as deemed necessary for the political, ideological, and academic operations of both the party and the Hohe Schule'.[9] Within days General Keitel of the Wehrmacht notified field commanders in occupied France and the Low Countries that Hitler had authorised 'the archivists of Reichsleiter Rosenberg' to search and seize libraries and archives.[10]

Rosenberg soon formed an entity called the Einsatzstab [or, operational staff of] Reichsleiter Rosenberg, to carry out this mission. His organisation rapidly branched out into looting art works and music[11] and its operations extended throughout Europe. By September 1940 Rosenberg could report in a letter to party treasurer Franz X. Schwarz about the 'research materials' that his staff had 'secured' in seven weeks of operations in Paris, pointing proudly to several Rothschild family libraries and to the Bibliothèque Polonaise with its 130,000 volumes and indicating that 'in Brussels and Amsterdam we are also on the track of valuable material and I believe that from there we will also be able to transport much to Germany'.[12] A later report indicated that the various Rothschild collections totalled some 28,000 volumes and

archival material, as well as a century of records from the Rothschild banking house, filling 760 boxes. Further Jewish collections seized in Paris included the 40,000-volume strong library of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, including about 20 incunabula, over 200 manuscripts, and an extensive newspaper clipping collection about the Dreyfus affair; the holdings of the École Rabbinique, comprising 10,000 volumes with especially valuable Talmudic material, and the entire 20,000-volume stock of the Libraire Lipschütz bookshop.[13]

'Jewish Studies without Jews'

Thousands of books began flowing from Paris to the IEJ in Frankfurt, which opened formally with a flurry of speeches on 26 March 1941 before German and foreign guests. In his dedicatory address Rosenberg proclaimed:

> The library of the Frankfurt Institute for the Study of the Jewish Question which opens today already houses a great number of documents important for the history of Judaism and for the political development of all of Europe. This library is already the largest in the world dealing with Judaism. In the coming years it will be enlarged in a most decisive way.[14]

Wilhelm Grau, the institute's director, spoke proudly of a growing library of 350,000 volumes.

> Through significant cultural policy measures in the war year 1940, Reichsleiter Rosenberg has arranged the securing and collection of important library holdings for the Jewish question. . . . Among them are hundreds of manuscripts, incunabula, and rare first editions.[15]

The actual working library was far more modest than these boastful accounts. Grau's annual report for 1941 indicated that 2,136 crates of books had arrived from occupied territories of which 794 had been unpacked and shelved and of these 'unordered masses of books' about 25,000 had actually been catalogued.[16] This huge discrepancy between the number of books acquired through confiscation and the number actually available for use was to plague the library throughout its brief existence, but this was not the view presented as propaganda to a credulous public. For example, under a headline 'For the First Time in History: Jewish Studies without Jews', the readers of the *Illustrierter*

Beobachter in April 1942 saw impressive photographs of staff members at desks and in well-ordered stacks consulting rare volumes and examining Torah rolls. The illustrations accompanied a breathless account of Jewish books now under German control.[17] The Institute's own journal, *Weltkampf*, carried pseudo-academic articles about Heinrich Heine's ostensibly sycophantic letters begging Baron James de Rothschild for money and Einstein's critique of the Hebrew University, both based on documents seized in Paris and now in the IEJ library.[18]

Dr Johann Pohl, the author of the latter article, was a former Catholic priest. After failing to secure an academic appointment he had worked in the Hebraica and Judaica department of the Prussian State Library in Berlin before moving to the IEJ to head its Hebraica division just after the library's official opening in 1941. He is known to have taken part in Einsatzstab book raids or evaluations of confiscated material in Greece, the Balkans, Lithuania, and Russia.[19]

Vilna: the Jerusalem of Lithuania

For a closer examination of the Einsatzstab's *modus operandi*, let us turn to confiscations in the city of Vilna in 1942 and 1943. The site of a flourishing Jewish community since the late fifteenth century, Vilna (also known as Vilnius) became a centre for rabbinical scholars, writers, cultural and political movements, and libraries, earning it the title 'The Jerusalem of Lithuania'. In the course of its history the city has been controlled by Lithuania, Poland, Russia, and Germany. When war broke out between Germany and the Soviet Union, the city's population of 200,000 included about 60,000 Jews.[20]

Among Vilna's Jewish libraries the oldest and perhaps most distinguished was the Strashun Library, formed by a nineteenth-century community leader and Talmudic scholar. By the late 1930s it held some 35,000 volumes, ranging from Hebrew incunabula to foreign Yiddish periodicals and serving a diverse audience of readers, described by Lucy Dawidowicz, a young American studying in Vilna in 1938:

> On any day you could see, seated at the two long tables in the reading room, venerable long-bearded men, wearing hats, studying Talmudic texts, elbow to elbow with bareheaded young men and even young women, bare-armed sometimes on warm days, studying *their* texts. The old men would sometimes mutter and grumble about what the world had come to. The young people would titter.[21]

Relatively new, but already the largest among the Jewish libraries in Vilna was that of YIVO, the Yidisher Visenshaftlekher Institut, founded in 1925 as an academic centre for Yiddish literature and linguistics and for East European Jewish studies. A 1938 report indicated that the library, operating in part via an ingenious network of volunteer *zamlers*, or collectors, who gathered fugitive print and manuscript material in their own communities, 'had rescued from oblivion, prevented from loss and preserved for posterity monuments of the Jewish past which are now available for study and research'. It numbered 40,000 books and 10,000 volumes of newspapers, making it 'the richest of all Jewish collections of this type'.[22]

A third major library was that of Mefitse Haskala, the Association to Spread Enlightenment. Founded in 1911 and owned by the Jewish community, by 1939 the library comprised some 45,000 volumes of popular literature, predominantly in Yiddish, Russian, Polish, and Hebrew and was serving about 2,000 readers. Soon after the Soviets occupied Vilna in June 1940 they nationalized the Mefitse Haskala Library and renamed it Public Library No. 5.[23]

German troops entered Vilna on 24 June 1941 after two days of air bombardment. Several thousand Jews were among those who fled the city for the interior of the Soviet Union on those two days. The majority had no alternative but to stay and await their fate.[24] By 6 September about 19,000 Jews had been taken to a wooded area outside the city and murdered. On that date the remaining 39,000 were forced to move into two small ghettos.

The Germans wasted no time in beginning to loot the libraries of Vilna. On 17 July 1941 Hitler appointed Rosenberg as State Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories and in August Rosenberg issued an order extending to this region his Einsatzstab's authority to seize cultural goods.[25] Dr Herbert Gotthard, a professor and librarian from Berlin attached to the Einsatzstab, soon appeared in Vilna and demanded that two scholars whom the Gestapo had imprisoned prepare lists of the incunabula and manuscripts in the Strashun Library.[26]

In the first week of September, just before establishment of the ghetto, Germans entered the Mefitse Haskala Library, shot the librarian, and removed the catalogue as well as some 1,500 volumes. As residents were being driven into the ghetto on 6 September, they saw books and papers from the library scattered in the street outside. Herman Kruk, the former director of a large Jewish public library in Warsaw who had fled to Vilna in the fall of 1939, attempted to gather up as many as he could.[27] Within days he secured permission from the Judenrat, the ghetto's puppet

council, to reopen the library's doors as the Vilna Ghetto Library. It proved immensely popular, a rare rock of stability and an avenue of temporary escape from the terrors and uncertainties of life in the ghetto.

Many years later Dina Abramowicz, one of Kruk's assistants, recalled which books were in highest demand. World literature in translation was heavily read, especially when it dealt with social themes: Ignazio Silone, Upton Sinclair, Theodore Dreiser, Leo Feuchtwanger and Franz Werfel. Former society women filled their time with translated Russian romances, expressing deep disappointment if some titles in a beloved series were missing. But it was the children whose reading habits made the most indelible impression upon Abramowicz.

> Yiddish translations of Jules Verne, written in a pseudo-literary style and published in New York around 1900 with outmoded orthography, were so well-thumbed by young fans that one could barely decipher the text on greasily shiny pages. There were volumes from which dozens of pages were missing from the beginning and the end (and presumably from the middle as well) and which had been rebound so often that there was no inner margin and lines began somewhere deep in the spine. In short, true book-invalids that had long since earned retirement. But nothing could keep the children from reading these books. Their longing to transport themselves to an unknown fantasy land did not diminish in the ghetto. On the contrary, it proved especially intense.[28]

On 13 December 1942 residents of the ghetto held a festival to mark a milestone, the circulation of the 100,000th book. Herman Kruk noted in his diary the occasion's speeches, tributes, music and prizes,[29] but a fifteen year-old reader, writing in his own journal, expressed himself more personally and poignantly: 'The reading of books in the ghetto is the greatest pleasure for me. The books unite us with the future. The books unite us with the world.'[30]

'A cemetery of books'

It is a particularly cruel irony that Herman Kruk, whose vision and determination guided the Ghetto Library, was forced to oversee the dismemberment of the other Jewish libraries of the city. In February 1942 Einsatzstab officers summoned Kruk, former YIVO administrator Zelig Kalmanovitch, and Chaikl Lunski, formerly of the Strashun Library and

now reading room supervisor in the Ghetto Library. Kruk recorded the fateful meeting in his diary:

> They want to transfer the Strashun Library into the university building. I am supposed to supervise the work; Kalmanovitch is my deputy; Lunski the specialist. Twelve workers are planned for moving the books. The rooms of the former Marxist-Leninist seminar are at our disposal. Chaikl is distraught. He is supposed to help remove the treasures from 'his' Strashun Library that he has protected for 45 years! . . . Kalmanovitch and I also feel ill at ease about the matter and don't know if we are grave diggers or rescuers. If we should succeed in keeping cultural assets in Vilna, then we would have rendered some service, but if they remove the library, then we will have contributed to it. I try to prepare for both possibilities. . . . We must sort the books, select them, and describe them exactly.[31]

The Germans continued to assemble books from libraries throughout Vilna and surrounding areas, but they soon abandoned a plan to move the YIVO library to the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences when they discovered that its floor would not support the weight of the books.[32] The university building and YIVO became storage depots where authors, scholars, and artists were forced to work as expert sorters. They came to be known in the ghetto as 'The Paper Brigade'. Rachel Pupko-Krinsky, a *Gymnasium* teacher in the work detail, described the incongruity of her 'interview' by one of the Einsatzstab supervisors: 'He looked us over from head to toe, and questioned us about our education, background and occupation, just as if we were candidates for constructive research jobs'.[33] Kruk's diary for 5 June recorded:

> There are Germans at work in YIVO who are undertaking the last inspection of the books and deciding which they can use (that is, transport away!). 70% of the remaining YIVO holdings as well as the books gathered there from throughout the whole city are being separated out as waste paper. . . . The Jewish workers who must carry out this task are in tears. . . . It is heart-rending to watch it together.[34]

Rachel Pupko-Krinsky recalled how she and other sorters 'would each hide a book in some secret nook and wait for the Germans to leave; for all we knew, these might be the last books we would ever read. The books too were in great danger: we were their last readers. Many had been sold by the Germans, as scrap, to paper mills.'[35]

But the workers in the Paper Brigade could not simply witness the theft or destruction of their heritage and they found ways to rescue at least some small portion of the books and manuscripts that they handled. The Yiddish poet Abraham Sutzkever, for example, reported in 1944:

> In the one and a half years of my activity with the Stab Rosenberg our group succeeded in rescuing many cultural treasures, sealing them into walls, burying them in cellars and caves. We were certain that the day is no longer far off when free people will dig them out again and use them in the interest of the people and of all humanity. We hid the most valuable manuscripts and books under our clothing and took them with us into the ghetto.

He went on to describe his own bold ploy of asking an Einsatzstab officer if he might take some scrap paper home to burn for heating. The officer wrote out a certificate of permission, little knowing that the bundles contained Theodor Herzl's diary, letters of Tolstoy and Gorky, drawings by Chagall, and rare fifteenth- and sixteenth-century imprints. The Brigade managed to hide about 5,000 of the most valuable books in a storage area under the YIVO building. When several dozen crates of material from the Smolensk Museum arrived in May 1943, they were able to divert three crates of valuable Russian manuscripts, books, and pictures and to divide them among several hiding spots in the hope that at least some would survive.[36]

These brave, but possibly futile, efforts could not stave off feelings of helplessness and depression. It seemed quite likely that their odious task was all that was keeping them alive as successive groups of their neighbours were transported out of Vilna to their deaths. Zelig Kalmanovitch wrote in his diary in May 1943:

> A kind of paralysis prevails in our work group. All the paper, i.e. all that was thrown out of the library and other institutions, has already been hauled away. This is lost forever. Whatever was saved may possibly be retrieved. The days drag on and there is no way out. This hope, too, hangs on a thread.[37]

Having found the YIVO's leather-bound guest book, Pupko-Krinsky wrote after the war, the sorters decided to inscribe their names in it and hide it, hoping against hope that in a peaceful future someone might discover their messages. Sutzkever inscribed the final stanza of his

ghetto poem, 'A Prayer to a Miracle', but she was so pessimistic that she wrote only 'Morituri vos salutant'. Kalmanovitch, she recalled, urged the others not to lose faith in their ultimate success: 'The Germans will not succeed in destroying everything. They're on the run themselves, right now. Whatever they have stolen will be found after the war and taken from them.'[38]

It is difficult to know how many books the Einsatzstab actually managed to ship from Vilna to Frankfurt. Both Kruk's and Kalmanovitch's diaries refer on various dates to numbers of crates of books awaiting shipment or sent off. A German report on the IEJ library in April 1943 indicated that about 280,000 volumes had been 'secured' in Riga, Kaunas, Vilna, Minsk, and Kiev, some 50,000 of which currently lay in Vilna, ready for shipment to Frankfurt.[39] A draft account of the Einsatzstab from 1944 mentioned that to date some three million volumes had been assembled and sorted in the occupied East. It indicated that 651 metric tons of printed matter had been pulped in 1943 alone.[40]

On 21 June 1943 Heinrich Himmler set in motion the liquidation of the ghettos of Vilna and other eastern cities and in the course of August and September the remaining Jews who had not escaped Vilna were removed to death chambers and concentration camps.[41] And yet in the ghetto's very final days, the sad work of the Paper Brigade went on. One of the last entries in Kalmanovitch's diary is for 26 August:

> All week long I selected books; several thousands I cast with my own hands on the rubbish pile. A pile of books is scattered on the floor of the reading room of the YIVO – a cemetery of books, a brothers' grave, books that were hit by the war of Gog and Magog just like their owners. . . . And if salvation will hasten to come, perhaps we may be able to save a remnant from the pile. Would that it were so![42]

In September Herman Kruk and Zelig Kalmanovitch were among those deported to camps in Estonia from which they never returned. Their Paper Brigade comrades Abraham Sutzkever and Shmerke Katcherginsky were fortunate enough to escape Vilna and to be among the Jewish partisans who joined with the Soviet army to liberate the city in July 1944. Of course they hoped to recover the books and documents that they had concealed in many locations. The YIVO building was in ruins and a cache of books hidden in the ghetto library had been discovered and its contents burned. Nevertheless, amazing quantities of material

had survived and the two and their associates quickly established a Museum of Jewish Art and Culture to house it.[43]

According to a proud report by Katcherginsky in 1945, the museum's collections included 25,000 Yiddish and Hebrew books and 10,000 in European languages, as well as 600 sacks full of YIVO documentary material. But it was soon clear that under Soviet rule the museum project was doomed. By the summer of 1946 Katcherginsky and Sutzkever had left for the West, smuggling out as much YIVO material as they could in order to send to the re-established YIVO in New York. In 1948 the Soviets closed and ransacked the museum, placing the books and archives in a closed repository called the Book Chamber of the Lithuanian S.S.R. whose director, Dr Antanas Ulpis, quietly and bravely ignored orders to destroy Jewish material. In the post-Stalin era he arranged for thousands of books to be catalogued, but he kept the existence of documentary material secret until his retirement and it did not become public knowledge until 1988. In 1995–96 much of this material was shipped to YIVO in New York.[44]

The IEJ – another lost library

As the fortunes of war shifted, the library of the Institute came to resemble less and less the neat order of the propaganda photos and more and more the chaos that the Einsatzstab had created in the libraries from which its books came. In December 1943 a large portion of the Frankfurt City Library building was demolished in a bomb attack. Fortunately, a substantial portion of its holdings had been evacuated to Schloss Mitwitz in Upper Franconia including Hebraica manuscripts and incunabula, but the rest of this rich collection was destroyed.[45] This heightened the urgency of removing the Institute library to a safer location. Its director located space in the Solms-Braunfels castle in Hungen, fifty kilometres north of Frankfurt and in the course of three weeks in January and February 1944 the staff frantically moved most of the collections, leaving the rest in the basement of the building in Frankfurt.[46]

On 9 April 1945 a pair of Americans in one of the Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives units that accompanied advancing Allied troops reached Hungen. Captain Robert Posey, an architect, and Private Lincoln Kirstein, the dance impresario, found hundreds of thousands of books on shelves, in packing crates, and in huge loose heaps in the castle, the church, a brickyard, and other buildings. They arranged for a military guard and off-limits posting.[47]

Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives officers initially used the Rothschild Library building in Frankfurt to gather and sort the caches of books that American troops were encountering in many locations, whether looted in occupied lands or evacuated from German libraries. These quarters soon proved inadequate and the operation moved to a five-storey I.G. Farben plant in Offenbach which became the centre of a remarkable undertaking to restore and reconstitute lost libraries. Over the course of four years a staff of 200 German civilians under American military supervision sorted 3.2 million books.[48]

'Scattered sheep in one fold'

The task of bringing order to the millions of books that had been mingled from many locations was daunting. Books with ownership marks in Western languages were not too difficult to identify and organise, but one can readily imagine the problems posed by Hebrew and Cyrillic characters. Captain Isaac Bencowitz, a chemist who was the depot's second director, devised an ingenious system of sorting teams in which each member memorised the appearance of a group of Hebrew and Cyrillic *ex libris* stamps and culled books with 'his' marks as they passed around a work table.[49] A contemporary account by Leslie Poste described the procedure:

> [Bencowitz] established a photographic section to reproduce library markings of all countries as an aid for his unskilled sorting crews. The procedure ran as follows: Teams of German workers were organized. The first group, responsible for the preliminary sorting, had four markings of the most frequent libraries to be sifted out. The second group, composed of more intelligent workers, then worked on the less frequent stamps, again using prepared photographic schedules. The most intelligent sorters, comprised of a third group, worked over the residue of books not already on schedules. In this way huge piles were sorted quickly into groups of identifiable and unidentifiable material. Upon being segregated, they were boxed immediately, the material subject to restitution being delivered to the liaison officers of the countries concerned.[50]

A thick two-volume scrapbook in the University of Chicago Library containing photographic reproductions of *ex libris* markings identified by the sorters stands as mute, powerful testimony to the scale of Nazi book

expropriations. For Vilna alone it contains 213 different stamps representing libraries as well as private collections.[51]

In 1947 the Joint Distribution Committee, an American Jewish relief organisation, sent Lucy Dawidowicz on assignment to the Offenbach Archival Depot. She was the young woman who had studied in Vilna in 1938 and described the intergenerational scene in the Strashun Library quoted above. Since 1940 she had been working for the New York branch of YIVO. Her assignment at Offenbach was to select 5,000 ownerless books to 'borrow' for use in refugee camps, although there was tacit recognition that the books would be read until they wore out. As she reviewed the shelves she soon began to encounter books and archives that she recognised as coming from the Strashun and YIVO libraries in Vilna. 'I had', she wrote, 'a feeling akin to holiness, that I was touching something sacred.' She accepted a special sorting assignment and became instrumental in the identification and shipment of 420 crates of Vilna library material to YIVO in New York.[52]

Isaac Bencowitz recorded his own reaction to the Offenbach depot with similar awe in his diary:

> In the sorting room, I would come to a box of books which the sorters had brought together, like scattered sheep into one fold – books from a library which once had been in some distant town in Poland, or an extinct *Yeshiva*. There was something sad and mournful about these volumes . . . as if they were whispering a tale of yearning and hope long since obliterated. . . .
>
> I would pick up a badly worn Talmud with hundreds of names of many generations of students and scholars. Where were they now? Or rather, where were their ashes? . . . I would find myself straightening out these books and arranging them in the boxes with a personal sense of tenderness as if they had belonged to someone dear to me, someone recently deceased.[53]

'The words will nourish . . .'

How does one sum up this story of lost libraries – the libraries of Vilna, wrenched from their shelves; and their antithesis, the library of the Institute for the Study of the Jewish Question, that ironically preserved some of these books from destruction, but to what end since most of their pre-war readers were dead? Let us give the last words to the poet

Abraham Sutzkever of the Paper Brigade. In the dark and desperate days of March 1943 he wrote a poem describing the books that he and his fellow sorters were managing to salvage and sequester. He compared these hidden books of Vilna to the grains of wheat entombed for centuries in the pharaohs' pyramids, yet able to germinate when discovered and planted. His prophetic words came true, not only for some of the books buried in Vilna, but for some of those removed to Frankfurt as well. Sutzkever's poem concludes:

> Perhaps these words will endure,
> And live to see the light loom –
> And in the destined hour
> Will unexpectedly bloom?
>
> And like the primeval grain
> That turned into a stalk –
> The words will nourish,
> The words will belong
> To the people, in its eternal walk.[54]

Notes

1. Chaim A. Kaplan, *Scroll of Agony: The Warsaw Diary of Chaim A. Kaplan*, trans. and ed. by Abraham I. Katsh (New York: Macmillan; London: Collier-Macmillan, 1965), pp. 90–1.
2. Rosenberg's report to Hitler on the 10th anniversary of his appointment, January 1944, Archives du Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine, Paris [hereafter CDJC], CXLIII-380.
3. Dr Friedrich Krebs to Rudolf Hess, 9 November 1938, CDJC, CXLII-230; transcribed copy forwarded from Martin Bormann to Rosenberg on 17 November 1938, Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfelde [hereafter BA], NS 8/180, fols 81–3. Unless otherwise indicated, translations are my own.
4. Hartmut Schaefer, 'Die Stadtbibliothek von 1884–1942', in *Bibliotheca Publica Francofurtensis. 500 Jahre Stadt-und UB Frankfurt am Main*, ed. Klaus-Dieter Lehmann (Frankfurt: Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek, 1984): 119–204 (pp. 173–6).
5. Aron Freimann, ed., *Katalog der Judaica und Hebraica*, Bd. 1 (Frankfurt am Main: Stadtbibliothek Frankfurt am Main, 1932).
6. Frankfurt Kultur-Amt to Oberbürgermeister Krebs, 27 February 1937, Frank-

furt Institut für Stadtgeschichte [hereafter FIS], Mag. Akte Nr. 6200, Bd. 1, fol. 105.

7. Bürgermeister Friedrich Krebs, undated memo, 'Vermerk: Bespr. mit Pg. Urban', [c. 29 November 1938], FIS, Mag. Akte Nr. 6919/12, Bd. 1, fol. 73; council protocol, 29 November 1938, ibid., fol. 72.

8. Direktor Emrich to Bürgermeister Krebs, 9 February 1939, FIS, Mag. Akte Nr. 6919/12, Bd. 1; contract, 15 April 1939, in transcript of January 1943, CDJC, CXLVI-32, pp. 5–8.

9. Rosenberg to Bormann, 1 July 1940, CDJC, CXLIII-368.

10. Keitel memorandum to Oberbefehlshaber des Heeres and Wehrmachtbe-fehlerhaber in den Niederlanden, 5 July 1940, BA, NS 8/167.

11. See Lynn H. Nicholas, *The Rape of Europa: The Fate of Europe's Treasures in the Third Reich and the Second World War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994) and Willem de Vries, *Sonderstab Musik: Music Confiscations by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg under the Nazi Occupation of Western Europe* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1996).

12. Rosenberg, typed carbon letter to Schwarz, 18 September 1940, CDJC, CXLIII-275.

13. Johann Pohl, 'Die Bibliothek zur Erforschung der Judenfrage', 29 April 1943, typed, carbon report, BA, NS 30/19. Offered in evidence at the Nuremberg Trials as Document PS-171 and published in *Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal*, 42 vols (Nuremberg: International Military Tribunal, 1947–9), 25: 243–6.

14. Rosenberg, 'Nationalsozialismus und Wissenschaft', 26 March 1941, Rosen-berg's original typescript, CDJC, CXLVI-22; published in *Weltkampf: Die Judenfrage in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (1941), pp. 3–6.

15. Wilhelm Grau, 'Das Institut zur Erforschung der Judenfrage', *Weltkampf* (1941), pp. 16–21 (p. 17).

16. 'Jahresbericht des Leiters der Außenstelle Frankfurt (Main) der Hohen Schule über das Jahr 1941', 10 January 1942, CDJC, CXLIII-293.

17. 'Zum erstenmal in der Geschichte: Judenforschung ohne Juden', *Illustrierter Beobachter*, Folge 18, 30 April 1942.

18. Otto Paul, 'Briefe Heinrich Heines an Betty und James Rothschild', *Weltkampf* (1941), pp. 165–9; Johann Pohl, 'Albert Einstein: "Unwürdige Verhältnisse an der Universität Jerusalem"', *Weltkampf* (1942), pp. 223–30.

19. Regarding Greece see 'Abschlussbericht über die Tätigkeit des Sonderkom-mandos Rosenberg in Griechenland', 15 November 1941, Anlage I, p. 2, BA, NS 30/75; regarding the Balkans, Maria Kühn-Ludewig, *Johannes Pohl (1904–1960): Judaist und Bibliothekar im Dienste Rosenbergs* (Hanover: Laurentius, 2000), pp. 234–9; regarding Lithuania, ibid., pp. 184–96; regard-ing Russia, ibid., pp. 181–3.

20. Yitzhak Arad, *Ghetto in Flames: The Struggle and Destruction of the Jews of Vilna in the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1980), pp. 27–8.

21. Lucy S. Dawidowicz, *From that Place and Time: A Memoir, 1938–1947* (New York and London: W.W. Norton, 1989), p. 119.

22. *Der YIVO Nokh 13 Yor Arbet* (Vilna, 1938), quoted in Dina Abramowicz, 'The YIVO Library', *Jewish Book Annual*, 25 (1967/68): 87–102 (p. 88).

23. David Shavit, 'Jewish Libraries in the Polish Ghettos During the Nazi Era', *Library Quarterly*, 52 (1982): 103–21 (pp. 105–6).

24. Arad, *Ghetto in Flames*, p. 35.

25. Document 1015c-PS, 'Rosenberg's order to the Reichskommissar Ostland, 20 August 1941, to seize property of cultural value and to send a selection to Germany (Exhibit USA-385)', *Trial of the Major War Criminals*, 26: 530–1.

26. Marc Dvorjetski, *La Victoire du Ghetto* (Paris: Éditions France-Empire, 1962), p. 187; Abraham Sutzkever, *Vilner geto* (Paris: Association Vilnois en France, 1946), p. 108, quoted in Kühn-Ludewig, *Johannes Pohl*, p. 160; Joshua Starr, 'Jewish Cultural Property under Nazi Control', *Jewish Social Studies*, 12 (January, 1950): 27–48 (p. 38).

27. Dina Abramowicz, 'Die Bibliothek im Wilnaer Ghetto (1941–1943)', in *Bücher und Bibliotheken in Ghettos und Lagern (1933–1945)* (Hanover: Laurentius, 1991): 119–37 (pp. 132–3).

28. Ibid., pp. 123–4.

29. Herman Kruk, 'Diary of the Vilna Ghetto', *YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Science*, 13 (1965): 9–78 (pp. 46–7).

30. Yitskhok Rudashevski, *The Diary of the Vilna Ghetto, June 1941–April 1943* (Tel Aviv: Beit Lohamei Haghetaot, 1973), p. 106.

31. Herman Kruk, *Togbukh fun vilner geto*, entry for 19 February 1942, translated into German in Kühn-Ludewig, *Johannes Pohl*, pp. 187–8.

32. Gustav Abb, '[Sechste] Bericht des Kommissars für die Sicherung der Bibliotheken und die Betreuung des Buchgutes im östlichen Operationsgebiet', 1 May 1942, BA, R21/10616, fol. 164–5.

33. Rachel Pupko-Krinsky, 'Laurel Trees of Wiwulskiego', in *The Root and the Bough: The Epic of an Enduring People*, ed. Leo W. Schwarz (New York, Toronto: Rinehart, 1949): 155–63 (p. 157).

34. Kruk, *Togbukh*, entry for 5 June 1942, translated into German in Kühn-Ludewig, *Johannes Pohl*, p. 192.

35. Pupko-Krinsky, 'Laurel Trees', p. 158.

36. Abraham Sutzkever, *Fun Vilner Geto* in German translation in Wassili Grossman and Ilja Ehrenburg, eds, *Das Schwarzbuch: Der Genozid an den sowjetischen Juden* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1995): 457–547 (pp. 496–7).

37. Kalmanovitch, 'A Diary of the Nazi Ghetto in Vilna', *YIVO Annual of Social Science*, 8 (1953): 9–81 (pp. 48–9).

38. Pupko-Krinsky, 'Laurel Trees', p. 162.

39. Johann Pohl, 'Die Bibliothek zur Erforschung der Judenfrage', 29 April 1943, typed, carbon report, BA, NS 30/19; Nuremberg Document 171-PS, 'Report of the Frankfurt-am-Main Branch Office of the 'High School', 29 April 1943 . . .', *Trial of the Major War Criminals*, 25: 245.

40. 'Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR)', [1944], CDJC, CXLI-158, p. 11.

41. Arad, *Ghetto in Flames*, pp. 401–32.

42. Kalmanovitch, 'Diary of the Nazi Ghetto in Vilna', pp. 75–6.

43. David E. Fishman, *Embers Plucked from the Fire: The Rescue of Jewish Cultural Treasures in Vilna* (New York: YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, 1996), pp. 11–12.

44. Ibid., pp. 14–15.

45. Rachel Heuberger, *Bibliothek des Judentums: Die Hebraica- und Judaica-Sammlung der Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt am Main – Entstehung, Geschichte und heutige Aufgaben* (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1996), pp. 115–16.

46. 'Bericht über die Tätigkeit des Institut zur Erforschung der Judenfrage (Außenstelle Frankfurt a.M. der Hohen Schule) November 1943 bis Anfang März 1944', CDJC, CXXXIX-53, pp. 1–4.

47. Captain Robert K. Posey, 17 April 1945, 'Semi-Monthly Report on Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives, for Period Ending 15 April 1945', pp. 16–17. 17 April 1945, US National Archives, RG 239, Box 11, Folder 'SHAEF G-5, MFA&A'.

48. For a brief account see F. J. Hoogewoud, 'The Nazi looting of Books and its American "Antithesis": Selected Pictures from the Offenbach Archival Depot's Photographic History and Its Supplement', *Studia Rosenthaliana*, 26 (1992): 158–92; also see the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's online exhibition, 'Offenbach Archival Depot – Antithesis to Nazi Plunder,' <http://www.ushmm.org/oad/>. It reproduces numerous photographs and documents.

49. Leslie I. Poste, 'Books Go Home from the Wars,' *Library Journal*, 73 (December 1948): 1699–1704 (pp. 1700–2).

50. Ibid., p. 1702.

51. Isaac Bencowitz, 'Library Markings Found Among Looted Books in the Archival Depot, Offenbach' (2-volume scrapbook in the Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library).

52. Dawidowicz, *From that Place and Time*, pp. 312–26.

53. Isaac Bencowitz, diary. 'The Offenbach Archival Depot,' p. 9, quoted in Leslie I. Poste, 'The Development of U.S. Protection of Libraries and Archives in Europe During World War II', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1958, p. 394.

54. Abraham Sutzkever, *A. Sutzkever: Selected Poetry and Prose*, tr. by Barbara and Benjamin Harshaw (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 156–8.

13
China's Roosevelt Library

Rui Wang and Yulin Yang

After the Communists took over China, Senator McCarthy took the lead in asking the famous question: 'Who lost China?' The question was based on the presumption that China was something the United States could lose. By the same token, we might ask a similar question: who lost China's Roosevelt Library? The question invites consideration of a library 'loss', not necessarily modern in origins but so far not addressed by the essays in this volume: the politically constructed disappearance (and history) of a hidden collection.

When people talk about the Roosevelt Library, what comes to mind is probably the Roosevelt Library located in Hyde Park, New York. In fact, it was believed that President Roosevelt had to be persuaded to have a library named after him. He knew, it seems, that he would be remembered in so many ways that a memorial to him in a form of a library would be unnecessary.[1] He would never know, however, that on the other side of the world, the government of China was to decide in 1945 to build a national library named after him. The subsequent preparation for the library and its construction were major topics in the Chinese media. However, within a year, civil war between communists and nationalists broke out and engulfed the country in another conflagration. As a result the Roosevelt Library of China was stillborn. This extraordinary project was lost to the world. During the last 50 years, little has been heard of the library both within and outside China. The following revisits the history of the planning and building of the library and of its final demise.

For China the surrender of Japan in August 1945 marked the end of the Second World War. It offered a much-needed break from foreign aggression and internal strife, thus paving the way to rebuild the country. On 5 May 1945, the ruling Nationalist Party held its sixth

national congress. Among many resolutions proposed and passed, one prominent decision called for building a national library, to be named after Franklin D. Roosevelt, the late president of the United States. Three declared purposes were prominent. First, President Roosevelt had played a decisive role as a leader in the war efforts against fascists throughout the world. In the name of world peace, the people, it was claimed, must commemorate him by building a library to collect and house his works and speeches. Second, the Chinese Nationalist government had greatly benefited from the support and assistance of the government of the United States during the war. The communication and correspondence between the two governments were valuable sources for study and research. The proposed library would be an ideal repository for such documents. Third, the world had been devastated by two world wars in recent history. World safety was a matter of utmost importance, quite clearly warranting research in the causes of war and the establishment of international peace-keeping. The findings and results of such studies needed a physical depository.[2]

Since 1938, the two major rival parties in China, the Nationalist Party or Guo Min Dang and the Communist Party or Gong Chan Dang had been in a practical and problematic coalition against the Japanese invasion. The Wan Nan Incident in 1941, in which the Nationalist army all but annihilated the Communist forces in southern China, made clear the deep-rooted mistrust between the two parties, and the surrender of Japan and the end of World War II foreshadowed the termination of this fragile coalition. Within weeks of the Japanese surrender, both parties started finger-pointing, each accusing the other of not contributing much to the war effort. Major differences remained as to which side was to take the POWs, receive enemy weapons and other equipment, and sign the surrender documents. Any of those issues could be issues of contention and potentially a cause for a new round of conflict.

Representing the Western view, President Truman reaffirmed America's commitment to a 'strong, united, and democratic China' and dispatched general George Marshall to seek a truce and a coalition government between Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists at Chong Qing and Mao Zedong's Communists in Yan An. Neither side, however, had any intention of compromising with the other. Fighting resumed in October 1946. At first the United States imposed an arms embargo. After May 1947 it started to extend its aid to the Nationalist government.

Representing the Eastern Bloc, Stalin also tried to woo the Nationalists on the assumption that Chiang was too strong for the Communists

to defeat but not strong enough to defy Soviet interests in Manchuria, Mongolia and Xinjiang. The USSR concluded a treaty of friendship with the Nationalist government on 14 August 1945. The Soviet policy at that time was to encourage the Communists to continue to work with the Nationalists for a coalition government. Having won Chiang's blessing, the Soviets systematically looted Manchuria of industrial equipment and reassumed their old rights on the Chinese Eastern railway. At the same time, Molotov insisted that the United States withdraw its advisers.[3] In other words, in 1945, amidst some optimism, dark clouds of uncertainty were hanging over China. A major confrontation between the Communists and Nationalists was a distinct possibility.

It was under such threatening conditions that the proposal to build a Roosevelt Library was made, before Marshall was sent to China to mediate a peace. At a news conference called by Truman, one can tell from the questions and answers at that time, 19 November 1945, that the president had not openly declared that the United States would support either side.[4] On 15 December the same year, however, the government of the United States issued a policy statement toward China. By this document the United States made it clear that it would only support the Nationalist Government and that the Communist forces should be disbanded.[5] In May 1945 when the Sixth Congress of the Nationalist Party was in session, its gravest concern was whether or not the Nationalists would receive United States support. Considering the strained relationship between the Nationalist government and the US military command in China under General Joseph Stilwell, the proposal to build a national library in honour of an American president seems in no small measure to have been a remarkable attempt to please the American government.

When the news was announced that the Nationalist Government intended to build a Roosevelt Library, several locations were suggested. Beijing, Xi'an, and Chong Qing were among the front runners. Beijing was considered because it had been capital of China and a cultural centre in recent centuries. Its famous universities included Beijing University, Yen-ch'ing University and Ching Hua University, among many others. Xi'an had been the ancient capital of China for 13 dynasties and one of the very few great towns which escaped the war devastation. In July 1945, Wang Weizhi, together with 31 fellow senators of the Nationalist Congress, sponsored a resolution calling for building the Roosevelt Library in Xi'an to serve as a cultural centre for the whole Northwest region.[6] Chong Qing was selected because it was the war capital. Nanjing, then the country's capital and the next destination of the

Nationalist government, was not even mentioned. In autumn 1946, Chiang Kai-Shek, president of the Nationalist government, made the final decision. Chong Qing, the war capital of the Nationalist government, was to be the site for the new national library.[7] Subsequently the Central National Library, which had been located in the war capital, was ordered by the Ministry of Education to abandon its active collection, except for its rare books, and to move back to Nanjing, the capital of China. The new Roosevelt Library would inherit this book collection of about 100,000 volumes.[8]

The Ministry of Education was charged with forming a preparatory committee for the new library. At the end of 1945, the ministry proposed a committee membership list. The Executive Council, China's highest administrative body, approved it in June of the following year.[9] The list boasts some of the most prominent government leaders, scholars and politicians of the time. It was another message for the outside world that this project enjoyed the highest priority in the reconstruction efforts after the war.

Chaired by Zhu Jiahua, the committee included many political, cultural and educational leaders of the day and reflected the particular emphasis put on the project by the national government. Chairman Zhu had held office in the Nationalist Government as minister of education (1932–33; 1944–48). He was minister of communications (1932–35), and vice president of the Examination Council. From 1939 to May 1944 he headed the administrative department of the Nationalist Party. He also served as secretary-general (1936–38) and as acting president (1940–58) of the Academia Sinica.[10] Another prominent member was Chen Lifu, who had directed the investigation division of the Nationalist Party for about a decade after 1928. He served as secretary-general of the Nationalist Party central headquarters (1929–31), head of the administrative department (1932–36; 1938–39; 1944–48), and minister of education (1938–44). In 1948 he became vice president of the Legislative Council and then minister without portfolio.[11] The secretary of the committee was Yan Wenyu, who had been director of the University Library of Beijing University.

Seven other prominent members completed the committee. Chiang Menglin served as a dean in 1919 and as acting chancellor of Beijing University in 1923. He served as minister of education from 1938 until 1940, later returning to Beijing University as chancellor.[12] Chiang Tingfu taught at Qin Hua University and Nankai University, before becoming ambassador to the Soviet Union in 1936. In 1938 he was appointed director of the political department of the Executive Council. He was

permanent representative to the United Nations in 1947 and ambassador to the United States in 1961.[13] The historian Fu Sinian was a leader in the May the Fourth Movement, and organised the Academia Sinica's institute of history and philosophy. He served as its director for more than twenty years and acted as president of the Academia Sinica during the Sino-Japanese war.[14] Hu Shih was a leading intellectual. His efforts to promote the use of the vernacular in writing sparked the literary and cultural movements of the 1920s. He served as China's ambassador to the United States from 1938 until 1942. He was president of the Academia Sinica in 1958 in Taiwan.[15] Wang Shijie held the chancellorship of Wuhan University from 1929 until 1932. Between 1933 and 1936 he was minister of education and then minister of foreign affairs between 1945 and 1948.[16] Wong Wenhao was regarded as a pioneer in geographical research in China, founding China's Geological Survey and serving as its director for many years. From 1938 until 1945 he served as minister of economic affairs. He was the first elected president of the Executive Council under the 1947 constitution.[17] Finally, Yuan Tongli, educated in the United States, was regarded as a distinguished library administrator. He was director of China's National Library in 1945 and was responsible for many exchange schemes between China and the west.[18]

In May 1947 Yan Wenyu, secretary of the preparatory committee of the Roosevelt Library, made a special trip to the United States in an attempt to seek support from the American government and people for China's effort to build a national library named after President Roosevelt. According to *Jiao Yu Tong Xun* (Education Bulletin),[19] Yan and his party met Eleanor Roosevelt and received memorabilia from the Roosevelt family. In addition Yan attended sessions during the American Library Association's (ALA) annual conference and made known to the US library community that China was building a Roosevelt Library. As a result about 20,000 books were donated by various libraries, including a card catalogue sent from the New York Public Library.[20] During his seven-month stay, Yan met a great number of politicians and professionals and in an extensive tour visited various types of libraries in 23 different states.[21]

By 1948 the proposed Roosevelt Library in Chong Qing received several major contributions in the form of books. In addition to the 100,000 volumes it had inherited from the Central National Library, the Roosevelt Library received about 100,000 books from the Ministry of Education in late 1947 as part of the consolidation effort to assist national and academic libraries.[22] With more than 200,000 volumes, the

library was well on its way to becoming a reality. In the meantime, however, the whole country was engulfed in the conflagration of a civil war between the Communists and Nationalists, and by the end of 1948, the Nationalists were on the retreat before major Communist offensives. In January 1949 both Tian Jin and Beijing, the most important cities in Northern China, fell.[23] When the very existence of the national government was in question, the fate of a national library under construction became even more uncertain. In fact through all available sources one can only identify a date when one reading-room in what was to be the Roosevelt Library was open to the public.[24] The library itself, with its 200,000 plus books and about thirty librarians and supporting staff, never opened as the Roosevelt Library. In November 1949 after Chong Qing was captured by the Communist troops, the Roosevelt Library became the Peoples' Library of the Southwest Region, thus ending a four-year saga of building a modern national library in China bearing an American president's name. Since then very little was known with regard to various collections in the proposed library.

So, who lost the library? The most obvious culprit was the civil war. But for the Communist takeover, the Roosevelt Library would surely have been sustained. However, a closer probe raises the more fundamental question – was the library meant to be lost?

After the scourge of the war, many hoped for a democratic, united and strong China. Certainly, the government of the United States publicly espoused that view in its policy toward China announced in December 1945.[25] In such a climate, even though each side wanted to be rid of the other, both the Communists and the Nationalists were eager to project to the outside world as well as to the Chinese people a desire for democracy, peace, prosperity and, above all, coalition. Realising that the winning of US support and sympathy was essential to their destiny, the Nationalists would do almost anything to make Americans happy. What better gesture than suggesting the building of a national library – a symbol of respect, knowledge and gratitude – in honour of an American president? The Nationalists wanted to make sure that the outside world, the US government in particular, knew that it was Nationalists, not the Communists, who made such a proposal. From the outset, the scheme to build a Roosevelt Library was highly political. If the Nationalist government truly wanted such a library to succeed, then, in addition to their own placemen, the library committee should surely have included members from the other side of the coalition or even well known personnel without political affiliation. Of the records retrieved so far none indicate that the idea was ever entertained. The proposal,

embellished with the impressive membership list of the Nationalist leaders and government officials, seems to have been a gesture sent by the Nationalist government to curry favour with the government of the United States. Had it been a joint effort, it was conceivable that the Communist government might have considered keeping the library as intended at least for some years. The library, after all, offered a rare opportunity of dialogue between the Communist government and the United States.

Despite the tremendous efforts made by the Preparatory Committee under the Nationalist government to win favours from the United States by publicising the library proposal, the American respondents – and the government in particular – made only lukewarm responses. It must have come as a sad disappointment to the members of the Preparatory Committee. Following the Chinese civil war, the exclusivity of the Nationalists' proposal, poor preparation and the obvious lack of support or endorsement from the United States government combined to bring down China's Roosevelt Library. The extent to which it was entirely eliminated, however, remains puzzling.

The People's Library of Chong Qing now occupies the site meant for the Roosevelt Library. From 1998 we attempted to contact the successor library in the hope of receiving new information. We received no response in the two years of our investigation. Privately, Chinese colleagues told us that we were barking up the wrong tree. Communist China had never admitted that there was any such thing as a Roosevelt Library. If anything, the attempt to build one was regarded as a futile effort on the part of the Nationalists to win US support to save their fate. In July 2000, however, a librarian colleague in China informed us that a Roosevelt Library did indeed exist, and, moreover, it boasted its own website: the website for the People's Library of Chong Qing. On 27 July 2000 we visited this site. First we went to 'the History of the Chong Qing Library' and read the following account:

> The predecessor of the Chong Qing Library was 'the National Roosevelt Library' [the name is in quotes] established in 1947.
>
> On 12 April 1945 President Roosevelt passed away. To commemorate his war efforts against fascists and to promote world peace, the Nationalist Party passed a resolution at its sixth congress in May 1945 to establish a 'Roosevelt Library'. The library was a new cultural institution. Many cities wanted to become its site. Finally it was decided that Chong Qing, the war capital, should be the site. The Roosevelt Library was open from 1947 to November 1949. During the three

years, the library actively served the people of Chong Qing. All the reading rooms were open the year round. Later the library started to open even at night. The library's travelling collection of extracurricular activities reached fifty schools. Together with the radio station and the *Peace Daily* the library developed a book review segment in both media. In addition, every month the Library invited famous scholars to make presentations.

On 30 November 1949, Chong Qing was liberated. On 25 April 1950, instructed by the Cultural and Education Department of the South-West Region, the library was renamed the 'National People's Library of the Southwest Region'. Serving the workers, peasants and soldiers became its service policy. On August 7, 1950, the People's Library of the Southwest Region was formally established.

In September 1954, as the administration of the southwest region was disbanded, the library was put under the administration of the Cultural Bureau of Si Chuan Province, and later under the Cultural Bureau of Chong Qing City. In May 1955, the People's Library of the Southwest Region, the People's Library of Chong Qing City (formerly the City Popular Library) and the Library of the Bei Pei District merged, forming the 'Library of Chong Qing City' on 1 June the same year.

In 1987, the Library was named the 'Chong Qing Library'.

This was the first indication to anyone outside China that there did indeed remain something of the original Roosevelt Library. According to the description, the Library had been open from 1947 to 1949, but it had been hidden from the media. In a later part of the website we found a letter to the veteran librarians of the Roosevelt Library:

June 16, 2000

Dear Veteran Librarians of the Roosevelt Library,
    Greetings!
    The authorities now instruct us to call ourselves the Roosevelt Library, and subsequently we will put another sign bearing that name beside the Chong Qing Library at the front entrance. In the spirit of commemorating historical events, looking into the future, enhancing international exchange and promoting development of the Greater West, the library has decided to publish a book to commemorate the Roosevelt Library and set up an exhibition room for the same purpose. As you all worked in the Roosevelt Library, we sincerely urge you to write to us describing your experiences or provide

information with regard to the archive, dossiers or other historical materials. It is our sincere hope that our efforts will receive your enthusiastic support and assistance. You will be notified of any other commemorative activities in this regard.

The Chong Qing Library/The Roosevelt Library[26]

An email message was speedily sent to the Library director to make further inquiries about the history of the library and its collection after 1949. A reply, dated 3 August 2000, briefly stated that 'China's Roosevelt Library has been always (*sic*) existed since the establishment in 1947' and that 'the books and documents are kept in their entirely (*sic*)'.[27] That, however, was the only message ever received from them. Other, more specific, questions went unanswered. Do they really know the answers? After further study of their website, it seems unlikely. The open letter to the Librarians of the Roosevelt Library and its call for papers in fact revealed that the Chong Qing Library Administration knew very little about its predecessor:

'The Roosevelt Library and Me' [a call for conference papers]

The predecessor of the Chong Qing Library was the National Roosevelt Library established in 1974 [1947]. In order to fully utilize the cultural resources in our municipality, promote international exchange, and increase the role of the Library in the build-up of two types of civilizations[28] for the purpose of developing the Greater West, the Chong Qing Library issues a call for papers entitled 'the Roosevelt Library and me' to the whole society. The purpose of this activity is to collect information related to the National Roosevelt Library

Submissions are encouraged to cover any of the following areas:
1. Using the Roosevelt Library in research and studies.
2. Working in the Roosevelt Library as librarians or library staff.
3. Any other information you may have about the Roosevelt Library.

The authors may write in any style or format. The writings should be clear and lucid. Each submission should include a brief introduction to the author and the contact information. Please address the submission to 'Office of the Chong Qing Library, Postal Code 400014'. Please mark the envelope by indicating that a submission is enclosed. The selected submissions will be included in a

commemorative volume. Awards may be issued to participants. Participants may also be invited to other related activities.

<div align="right">The Chong Qing Library[29]</div>

The resurrection of the library has to be understood in terms of the new China. Since the late 1980s, under a new economic policy, many regions, coastal regions in particular, have become affluent. Inland regions have been left as relatively backward. It is widely believed in China that Western investments are the key to economic development in these coastal areas, and for years inland regions have been trying to gain investments from the west. In the late 1990s, the central government decided to provide more favourable conditions by loosening up laws and tax regulations for the inland regions. In many ways these regions are left to do whatever seems necessary to attract Western investments. The effort is referred to as the 'development of the Greater West'. Chong Qing is situated in the Greater West, and what effort could be more effective to attract western investments than to resurrect a library bearing the name of a famous American president? As happened fifty years ago, a Roosevelt Library is being built and promoted, and the saga of China's Roosevelt Library has come full circle. Proposed and built to win favour with the Americans, apparently surviving in some form through the years of Mao and his immediate successors, the library is now being resurrected to promote the new China – and perhaps its relations with the West. Its history is invented and reinvented. A call for papers has been issued to give the illusion of a continuous history. It is unlikely that any commemorative volume will be verifiable. Whether the library, in fact, ever fully served as a working library remains an open question. Its history is still under construction.

Notes

1. Don W. Wilson, 'Presidential Libraries: Developing to Maturity', *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 21 (1991): 9.
2. Luo Si Fu Tu Shu Guan Chou Bei Wei Yuan Hui (The Preparatory Committee for the Roosevelt Library), 'Chuan She Luo Si Fu Tu Shu Guan Zhi Qu' (The Purpose of Building a Roosevelt Library). *Jiao Yu Tong Xun* (Education Bulletin), 2 (1946): 4.
3. 'International Relations, Encyclopædia Britannica Online. <http://search.eb.com/bol/topic?eu=108377&sctn=12> (accessed 25 Aug. 2000).
4. United States Government Printing Office, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Harry S. Truman, 1945* (Washington, DC, 1945), pp. 512–13.

 5. Ibid., pp. 543–6.
 6. Xiao Xi (News). *Zhong Hua Tu Shu Guan Xie Hui Hui Bao* (Journal of China's Library Association), 19 (1946): 4–5.
 7. Xiao Xi (News), *Jiao Yu Tong Xun* (Education Bulletin), 2 (Oct. 1946).
 8. Ibid.
 9. Xiao Xi (News). *Zhong Hua Tu Shu Guan Xie Hui Hui Bao* (Journal of China's Library Association), 19 (1946): 4–5.
10. Howard Boorman and Richard Howard, eds, *Biographical Dictionary of Republic of China*, 5 vols (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), 1: 437.
11. Ibid., p. 206.
12. Ibid., p. 346.
13. Ibid., p. 358.
14. Ibid., 2: 43.
15. Ibid., p. 167.
16. Ibid., 3: 395.
17. Ibid., p. 411.
18. Ibid., 4: 89–92.
19. Xiao Xi (News), *Jiao Yu Tong Xun* (Education Bulletin), 4 (Jan. 1948).
20. Xiao Xi (News), *Jiao Yu Tong Xun* (Education Bulletin), 3 (Oct. 1947).
21. Wenjun Zhou, *Tu Shu Guan Qing Bao Xue Ci Dian* (A Dictionary of Library and Information Science) (Beijing: Shu Mu Wen Xian Publishing House, 1991), p. 60.
22. Xiao Xi (News), *Jiao Yu Tong Xun* (Education Bulletin), 4 (Jan. 1948).
23. 'International Relations', *Encyclopedia Britannica Online* <http://search.eb.com/bol/topic?eu=108377&sctin=12> (accessed 9 Aug. 1999).
24. 'Tu Shu Guan Xue Qing Bao Xue Dang An Xue' (Library and Information Science), *Zhong Guo Da Bai Ke Quan Shu* (The Grand Chinese Encyclopaedia) (Beijing: Zhong Guo Da Bai Ke Quan Shu Chu Ban She, 1993), p. 31.
25. United States Government Printing Office, 'Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States. Harry. S. Truman, 1945' (Washington, DC, 1945).
26. 'Chong Qing Library', available: http://www.cqlib.org/history.htm. 27 July 2000.
27. Rui Wang (rw6@humboldt.edu), 'China's Roosevelt Library', e-mail to Director of Chong Qing Library (cqtsq@cqlib.org), 27 July 2000; Chong Qing Library (cqtsq@cqlib.org), 'Letter to Dr Wang', e-mail to Rui Wang (rw6@humboldt.edu), 3 Aug. 2000.
28. The terminology is Chinese government propaganda: the two civilisations refer to material civilisation and spiritual/moral civilisation.
29. 'Call for Papers', available: http://www.cqlib.org/zhenwen.htm, 27 July 2000.

14
China's Destruction of the Libraries of Tibet

Rebecca J. Knuth

The following considers the history and consequences of the destruction of monasteries and monastery collections in late twentieth-century Tibet. The origins of this extraordinary deprivation date, like the building of the Roosevelt Library, from the Chinese civil war and the remaking of the state following the Japanese surrender of 1945. By 1949 the Chinese Communists had built a formidable war machine. After taking control within existing borders, the Communist government proceeded to assert domination over China's 'provinces'. From the Chinese point of view, their government was merely seeking the reestablishment of historically unequivocal rights that they had been unable to exercise for some time.[1] To most Tibetans, the invasion was blatant imperialism, motivated by a desire for Tibetan territory and natural resources, but, during the invasion and thereafter, there was little the Tibetans could do to resist or expel the Chinese.

Isolated by geography, Tibet had evolved over several thousands of years into a unique, highly focused civilisation based on an adaptation of Indian Buddhism. By the turn of the twentieth century Tibet sustained over 6,000 thousand monasteries, and still more shrines, chortens (the spire-topped reliquaries of Buddhist saints), stupas (domed platforms containing religious objects), and piles of mani stones (stones carved with invocations). The monasteries owned 40 per cent of the land and were supported by taxes and contributions from tenant farmers. Most of the disposable wealth of the country was invested in statues and art objects to grace the temples and shrines. Almost all Tibetans had a personal connection with a monastic community through a close relative or son. The centrality of religion was most evident in the figure of the Dalai Lama, the ruling spiritual leader, an incarnate monk in whom both religious and political powers were

vested; in his person, the state and religion were fused. This fusion was evident in the interweaving of religious and political archives in pre-1959 Lhasa. The bottom floor of the Central Cathedral housed fifty chapels filled with religious artefacts and scriptures, while above were the offices of the mayor, the regent, and other government officials and hundreds of documents, centuries-old treaties and tax records filed in bunches tied to red-lacquered pillars.[2] The cellars of the Dalai Lama's home, the 1,000-chamber Potala, also held thousands of texts that testified to the life and development of Tibetan culture – parchments, palm-bark books, volumes of sacred texts written in a special ink made from blends of gold, silver, iron, or copper powder.[3]

The monasteries supplied and cultivated the basic doctrine on which the political and social order of Tibet rested, but they were also guardians of lost Buddhist scripture. A Tibetan script was developed in the 700s so that Buddhist scriptures could be translated from Sanskrit. Resulting translations of the Buddha and 750 Indian pandits, in more than approximately 4,500 individual works, have also allowed reconstructions of lost Indian Sanskrit works. Even by the thirteenth century, when Buddhism was disappearing from India and dwindling in Nepal, Tibetans felt uniquely privileged to be the guardians of the entire corpus of their religion, probably the richest collection of religious literature in the world. Maintenance of these texts thereafter became a priority.[4]

The Tibetan monasteries had assembled a canon with an extraordinary range of teachings. They had the full scope of *sutras*, *tantras*, their accompanying liturgy, and, most critically, the guru-disciple lineages founded on oral transmission.[5] They possessed 108 volumes of discourses called the *kangyur* or 'translation of the word', and a further 227 volumes of Indian commentaries on those discourses, called the *tengyur*. Four to five thousand pages long, these scriptures were printed on tough, fibrous paper, placed between wooden covers, and wrapped in cloth. Chapels routinely contained shelves of texts that were worshipped as reverently as other holy objects. Stupas might contain scriptures as well as religious relics; the white stupas at Drepung Monastery contained 100,000 verses. While few villagers could read them, sacred texts were often carried in a yearly procession around the village in order to ensure a good harvest. Tibetans cherished their books and considered it a sin to place anything upon a book or even step over one and books were reverently stored in high places within any Tibetan abode. Many homes had a few religious books, kept respectfully by the shrine and sometimes read to their owners by mendicant monks. For the wealthy, having a private library of sacred Buddhist books was considered an act

of merit; for those who were well-educated, it was also an indispensable aid to spiritual practice.[6]

The Tibetan literati absorbed the construction and styles of Indian works and also developed their own linguistic materials to produce a highly complex religious and philosophical vocabulary.[7] After the initial translations were complete, Tibetan lamas began to compose commentaries and dissertations, and every important lama authored his own *sungbum* (collected works), often ten to 20 volumes, exploring the meaning of Buddhist doctrine, philosophy, and logic as well as secular subjects.[8] Monasteries were known for their associations with famous scholars and possession of their texts. Samding Monastery, for example, was associated with the eminent poet and scholar Lama Bodong Chokle Namgyel (1306–86), the author of a hundred volumes of religious writings.

Some lamas became known as 'text-discoverers' or 'revealers of treasure' because they produced compilations of rediscovered texts that had been hidden during political upheavals in the ninth century; these texts glorify the achievement of ancient kings. While some texts may indeed have been hidden and retrieved, some may have been composed for the legitimation conferred by an ancient provenance. Real or quasi-rediscovered texts allowed new groups of monks to produce 'refurbished literary works with [the] sanctity of earlier traditions' and all served the same function: 'the creation of a national sentiment whether in state affairs or in matters of religion'.[9] Possession and study of unique texts was also important in differentiating various 'schools' of Tibetan Buddhism. For example, the Precious Treasury of Hidden Texts, editions of 25 or more volumes, was important to the Nyingmapa and Kargyupa schools.

Woodblock printing was introduced in the fifteenth century, at about the same as European adoption of movable metal-type printing. While monasteries of any size could print charms and prayer flags, large monasteries boasted print shops with woodblock presses and rooms housing tens of thousands of blocks. The Tibetans became so attached to block printing, an early and laborious method in which between seven and ten pages were reproduced per block, that it was not until the mid-twentieth century that they developed interest in any other method.[10] Even after the advent of woodblock printing, the format of Tibetan books remained the same: each is composed of paper strips, approximately four inches high by twenty inches wide, covered by beautifully carved oblong wooden planks, preserving the style of the Indian palm-leaf texts. According to data collected in 1957, the Great

Monastery of Derge had a collection of more than half a million wood-blocks that was systematically deposited in more than ten halls.[11] The use of such blocks made possible printing on demand. The bigger monasteries produced complete editions of the general collection, the *kangyur*. Collections of works on philosophy, spiritual practice, medicine, astrology and other topics unique to a particular school's curriculum were printed at the principal monastery and copies distributed to branches.[12] For example, Dzogchen Monastery printed a core collection of books sent out to 200 affiliated monasteries. In addition, books were made to order; the purchaser had to supply ink and paper and the monks were paid for the work. Books were usually not resold. Religious merit was acquired by printers, copyists, and the persons commissioning and then possessing the work.[13] Status and reputation increased for monasteries and temples with holdings of important blocks and texts. In this respect, the Nartong Monastery, founded in 1153, became famous for its woodblocks of the entire Buddhist canon, the Nartong edition, carved between 1730 and 1741. The Vairocana Chapel of the Pelkor Chode Monastery was known for its extremely large scripture written in gold ink on black paper.

The Chinese were particularly appalled by the Tibetans' devotion to Buddhism. The Chinese Communists recognized religious faith as a 'poison' that competed with Marxism in providing a comprehensive pattern of moral and cognitive beliefs to guide behaviour. After 1949, the Chinese concentrated first on acculturating minorities in those areas closest to China, the provinces of Amdo and Kham. The fiercely independent border-Tibetans viewed Communist reforms first and foremost as an attack on their value systems, and they rallied around their Buddhist faith. Rebellious activities began as early as 1951 and continued sporadically. Full-scale guerilla warfare had erupted by 1956. Refugees flooded into Lhasa, where the situation had become very tense. The climax came in 1959 when the Dalai Lama fled again to India and Tibetans took to the streets of the capital in a short but bloody uprising. Tibetans were no match for the well-armed Chinese troops who hunted them down in the streets and buildings of Lhasa. Many monuments and sacred buildings were damaged and destroyed. Ramoche Cathedral was shelled and burned, as was the Chakpori, an ancient monastic medical college. Records and sacred books were destroyed at the Potala, the Dalai Lama's home. Central Cathedral, the most sacred shrine and a refuge for 10,000 people, was also shelled and mortars and heavy artillery were fired at close range into the crowds around the Dalai Lama's summer palace. Bodies were stacked in piles and doused with

kerosene; the pyre burned for three days. Some 87,000 Tibetans may have been killed in the 1959 revolt.[14]

During the repressive period after the 1959 revolt Chinese radicals also promoted the disastrous Great Leap Forward reforms. Economic transformation required the seizure of land held by the monasteries; social transformation required shattering the architecture of Buddhism. The Chinese used the 1959 revolt to justify launching campaigns that targeted the monasteries. Monks and lamas were accused of supporting the rebellion, both actively (by feeding, housing, and colluding with the rebels) and passively (by performing religious rituals and harbouring evil intentions).[15] Learned monks, teachers, reincarnate lamas and administrators were tortured and sent to penal colonies. Monasteries that had not been bombed earlier were emptied of both residents and artefacts. In 1959 the number of active monasteries dropped from 6,200 to 1,700; the number of active monks declined from 110,000 monks to 56,000.[16] By 1966 only 550 monasteries were still active; the number of monks had dwindled to 6,900. Those monks who were not imprisoned were often forced to do physical labour and were unable to devote time to spiritual practices. The dissolution of the economic power base of the monasteries (and then the monasteries themselves) became the most significant social and political event in the history of Tibet since the introduction of Buddhism.[17]

Beginning in 1959, the destruction and desecration of rural monasteries in the day was accompanied by the looting of religious treasures at night. Lorry after lorry carried the artefacts of Tibet back to Beijing and the antique markets in Hong Kong and Tokyo eventually became flooded with Tibetan objects. Throughout the first half of the 1960s, the Chinese inventoried the contents of all temples, monasteries, shrines, and government buildings and made lists of objects to be sent to China. Religious people were ridiculed and humiliated and religious texts and objects were publicly destroyed and desecrated as the Chinese worked to reduce Buddhism to a much less central position in Tibetan life and society from which it could be shaken loose.

Because they could blame it on the short-term anarchy of Red Guards or radical elements, Beijing Party leaders have encouraged the myth that the monasteries were primarily destroyed during the Cultural Revolution (1966–77). In reality, some of the worst destruction occurred after the revolt in 1959 when ethnocide first became Party policy. Visitors to Tibet in the 1980s often found fragments of sacred scripture lying derelict in the fields and streets and were regaled with stories of how the Chinese in the late 1950s and early 1960s had desecrated the monas-

teries and chapels. After first removing religious items that were valuable, the Chinese destroyed the rest as publicly as possible. Wherever possible, Tibetans were forced to participate. The Chinese forced Tibetans to burn or shred sacred scriptures, mix them with manure, or lay them on the ground and walk on them. Tibetans had to break up the mani stones and use them to build toilets. Forcing the Tibetans themselves to desecrate the monasteries and religious objects was part of generalized campaigns to reduce resistance and identification with Tibetan culture.[18]

Both the destruction and the mythologising were facilitated by the onset of the Cultural Revolution. The radicals, led by Mao, were poised for an all-out, no-holds barred battle to revolutionise China and all its territories. The new campaigns had two facets: the destruction of anything 'old' (old ideology, culture, habits, customs) to make way for the 'new' (Mao's new ideology, proletarian culture, Communist habits and customs). The simple fact that minorities in the border regions had a separate language and culture was considered reactionary. Overall campaigns to revolutionise society were conducted much more vigorously in Tibet than in China proper. In 1970 34 per cent of the villages were organised in communes, and in 1971, 60 per cent. By 1975 2,000 communes existed and the whole of Tibet's rural population was locked into drudgery and political indoctrination.[19]

The Cultural Revolution proper began in Tibet on 25 August 1966, when, after a rally, Red Guards invaded the Central Cathedral, smashed images, defaced frescoes, and destroyed the revered treasures of centuries of Buddhism. The damage was particularly devastating because the cathedral had become a warehouse for countless artefacts from neighbouring monasteries and because it contained both civil and religious records. For five days scriptures and documents were burned in the courtyards. Tibet's holiest shrine (similar to the Vatican in Rome) was dubbed 'Guest House no. 5' and pigs were kept in the yard.

During the Cultural Revolution Maoism was imposed on every last vestige of Buddhist society. In Lhasa's hallowed Ramoche Temple, which was badly damaged by Red Guards, the Chinese set up a temple to Mao Zedong and decked the ancient altars with enormous pictures and statues of Mao. Twenty-eight thousand copies of Mao's *Little Red Book*, translated into Tibetan, were distributed ostensibly 'in response to Tibetans' requests to study Mao's works'.[20] Tibetans were coerced into repeatedly demonstrating their transfer of emotional allegiance from the Buddha to Mao: people meeting on the street were to greet each other with an exchange of Mao quotations. Overall, a climate of social

and physical brutality reigned, and mob violence, rape, public executions, and mutilations became commonplace.[21]

With the onset of the Cultural Revolution, the lorries that had been operating at night throughout the early 1960s to convey artefacts from rural monasteries to Peking could operate blatantly even in populated areas as a final push was made to mine Tibet's portable wealth. Red Guards supervised while gold and silver images were collected, sometimes mashed as scrap, and removed to Beijing for release on the antique market or to be melted down into bullion. The scale of looting is mind-numbing. By 1973 one Beijing foundry had melted down 600 tons of Tibetan sculptures; in 1983 a recovery mission from Lhasa found 32 tons of Tibetan relics in the Chinese capital, including over 13,000 statues and statuettes. The Red Guards seemed well-schooled in their functions and had access to inventories, compiled by Chinese experts, that detailed the relative value of objects in the monasteries. Valuable images and artefacts, sometimes particularly valuable libraries, were often neatly packed and carried away before remaining objects, frescos, and the buildings were dynamited, knocked down, burned, or defaced.

Observers have also commented that, despite the chaos they caused, the Red Guards often seemed highly disciplined.[22] Chou En-lai, who was responsible for preserving the Forbidden Palace in Beijing, ordered the Red Guards to spare certain historic buildings in Tibet. This ensured that parts of buildings within 13 monasteries (from an estimated 6,000 in 1950) survived not only the post-1959 revolt initiatives, but also the Cultural Revolution. Kunsang Paljor, a Communist-Tibetan journalist who was working in 1977 for the *Tibet Daily*, later commented on patterns of 'well-planned destruction' in which Red Guards often were sent to handle tasks that the local Chinese authorities were unable to pursue. There was 'method in this apparently mindless destruction: what was economically valuable was carted away, and what was historically connected with Imperial China was saved'.[23]

The Red Guards were encouraged to destroy all signs of Buddhism and traditional Tibetan culture. Statues and frescoes (the texts of the illiterate) and printed scriptures, religious articles in their own right, were favoured targets. The Guards usually committed their desecrations publicly and violently, often in the streets and marketplaces; religious texts were burned in giant bonfires in front of the temples. The Chinese students proudly declared themselves 'a group of lawless revolutionary rebels [that] will wield the iron sweepers and swing the mighty cudgels to sweep the old world into a mess . . . in order to create a brightly red new world . . . !'[24] The Guards tried to enlist local Tibetan youth, but

except for some members of the Communist Youth League from three middle schools in Lhasa, they failed to muster significant local support. But because vandalising and destroying religious structures was supposed to be a 'politically and psychologically cathartic act',[25] Tibetans were forced at gunpoint to demolish their own monasteries. The Chinese sometimes posed these public demonstrations of sacrilege as celebratory ceremonies and flew red flags and played drums, trumpets, and cymbals.

The processes of cultural destruction involved a curious mixture of vindictiveness, desecration, frugality, and manipulation. Texts not incinerated in huge bonfires were used as wrapping in Chinese shops, or as padding in shoes; ornate wooden book covers were made into floorboards, chairs, and tools. One eyewitness wrote of huge loads of scriptures that were brought into a prison and piled up; prisoners had to tear them into little pieces, dump the shredded pages into a drum of water, add mud, and thus prepare a mixture for use in plastering houses.[26] 'The intention was not only to desecrate, but also to humiliate; to identify religion with the lowly and the vile. Predictably, holy Dharma texts were converted into toilet paper.'[27]

Eventually, most of the gutted monasteries were dynamited or shelled into rubble: 'in a matter of months, there was nothing left but collapsed roofs, shattered walls, crumbled metal, crushed stones and shapeless, unrecognizable ruins . . . inanimate ghost towns'.[28] Some 99 per cent of all monasteries were now devastated. In most cases, the destruction involved the loss of written heritage. One scholar has declared that 60 per cent of Tibet's philosophical, historical, and biographical literature was burned. The ancient monastery of Bedroya Drofan Tana Noe-tsar Rigje Ling, with its historic and world-famous school of Tibetan medicine, was destroyed along with its records; a military prison and transmitter were built on the site.[29] At the huge Sera Monastery, 95 per cent of the statues and texts were destroyed along with 500-year-old frescoes; the rooms were then used for grain storage, stables, prisons. A journalist in the 1980s recorded the comments of a monk surviving the destruction of the Dokhang Th'e Gelma monastery:

> More important than the building, which was indeed old, were the most beautiful scriptures painted in gold and silver on palm leaves. They were very ancient. Very special. But the Chinese came and tore them from the shelves they had lain on for hundreds of years and threw them on the fire they made in the middle of the temple. When

some monks pleaded with the soldiers saying 'Please don't. They are very old and mean everything to us', the Chinese pushed them to the floor and said, 'Rubbish, religion is bourgeois poison!' They proceeded to pour kerosene on the priceless scriptures and then put a match to them as though they were useless refuse. 'Now how', he asked me gently, 'can we replace that?'[30]

All over Tibet, printing presses and texts were broken up, burned, desecrated, and turned into waste. The ancient state printing house located below the Potala, known for producing magnificent large sacred books, was destroyed. Dzogchen Monastery along with its substantial printing press, wooden blocks, and library, was burnt to the ground.[31] Also destroyed was Zhalu Monastery, renowned as the home of the brilliant scholar-abbot Buton Rinchen Drup, who had brought Tibetan Buddhism to full maturity by collecting and classifying all the texts of the *tengyur*. His 227 hand-written tomes were burned, along with his pen and the handwritten originals of his collected works. It was not merely

a question of destruction of religion: the losses to scholarship were also incalculable, because no more than a dozen copies of even a recent book might exist, while some libraries held thousand-year-old manuscripts copied from originals that no longer exist in India. It is not unrealistic to compare Chinese destruction of centres of learning in Tibet with the destruction of the library of Alexandria in AD 640; by comparison, the book-burning of the Inquisition or of the Nazis was the work of uncoordinated amateurs.[32]

In addition to 60 per cent of its literature, an estimated 85 per cent of the nation's written materials and documents were destroyed. Some were ancient, dating from the eighth century and written on palm leaves. But some were not even religious. Years after, Tibetans still had trouble understanding and accepting the losses and conveying this to Westerners:

Many were the documents of simple families recording details of their personal history, their births, their death, their marriages. Details of their land. . . . What possible use was their destruction to the Chinese? It was as though all your culture's old manuscripts written on parchment and with painted pictures in the margins, Gutenberg bibles and Domesday books were burned. That's what happened in Tibet.[33]

A relatively relaxed period ensued from the late 1970s until 1987 as the moderates engineered a shift from rigid Maoist orthodoxy to a more flexible and pragmatic plan to win over the minorities. Officials pulled back from enforcing class struggle; they disbanded communes, cut back on taxes, allowed a certain degree of religious freedom and cultural revival; Tibetans were given modest funds to repair the most important cultural sites, and some historic and religious artefacts were returned from China. Tibetan studies advanced as a scholarly subject in China. In a subtle way, however, the Chinese literature about Tibet continued earlier, more blatant campaigns that the Chinese had maintained since their takeover. In the 1960s they had set up a Museum of the Tibetan Revolution across from the Potala, and there presented dioramas of fabricated feudal atrocities. Treasure from the Potala and torture instruments and bones and skin taken from the corpses of 'assassinated serfs' were displayed to illustrate a society the Chinese typified as brutal, decadent, and medieval. Whether from a political need to legitimise their invasion as a 'liberation' and to divert attention from current conditions, or from a psychological need to demonise Tibetan society in order to justify its destruction (or from both), the Chinese continually characterised the old Tibet as a lurid hell on earth. All displays naturally supported a 'correct' interpretation of history: that Tibet always had been part of China.

Some politically acceptable Tibetans were able to write and publish texts approved by the Party, and reprints were made of some of the ancient manuscripts banned and destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. Dictionaries, grammars, word lists, and other works that had been started during the conciliatory period in the 1950s and miraculously saved from destruction in the Cultural Revolution began to be published. Some libraries that had been hauled away in convoys from major monastic centres, and thus saved, were taken out of storage, catalogued, indexed, and microfilmed. The Chinese returned a superb edition of the *kangyur*, taken from Tara Chapel in 1959; the 114-volume set, bound in sandalwood with ivory ends and written in gold ink, had been commissioned by the fifth Dalai Lama. Tibetans themselves came up with funding to print a few books in the traditional style. The Gye-Me (the Lower Tantric College), which had been completely desecrated during the Cultural Revolution and turned into housing, was reopened in 1985 with 35 monks who began some woodblock printing of the *tengyur*. Books began to reappear, and various surviving religious texts could be seen in some of the chapels and public buildings.[34]

Relatively little has been done in compiling a comprehensive bibliography of indigenous Tibetan books. Cate Hutton, an American Library

Association fellow assigned to Tibet for nine months in 1993 and 1994, reported that Lhasa was one of only a few regional capitals in China without a functioning institution equivalent to a state library. Hutton learned of several magnificent but uncatalogued collections of old and rare books. A trip to Sakya Monastery, revealed, in the beam of a flashlight, an approximately sixty-foot high mound of books visible through the dust and obviously untouched for years. Significantly, the pile was draped with the 'white, silky offering scarves called "kha-ta" which are often used to indicate respect for sacred objects'.[35]

Little is also known about what other books may be warehoused in surviving monasteries, but reports sometimes surface of 'Tibetan books [that have been] ignored, sometimes forgotten about or hidden away . . .'[36]; inquiries by both Chinese and Western scholars are met with distrust. The existence of a private library within a home, composed of books hidden during times of repression, is still rarely acknowledged. Efforts to identify, catalogue, reprint, and preserve Tibetan texts often flounder on the fear of the caretakers and owners, and with good reason. In 1997 the Communists initiated a campaign against the Dalai Lama and sent teams of officials to even the most remote monasteries and nunneries to expunge references to the Dalai Lama from Buddhist texts. Again, books and archives were destroyed.[37] Only a small number of monks were permitted to occupy the shattered monasteries: Drepung once housed 10,000; it now contained 400.[38] Few resources were provided to allow monasteries to function as educational and learning centres. Instead, they are marginally supported as historical sites and cultural museums – attractions for the controlled tourism that the Chinese allowed in the 1980s. Monks were instructed to collect fees and to charge for posing for photographs. Even in the shells of the great monastic universities, the monks functioned not as intellectuals and teachers, but as caretakers and exhibits. In any event, continuation of the intense teacher–learner process of Buddhism was impossible given the lack of resources, constraints on the monks, and restrictions on new acolytes.

Millions of Chinese settlers poured in and were given preferential treatment across the board – employment, housing, medicine, and education. Tibetans continued on a long slide into marginalisation under an emerging system of apartheid.[39] Economically, Tibet became a Third World region within a Third World country, and Tibetans, the 'last of the least'.[40] Under Chinese law, Tibetans were forbidden to listen to any foreign-language broadcasts or read foreign newspapers, magazines, or books. Those Tibetans who could read were restricted to the Tibet version of the *China Daily* and to texts produced by the Chinese.

Not everything has been lost, however. By the mid-1980s a resistance movement was animated by the Tibetans' identification with the Dalai Lama and his government-in-exile located in India. The 100,000 people who had poured out of Tibet, most of them between 1959 to 1963, had been able to create a simple but viable community in Dharamsala where attention eventually turned from physical survival to cultural reconstruction. Many refugees had dragged religious artefacts over the Himalayas with them and, because the written and spoken word of the Buddha is the core of all Buddhist culture, entire libraries were brought out of Tibet.[41] These books were gathered together. Because of the critical role of the teacher in Buddhist learning and traditions of memorising texts, a search was also made for scholars and they were removed from deadly work conditions. Of Tibet's 600,000 monks, only 7,000 made it into exile along with only a few hundred of the 4,000 incarnate lamas. Preserving the scholars within this group was essential, because many could be considered as living texts; for every scholar who died building roads, centuries of learning were lost.[42]

Along with gathering resources and protecting scholars, book production was begun and the Tibetans began lithographing over 200 major works with stone and ink. Beginning in 1962 and continuing for two decades, a United States' Library of Congress program in India reprinted 2,800 Tibetan classics that represented thirteen centuries of Tibetan literature. Tibetan orthography presented problems in typesetting that were alleviated by the development of computers. In the 1990s, TTPS, a Tibetan 'desktop publishing system', would ultimately offer the potential for easier storage and retrieval and make possible the printing on demand once offered by woodblocks.[43]

In 1971, the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives (LTWA), was founded to secure Tibet's written heritage. By the year 2000, the collection of the LTWA had grown to 80,000 manuscripts, books, and documents, including the estimated 40 per cent of Tibet's literature that was saved.[44] The library also contains 6,000 photographs; several thousand legal and social documents in Tibetan, some dating as far back as the tenth century; and 15,000 hours of taped interviews with senior Tibetans. Both scholars and the general public are granted access to the collection. The LTWA was part of a series of cultural institutes set up by the Dalai Lama with the goal of preserving Tibetan identity and educating Tibetans for a purposeful future. These include the Tibetan Dance and Drama Society and the Tibetan Medical Centre. All are predicated on the belief that survival as a people depends on cultural vitality and they run directly counter to Chinese policies of cultural extinction

within Tibet proper. Ironically, the Chinese repression has resulted in a revitalisation and modernisation of Tibetan culture that has made it appealing to a global public. This makes the loss of so much of Tibet's written heritage doubly lamentable.

Notes

 1. Thomas Heberer, 'Tibet and the Chinese Concept of Nationhood', in Petra K. Kelly, Gert Bastian, and Pat Aiello (eds), *The Anguish of Tibet* (Berkeley, California: Parallax Press, 1991), pp. 47–52.
 2. John F. Avedon, *In Exile from the Land of Snows: The Definitive Account of the Dalai Lama and Tibet since the Chinese Conquest* (New York: Harper Collins, 1997), p. 17.
 3. Jestun Pema, with Gilles Van Grasdorff, *Tibet: My Story, An Autobiography* (Shaftesbury, Dorset: Element, 1997), p. 8.
 4. Gyaltsen Gyaltag, 'From Monarchy to Democracy: An Historical Overview', in Kelly, Bastian, and Aiello (eds), *Anguish of Tibet*, pp. 3–13; Benjamin Alterman, Deborah Alterman, and Laura L. Gewissler, 'From Woodblock to Silicon Chip: The Transmission of Tibetan Language', *Printing History* 9: 1 (1987): 15–26; Pema, *Tibet: My Story*, p. 8.
 5. Avedon, *In Exile from the Land of Snows*.
 6. Stephen Batchelor, *The Tibet Guide* (London: Wisdom Publications, 1987); Alterman, Alterman, and Gewissler, 'From Woodblock to Silicon Chip'; Stephen Aldridge, 'Discovery and Preservation of Ancient Tibetan Manuscripts', http://www.khamaid.org/programs/culture/text.htm; 27 Dec. 1999; David Snellgrove and Hugh Richardson, *A Cultural History of Tibet* (Boston: Shambhala, 1986).
 7. Snellgrove and Richardson, *Cultural History of Tibet*, p. 76.
 8. Batchelor, *Tibet Guide*, p. 64.
 9. Snellgrove and Richardson, *Cultural History of Tibet*, p. 154
10. Snellgrove and Richardson, *Cultural History of Tibet*, p. 160.
11. Alterman, Alterman, and Gewissler, 'From Woodblock to Silicon Chip', p. 19.
12. Aldridge, 'Discovery and Preservation of Ancient Tibetan Manuscripts'.
13. W. Zwalf, *Heritage of Tibet* (London: British Museum Publications, 1981), p. 122.
14. Avedon, *In Exile from the Land of Snows*, p. 24.
15. Dawa Norbu, *Red Star Over Tibet*, 2nd edn (New York: Envoy Press, 1987), p. 197.
16. A. Tom. Grunfeld, revised edn, *The Making of Modern Tibet* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1996), p. 172.
17. Tsering Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows: A History of Modern Tibet since 1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), p. 254.
18. Avedon, *In Exile From the Land of Snows*, p. 291; Pierre-Antoine Donnet, trans., Tica Broch, *Tibet: Survival in Question* (London: Zed Books, 1994), p. 82.

19. Avedon, *In Exile from the Land of Snows*; Shakya, *Dragon in the Land of Snows*, p. 356.
20. Warren W. Smith Jr. *Tibetan Nation: A History of Tibetan Nationalism and Sino-Tibetan Relations* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1996), p. 544.
21. Kunsang Paljor, *Tibet: The Undying Flame* (New Delhi: Model Press, 1977).
22. Heinrich Harrer, trans. Ewald Osers, *Return to Tibet* (New York: Schocken, 1985), p. 147.
23. Cited in Dawa Norbu, *Tibet: The Road Ahead* (London: Rider, 1997), p. 276.
24. Grunfeld, *Making of Modern Tibet*, p. 183.
25. Smith, *Tibetan Nation*, p. 544.
26. David Patt, *A Strange Liberation: Tibetan Lives in Chinese Hands* (New York: Snow Lion Publications, 1992), p. 100.
27. Donnet, *Tibet*, p. 82.
28. Donnet, *Tibet*, p. 82.
29. R. J. Rummel, *China's Bloody Century: Genocide and Mass Murder since 1900* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1991), p. 272.
30. Vanya Kewley, *Tibet: Behind the Ice Curtain* (London: Grafton, 1990), p. 208.
31. Harrer, *Return to Tibet*; Aldridge, 'Discovery and Preservation of Ancient Tibetan Manuscripts'.
32. Roger Hicks, *Hidden Tibet: The Land and Its People* (Shaftesbury, Dorset: Element, 1988), pp. 78–9.
33. Kewley, *Tibet: Behind the Ice Curtain*, p. 104.
34. Aldridge, 'Discovery and Preservation of Ancient Tibetan Manuscripts'; Stephen Aldridge, 'A Look At Tibetan Books', May 1999 http://www.khamaid.org/programs/culture/books.htm.
35. Cate Hutton, 'High-Altitude Librarianship: The Adventures of an ALA Library Fellow in Tibet', *Information Technology and Libraries* 16: 1 (1997): 30–3 (p. 31).
36. Aldridge, 'Discovery and Preservation of Ancient Tibetan Manuscripts'.
37. Mary Craig, *Tears of Blood: A Cry for Tibet* (Washington, DC: Counterpoint, 1999).
38. Government of Tibet in Exile, 'Religion and National Identity', 27 Dec. 1999 http://www.tibet.com/WhitePaper/white7.html.
39. David Ennals, 'Tibet: A New Colony', in Kelly, Bastian, and Aiello (eds), *Anguish of Tibet*, pp. 65–7.
40. Donnet, *Tibet*, p. 147.
41. Aldridge, 'Discovery and Preservation of Ancient Tibetan Manuscripts'.
42. Avedon, *In Exile from the Land of Snows*, p. 92.
43. Alterman, Alterman, and Gewissler, 'From Woodblock to Silicon Chip', p. 22.
44. Government of Tibet in Exile, 'The Library of Tibetan Works and Archives', 29 Mar. 2000, http://www.tibet.com/ltwa.htm; Avedon, *In Exile from the Land of Snows*, p. 93.

15
Burn the Books

Robert J. Fyne

By 1965, François Truffaut, a thirty-five-year old Parisian-born film critic, reviewer, and director, had emerged – after a seesaw, six-year apprenticeship – as perhaps the most famous name in contemporary French cinema. Now this proponent of the New Wave and *enfant terrible* of established motion picture theory was enthralling audiences everywhere with four photodramas that still brought large crowds to their feet with heartfelt applause. *The 400 Blows* (1959), a lyrical *roman-à-clef* about a troubled youth's alienation, took the Cannes Grand Prix that year, while *Shoot the Piano Player* (1960) paid homage to the American gangster genre, those *films noirs*, that French moviegoers always enjoyed. *Jules and Jim* (1961), became a playful ménage-à-trois romp, a bittersweet satire that frolicked with early-twentieth-century sexual mores, while *The Soft Skin* (1964) poked around with modern-day adultery using Balzac's human comedies as the backdrop.

Indeed Truffaut's popularity was at its crest when he picked up a copy of Ray Bradbury's 1953 science fiction, anti-communist, cold war paranoia, dystopian novel, *Fahrenheit 451*, a title that, like George Orwell's *1984*, envisioned a totalitarian life style – presumably after a nuclear war – that completely dehumanised individual thought. For Truffaut, this off-the-wall storyline about zealous book-burners contained enough elements to create a new type of motion picture.[1] Such a photoplay would depart from his usual theme of love and solidarity and, instead, work up a script fusing the individual with his need for the printed page in a manner that suggested that each book is a concrete, sensuous object, with its own personal story.

Perhaps with his eye on Daniel Taradash's 1956 indictment of right-wing America's obsession with censorship, *Storm Center*, Truffaut envisioned a refinement of this theme. Indeed, *Storm Center* – which starred

Bette Davis as a popular librarian who refused to remove a controversial title from her non-fiction shelf – served as a prototype for *Fahrenheit 451* when an entire southern California town, literally afraid of its own shadow, goes mad with fear. After a series of convoluted events, an 'accidental' fire destroys the library and in an elaborate anti-censorship, anti-bigotry scene, individual titles are slowly enveloped in flames. While *Storm Center* was replete with tendentious homilies, it still advocated – as one by one, library books were turned into ashes – tolerance, reason, and compassion.

But these traits lurked below the surface. Apparently Taradash wanted audiences to face their own frailties by looking in a mirror that emphasised America's worst nightmare. Why not? Since the end of the Korean War and the discovery of prisoner-of-war brainwashing, the internal communist menace seemed ubiquitous. As Senator McCarthy railed against ordinary citizens, calling them Soviet Union dupes, the mood seemed right for demagoguery. *Storm Center* tackled this theme openly and pointed out the damage that renders an individual impotent when basic freedoms are curtailed.

What happened? What made this Columbia Pictures production so controversial? How would its theme – the banning and, later, the burning of books – influence Truffaut's futuristic society conception where the mind is subordinate to the state? Perhaps it was the determination of a righteous, but harmless librarian's integrity by ignoring a city council's dictum to remove a treatise entitled *The Communist Dream* from the shelf. Soon, she is labelled a 'Red' and, after a hastily assembled kangaroo court, discharged. Even worse, most of her friends and neighbours show their sheepishness by ostracising this middle-aged widow. Parents order their children away from her and one narrow-minded father (played by Joe Mantell) – fearful that his offspring will become contaminated – forbids his son (Kevin Coughlin) to speak with this known 'subversive', even though the boy, an avid reader, spends hours in this city building poring over his favorite books.

No doubt Taradash's blunt direction seemed heavy-handed as scene after scene depicted the long-time librarian as the victim of a modern-day lynch mob, an unruly group of righteous citizens bent on saving democracy by excoriating the red scourge. But at what cost? Basic civil liberties are discarded as one by one the townspeople – behaving like automatons – sanction censorship. Now what? Where could Taradash go with this photoplay? How would he turn the story around and emerge with a modicum of the typical Hollywood happy ending?

Certainly the dénouement must have influenced Truffaut. In a homage scene the French director would duplicate nine years later, Taradash burns down the library. As the flames engulf this small municipal building and the ashes of the great books seep through the damp California night air, the townspeople realise they have lost more than the tangible property now disintegrating in front of their eyes. They have given up control of their lives. By kowtowing to right-wing poison, they have ignored basic principles of fair play and integrity. Now the slate is wiped clean. Standing around their former librarian, a feeling of remorse brings the film to a dramatic if not saccharine closure. No more censorship, the citizens exclaim, no more autocracy. A new library, like the phoenix, will emerge and who will be its new director? – only the venerable Bette Davis, whose closing words echoed the libertarian creed: 'I'm going to help rebuild the library. And, if anybody ever again tries to remove a book from it, he will have to do it over my dead body.'

As a 1956 motion picture, *Storm Center* took a positive stand for civil liberties, although not everybody applauded its liberal message. The Catholic Legion of Decency placed the film in a special category, calling it propagandistic, misleading and misrepresentative.[2] More widely, however, the film issued a warning about the perils of literary censorship by proffering a dictum: only an unrestrained library (here, a modification of the free press theme) could ensure America's survival. Without its books, despotism seemed a stone's throw away. Only by upholding literary standards today can tomorrow's future emerge. As long as librarians take a stand, the nation's legacy stands secure.

Perhaps Truffaut saw this ending as somewhat gawky, almost resembling one of those pious Westerns that Hollywood often cranked out about simple, law-abiding townspeople, who – for purely selfish reasons – transform into an ugly lynch mob only to see the light after the widow's son expires. In developing the script for *Fahrenheit 451*, he would apply a lighter, contrasting touch. In Truffaut's futuristic view, mob mentality – once the staple of irrational conduct – no longer exists. Like the androgynous citizens of *1984*, all human behaviour has become subordinate to government decree.

For Truffaut, this authoritative theme, in his only English-language production, forms the cohesive ingredient of a futuristic society, modelled in a quasi-Teutonic fashion, that has emerged, presumably, after some nuclear conflagration. But what is the date? How far into the future has *Fahrenheit* ventured? Thirty years? One hundred? Two hundred? Or does it matter? Are all civilisations, regardless of the time period, the same? Truffaut seems deliberately vague.

Here in Truffaut's European-style world of the totalitarian future, most inhabitants, now dehumanised, live in a quiet, minimal society where a giant television set, often called the wall screen, blares constant instructions about every facet of daily existence. In a semi-lobotomised condition, viewers gape at this looming screen, ingesting every word. Why not? In this McLuhanesque state, only the visual image matters and the viewer is gently, but firmly massaged into submission. For their own protection, all books – once the cornerstones of civilisations – are banned. Reading is forbidden and to enforce this edict, an elaborate fire department stands ready. The firemen's job – in this brave new world – is to burn all the books they uncover. They no longer extinguish fires; instead, as guardians of public morality, they start huge bonfires and when the temperature reaches 451 degrees Fahrenheit – as one fireman will later explain – book paper starts to burn.

Indeed, everything seems antiseptic about this new order. Television antennae, like silent tributaries to a non-reading society, permeate the landscape, offering testimony to the transmogrification from a literate to a tactile world. Pre-packaged foods, requiring no thought process, supply the daily nutrients while basic human emotions – joy, pain, even sexual fulfilment – seem non-existent. Standing aloof in this hygienic void is a disillusioned, veteran fireman, Montag (played by Oscar Werner), who dutifully implements every commandment issued by his superior (Cyril Cusack). Known simply as Captain (last names, in this futuristic land, no longer apply)[3] he praises Montag's[4] sharp eye and consistent acumen in uncovering some hidden books on a recent raid. This entire scene resembles the typical Gestapo raid found in any 1940-era Hollywood propaganda script.

With well-rehearsed precision, Captain orders his burn team into a 1960s-style fire truck and soon the entourage – red lights flashing, siren skirling – roars down the highway into a suburban neighbourhood. Alerted by an anonymous telephone call, the frightened owner dashes out the side door moments before the firemen arrive. Quickly, Captain and Montag break into the house and, within seconds, uncloak a cache of books. Well-known titles are culled from ceiling fixtures, false television screens, and other hiding spots: Miguel de Cervantes' *Don Quixote* and W. Somerset Maugham's *The Moon and the Sixpence*.

Soon, these books are thrown on to the sidewalk and neo-storm troopers (they wear an all-black outfit with a small emblem just below the right shoulder) set up their destructive equipment. The honour befalls Montag, who quickly slips his protective, all-white, asbestos suit over his uniform. Looking more like a modern Ku Klux Klan member (instead

of a Gestapo follower) Montag inspects his flame thrower, adjusts the aperture and quickly unleashes its destruction on the pile of books just feet in front of him. Everything goes up in flames restating the fireman's credo, 'We burn them to ashes and then burn the ashes – that is our official motto.'

For Captain, this is a moment of exhilaration. Another pile of illegal books – ferreted out by his swift-moving staff – is reduced to ashes. Seemingly detached from his new success, he plies his subordinate: 'What does Montag do on his day off-duty?' This isolated, impersonal, third-person dialogue – which is used throughout the film – only restates the unemotional nature of the futuristic society. Montag's response is just as withdrawn: 'Not very much sir, mow the lawn.' On the surface, he remains obsequious because Captain has promised a promotion but underneath, there rests a subliminal frustration. For Montag, a gnawing question permeates his mind: what are we doing?

But this is not the only question racking his brain. That afternoon he boards the sleek, bullet-shaped monorail for the fast commute home (there were, of course, no monorails in service in the middle sixties, this proposed technology existed on drawing boards or an occasional World's Fair)[5] and, peruses some of the riders. A young girl stares at her reflection in a window and passionately kisses this image; and an attractive stranger casually strokes her body in a quiet move that suggests a mating ritual. This comely passenger (played by Julie Christie) leaves the monorail at Montag's stop and soon, the twosome exchange pleasantries along the sidewalk to their respective, similar homes. For the fireman, this becomes an uplifting moment as he hears uninhibited, free spirited ideas from a woman – named Clarisse – whose vivacity seems both inspiring and foreboding. Ironically, she is an educator, a type of renegade teacher.[6]

Now what? For a man who spends his days burning books, this new acquaintance represents an anomaly to his bland, methodical life. After a few perfunctory (and somewhat flirtatious) remarks, the neighbours part, Clarisse to her neat, solitary – but non-fireproof – home and Montag, a few doors down, where he finds his wife, Linda,[7] half-asleep in the main room, her lethargic eyes transfixed on the wall screen while an unseen narrator issues directives about the subtle art of judo. For Montag, this becomes an obvious frustration since his spouse lacks any of the spontaneity that he savoured a few minutes earlier with a pretty stranger, a recluse living nearby. For the viewers, this encounter offers an unusual cinematic technique: both Linda and Clarisse are played by

the same actress, Julie Christie. In other words, Montag keeps falling for the same person.

This was not, of course, the first time that a performer played multiple roles in a prominent motion picture (the most obvious example is Peter Sellers's three zany portrayals in Kubrik's runaway 1964 classic *Dr Strangelove*) and Truffaut manipulates this method effectively. Using different hairstyles and speech intonations, the two women seem miles apart in this faraway world that expounds no-thought, no-action. Clarisse – the neighbour with a strong personality and a magnetic smile with her tantalising secret – contrasts sharply with Linda, one of the Stepford Wives in Bryan Forbes's 1975 misogynistic horror film, who embraces both her pills and the wall screen as a pabulum for reality. For Montag, this chance meeting has ominous overtones. What will the book-burner do next?

As with most of Truffaut's screenplays, the main focus is always people; their problems and frustrations. It is almost, as one critic noted, that the auteur compared the unlikely theme of human dynamics and books. Truffaut once admitted that he wanted 'to show books in difficulty, almost as if they were people in difficulty'. For Truffaut, the essence of this film seemed clear: 'I wanted the audience to suffer as if they were seeing people (instead of books) burning.'[8] Montag's staid world seems disrupted. On the one hand, his life is tranquil and predictable. Like a Woody Allen character, he has learned that 90 per cent of success means just showing up, obeying his supervisor, and burning books. But a void exists in this fireman's world. An agonising, inexplicable chasm alienates husband and wife.

Why is this? What barriers separate the experienced fireman from his attractive, childless wife? Has the new society that Truffaut envisioned vitiated intimacy? Certainly. In a protracted bedroom scene, all kindness vanishes as Montag and Linda drift off into their separate spheres. Montag delves into the comic page, elaborate cartoons that do not contain balloons (reading, of course, is forbidden, so actual words cannot appear), while Linda carps about trivial, domestic matters, ingests more pills, and gapes at the wall screen. The entire episode reiterates the alienation that exists in human dynamics and serves as a harbinger for more foreboding events.

How far can Truffaut push this point? While many concepts seem deliberately ambiguous, the theme of 'reading' moves off into new dimensions. In this futuristic, science-fiction world – where books are burned because they contain bad ideas – a government has evolved to protect citizens from themselves. But what about basic information,

signs or public notices? Can a society function without print? Without basic directions? Where did people learn to read in the first place? How do schools conduct lessons? What is going on inside the classroom? How can the wall screen commentators – people that transfix Linda with their soothing, jejune information – prepare their talk? Can they work without a script? Hardly. But science fiction – like any other Hollywood production – has ample room for poetic licence.

Putting this issue aside, life moves on for the nine-year veteran fireman who must teach sour-faced cadets the rudiments of unearthing contraband. As a senior officer, Montag's skill as an instructor coruscates – 'To learn how to find, one must first know how to hide' – as he points out places designed to conceal books. Toasters, light fixtures, floors, ceilings, ovens, even television sets may contain forbidden material, he enjoins the class, nonchalantly extracting a blank page book from a cylindrical thermos bottle. Later, Captain reminds him that the impending promotion recognises exemplary work and inquires what changes the salary increase will provide. 'We might be able', Montag proffers, 'to have a second wall screen.' Caught off-guard, Captain retorts, 'Oh, you only have the one?'

Throughout the film, the many references to this wall screen – and its subliminal impact on individual thought – seem prophetic, anticipating such later behaviour-altering technology found with modern day users of the Walkman, the Discman, cellular phones, telemarketing industry, internet access, MP3, and the many interactive crime-reporting television programmes. After all, it is the wall screen that blares statistics about burned books – using rhetoric that echoes the Pentagon's weekly casualty statements, those meaningless, distorted, and mendacious reports during the Vietnam War – that warn the public about the subversive groups, those antisocial elements who hide books and question the well-established norms of this new society, creating their own special form of disharmony. In one scene, a long-haired youth runs from the hair police only to be thrown against the wall and his locks quickly sheared. 'After all', the anonymous wall-screen announcer quips, 'it all goes to show, law enforcement can be fun'. Without question, life in the regimental future is controlled by the wall screen; the media has paralysed individual thought and insight.

That evening, Montag faces another crisis. Returning home, he finds Linda unconscious on the bed, with numerous pill bottles opened and their contains strewn helter-skelter. Fearing the worst, he dials (using a rotary phone) the emergency department who treat his entreaties in a cavalier manner. 'What kind of pill?' the operator languidly asks. 'Red

#2', the confused Montag replies. Soon, two technicians appear carrying a bottle of blood. 'No doctors on these jobs', they tell Montag, who watches non-plussed as a blood transfusion is being prepared. 'We do all the blood jobs; we'll give her a first-class pump out, fill her up with new blood. We handle fifty a day. She won't be the last tonight, not by a long shot'. They are right about that. The next morning, Linda saunters around her kitchen completely oblivious about the previous evening's mishap. With new blood in her body, her personality radiates with inexplicable buoyancy, culminating with seducing her confused husband.

Truffaut is apparently poking fun at the mechanised society. As Montag runs from one telephone to another he is using old-fashioned equipment that resembles the early technology used at the turn of the century. Later, as Linda prances around the kitchen in a frivolous mood, she places a small box in her husband's hand. 'I brought you a present', she remarks, 'isn't it smart? It's the very latest thing, everyone uses them now'. Montag opens the package and admires his wife's gift. It is a fancy straight razor. Now what? Does this mean that everything that is old, becomes new again? Didn't the ancients believe in complete blood transfusions? Why does Truffaut emphasise the interactive wall screen and almost scorn the telephone? Does it take new blood – plus an ongoing supply of pills – for a wife to enjoy sex? For Montag, this episode serves as the *pièce de résistance*. He has finally been pushed over the edge.

That evening, a transformation occurs. Montag quietly leaves his bed, turns on the wall screen (muting the sound), and removes a copy of Charles Dickens's *David Copperfield* hidden in a closet. Finally, after years of loyal government service, a fireman – who spends his working days destroying books – succumbs to the forbidden fruit. Like a child playing with a Christmas toy, he runs his finger across the first page reading aloud the printed word: 'Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life, or whether that station will be held by anybody else, these pages must show.' Almost enthralled by these concepts, Montag's excitement intensifies. Wearing a hooded robe over his pyjamas, he resembles a monk experiencing a religious epiphany. Each sentence seems refreshing, exhilarating. What happened? After all the melancholy, dreariness, and hopelessness he has witnessed, why has the man who instructs recruits how to find hidden books, concealed this contraband? Why has he crossed the Rubicon?

Who knows? But for Montag, his reading experience is put aside the next morning as he participates in another subversive round-up. Here

Captain leads his fireman through a recreational area searching for books. Adults are stopped and patted down, a pregnant woman's abdomen is gently touched, and then a baby carriage inspected. At one point, Captain retrieves a one-inch novelty book hidden inside the infant's shirt. Montag halts a stranger and feels the man's overcoat. Abruptly, he orders him to move on. Montag knows this stranger is concealing the forbidden contraband, but will not detain him.

This Gestapo-style search reaffirms Truffaut's oligarchical world. In scenes modelled after the Hitler (or Stalin) era, citizens are routinely stopped and detained. Civil liberties, individualism, and nonconformity no longer exist. All power emanates from the Big Brother state, and books – plus long hair and loud music – deviate from government edict. It is a totalitarian society of repression, spying, fear, and denunciation as malcontents routinely report their friends and family by dropping envelopes into an information box (it resembles a postal box) located on street corners. Eyeing a stranger about to shove a letter inside this receptacle, Montag once observed that, 'The man is like someone circling around a woman.'

For Montag it can only be a matter of time before he becomes the hunted. That evening, wearing his monk's robe, he piles more books – including a dictionary – upon the dining-room table and intensifies his readings. This commotion attracts his wife who appears distraught: 'I don't want these things, they frighten me', she exclaims. Montag's anger fills the room: 'These books are my family.' Later, he asks Linda if she remembers their first meeting. She cannot. Lacking the power of memory, any recall is impossible.

Reading, therefore is the process of recording and recounting; it is really the power of memory. Without it, human emotion turns barren. The printed word becomes both tactile and emotional entering through the eye, transforming an image into imagination, and finally – to complete this holistic experience – imbrued as memory. The individual experiences the sum of his reading. Montag's wife lacks this capability. Constantly drugged, manipulated by the wall screen, she stands – like her friends around her – another cipher in the new society: docile, tractable, and unimaginative. But for Montag it is a different story. Reading provides emancipation, opening a new world, breaking the bonds of sterility that encapsulated him all these years. But once more, Truffaut, in his science-fiction morality fable, does not explain where Montag (or later on, other individuals) learned to read.

Montag's secret, of course, cannot stay hidden much longer. The next day the fire brigade breaks into a house in his neighbourhood where a

simple-hearted woman – a friend of Clarisse – stands stoically in the hallway as her books are uncovered and heaped into a messy pile. Captain's glee permeates the entire operation: 'The existence of a secret library was known in high places', he brags, breaking into a large attic containing hundreds of titles. 'There's nothing there,' he exults, 'the books have nothing to say.' One by one, he throws them on to the floor: they include William Shakespeare's *Othello*, Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, William Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, J. P. Donleavy's *The Ginger Man*, Aristotle's *Ethics* and Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. 'It's no good, we all got to be alike', Captain glowers, 'The only way to be happy is for everyone to be made equal. You see, we must burn the books – all the books!'

In this frightening scene of despair and hopelessness, the woman holds her ground. Ordered from her home, she refuses even though the fireman – after saturating the front room with gasoline – stand ready to ignite the entrance way. While Captain bellows more orders, Montag stares incredulously as this book-woman casually strikes a match and lackadaisically drops it on the gasoline-soaked floor. As the firemen flee for their lives, Montag stands transfixed as the entire room turns into a huge conflagration consuming the books, the house, and the occupant.

This book-woman's martyrdom – the most dramatic scene in this screenplay – reaffirms what John C. Tibbetts[9] called 'the ecstatic images of conflagration, the tongues of orange flames consuming – first daintily, then ravenously – the pages of books'. Why wouldn't it? As title after title quickly disintegrates in the multi-hued flames, Truffaut suggests a miniature nuclear explosion. 'Nothing else in the film, not the impassivity of Montag or the mild sensuousness of Julie Christie – in the dual role of Clarisse and Linda – can rival these scenes of terrible, intoxicating beauty', John Tibbetts concludes.[10] Can it be true? Are Captain's words prophetic? Is book-burning an aesthetic experience?[11] And as Tibbetts points out, even though Bradbury frequently carped about motion picture versions of his works, he praised this one. 'The results were very good indeed', Bradbury remarked. 'It has a terrific ending that makes me cry every time I see it.'

After this harrowing experience, the bewildered Montag has nowhere to turn. Where can he find comity? At home, his drug-induced wife, spouting inane shibboleths, provides little solace for his confusion and anxiety and, finally, places an envelope in the information box denouncing her husband. Unaware of her perfidy, Montag returns to

work and within minutes Captain orders him off to another mission. 'Just this last call', his superior teases, 'then you can do as you like.' As the fire truck roars down the road, Montag seems almost relieved when the vehicle abruptly halts in front of his house. 'Well, now', Captain glimmers, 'Montag knows exactly what we're looking for.'

Without question, this becomes the realisation that the proverbial game is up. As his colleagues rip apart furniture, Montag's hidden treasures – his prized literary stash, including Henry Miller's *Plexus*, Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, Ivan Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons* – spill out on to the bare floor as Captain readies the flame-thrower for another book-burning session. But impulsively, Montag grabs the instrument and seeks his own retribution. In a scene that resembles much of the Second World War documentary footage shot in the South Pacific where US Marines routinely immolate Japanese soldiers in their pillboxes, Montag first blasts the bed, then the wall screen, and – after a slight pause – turns the flame on Captain. As his supervisor screams out in a death throe and his valued book collection crumbles into ashes, Montag bolts out of his home, leaving behind a world he never made. Now the lone hero – after many years of dedicated service as a book burner – becomes an outlaw.

Soon, television announcers alert their viewers to the fugitive and, after a series of protracted scenes, the culprit is shown cornered and executed. Unknown to the television audience, however, this is a bogus re-enactment made to endorse the government's authority ('A crime against society has been revenged'). In reality, Montag – with Clarisse's[12] help – dodges his pursuers, fleeing to the countryside to a secret coterie of book worshippers. Here, everyone proffers a singular belief: return literature to mainstream society. For Montag, this Kafkaesque dénouement brings both relief and confusion as he watches the book people reading, reciting, and memorising assigned titles. As Clarisse explained earlier, these individuals are people who vanished: 'They are books, each one, men and women. Everyone commits a book they have chosen to memorise and they become the books.' Now, he meets members of this prized community, Plato's *Republic* says hello, Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* walks by, John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* waves, Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* smiles cordially, and even Ray Bradbury's[13] *The Martian Chronicles* saunters past him. Enthralled by these book-people, Montag realises he has found sanctuary and, soon takes his place in this counter-society. He, too, will memorise a book.[14]

Truffaut, of course, has created the perfect ending for his only science-fiction foray and seems to challenge audiences with an audacious ques-

tion: which group suffers from the greater obsession? On the one hand, he portrays the book-people as clones seemingly bent on some messianic crusade, reading and reciting selected tomes to maintain their literary legacy, while on the flip-side, he delineates the drug-induced TV crowd, those members who spend their lives glued to the wall screen playing silly, interactive games. Are the book-people (they walk around in a robot-like trance, oblivious to anything around them) any different from the voyeur-turned-viewer television society that demands instant gratification from its cathode rays?

How dissimilar is Truffaut's distant world from the reality that confronts Western civilisation? In Truffaut's society, people do not want to trouble themselves with unpleasant ideas or feelings, so literature is banned because books only inspire lethargic, sad, and doleful thoughts. As a substitute, the government offers drugs, emotionless sex, and witless mass media as placebos to maintain conformity. For a 1966 film, *Fahrenheit 451's* message seems foreboding. Western societies contend with run-away drug addiction as users consistently seek solace from a variety of problems, while television-watching – including ancillary activities associated with the computer, which in itself is television-watching – has become the chief form of entertainment and the subject of that enjoyment – violence – provides instant gratification. While millions of participants seek vicarious, sexual thrills from internet chat rooms or pay those per-minute charges for pornographic sites, Truffaut's vision stands firm.

Given that *Fahrenheit 451* contains the same feelings of irrationalism, cynicism, and disenchantment commonly associated with popular life styles and given that Western society offers more technological advances and gadgetry than ever before, why is the word 'stress' on practically everyone's lips? What are the answers? The remedies? What does contemporary society crave? While Truffaut envisioned a post-nuclear world without books, could he foretell the current unacceptable levels in suicide, drug addiction, melancholy, alcoholism, and boredom that permeate today's society? Did Truffaut reach far enough into the future? Could he anticipate the status-seekers plus the lonely crowd, those individuals who need greater choices in careers, lovers, and 'things' – mindless collectibles that resemble kitsch – and live by the hedonist credo: the more one obtains, devours, and consumes, the more one wants.

Certainly Truffaut's motion picture offers a glimpse into a precarious world and while his screenplay assuredly influenced other directors to explore their own ideologies – with such titles as *Planet of the Apes*

(1967), *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), *Soylent Green* (1973), *Escape from New York* (1981), *The Road Warrior* (1982), *Blade Runner* (1982), *Brazil* (1985), *Robocop* (1987), and even *Total Recall* (1990) – much of *Fahrenheit 451's* drama rests with its cerebral, rather than violent, interpretation of life to come. How prescient was Truffaut's vision? Will societies evolve without books? Or print? Will the fire brigades roam the streets looking for bibliophiles? Is the printed word finally finished? Will libraries become deserted and refurbished as elaborate tyre stores? There seems little sign of this – or at least not in the manner prophesied.

This essay concludes a collected history of the impact of lost libraries – in an age when the bookshops of the most technologically advanced nations are enjoying unprecedented sales and custom. In the late twentieth century Marshall McLuhan, the linear-tactile-sensory guru, predicted that bound editions would become obsolete, that the cool medium, two-dimensional qualities associated with reading – like the fifteenth-century Gutenberg typeface – would belong to another era. McLuhan unsettled academia with his avant-garde concepts, headlined for many as 'the medium is the message'. But how did he prove his point? How did he disseminate his theories? How did he turn everyone on to his hip ideas? The old-fashioned way. He wrote thirteen books. And at the start of the twenty-first century, for all the astonishing and continuing revolutions in electronic communication and in consequent working – and reading practices – the number of domestic, institutional and state book-holding libraries is greater than ever. Engagement with e-mail, the internet and electronic information storage and retrieval seems to enhance rather than reduce diversity in communication, and it serves (despite the coming-of-age disasters of national library de-accessioning and of ancient catalogue destruction) to create more intense and more widespread public outrage at the destruction of 'heritage'. Dozens of websites collected information and commented upon the destruction of libraries in Iraq and continue to identify and monitor threats to important book collections across the world. The concern is more instant and reaches a more diverse and far-flung audience than ever before. Such developments point, it seems, to some future hope of book conservation that confounds Truffaut and confounds the more intolerant of electronic enthusiasts. The new technologies clearly offer the potential for fresh measures of observation and replication to safeguard – if still in a relatively crude and materially changed mode[15] – against both natural and manmade destruction of often fragile depots of accumulated knowledge.

Notes

1. For a detailed analysis of Truffaut's use of literary sources, see Joy Gould Boyum, *Double Exposure: Fiction Into Film* (New York: Universal Books, 1985), p.13. Truffaut frequently turned to standard works of fiction for his photo-dramas: Henri-Pierre Roche in *Jules and Jim* and *Two English Girls* plus Henry James in *The Green Room*.
2. See Whitney Stine, *Mother Goddam: The Story of the Career of Bette Da*vis. (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1974), pp. 263, 264.
3. Truffaut ignores the full names given by Bradbury, Guy Montag and his supervisor, Captain Beatty, probably to give the screenplay more of a science-fiction edge. See Ray Bradbury, *Fahrenheit 451* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1991).
4. Montag is the name of a popular American paper manufacturing company. It is another example of Bradbury's irony.
5. In Bradbury's novel, there are no monorails. Instead, Guy Montag rides the subway, a silent, air-propelled train that moves silently down its lubricated flue in the earth.
6. In the novel, Clarisse is a seventeen-year-old student.
7. In the novel, Montag's wife's name is Mildred, changed perhaps to avoid confusion with the main character in Michael Curtiz's 1945 Oscar-winning film, *Mildred Pierce*.
8. For a more detailed explanation of this idea see Truffaut's essay, 'How I Made *The Wild Child*' in the English version of the script *The Wild Child*. (New York: Washington Square Press, 1973).
9. For a thorough examination that contrasts Bradbury's novel with Truffaut's screen rendition, see John C. Tibbetts and James M. Welsh. *Novels into Film: The Encyclopedia of Movies Adapted from Books* (New York: Checkmark Books, 1999), pp. 75–6.
10. Ibid., p. 76.
11. For a brief, but excellent discussion of Truffaut's art motifs, see Boyum, *Double Exposure*, p. 13.
12. Clarisse dies much earlier in Bradbury's novel. Truffaut expanded her role for the film version.
13. Truffaut, naturally, is playing homage to the author of *Fahrenheit 451*.
14. Montag agrees to memorise Edgar Allan Poe's *Tales of Mystery and Imagination*. In the novel, Montag is assigned the Book of Ecclesiastes.
15. See, for example, Hans van der Hoeven, 'The Destruction of Libraries in the Twentieth Century', in *Lost Memory: Libraries and Archives Destroyed in the Twentieth Century* (UNESCO, 1996), esp. p. 3.

Index