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# OCCASIONAL PAPERS

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## **Book-Fools of the Renaissance**

by

**K. Lesley Knieriem**



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## ABSTRACT

The object of this thesis is the search for the “folly” of Renaissance bibliophiles in their motivations for collecting books. The end of the medieval period saw not only a great increase in the number of private book collectors and a diffusion of bibliophily among new classes, but a whole new attitude towards books also developed—a passion for accumulating books not for their contents but as objects valued for their own sakes. This development is set in the context of the intellectual, social, religious, technological, and economic changes that accompanied the birth of the “modern” world. The principal reasons for venerating books as objects are classified broadly as financial, ambitious, aesthetic, nostalgic, and nationalistic. These are discussed in depth with illustrative case studies of Renaissance book-fools representing each motivation.

## INTRODUCTION

First published in 1494, Sebastian Brant’s social satire *Narrenshiff* met with enormous success. It went through 29 editions by 1620, was quickly translated into various languages, inspired sermons in pulpits across Germany, and gave rise to a score of imitators which exerted a tremendous influence on contemporary satiric literature.<sup>1</sup> To some extent, its popularity continues to our own day. Librarians and other book lovers of the past two centuries have been especially amused by the opening chapter, Brant’s biting portrait of the book-fool. In Alexander Barclay’s English translation of 1509, it appears:

That in this shyp the chefe place I gouerne  
By this wyde see with folys wanderynge  
The cause is playne, and easy to dyscerne  
Styll am I besy bokes assemblynge  
For to haue plenty it is a plesaunt thyng  
In my conceyt and to haue them ay in honde  
But what they mene do I nat vnderstonde  
  
But yet I haue them in great reuerence  
And honoure sauynge them from fylth and ordure  
By often brusshynge, and moche dylygence  
Full goodly bounde in plesaunt couerture  
Of domas, satyn, or els of veluet pure  
I kepe them sure ferynge lyst they sholde be lost  
For in them is the connyng wherin I me best.

But if it fortune that any lernyd men  
Within my house fall to disputacion  
I drawe the curtyns to shewe my bokes then  
That they of my cunnyng sholde make probacion  
I kepe nat to fall in altercacion  
And whyle they comon my bokes I turne and wynde  
For all is in them, and no thyng in my mynde.

Tholomeus [Ptolemy] the riche causyd longe agone  
Ouer all the worlde good bokes to be sought  
Done was his commaundement anone  
These bokes he had and in his stody brought  
Whiche passyd all erthly treasure as he thought  
But neuertheles he dyd hym nat aply  
Unto theyr doctryne, but lyued unhappely.

Lo in lyke wyse of bokys I haue store  
But fewe I rede, and fewer understande  
I folowe nat theyr doctryne nor theyr lore  
It is ynoughe to bere a boke in hande  
It were to moche to be it suche a bande  
For to be bounde to loke within the boke  
I am content on the fayre couerynge to loke

Why sholde I stody to hurt my wyt therby  
Or trouble my mynde with stody excessyue  
Sythe many ar whiche stody right besely  
And yet therby shall they neuer thryue  
The fruyt of wysdom can they nat contriue  
And many to stody so moche are inclynde  
That utterly they fall out of theyr mynde

Eche is nat lettred that nowe is made a lorde  
Nor eche a clerke that hath a benefyce  
They are nat all lawyers that plees doth recorde  
All that are promotyd are nat fully wyse  
On suche chaunce nowe fortune throwys hir dyce  
That thoughe one knowe but the yresshe game  
Yet wolde he haue a gentyllmannys name

So in lyke wyse I am in suche case  
Thoughe I nought can I wolde be calllyde wyse  
Also I may set another in my place  
Whiche may for me my bokes excercyse  
Or else I shall ensue the comon gyse  
And say concedo to euery argument  
Lyst by moche speche my latyn sholde be spent

...

But O noble Doctours, that worthy ar of name:  
Consyder our olde faders: note wel theyr diligence:  
Ensue ye theyr steppes: obtayne ye such fame,  
As they dyd lyuynge: and that by true Prudence.  
Within theyr hartys they planted theyr scyence  
And nat in plesaunt bokes. But nowe to fewe such be.  
Therefore in this Shyp let them come rowe with me.<sup>2</sup>

Most discussion of this passage has centered on the social and religious criticism in the poem and secondarily on speculations as to the identity of Brant's model for his fool. Despite its impact, Brant's portrait of the book-fool is not particularly original. In fact, a great deal of the entire poem is derived from classical and biblical archetypes, and Brant even annotated Locher's Latin version with citations to his sources.<sup>3</sup> In many ways, Brant's portrait of the book-fool is a criticism of all humane letters as vain and foolish in comparison to the wisdom of the divine Revelation, which supplants them all. This was an increasingly popular motif of the religious bibliophobia of the late Renaissance, and it led to the sixteenth-century doctrine of the vanity of learning and the inability to find real wisdom in books. These criticisms of book collecting eventually evolved into a general condemnation of the reliance of civilization upon books and libraries.<sup>4</sup>

At the same time, Brant ridicules a clearly recognizable type. Satires do not exist in a vacuum, and if some kind of behavior is being consistently ridiculed, as in the numerous editions, translations, and imitations of the *Narrenschiff*, this behavior must be perceived as occurring. Thus the popularity of the theme indicates the widespread perception of the existence of this kind of fool during the Renaissance. The object of this thesis is therefore to search for the "folly" of Renaissance bibliophiles in their motivations for collecting books.

A guiding principle of this search is Ralph Waldo Emerson's definition of the bibliomane (as opposed to the bibliophile) as one who "values books as such; not as related to nature and the human constitution, but as making a sort of Third Estate with the world and the soul." In other words, one who loves books as physical objects independent of their contents.<sup>5</sup>

The term "Renaissance" is admittedly vague, covering the entire complex of profound intellectual, social, religious, technological, and economic changes that separate the "medieval" from the "modern" world. The confusion is compounded by the fact that the "Renaissance" took place at different times in different countries. In Italy, where many of the elements of this movement originated, the time frame is roughly from 1330 to 1530; in England, where it lingered the longest, each end of this period occurred about a century later.

In terms of book collecting, the crucial period is the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Before the fourteenth century, book collections were rarely considered personal property and were revered above all for the

content of the books. After the seventeenth century, the character of book collecting and librarianship changed again. The first great migration of medieval manuscripts into modern libraries had ceased.<sup>6</sup> Book collecting became fashionable, scholarly, and very much on the grand scale. Modern techniques of acquisition and organization appeared; the first textbook of library management, Gabriel Naude's *Avis pour dresser une bibliothèque* was published in 1627.<sup>7</sup>

The condemnation of the bibliomane occurs repeatedly throughout the Renaissance period, and not just in the poetry of Sebastian Brant. The topic is often brought up in the context of the Alexandrian library, traditionally founded by Ptolemy Philadelphos. The ancient Egyptian king served as the archetypal bibliophile, a magnet for those who sought either to praise or to denigrate the zealous accumulation of books. "The most significant metamorphosis of the Ptolemaic topos occurs when good King Ptolemy, the benefactor of scholars and, unwittingly, of Christians, is superseded by foolish Ptolemy, the type of the misguided bibliophile."<sup>8</sup> The favorable view of Ptolemy persists throughout much of the Renaissance, but by the end of the period, his stature is decisively weakened.<sup>9</sup>

So not only the nature of book collecting, but the perception of it changed as well; while it generally remained a positive virtue, bibliophilia always stood in danger of succumbing to bibliomania, which gradually changed from an amiable failing to a potentially dangerous vice. Thus by the seventeenth century, Thomas Bartholin, while mourning the destruction of his library, could find consolation in the fact that "I am now too old to be the slave of a library, not otherwise than as in bondage to the talent of others."<sup>10</sup>

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Books were always valued throughout the medieval period. This veneration of books centered around their content, that is, the text. Many books—especially *the Book*, par excellence, the Scriptures—were decorated with illuminations, miniatures, even bound with gold and gems. But generally speaking, during the Middle Ages, this ornament was a means of paying homage to the content of the book, not an end in itself. A thirteenth-century monastic chronicle notes "you should make a habit in reading books to attend more to the sense than to the words, to concentrate on the fruit rather than the foliage."<sup>11</sup>

The book, as a vessel of sacred knowledge, was not to be owned by any ordinary individual (even assuming that such could read); therefore, the vast majority of books were owned in common by religious institutions: monastic communities, churches, universities, and the semi-sacral royalty. The content being primary, there was a perception that a book could not even be "owned" in a material sense. The familiar medieval book curses actually began as a means to protect the purity of the text; only around the thirteenth century did they commonly function as a protection for the object.<sup>12</sup>

The ordinary medieval layman rarely, if ever, owned many books. Even those who were wealthy or of noble rank were generally more or less illiterate. Meanwhile, among the ranks of the better educated, the books needed were those with which the reader had made acquaintance at his university or which were necessary for his special study and occupation. And even then libraries were relatively uncommon, and they tended to be very small.<sup>13</sup>

Not that private individuals did not occasionally own book collections during the Middle Ages, especially near the end of the period. During the fourteenth century, one can see an enormous rise in the number of private individuals (as opposed to institutions) who possessed books. By the end of the century, not only bishops and nobles, but any respectable private person might have accumulated a small hoard of books. In Theodor Gottlieb's listing of the catalogs of medieval and Renaissance libraries, he notes some 219 for the fifteenth century and 114 for the fourteenth, a significant increase from 60 for the thirteenth, 70 for the twelfth, and 43 for the eleventh century.<sup>14</sup>

In his Prologue to the *Legend of Good Women*, Chaucer remarks that he owns "sixty bokes olde and newe, . . . alle ful of storyes grete, that bothe Romayns and ek Grekes trete, Of sundry wemen. . . ." <sup>15</sup> But Chaucer was an exceptional figure. The typical private libraries at the end of the fourteenth century were small collections very similar one to another, containing psalters and other devotional works, some popular scholastic theology, chronicles and epics, and perhaps a few law books among the professionals. Still, the content of these small libraries, although predominantly religious, gradually moved towards more secular themes.<sup>16</sup>

But only by the fifteenth century do we find that a few books were commonly in the possession of well-to-do and cultivated people. Towards the close of the century, the average private library might contain up

to 15 or 20 manuscripts.<sup>17</sup> Among the country gentry and urban merchants, the possession of a few books may have become a social obligation.<sup>18</sup> These “mini-libraries” became enormously popular by the end of the century, perhaps because they were both individualized and relatively inexpensive; indeed, some of them were obviously “home-made.”<sup>19</sup>

These nascent bibliophiles did not, however, tend to form permanent collections. Almost always their books were dispersed immediately after their deaths. In some cases, they were bequeathed to religious establishments, often with the stipulation that they be available for public use. In other cases, they were left to members of the family, clergy, even to other layfolk, the last particularly indicating a burgeoning circle of fellow book lovers.<sup>20</sup>

It was not only the wealthy and the gentleness who built small private collections. In the fifteenth century, the artisan class rose to a new social prominence. Almost two-thirds of the sixteenth-century German artisans and day laborers who left household inventories at their deaths included books among their possessions. Even in the lowest segments of this class, popular devotional literature could be found.<sup>21</sup> In fact, private household libraries were so common among all urban classes by the end of the Renaissance that the Frankfurt pastor Konrad Lautenbach could report in his 1597 *Marckshiffer Gespräch*:

Dem Teutschland mans zu dancken hat,  
Wie sichs befindt selbs in der That,  
Dass jeder ihm jetzt leicht kan zeugen,  
Ein Liberey, dass ers hab eigen:  
Die man fande vor alten Zeiten  
Nur bey gross Herrn, reichen Leuthen.<sup>22</sup>

However, none of these could honestly be accused of acting like the book-fools for whom this thesis searches. They bought only those books essential for their private devotional and (less often) occupational and recreational needs. Content was of primary interest. “This was an era of intensive reading of selected books; the development of extensive middle-class libraries of seldomly reread books would not receive its impetus until the eighteenth-century rise of the novel.”<sup>23</sup>

It is difficult to be sure how much of this apparent increase in the number of private libraries is due to the better preservation of more recent records. But it is even more difficult to deny the rise of new categories of book users and book owners. There were several new factors

that influenced this increase in private book ownership, most of which reinforced the textual value of the book.

Too much emphasis cannot be placed upon the effect produced by the rise of the universities.<sup>24</sup> The collecting activities of fifteenth-century scholars were closely tied to their university education. The development of the university system, and the rising level of education in general, meant not only that more people could read, but that the subject matter of the books changed. The needs of the new students were practical, for textbooks, principally for pastoral care and theology, but also for the professions of medicine and increasingly for the law.<sup>25</sup> Chaucer leaves a good description of a fourteenth-century student book collector in his *Canterbury Tales*:

For him was lever have at his beddes heed  
Twenty bookes, clothed in blak and reed  
Of Aristotil, and of his philosophie,  
Than robus riche, or fithul, or sawtrie.  
But al though he were a philosopfre,  
Yet hadde he but litul gold in cofre;  
But al that he might of his frendes hente,  
On bookes and his lernyng, he it spente. . .<sup>26</sup>

Another factor, humanism, became so characteristic of the Renaissance intellectual climate, particularly in Italy, that the words "humanistic" and "Renaissance" are often used interchangeably. The humanists were avidly interested in texts, Greek as well as Latin, and were assiduous in comparing and editing manuscripts to produce the "purest" text possible.

The book collectors of the Renaissance were as important as the book hunters in the diffusion of classical literature. For example, Niccolo Niccoli (1364-1423) never scoured ancient monasteries or visited distant lands, but "in some mysterious fashion, newly found codices came to him."<sup>27</sup> As a result of his feverish energy in collecting, Niccolo left, at his death, a legacy of 800 volumes, valued at 6,000 gold florins.<sup>28</sup> And participation in humanistic activities was not limited just to the upper classes, especially in Italy. Professionals and even tradesmen collected manuscripts of the classical authors.<sup>29</sup>

At first this movement fostered mainly the love of books for their content. Books were viewed as the conduits to the ancient wisdom; they served as vessels of knowledge. Indeed, the manuscripts of the humanists, even the deluxe volumes, are almost always unillustrated; decoration, if it

appears at all, serves to clarify understanding of the text, emphasizing the content of the book over the container.<sup>30</sup>

Humanistic concerns quickly spread from Italy to other regions of Europe, especially Germany. There the new "professional scholars" gave to books and libraries a new significance. The impact of humanism upon the number and size of libraries matched its influence upon their contents. In the fifteenth century, humanistic influences began to appear in royal and princely libraries all over Europe. The success of the movement created a fashion in erudition, so that no person with any pretensions to culture would care to display a study bereft of books.

Other major social phenomena associated with the burgeoning desire for books were the religious reform movements sweeping Europe during the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. These stressed the simple common life and affectual devotion and were also associated with the spread of literacy. The second half of the fifteenth century witnessed a huge demand for devotional works, such as the Book of Hours, which were frequently decorated lavishly in recognition of their sacred contents. There were also increasing efforts to widely disseminate and even translate the Scriptures.

These diverse movements eventually culminated in the religious and social convulsions known as the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. The various Protestant groups tended to value the book even more highly than before; not only were they characterized by a common reverence for the Word as a sacrament, but they also generated a huge volume of controversial literature. One significant impact was the huge new demand for Bibles, especially in the vernacular. Between the years 1526 and 1600, "so great was the rush for this new supply of hitherto forbidden knowledge, that we have no less than 326 editions, or parts of editions, of the English Bible."<sup>31</sup> Indeed, about half the total output of incunabula were Bibles or parts of Bibles.<sup>32</sup>

Another curious result of the Reformation was the increased tendency to value religious books, especially the Scriptures, not only for their content, but as a religious totem or fetish "fraught with ancestral, religious and communal meaning."<sup>33</sup> Volumes were laid upon the heads of the sick, consulted randomly for prophetic predictions, used to detect thieves and lost objects, carried before one into battle as a shield and a standard, and—in a custom surviving to our own day—used to amplify and guarantee oaths and testimony in a court of law:<sup>34</sup>

The implication in all these cases is that the power of the Bible lay not simply in its text, to be unlocked by rigorous exegesis, but rather in its ineffable holiness, its sacred magic. The Bible as an object, symbolizing and encapsulating the word of God, was believed to do duty comparable to or superior to the Scripture as text.<sup>35</sup>

These religious movements so stressed the importance of the content over the form, that many books were deemed dangerous and prohibited or even destroyed by Catholics and Protestants alike. As printing made books more universally available, religious censorship became more prominent. The "Index of Forbidden Books," which saw only limited use during the Middle Ages, was increasingly relied upon by the mid-sixteenth century.<sup>36</sup> The smuggling of books became an important tactic in the struggle for religious supremacy.<sup>37</sup>

One of the side effects of the "nationalization of religion" in the fifteenth century was a stronger sense of national identity. Even more important were the development of international commerce, with the concomitant growth of the bourgeois class, and the rise of strong monarchies in England, France, and Spain, along with the brilliant princely despotisms established in Italy.<sup>38</sup>

Nationalism also had a significant impact upon the contents of private collections, particularly among the nobility. A desire to collect the "national literature"—courtly epics, prose romances, chronicles, and the like—became more prominent. Vernacular books accounted for a large proportion of all private collections except those of the humanists, particularly in the princely or ducal libraries.

The fifteenth and sixteenth centuries witnessed great advances in education. The ability to read and write spread to social groups that had formerly been excluded. Even more importantly, those groups that formerly read only painfully, for practical purposes, were now increasingly reading for pleasure.<sup>39</sup> This growth stemmed in part from the spread of humanism, in part from the educational efforts of many of the reformed religious groups, but principally from the rise of the merchant classes, and the need for literacy in carrying out their increasingly complex businesses.<sup>40</sup>

The actual size of the literate public has been a matter of some controversy. Most of the evidence is drawn from contemporary estimates, such as Sir Thomas More's comment in 1533 that more than half the population of England could read English.<sup>41</sup> By 1581 the Augsburg minnesinger Daniel Holzman could claim as an already established

proverb throughout German lands that "he is but a half-man who cannot read or write."<sup>42</sup> Such estimates are impressionistic, little better than guesses, but there was clearly a widespread impression that by the end of the period, people of all ranks were capable of using books for both profit and amusement.<sup>43</sup>

The effects of this increased literacy went beyond the ability to use books. As they became less mysterious and awesome, they also appeared less as sacred objects. A new critical temper blossomed, enabling readers to focus more intelligently upon the contents of the books.<sup>44</sup>

Increased literacy also helped foster the rapid development of certain technical innovations that made relatively inexpensive books much more widely available, first through the commercial production of manuscripts and later through the printing presses. The effects of the printing press on book collecting are not easy to assess. Printed books did not at first find a ready acceptance among the wealthy bibliophiles who preferred the more elegant deluxe manuscripts. Yet the humanists and the other readers who were chiefly interested in the content rather than in the externals of the book eagerly welcomed the products of the press. In some ways, printing strengthened the emphasis on content. With identical versions widely available, textual questions could begin to be addressed critically.<sup>45</sup> But on the other hand, printing could just as easily retard the spread of ideas, strengthening traditional prejudices and popularizing destructive errors.<sup>46</sup>

But generally, as books became more available, it was for the first time possible for a private individual without the resources of a prince or a bishop to indulge the passion to accumulate larger numbers of these previously scarce treasures. Therefore, those who wished to distinguish their collections could no longer rely on mere quantity. Rarity, beauty, antiquity, and the like became the mark of distinction and sophistication among some collectors.

## THE BEGINNINGS OF BOOK-FOLLY

In fact, a different attitude towards books, for the most part absent from European culture since the Roman Empire, was indeed beginning to develop during the Renaissance. This was the passion for accumulating books, not for their contents, not as containers of a more important text, but as objects to be collected for their own sake. This bibliomania

was at first particularly widespread among the aristocracy both secular and religious, but it later enraptured the urban merchants and civil servants as well. To serve this new commercial clientele, the medieval stationer became the Renaissance bookseller, providing relatively cheap mass copies of manuscripts and printed books. Many of their patrons were not so much interested in their contents as in the books themselves, for motives avaricious, ambitious, aesthetic, nostalgic, nationalistic, even altruistic.

Modern studies of Renaissance libraries all too infrequently warn that providing the most thorough listing possible of an individual's books does not prove that he actually read them:

Many other personal libraries, however, were built up with other aims in mind. . . . Most of those mentioned as great collectors were bibliophiles, usually rich, who sought out rare and beautiful manuscripts for their aesthetic appeal as objects rather than for their contents. . . . All too often "gentlemen's libraries" contained well-bound copies of classic works which were never opened.<sup>47</sup>

The extreme book-fool so wittily skewered by Sebastian Brant was definitely not the norm for Renaissance book collectors. However, a new attitude towards the accumulation of books unquestionably did spring up at the very end of the medieval era.<sup>48</sup>

This phenomenon can be observed in the very new sense of pride of ownership in one's books. Colophons and other book inscriptions radically changed their tone, indicating a perception of the book as "my thing," rather than as the container of a text belonging to all. "The acquisitive society so foreign to medieval teachings appears in those inscriptions which clearly indicate that there is an owner and that he has written his name in the book."<sup>49</sup> So common had the custom of inscribing one's name in one's books become that in 1545 Lazare Drilhon, an apothecary of Toulon, committed the astonishing indiscretion of inscribing "a moy appartient Lazare Drilhon" in a secret stash of prohibited books.<sup>50</sup> Similarly, the practice of introducing the arms of the owner into the design of the book began in Italy during this time.<sup>51</sup>

Even among the humanist book hunters, dedicated to bringing lost texts to the light of scholarship, some were occasionally accused of hoarding newfound manuscripts. "While many of the treasures discovered on such expeditions found their way into the large collections . . . others were jealously guarded by private individuals, who vied with each other in building up their own libraries."<sup>52</sup> The letters of Poggio Bracciolini

often complain of this sort of behavior.<sup>53</sup> Niccolo Niccoli similarly complained that the parchments of Petrus de Canino had been hidden from him.<sup>54</sup> However, Niccolo was equally guilty of selfishly retaining the manuscript of Lucretius discovered by Poggio.<sup>55</sup>

The vilification of those who collected books to decorate their walls rather than to furnish their minds is a hoary commonplace. A well-stocked library served as a status symbol during the Roman period, a sort of "badge of personal achievement." Many were working libraries, but even Cicero could be accused of collecting extravagantly "for the mere luxury of possession." The book-fool appears frequently in classical literature, most prominently in the satires of Petronius, Martial, Juvenal, Lucian, and Ausonius.<sup>56</sup> Especially influential in the Renaissance period was the condemnation of Ptolemaic bibliophily by Seneca in his *De Tranquillitate Animi*:

Forty thousand books were burned at Alexandria; let someone else praise this library as the most noble monument to the wealth of kings. . . . There was no "good taste" or "solicitude" about it, but only learned luxury—nay, not even "learned," since they had collected the books, not for the sake of learning, but to make a show, just as many who lack even a child's knowledge of letters use books, not as the tools of learning, but as decorations for the dining room.<sup>57</sup>

This tradition was kept alive during the Middle Ages through the writings of Isidore of Seville, who condemned those who "wish to have many books with fine and attractive bindings, and keep them in closed book-cases, never reading them or letting others benefit from them," as well as many less prominent authors.<sup>58</sup> But warnings against the excesses of bibliomania multiplied as the Renaissance passion for book collecting grew. Figures like Andreolo de Ochis of Brescia, who in the fourteenth century declared himself ready to sacrifice house, land, family, and even himself to add books to his collection, became held up to public ridicule.<sup>59</sup> As the condemnation becomes more of a commonplace, so must we assume did the practice. By the end of the Renaissance, book-folly was seen as a type of madness, as in the case of Pope Paul IV's chamberlain, Ulric Fugger of Augsburg. When his passion for books threatened to bankrupt his family, his relatives had him declared legally incompetent to manage his own affairs. As a result, he died of melancholy in 1584.<sup>60</sup>

By the beginning of the seventeenth century, the failing was a clearly recognizable type, so that Henry Peacham, in his *Compleat Gentleman* could warn readers to

affect not, as some do, that bookish ambition, to be stored with books, and have well-furnished libraries, yet keep their heads empty of knowledge.

To desire to have many books, and never to use them, is like a child that will have a candle burning by him all the while he is sleeping.<sup>61</sup>

One of the most widely circulated condemnations of the useless piling up of books came from the pen of that most eminent advocate of the new learning, Francesco Petrarch, "for whom a book's contents, script and decoration were of equal value."<sup>62</sup> In his *De Remediis Utriusque Fortune*, Petrarch addressed a dialogue to the problem "de librorum copia." In this piece, Reason tirelessly points out the folly of owning too many books:

Some seek books for study, others seek them for pleasure and for ostentation. There are those who decorate their rooms with furniture devised to decorate their minds, and they use books as they use Corinthian vases or painted panels and statues and the like. . . . There are those who by obtaining books satisfy their greed. . . . Books have led some to knowledge and some to madness, who drew from them more than they could hold. Like our stomachs, our minds are hurt more often by overeating than by hunger, and as the use of food so is the use of books to be limited to the capacity of the user. . . .<sup>63</sup>

Numerous other arguments of the folly of bibliomania are adduced, many of which became standards in the sixteenth-century arsenal against bibliomania. Yet to all of them, the figure of Gaudium (or "Joy in owning books") endlessly reiterates "I own many books," as if this constituted sufficient defense against all attacks.

Petrarch's "De librorum copia" and Brant's "Von unnutzen buchern" are strikingly similar. Both authors adopt Seneca's condemnation of the bibliophile, and each invokes the example of Ptolemy. Both Gaudium and Brant's book-fools delight more in possessing than in reading books, and each boasts of a large collection. Just as Gaudium endlessly repeats simple variations on the theme "Librorum copia magna est," so does the fool repeat four times that he has a large number of books.<sup>64</sup>

Yet Petrarch himself was not free from a certain morbid tendency towards bibliomania:

For Petrarch book-collecting became a surrogate for the complete assimilation of classical culture. Hence his ownership of Greek books he could not read, and his pathological need to be always in close proximity to his books. In a letter . . . Petrarch recalls the time when he gave up the keys to his book closet and tried to avoid his books for a ten day period. He soon developed headaches and a fever; nor did these symptoms of bibliomania disappear until keys and books were restored to him. . . . Petrarch was ashamed of his malady, for . . . he confesses that his passion for books is a vice, and that he owns more books than he really needs.<sup>65</sup>

*Case Study: Richard De Bury (1281-1345)*

When humanists such as Petrarch and Brant satirize bibliomanes, sometimes it seems that they have De Bury in mind.<sup>66</sup> As late as 1500, Johannes Trithemius still described him as “the single most famous bibliophile of all time.”<sup>67</sup> His passion for books is worth examining in some depth; for although he always remained essentially medieval in outlook and motivation, in behavior he exhibited most of the characteristics the Renaissance book-fools were to follow.

Richard Aungerville De Bury achieved the highest ranks of success in both church and state. Beginning as the tutor of Edward III, he was awarded several benefices and became successively dean of Wells, Treasurer Royal, Lord Privy Seal, ambassador to Rome, and bishop of Durham during the last 12 years of his life.<sup>68</sup>

But it is as a book collector that De Bury gained his greatest fame. Richard himself confesses that “the over-mastering love of books has possessed our minds from boyhood, and to rejoice in their delights has been our only pleasure.”<sup>69</sup> The results of this passion can be seen in the account of William de Chambre, Richard’s biographer:

De Bury had more books than all the other bishops of England, and that, besides the volumes kept separately in various manors, wherever he was, he had so many books lying about his bedroom that one could scarcely take a step without treading upon them.<sup>70</sup>

His less-charitable contemporary Adam Murimuth reported that five wagons were scarcely sufficient to transport even the bishop’s favorites. At approximately 300 volumes per wagonload, this works out to a library of at least 1,500 books—but it was undoubtedly an exaggeration.<sup>71</sup>

Richard spared no opportunity to acquire more books. From his political success he

obtained ampler facilities for visiting everywhere as we would, and of hunting as it were certain most choice preserves, libraries private as well as public. . . . There was afforded to us, in consideration of the royal favour, easy access for the purpose of freely searching the retreats of books.<sup>72</sup>

He always maintained about him a “multitude of copyists and scribes, of binders, correctors, illuminators, and generally of all who could usefully labour in the service of books.”<sup>73</sup> A number of volumes came to him as gifts, especially as his political influence increased. “We were reported to burn with such desire for books, and especially old ones, that it was more easy for any man to gain our favour by means of books than of money.”<sup>74</sup> He even openly admits to having accepted

such “gifts” when chancellor of England from plaintiffs in cases before him, as long as “justice suffered no disparagement.”<sup>75</sup>

Much of Richard’s claim to being the greatest medieval bibliophile rests upon his putative authorship of the treatise known as the *Philobiblon*.<sup>76</sup> Nearly as much of the work is devoted to criticism of the contemporary church and society as it is to the praise of books, mostly highly derivative of standard medieval authors. But his rhapsodizing bibliophily is unique, as seen in this typical passage:

Books delight us, when prosperity smiles upon us; they comfort us inseparably when stormy fortune frowns on us. . . . How highly must we estimate the wondrous power of books, since through them we survey the utmost bounds of the world and time, and contemplate the things that are as well as those that are not, as it were in the mirror of eternity.<sup>77</sup>

Unfortunately, only the vaguest notion of the contents of his library can be deduced from the work.<sup>78</sup> He probably owned the standard medieval works, but he defended the collection of modern authors along with the traditional. He promoted the collection of poetry and literature in a serious library,<sup>79</sup> but had no love for law books.<sup>80</sup>

If Richard revealed little about the contents of his books, he was passionately eloquent about the respect owed to the physical objects:

We are not only rendering service to God in preparing volumes of new books, but also exercising an office of sacred piety when we treat books carefully . . . that they may rejoice in purity while we have them in our hands, and rest securely when they are put back in their repositories.<sup>81</sup>

He devoted an entire chapter to the proper care of books or, more accurately, to a tirade against all the misuses of books that he had encountered.<sup>82</sup>

The subject of this bibliomane’s motivations has been one of endless fascination to scholars, partly because the evidence is so slight and vague. All of the motivations attributed to this seminal figure, as shall be seen below, play major roles in the bibliomania of later Renaissance figures.

De Bury himself claimed that all his book collecting was done from the most pious and charitable motives; despite the insinuations of “perverse tongues of gossipers,” it was all in the aim of setting up a library at Oxford University for the common use of scholars.<sup>83</sup> But he admitted outright that, whatever his motives, “this ecstatic love has carried us away so powerfully, that we have resigned all thoughts of other earthly things, and have given ourselves up to a passion for acquiring books.”<sup>84</sup>

He was clearly subject to the criticism and even ridicule of his contemporaries for this passion. De Bury lamented that

although the love of books from the nature of its object bears the aspect of goodness, yet, wonderful to say, it has rendered us obnoxious to the censures of many, by whose astonishment we were disparaged and censured, now for excess of curiosity, now for the exhibition of vanity, now for the intemperance of delight in literature.<sup>85</sup>

Adam Murimuth accused De Bury of assembling "such a colossal number of books" in order "to conceal his own literary mediocrity and to appear as a great scholar."<sup>86</sup> He dismissed the bishop as "a man of small learning"; Chambre called him "passably literate."<sup>87</sup>

Modern historians of the book have repeated these harsh judgments. De Bury is often portrayed as

an antiquarian, not of the lovable kind, but unscrupulous, pedantic and vain, indulging an inordinate taste for collecting and hoarding books, perhaps to satisfy a craving for shreds and patches of knowledge, but more likely to earn a reputation as a great clerk.<sup>88</sup>

In short, many say that "Richard was merely a collector for whom it was sufficient to own as many manuscripts as possible without concerning himself deeply about their contents."<sup>89</sup>

## THE TYPES OF RENAISSANCE BOOK-FOLLY

The urge to collect books for their content—for the sake of scholarship, enlightenment, entertainment, or information—is ancient and still continues. But acquisitive bibliomania is relatively recent in western Europe. Why should one come to value books as objects? In considering this question, several different kinds of book-fools become apparent. These different motivations can be grouped by general type and best illustrated with representative examples of each kind of collector. It is worth noting, however, that no example is a pure type, and even in fools, motives are often mixed.

### Financial Motivations

To modern eyes, the idea of collecting books as an investment seems obvious, especially when one considers the even greater monetary value of books during the early period. But early evidence for this motivation is exceedingly scanty and open to varying interpretations. Brant's book-fool noted that "Ptolemy the rich" thought of his books as merely

a treasure house; he himself is not so convinced of their financial value.<sup>90</sup>  
And Petrarch observed that

they are the worst of the lot who do not appreciate the true value of books but regard them as merchandise—a foul and recent pest which now seems to have infected the desires of the rich, providing avarice with yet another tool and another trick.<sup>91</sup>

Although it is often asserted that books were much more valuable during the Middle Ages and Renaissance, it is not possible to quantify their cash value in even the most general terms. To put it simply, depending on how they were acquired, books could cost almost anything.<sup>92</sup>

Nonetheless, there are clearly cases of Renaissance book collectors viewing their volumes purely in terms of financial value. For example, John Dee (1527-1608), the Elizabethan astrologer and book collector, took an unusual pleasure in boasting about the value of his library and the enormous prices that were offered in vain for various volumes.<sup>93</sup> More common is the evidence showing books being used as a substitute for cash. Pawnbroking was an important part of a bookseller's business.<sup>94</sup> Or sometimes, rather than pledge their books to raise cash, needy collectors would simply sell them.<sup>95</sup>

The ideal humanist would not perceive the writings of the classical authors in such crass financial terms; Poggio for example exclaimed piously that "now that I have begun, I want to collect myself this property that will be worth more in every age than monetary savings."<sup>96</sup> Yet Poggio himself frequently discussed the cash value of the books he discovered, even in terms of price per page.<sup>97</sup>

More importantly, several prominent humanists apparently supported their activities by selling newly discovered texts. Giovanni Aurispa (1369-1459) discovered a number of important manuscripts and became "virtually a dealer in Greek manuscripts."<sup>98</sup> This did not always sit well with his fellow humanists, one of whom, Franciscus Philadelphus, "accused him of being a bookseller, not a reader."<sup>99</sup> Aurispa himself suffered the theft of his books for their monetary value,<sup>100</sup> and left perhaps 30 unimportant manuscripts when he died. There is also some evidence that Niccolo Niccoli bought and sold the manuscripts that came his way for profit, though he was reputed to be a very wealthy man. "Not everyone praised Nicolaus for selling his possessions. Both Leonardus Brunus Aretinus and Guarinus accused him of having a merely commercial interest in his books and antiquities."<sup>101</sup>

Jacques Strada de Rosberg, the sixteenth-century Italian antiquary, approached closely a professional dealer in antiquities. Some of his

contemporaries accused him of buying up the collections of colleagues in financial distress for less than their true value and turning considerable profit on the deals.<sup>102</sup>

Book selling was in fact a respected and legitimate trade, employing around 6,000 persons by the middle of the fifteenth century.<sup>103</sup> A commercial book dealer would of necessity have to build up a large stock, especially since most of his trade was secondhand.<sup>104</sup> There are hints that at least one English book dealer, John Shirley, recognizing the demand for vernacular literary works, profited by lending his stock as well as selling it.<sup>105</sup>

The producers of new commercial manuscripts would need a considerable collection as well, since for the most part their products were produced on a commission, rather than on a speculative basis. They needed to have a large collection to serve as exemplars in order to produce custom compilations to suit the taste of every patron.<sup>106</sup>

Perhaps the most successful of these was Vespasiano da Bisticci (1421-98), a "free-lance book-collector, who made a serious business of the favourite pursuit of the other collectors."<sup>107</sup> He maintained an army of book hunters, and several dozen copyists to multiply their discoveries. His workshop was capable of turning out 200 manuscripts for just one patron in less than two years:

This Vespasiano was no ordinary stationer. He was a connoisseur of books, who advised great men on their libraries. . . . He was instrumental in finding rare books for his clients, especially Greek and Latin classics, and he specialized in having Latin translations prepared from the Greek. Thus he became an important figure in Italian humanism.<sup>108</sup>

He served the needs of such prominent bibliophiles as Cosimo de' Medici, Nicholas V, and Federigo, duke of Urbino. His business was international, with clients in England, Germany, Spain, and Portugal.<sup>109</sup>

Even with the advent of printing, the book market remained quite profitable, inspiring avariciousness and dishonesty. The intrigues, rivalries, secrecy, and deliberate spread of false rumors involved in the auction of the library of Gian Vincenzo Pinelli revealed "how little book buyers trusted one another" by the end of the sixteenth century.<sup>110</sup> Yet the profit involved in buying and selling books did not ensure that the dealer gave any thought to their contents; indeed, almost the reverse was the case.

By the seventeenth century, George Wither would characterize the "honest stationer" as

a seller of Bookes, [but] he is no meere Bookeseller (that is) one who sellyth meere ynk & paper bundled vp together for his owne advantage only; but he is the Chapman of Arts, of wisdom, & of much experience for a litle money.<sup>111</sup>

Unfortunately, his opposite number is all too often met with, ignorant of his stock, indeed barely lettered, interested only in making a profit:

What booke soever that he may have hope to gaine by, he will divulge; though it contayne matter against his Prince, against the State, or blasphemy against God. . . . He prayseth no booke but what sells well, and that must be his owne Cobby too or els he will have some flirt at it.<sup>112</sup>

Yet there was a much subtler and even more important way in which a book collection could lead to worldly benefits.

### **Social Status**

Brant's book-fool, though cynically conscious that real wisdom does not ensure worldly advancement, certainly wishes for the status of the learned; he is proud of the title of "doctor," and says "though I can not, I would be called wise." He thus turns to his book collection for "the knowledge wherein I boast myself." But he feels he has adequately demonstrated his culture merely by "draw[ing] my curtains to show my books" to any doubting scholars.<sup>113</sup>

Renaissance societies offered enormous rewards to the socially successful. Yet due to the disturbances that accompanied the end of the Middle Ages, neither noble birth nor wealth were any longer automatic guarantees of status:

Perhaps this is why culture, what we still call humanistic culture, tended to become the highest symbol of nobility, the magic password which admitted a man or a nation to the elite group. Its value rose at the very moment that the value of the land fell. Its returns mounted when commercial interest rates declined. Statesmen who had tried to build up their power and prestige by enlarging their estates now vied with one another to gather works of art. Business men who had been looking for the most profitable or the most conservative investments in trade now invested in books.<sup>114</sup>

The most conspicuous honors were now heaped upon the cultured, particularly the connoisseurs of books and their contents. A reputation for scholarship and learning was often the most important recommendation to the best offices in both church and state.<sup>115</sup> In some Italian cities, a certain degree of culture even became an official requirement for holding civic office.

Petrarch early on perceived this trend towards displaying learning as a means to status and condemned it roundly:

The princes and lords of the world who with great fervor seek books, beg them, steal them, buy them, not because of a love of letters, of which they are ignorant, but induced by greed, seeking splendor not for their mind but for their chamber. They do not crave knowledge but a reputation, and consider not the teachings of the books but their price.<sup>116</sup>

As with Brant's book-fool, this attitude all too often led to the piling up of books in the vain attempt to appear fashionably learned. Condemnation of this practice continued throughout the seventeenth century. Thomas Fuller admonished that "it is a vanity to persuade the world one hath much learning, by getting a great library. As soon I shall believe every one is valiant that hath a well furnished armoury."<sup>117</sup> Similarly, the author of the 1606 volume *Returne from Pernassus* mocked such book-fools in the person of "this great linguist my Maister," who would

come to a booke binders shop, and with a big Italian looke and spanish face aske for these bookes in spanish and Italian, then turning through his ignorance, the wrong ende of the booke upward use action, on this unknowne tongue after this sort, first looke on the title and wrinkle his brow, next make as though he read the first page and bites a lip, then with his naile score the margent as though there were some notable conceit, and lastly when he thinks hee hath gulld the standers by sufficiently, throws the booke away in a rage, swearing that he could never finde bookes of a true printe since he was last in Joadna, enquire after the nexte marte, and so departs.<sup>118</sup>

Scholars have distinguished two phases of humanistic book collecting. Library building would begin with the formation of working collections by the scholars in whom the new intellectual movement originated. But afterwards would follow the accumulation of magnificent collections by the princes of church, state, and commerce, who were more interested in the rarity and splendor of their books than in their content.<sup>119</sup> It was in Italy that this tradition was most important for expressing status and conferring prestige.

Many, perhaps most, of the private book collections of Renaissance Italy were working libraries, put together by bibliophiles who cared as passionately about the content of the volumes as they did about their covers, about depth as well as breadth. But the most celebrated libraries were the splendid princely collections of Renaissance Italy, for the most part designed as much to impress as to enlighten.

Federigo da Montefeltro, duke of Urbino (1442-82), created perhaps the most celebrated of these collections. His appetite for books was famous, as he "searched far and wide for his books, and spared no expense in recovering any rare or desirable work that he thought would prove an

ornament to his library."<sup>120</sup> Federigo was one of the most faithful and liberal patrons of Vespasiano, who wrote of him and his library in glowing (and probably highly exaggerated) terms:

He alone had a mind to do what no one had done for a thousand years or more; that is, to create the finest library since ancient times. He spared neither cost nor labour, and when he knew of a fine book, whether in Italy or not, he would send for it. . . . He always employed, in Urbino, in Florence, and in other places, thirty or forty scribes in his service.<sup>121</sup>

The bookseller went on to claim that this library lacked for no author or work, sacred or profane.

Vespasiano hints, however, that his noble patron was interested more in splendor than in erudition.<sup>122</sup> While seeking a reputation for humanistic learning, Federigo did not display much sympathy for the love of antiquity. He cared more for acquiring beautiful books than ancient ones. He would not refuse altogether to buy old manuscripts if they were adorned with fine illuminations; but in his library, there were only 40 fourteenth-century manuscripts and only 16 from earlier centuries.<sup>123</sup>

Federigo was not alone in his bibliomaniac zeal. Much of the fame of the Medicis of Florence rests upon their reputation as patrons of culture. The founder of the family fortune, Cosimo de' Medici (1389-1464), was "one of the greatest of the early patrons of book-collecting."<sup>124</sup> There is some scholarly debate, however, as to whether Cosimo could even read the Latin manuscripts he collected so assiduously. Vespasiano merely says diplomatically, "he had a knowledge of Latin which would scarcely have been looked for in one occupying the station of a leading citizen engrossed with public affairs."<sup>125</sup>

But it was Lorenzo de' Medici (1448-92), "undoubtedly the greatest and most lavish of all the Renaissance book-collectors," who represents the culmination of the family passion for books. "Lorenzo's own expenditure on books alone reached sixty-five to seventy-five thousand pounds annually."<sup>126</sup> He maintained the book-collecting activities of his forefathers, while slightly changing their emphasis by his strenuous promotion of Italian literature.<sup>127</sup> When Lorenzo died, the fabled wealth of the Medicis had largely been dissipated in his pursuit of culture. But his last words to his grieving friends were that "he wished that death had spared him until he had completed their libraries."<sup>128</sup>

All over Italy, the pattern of princely book collection was the same. The 1436 inventory of the D'Este princes of Ferrara, like so many of

these princely catalogs, gives a detailed description of the physical appearance of the manuscripts—the heavy parchment, the elaborate binding, the ornamental clasps—but unfortunately reveals little about their contents.<sup>129</sup>

Aristocratic book collecting outside of Italy also intensified to the greatest degree it had known since Charlemagne. This resulted mostly from the influence of Italy—the “Italianate fashion”—the need of an appearance of culture to gain the prestige of a learned prince. The influence of the Italian Renaissance reached France at the end of the fourteenth century, and “book collectors there conceived a passion for acquiring illuminated and exquisitely decorated volumes.”<sup>130</sup>

This passion first blossomed in the circle of Charles V, known as “the Wise”; he was considered by his contemporaries a library founder akin to such archetypes as Ptolemy, Caesar, and Charlemagne. One of the court poets, Christine de Pisan, said of him:

What shall I say of Charles' wisdom, his great love of learning and science? He has proven himself by the marvellous collection of valuable books and his beautiful library. . . . Everything was beautifully written and richly decorated. The king always employed the best copyists. The library room was properly and practically furnished in keeping with the interest the king had in beauty and order in all things.<sup>131</sup>

Despite his reputation, his collection consisted primarily of French translations of medieval literature and some standard classical works.<sup>132</sup> The brothers of Charles V—the dukes of Anjou, Berry, and Burgundy—also built famous collections of a similar nature. “Enlightenment and entertainment were the main purposes of such collections, outweighing any practical, everyday use. . . . Beautiful, richly illustrated showpiece books, which could lend glory to the collections, were much sought after.”<sup>133</sup> These libraries were noted more for the gorgeousness and costliness of their volumes than for the texts they contained.

Book inscriptions demonstrate the success of these noble collectors in their effort to gain prestige through their libraries. In Laurent de Premierfait's 1409 translation of Boccaccio's *De casibus virorum illustrium*, the author accentuates the praiseworthy nature of Ptolemy's bibliophilia in order to flatter his patron, Jean Duc de Berry, “whose pleasure also lay in book-collecting.”<sup>134</sup>

The fashion for book collecting spread from the highest ranks to the professional and merchant classes. By the beginning of the fifteenth century, bibliophilia was common among the members of the French

parliament of all degrees and among presidents, counselors, and attorneys. By the next century, it had become the fashion to create a collection "bound in red Moroccan leather and tooled in gold to grace a fashionable cabinet and give an aura of literary preciousity."<sup>135</sup>

Jehan Molinet expressed in the later part of the fifteenth century some of the contempt many intellectuals felt at the attempt of the lower classes to buy culture with the collection of books:

J'ai vu grand multitude  
De livres imprimez  
Pour tirer en estude  
Povres mal argentes.  
Par ces nouvelles modes  
Aura maint escollier  
Decrets. Bibles, et Codes  
San grand argent bailler.<sup>136</sup>

As the scholarly segments of society became more politically active, and the government continued to favor men of intellectual attainment, it became more important for individuals with political ambitions to solicit favor with this increasingly influential community.<sup>137</sup> Nicolas Fouquet (1615-80) followed the examples of such figures as Cardinal Richelieu and especially Cardinal Mazarin, who had established positive liaisons with the scholarly community to their political advantage. Fouquet consciously created

the second most important library in seventeenth-century France . . . to aid the research of those scholars who were attached to him for the purposes of political advocacy and patronage. By all appearances he intended that it should play a role in his rise to the position of first minister in Louis XIV's government.<sup>138</sup>

The establishment of prestigious aristocratic libraries spread more slowly across the rest of Europe. But, like humanistic scholarship, it was a virtually inevitable result of Italian influence. King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary (1440-90), for example, built a legendary library, which some accounts credited with up to 50,000 volumes (a more likely figure is about 1,000).<sup>139</sup> Italian influence was particularly strong in Hungary in his time, and Matthias himself had, as tutors, humanists trained in Italy. "His chief pleasure, almost a monomania, was the collecting of books."<sup>140</sup>

Matthias is said to have spent annually 30,000 gulden on his library. He employed a staff of 30 copyists, 4 of them in Florence alone, and sent agents all over Europe to expand his collection. Miniaturists, binders, and similar artists were kept busy decorating his volumes luxuriously. "The volumes, it must be emphasized, had great value as

works of art (for their bindings and ornamentation) rather than for their content.”<sup>141</sup> The library was probably meant to display the fashionable erudition of the Hungarian throne rather than to serve Matthias’s personal intellectual needs. One of his Florentine agents wrote in 1489 that “the king intends to outshine every other monarch with his library, as he does in all other points.”<sup>142</sup>

Zygmunt August of Poland (1520-72) also managed to collect a substantial library. A well-known lover of the arts, he had his books selected and managed by a succession of Italian-trained humanists. Much debate has centered around Zygmunt August’s attitude towards his book collection; the predominant opinion holds that the monarch did not actually read his books himself.<sup>143</sup> Instead, the royal Polish libraries had a “semipublic character,” serving not only the kings but also various court officials and guests:

Yet their role does not end there. What may be just as important, or even more so, is that these book collections served as a model to be followed by others and thus influenced the development of book culture in the country.<sup>144</sup>

The English court also discovered the fashion of learning during the fifteenth century. Ambitious and intelligent young nobles soon became “Italianate Englishmen,” steeped in humanistic culture, including book collecting, as a part of the atmosphere fostered by Henry VI and his cultured relations. Once again the Italian influence was crucial; Italian humanists visited England, and dazzled English bibliophiles travelled to Italy and busied themselves in collecting books there.

The Italian style of princely book collecting was most influential on Humphrey, duke of Gloucester (c. 1390-1447), the youngest son of Henry IV. He has been called “the greatest of English bibliophiles before the invention of printing.”<sup>145</sup> Humphrey acquired books by all means: gifts, copying, and translations made by noted humanists at his request. The greatest part of his collection, however, came from direct purchase. Although the actual size of Humphrey’s library is unknown, it seems certain that it could not have contained less than 600 volumes. The subject matter covered included classical and humanist texts, theology, medicine, canon law, science, philosophy, and history, as well as some French and Italian literature:

He eventually came to possess not less than four copies of the Latin version of Plato’s *Republic*, and at least two of Vitruvius’s *De Architectura*. . . . This explains of course why Humphrey was prepared to give in his lifetime so many of the works which he had acquired to Oxford University; he

did so because in many cases they were not the only copies of those writings in his possession.<sup>146</sup>

Humphrey's deficiencies in Latin make it unlikely that he actually utilized much of this collection himself. "The untutored passion to recover classical culture by way of book collecting often shaded into a philistine bibliomania in which books-as-objects came to be prized over the writings they contained." Humphrey, for one, "preferred to look at rather than read his books."<sup>147</sup>

He was much more interested in the reputation that resulted from the patronage of scholarship. To this end, Humphrey

had the idea of employing an Italian humanist as his secretary, which meant that he wanted to support a scholar who would do translations for him and dedicate them to him, from which he hoped to derive prestige as well as the pleasure of adding books to his library.<sup>148</sup>

John Lydgate even further amplified Humphrey's prestige in his 1438 verse translation of Laurent de Premierfait, which was dedicated to the duke. Lydgate devoted an entire stanza to lauding Ptolemy's collection, doubtless wishing to compliment Humphrey with the analogy:

In which thyng Bochas reherseth in sentence,  
How Tholome was gretli comendable,  
That thoruh his besi roial prouydenche  
Made hymself a librarie so notable;  
For to al clerkis in studie that wer hable,  
Of seuene sciences, the stori makety mynde,  
Lyk ther desire myhte bookis fynde.<sup>149</sup>

The flattered duke could easily apply these verses to himself.

The ranks of book-collecting Englishmen diffused beyond the immediate court circles. "It would be singular if this progress in library-making were not reflected in the habits of a considerable section of the people; the court and its entourage set the fashion."<sup>150</sup> Much of the desire for learned libraries can be traced back to the example of Duke Humphrey. A large circle of young aristocrats and churchmen came under his influence at Oxford and adopted the fashions and culture of the Italian Renaissance.

Yet for all their efforts, "all these early English scholars accomplished little except to leave books for later students to use. No real enthusiasm for scholarship was aroused. . . ." Instead they merely collected manuscripts.<sup>151</sup> Still, they earned for themselves the reputation of learning; and a scholarly name remained a powerful tool for social advancement. For example, towards the end of the fifteenth century,

John Shirwood demonstrated a humanistic facility with Latin and ability in Greek as well. He wrote works on mathematics and a Latin poem in praise of England:

After he was named bishop of Durham, he travelled on the business of both church and state and collected books in the process. . . . He was recommended to the pope by Richard III for a red hat, in part on the basis of knowledge of Greek and his classical learning. . . . Shirwood was, in short, a professional humanist.<sup>152</sup>

### *Case Study: John Tiptoft (1427-70)*

First place among these Italianate Englishmen belongs to John Tiptoft, earl of Worcester. He was dispatched in 1458 as Henry VI's ambassador to Rome, and spent three years in Italy, studying classical literature, collecting manuscripts, and making friends with a number of humanists. Vespasiano included Tiptoft in his biographies of illustrious statesmen and expressed great admiration for the earl, whom he had supplied with a large number of books.<sup>153</sup> Upon returning to England, Tiptoft soon became powerful in English politics, though adopting more "the manner of an Italian prince."<sup>154</sup>

As a book collector, Tiptoft was the most lavish of the English aristocrats. He made book purchases on a large scale, commissioned translations, and employed scribes wherever he went. Indeed, Ludovico Carbone accused him of despoiling Italy's libraries to adorn England's.<sup>155</sup>

Although the traditional medieval standards were present, classical and humanistic learning dominated his collection. He repeatedly showed himself to be both knowledgeable and individualistic in his book selections.<sup>156</sup> Despite the quality of this collection, it is not altogether certain that it was actually used by its owner. Marginal notes and comments are not to be found in Tiptoft's hand in his books.<sup>157</sup> In contrast to all the other contemporary English book collectors, he cared passionately about the decoration of his books:

Like the great Italian bibliophiles of his day, he was not only interested in the contents, but also wanted his manuscripts to look beautiful, with the result that all those which were expressly made for him invariably had some handsomely illuminated initials and title pages with his coat of arms beautifully framed.<sup>158</sup>

Tiptoft's motivations for building this magnificent collection seem to have been mixed. He clearly was interested in the new learning and did much to further humanistic scholarship in England. Nevertheless, he also had imbibed deeply of the Italian perception of culture as a

necessary accompaniment of status. He seemed particularly fired by a desire to emulate the royal example of Duke Humphrey. His years at Oxford had introduced him to Gloucester's style of intellectual patronage. "Duke Humphrey's role was quite familiar to him and there is no doubt that he aspired to be a second Duke Humphrey."<sup>159</sup> His proposed donation of his library to Oxford specifically alluded to Humphrey's example.<sup>160</sup> He was aware of Humphrey's formulaic *ex libris*, and "in this, as in so many other ways, Tiptoft both imitated and outdid his model."<sup>161</sup>

This habit of lavishly decorating his books leads naturally to a consideration of the second way in which bibliophiles sought status through their collections: the appreciation and display of sumptuous deluxe volumes.

### Aesthetic Motivations

Brant's book-fool was much concerned with the aesthetic beauty of his books, more so indeed than with their contents. He bound them elegantly with "pleasant coverings of damask, satin, or else of velvet pure" and exerted great effort in keeping them tidy and clean. However, he found it too great an effort "to look within the book; I am content on the fair covering to look."<sup>162</sup> It was frequently observed in the discussion of the princely collections above that the elegance of their appearance was as important to their prestige as the erudition of their contents. This same impulse was apparent in aristocrats not noted for their bibliophily. John Skelton, poet and tutor to Henry VIII, wrote this charming description of his beautiful books:

The margent was illumynid all with golden railles  
And byse, enpicted with gressoppes and waspis,  
With butterflyis and freshe pecocke taylis,  
Englorid with flowris ans slymy snaylis;  
Enuyuid picture well touchid and quikly;  
It wold haue made a man hole that had ryght sickly.  
To beholde how it was garnyschyd and bounde,  
Encouerde ouerwith gold of tisew fyne;  
The claspis and bullyons were worth a thousande pounce;  
With belassis and carbuncles the borders did shyne;  
With aurum mosaicum every other lyne  
Was wrytin.<sup>163</sup>

But the impulse to own luxury volumes was not restricted to these aristocratic collectors. "Looked purely from the viewpoint of social class, decorated books were marks of status which combined portability, durability, and sound investment value for practical and upwardly mobile people."

In many cases, appreciation of the appearance of the books not only overwhelmed all other concerns but actually detracted from the quality of the content. Commercial producers of manuscripts found that their profits were increased more by an appearance of neatness than by fidelity of transcription. As a result, the most beautifully written manuscripts often contain the worst texts.<sup>164</sup>

The celebrated Florentine bookseller Vespasiano da Bisticci was particularly guilty of this behavior. Vespasiano himself, although knowledgeable in the technical aspects of the finding, producing, and arranging of manuscripts, was probably not well educated as to their contents; his Latin was not sufficient for him to write other than in the vernacular, and even there, "worse prose than Vespasiano's has rarely been written."<sup>165</sup> More to the point, his beautifully penned masterpieces were edited with extraordinary slovenliness:

Whole lines are left out, mistakes abound, repetitions are left uncorrected rather than spoil the beautiful page. Vespasiano's manuscripts are written for people who wanted to possess these books, not to read them, and the scribes knew it and were much more attentive to the evenness of their letters than to the sense of what they were writing.<sup>166</sup>

Perhaps it is not really surprising that so few of these deluxe productions show signs of wear. They were "produced to be admired, to be shown, to be treasured, but not to be read."<sup>167</sup>

The invention of printing did not significantly alter the desire for luxury volumes, especially in France and Italy. A few early printers, confronted by many wealthy book lovers, accustomed to manuscripts adorned with every possible magnificence, found it worthwhile to cater for this taste.<sup>168</sup>

To this kind of book-fool, the luxurious binding of a volume was as important as the elegantly written and decorated interior. Book collectors of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries customarily had their volumes uniformly bound.<sup>169</sup> The most deluxe bindings were reserved for display books:

volumes to be looked at, admired, and destined to remain unopened. Doubtless many a fifteenth-century reader had a well-thumbed copy of a Book of Hours which he, or perhaps his wife, carried to church, but the grandiose display volume reposed at home to impress his friends with the owner's opulence and taste.<sup>170</sup>

While even the most sophisticated and literate of book lovers (such as Jacques Augustus de Thou) could fall prey to the taste for sumptuous binding, the particular kind of bibliomane who collected these deluxe volumes tended more to aesthetic appreciation of the object than to

concern for their textual content.<sup>171</sup> This kind of book-folly can be seen from the end of the age of manuscripts well into the new age of printing.

*Case Study: Raphael de Marcatellis (1437-c. 1508)*

Marcatellis, the illegitimate son of Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy, entered the church at an early age and quickly achieved success in his chosen career. In 1463 he was appointed abbot of St. Peter's at Oudenburg, in 1478 became abbot of St. Bavon's in Ghent, and in 1487 was consecrated bishop of Rhodus. Judging by the huge sums he spent on his library, along with other pet projects, he must have accumulated a considerable fortune along the way.<sup>172</sup> By all accounts, he behaved in the manner typical of a certain kind of late medieval prelate—"creatures of a mighty prince, assembling money, indulging in the good things of earthly life, spending hundreds of pounds on buildings and fine books, and neglecting most of their religious duties"—whose abuses helped spark the Reformation.<sup>173</sup> His most celebrated accomplishment was the building of an enormous private library while abbot of St. Bavon's.

One of the most striking features of his collection was his aversion to the printed book. Marcatellis may have been the last to make extensive use of the great Flemish commercial scriptoria.<sup>174</sup> Although a few of his manuscripts were acquired secondhand—Marcatellis did not hesitate to appropriate choice volumes from the abbey library into his own collection<sup>175</sup>—for the most part, they were produced specially for him, according to his exacting specifications.<sup>176</sup> Indeed, he often had printed volumes hand-copied to suit his luxurious taste. "This is indeed an astonishing proceeding seeing that in general, the quality of the copy is inferior to that of the exemplar. Marcatellis' preference for de luxe manuscripts . . . was largely a question of prestige."<sup>177</sup>

Marcatellis insisted on the most luxurious materials for his manuscripts. All of his books were written on white vellum of the finest quality, usually rather heavy. He usually commissioned volumes significantly larger than even the most deluxe manuscripts in contemporary humanistic collections. "The leaf dimensions and thickness of the manuscripts are generally exponents of their owner's sense of grandeur, perhaps even of a certain megalomania; his manuscripts are large, thick, heavy, and unhandy objects, only to be studied on a lecturn."<sup>178</sup> Even the text was designed more for display than for use. The scriptoria he patronized used a heavy large-sized Gothic script of extravagant

proportions, which was elaborate, sophisticated, artificial, and extremely hard to read.<sup>179</sup>

The decoration of the volumes, although profuse and undoubtedly extremely expensive, is more notable for quantity than for quality. The marginal designs are of a pedestrian nature, studiously ignoring the innovations for which Flemish ateliers were famed; the innumerable illuminations were simply “second-rate.”<sup>180</sup>

The gorgeous bindings and gilded edges add the final touch of luxury to the collection. Oddly enough, many of the volumes were originally bound in blind-tooled leather and then recovered with silk, damask, camlet, and velvet. This “absurd dissipation” can perhaps be accounted for by an improvement in his social or financial position—perhaps his episcopal consecration—which “enabled him to give all the extant and forthcoming books a sumptuous finish in various colours.”<sup>181</sup>

Marcatellis’s library was almost as remarkable for its subject matter as for its appearance. Unlike most luxury collections, it eschewed translations, devotional works, and popular literature.<sup>182</sup> More importantly, he was among the first in the Netherlands to collect books of a markedly humanistic nature.<sup>183</sup> He collected the works of contemporary scholars along with those of the ancients; astronomy and astrology seemed to be his fundamental fields of interest.<sup>184</sup>

Marcatellis’s library was thus remarkable for both content and appearance. Which of these factors was more central to his motivations for collecting? A clue can be found in a “certain slovenliness” in ensuring the accuracy of his texts.<sup>185</sup> More telling is the fact that his books seem scarcely to have been used:

This is probably to be connected with a trait of character of Marcatellis, which, as soon as a new work was on the stocks, made him lose sight of the completed or partly completed manuscripts. . . . In a considerable number of manuscripts the ornamentation or illustration was not sustained until the end. Since Marcatellis kept on ordering new manuscripts this unfinished state of his books cannot as a rule be due to lack of financial resources.<sup>186</sup>

But unlike those who collected for prestige, Raphael apparently did not even admit scholars to the use of his library. He was, however, eager to proclaim his ownership of the volumes: Marcatellis’s coat of arms is painted once—or more—in the great majority of his books.<sup>187</sup>

It seems plausible that the humanistic content of Marcatellis’s library was the result not of his own deep interest in these subjects but of

his leaving the selection of texts in the hands of his humanist friends.<sup>188</sup> But the exaggerated luxury and almost pretentious ostentation of the material aspects of the book was undoubtedly the result of Marcatellis's own taste.

Another, more famous, bibliomane, while exhibiting much more sophisticated taste than the abbot of St. Bavon's, was clearly motivated by the same valuation of the cover over the content.

*Case Study: Jean Grolier (1479-1565)*

Jean Grolier of Lyons was a man of great social standing: chevalier, vicomte d'Aguisy, treasurer of the Italian army, ambassador to Rome, and finally treasurer of France. He was also a zealous patron of artists and scholars, a lover of beautiful books, and a collector of medals and antiquities of all kinds.<sup>189</sup>

Despite all his honors and achievements, it is for his library that he was chiefly known, even among his contemporaries. De Thou, who knew Grolier personally, gave this account in his *Histoire du XVIe siecle*:

He collected a quantity of old medals and a large number of good books. He spared no expense, and as he was very polished, and a man of the most refined tastes, his library was arranged with so much care that it was comparable to the one owned by Asinius Pollio, the finest in Rome. His books were so many, that, in spite of the gifts to his friends, and all manner of causes that might have contributed to diminish their number, the most remarkable libraries either in Paris or in the provinces contain nothing more beautiful than the books once owned by Grolier.<sup>190</sup>

This magnificent collection probably contained over 3,000 volumes, of which only about 600 survive.<sup>191</sup>

The subject matter of these volumes, like those of Marcatellis, reveals no trace of the light literature or popular devotions so characteristic of the princely collections. Of the 556 volumes known to have been his, some 220 or about 40% were classical texts, and only 71 were in the vernacular.<sup>192</sup> In part this may be attributed to his own studies, especially in numismatics and other antiquarian sciences. But the scholarly nature of his books may also be attributed to the influence of his long sojourn in Italy and the humanist friends he first acquired there.<sup>193</sup>

Grolier used his wealth and standing to assemble a circle of intellectuals, literati, and artists. He was in particular an enthusiastic admirer and

financial backer of the Aldine press. Almost half of the surviving volumes from his library are Aldines, many of them from the heyday of the press under the first Aldus.<sup>194</sup> "Indeed, not one book was issued by the Aldine press without the special printing of several copies, some on vellum, others on white or tinted paper" for Grolier's library.<sup>195</sup> As a result of this patronage, several editions printed by the Aldi were dedicated to Grolier, either by the scholars who revised them or by the publishers themselves. It is no wonder that Erasmus commented that Grolier's "name is placed at the beginning of all the works printed in his day. . . . You owe nothing to books, but books will in the future give you eternal glory."<sup>196</sup>

Grolier's efforts seem to have centered around his own library. Here the overriding concern was with the physical beauty of the volumes. He paid the greatest attention to "the material of the volume, the paper, the beauty of the type, and the paintings that ornamented the initials." Almost all of his books were printed on unusually good paper; the Aldine productions are distinguished by capitals rubricated in gold and colors.<sup>197</sup> His personal attention to these matters can be seen in his 1519 letter to Francesco d'Asola, announcing Grolier's intention to have Bude's *De Asse* published at his expense:

But you, dear Francesco, will give your greatest care in order to make a correct work issue from your printing-house to the hands of the learned. I ask you repeatedly, I even beg you to combine beauty with elegance. Let the paper be spotless, the type of perfect regularity, and, a point not to be despised, let the margins be broad. . . . If too much luxury leads you to great expense, I will reimburse you for any outlay.<sup>198</sup>

The crowning glory of these volumes were their bindings, distinguished by "the variety of ornaments, always in the purest and most exquisite taste, with which the two exterior sides of the volume are enriched."<sup>199</sup> For the most part, his books were bound only under his close personal supervision, according to his own designs, and by his own workmen.<sup>200</sup> Grolier moved in a French society keenly appreciative of splendid books richly adorned. Such notable bibliophiles as Diane de Poitiers, Louis de Sainte-Maure, the Duc de Guise, Claude Gouffier, Duc de Roanmois, Geoffrey Tory, and many others all built up collections distinguished for beauty and luxury. But Grolier outshone them all: "no one had more magnificent bindings than he, and no one owned a greater number, with more complicated interlacings, more covered with gold and mosaics, or with ornamentations more original in their exquisite taste."<sup>201</sup>

Grolier's motivations for creating this extensive, carefully chosen, and beautifully bound collection do not seem connected to any particular

desire for a working scholarly library. There is a surprising scarcity of the Greek editions for which the Aldine press was particularly famed among the humanists.<sup>202</sup> Moreover, Grolier often bought multiple copies (as many as six!) of the same edition, sometimes printed on different materials.<sup>203</sup> And the collection was “apparently as unread as it was repetitious.”<sup>204</sup> Grolier’s volumes show very few indications of use; only eight have any marginal notes in Grolier’s handwriting.<sup>205</sup>

Perhaps Grolier created this massive display of luxurious art from a desire that the masterpieces of the human mind should receive the setting they deserved and be “printed in clear type, stripped of Gothic characters and on paper made to brave the centuries; . . . carefully preserved in morocco, like precious stones, . . . tooled with ingenious designs, . . . [and] executed in gold and colors.”<sup>206</sup> More likely, the library was “conceived as a presentation, a splendid social gesture, the expression of an impressive way of life.”<sup>207</sup> The absence of any marked individual taste in the selection of titles suggests that it was

indicative of what the gentleman-collector of the time thought was worth binding in the best possible manner, not necessarily what he thought was worth reading. There may be a certain pretentiousness about the books that Grolier had bound so luxuriously.<sup>208</sup>

Despite his undoubted familiarity with all the classical condemnations of opulent bibliomania, Grolier was most likely motivated by sheer aesthetic pleasure and a love of display.<sup>209</sup>

Somewhat ironically, while Grolier’s library was dispersed almost immediately upon his death, Charles IX paid a huge price to acquire his collection of antiquities, “so that France should not be deprived of such treasures.”<sup>210</sup> Apparently not only Grolier was interested in collecting the relics of the past.

### **Nostalgic Motivations**

In a time of rapid and unsettling changes, many turned to collection of ancient books as a means to capture “the good old days.” Central to the very ideas of Renaissance (or “rebirth” of antiquity) and Reformation (a return to the pure original church) was the search for the ideal of perfection in some past “Golden Age.”<sup>211</sup> Some, like the humanists, optimistically thought this perfection could be recaptured in their own times; others, like Brant, felt that humanity had irretrievably decayed from this ideal. Like so many of his contemporaries at the end of the medieval era, Brant’s book-fool looked back at the example

of the past as the model for a better life in the present. "Consider our old fathers," he pleads; but he well knows that too few follow their example and welcomes the rest as fellow-fools.<sup>212</sup>

Antiquarianism, the desire to collect and preserve the ancient merely because it is old, is a natural, if perverse, offshoot of the humanist interest in rediscovering the treasures of classical antiquity.<sup>213</sup> This "second stage" of Renaissance humanism was particularly evident in the princely libraries of Italy during the fifteenth century. For example, there was a great demand among collectors for Greek manuscripts, "although in many cases they were unable to read the works they coveted so greatly."<sup>214</sup>

In the rest of Europe, this nostalgia was often expressed by a newfound interest in the "national literatures"; that is, the mostly vernacular epics and romances so evocative of a glorious history. When this literature was first composed, it was primarily an oral art form, and written copies existed principally to teach the words to new performers. But as the minstrels slowly became obsolete, their manuscripts became prized by those to whom they represented a bygone but more chivalrous past.

The urge to preserve the old literature was particularly strong among the German knights, a class that itself felt obsolete in the newly emerging modern world. Typical was Jacob Püterich von Reichertshausen (1400-69), a Bavarian knight, who wrote to Mechthild, Countess Palatine, about their mutual interest in collecting old texts. His letter "describes his life as one of restless wandering, long journeys in search of old books on chivalry, and visits to the graves of their authors."<sup>215</sup> Püterich was enamored of the ancient, avowing that "I would sooner spend hours with an old book than a minute with a new one." He spared no pains in accumulating his 164 manuscripts, confessing that "in building my collection, these books were snatched, acquired by stealth, robbery, and also loan; they were given, copied, purchased, and even found."<sup>216</sup> He met with the same scorn and abuse suffered by so many Renaissance book-fools: He had been betrayed and scoffed at because of his passion for books, his friends would not return volumes they had borrowed from his collection, and acquaintances at court teased him with false rumors of ancient books.<sup>217</sup>

In sixteenth-century England, this interest in a lost past found institutional form in antiquarian societies both formal and informal. The most prestigious was undoubtedly the Society of Antiquaries

founded in about 1585 and active through the first decade of the seventeenth century.<sup>218</sup> Favorite topics included

matters of law, the history of the Inns of Court, and the privileges of members of the legal profession, the development of various offices of state, heraldic problems, or the early history of this country and the meaning of the antiquities that remain, whether these be in the form of coins or monuments or manuscript records.<sup>219</sup>

By 1628, John Earle was able to satirize the antiquary as a recognizable “type” in his *Microcosmographie*:

Hee is a man strangely thrifty of Time past. . . . Hee is one that hath that unnaturall disease to bee enamour'd of old age, and wrinkles, and loves all things (as Dutchmen doe Cheese) the better for being mouldy and worme-eaten. . . . Printed bookes he contemnes, as a novelty of this latter age; but a Manuscript he pores on everlastingly, especially if the cover be all Moth-eaten, and the dust make a Parenthesis between every Syllable. He would give all the Bookes in his Study (which are rarities all) for one of the Romane binding, or sixe lines of Tully in his owne hand. . . .<sup>220</sup>

Although printing began around the middle of the fifteenth century, printed books did not really replace manuscripts until the early part of the next century. Nonetheless, the majority of scholars soon bought printed books voraciously and discarded manuscripts as obsolete; however, a conservative minority disliked and refused to use them. This desire for manuscripts in the face of printing is generally taken as conclusive evidence of antiquarian sentiment. Those who, like “Gruuthuse and Marcatellis, continued to collect and order luxurious manuscripts, large-sized and lavishly illuminated, [were] anachronisms in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries” but were not isolated cases.<sup>221</sup> A very considerable number of such manuscripts copied from printed works have survived. “Every manuscript ascribed to the second half of the fifteenth century is potentially . . . a copy of some incunable.”<sup>222</sup> At least 24 manuscripts are wholly or in part copies of Caxton’s printings alone.<sup>223</sup>

Of those who explicitly rejected the new technology, probably the best known is Federigo, duke of Urbino, who despised printed materials and “refused to defile his collection” with the products of the press.<sup>224</sup> But this feeling was not limited to great princes. Some humanists found the texts unacceptable, particularly in the incunabula. Indeed, Johan Wernher, Freiherr zu Zimbern, hired the scribe Gabriel Lindennast to write manuscripts for his library because printed books had such inferior texts.<sup>225</sup>

Others considered printed volumes to be flimsy and cheap. When the business agents of Cardinal Federigo Borromeo acquired the library

of Pinelli at auction, they resold many of the printed volumes in Naples “because they did not think them valuable enough to warrant the cost of shipment.”<sup>226</sup> That paper volumes were regarded as “cheap and nasty” is suggested by “a ruling promulgated at Cambridge in 1480, which stipulated that books on paper could not qualify as a pledge for loans.”<sup>227</sup>

Others found them aesthetically displeasing. Francesco Sassetti was exceptionally fastidious about the quality of his books, eschewing paper in favor of only the finest parchment and avoiding all but the most refined and sparing decoration. He rejected printed volumes, despite the links of his advisors and librarians to several printers; his manuscript *Quintilian*, at least, was copied from a printed edition.<sup>228</sup>

There was a widespread dislike of printed books as innovations, symbolic of the unsettling changes of the times. The manifestations of this feeling were manifold. Some merely reacted with scorn. The agents of Cardinal Bessarion, for example, when they first saw a printed book in the house of Constantine Lascaris, laughed at the discovery “made among barbarians in some German city.”<sup>229</sup> Others tried to preserve the manuscripts of the past from destruction, though not always successfully. In 1550 the Imperial court historian Nicolaus Mameranus “bewailed the fact that many monasteries had sold off or had given away their manuscripts when they received printed versions of these texts.”<sup>230</sup> Others took a still more active stand. Matteo Battiferri, doctor and poet of Urbino, took his 1494 edition of the Greek Anthology, hand illuminated it, and changed “impressum” in the colophon to “scriptum.” His subversive actions demonstrate that there were still those who desired that their books be “manuscripts—or if not actually that, at least appear to be manuscripts.”<sup>231</sup>

Even at the very end of the Renaissance, some antiquarians still fought against the triumph of the printed book. Seventeenth-century manuscript transcriptions of printed books include a 1621 copy of the *Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers* owned by Sir Peter Manwood and a Wycliffite New Testament (c. 1600) written for Richard Robinson.<sup>232</sup>

Whatever their motivations, these “manuscript-fools” could have found comfort and inspiration in the activities and writings of Johannes Trithemius.

#### *Case Study: Johannes Trithemius (1462-1516)*

Johannes Trithemius, abbot of Sponheim and later of St. James at Wurzburg, was an important figure in early German humanism. A

passionate advocate of church reform, he soon gained a reputation in Benedictine and literary circles for both the breadth of his learning and his eloquence and style. He rose to prominence in the circle of monastic reform centered around Bursfield, holding many offices and occasionally acting as an unofficial spokesman for various causes.<sup>233</sup> When in 1483 he became abbot of Sponheim, his efforts were immediately turned to improving the material conditions of the abbey, "but his chief interest was in books."<sup>234</sup>

Trithemius himself wrote of his love for books:

I readily admit my boundless and unceasing love of studies and books. Neither could ever satisfy my desire to know everything which can be known in this world. It is my greatest pleasure to own and to know all books I ever saw or which I knew to have appeared in print, however trivial and unimportant they may have been. To my regret I could never satisfy my desire . . . money was always lacking even for the necessities of life and much more so for the satisfaction of my passion for books.<sup>235</sup>

His mania enabled him to give an exact description of a codex many years after having viewed it.<sup>236</sup>

Much of his bookish passion was channeled into building a magnificent library at Sponheim, famous for its completeness and the rarity of its volumes. Under his direction, the monks copied texts both borrowed and purchased from other monasteries.<sup>237</sup> Whenever he encountered manuscripts or rare editions, he tried to acquire them by purchase or exchange. "It must be suspected that he did not refrain from taking advantage of the ignorance of monks—that same ignorance of which he so often complained—by 'persuading' them to part with the books he was determined to have."<sup>238</sup> Despite the meager resources of his monastery, he spent vast amounts for the purchase of books; during his 25 years as abbot, Trithemius accumulated approximately 2,000 volumes with the expenditure of between 1,500 and 2,000 gulden.<sup>239</sup>

But Trithemius was not interested in merely accumulating a quantity of volumes. Rarity and antiquity were his chief concerns. He shrewdly exchanged inexpensive printed books for manuscripts belonging to clerics who, in his words, "owned but either did not understand or were afraid of" these ancient volumes.<sup>240</sup> He displayed his antiquarian interest in ancient scripts by swapping a newly printed copy of the works of St. Anselm for "the oldest example of Tironian shorthand," by then unreadable to almost all but the most specialized of scholars.<sup>241</sup>

Around 1506 Trithemius's long absences from the monastery and his obsessive bibliophilia caught up with him. The monks of Sponheim revolted from his rule, objecting to among other things "his fanatical

pursuit and promotion of learning and for his obsession with the enlargement of his library, for squandering the resources of the monastery on the purchase of books."<sup>242</sup> He was transferred to the abbacy of the tiny monastery of St. James at Wurzburg. Once there he continued to agitate on behalf of Benedictine reform; he also immediately took on the task of building up a new library to perhaps over 250 volumes.<sup>243</sup>

His chief love lay in the promotion of copying books by hand. Under Trithemius's inspiration, the reformed monasteries of Windesheim and Bursfield experienced a late burst of excellence and quantity in the products of their scriptoria. In 1492 Trithemius was asked to write a treatise justifying and encouraging this practice, which became known as *De Laude Scriptorum*. Ironically, most of the surviving copies of this work are in printed form. "Trithemius knew very well that a printed book was bound to reach a much larger audience than a manuscript. If his instructions in the art of copying were to be effective, he had to ensure the greatest possible circulation for them."<sup>244</sup>

In this work, his love of the handwritten text is evident. He did not restrict the sacred nature of this work to religious texts alone. Indeed, one "should exclude no discipline from his library, except heretical books. No book is so poor that some profit cannot be derived from it."<sup>245</sup>

Bibliophily was expressed not only in the love of the books' contents. Care for the physical objects was important as well:

If I enter your house, there is no need to ask about your studies; your books will tell me. Your books honor you just as you honor them. . . . If your books are lying all over the reading-desks in shreds and covered with dust, inside full of stains, outside unattractive, then they testify to your being an uneducated swindler, even if people take you for a doctor. . . . Therefore, any lover of books has to devote all his energy to the care and decoration of his books, arranging them on his shelves according to disciplines or importance.<sup>246</sup>

This care included not only tidiness and organization but extended to aesthetic appreciation as well. "As far as possible, manuscripts should be decorated so that their appearance alone will induce perusal. . . . However, we should beware that this artwork does not become an end in itself."<sup>247</sup>

This treatise was written at almost precisely the time when printing was causing the art of copying by hand to become extinct. But Trithemius thought little of printed books, which he predicted "will quickly disappear." Manuscripts had more lasting value:

Brothers, nobody should say or think, "What is the sense of bothering with copying by hand when the art of printing has brought to light so many important books; a huge library can be acquired inexpensively." . . . All of you know the difference between a manuscript and a printed book. The word written on parchment will last a thousand years. The printed word is on paper. How long will it last? The most you can expect of a book of paper to survive is two hundred years. Yet there are many who think they can entrust their works to paper.<sup>248</sup>

But manuscripts enjoyed more advantages than just longevity:

Even if all works ever written would appear in print, the devoted scribe should not relax in his zeal. On the contrary, he will guarantee permanence to useful printed books by copying them. Otherwise they would not last long. His labor will render mediocre books better, worthless ones more valuable, and perishable ones more lasting. The inspired scribe will always find something worth his trouble. He does not depend on the printer; he is free and as a scribe enjoys his freedom. . . . Printed books will never be the equivalent of handwritten codices, especially since printed books are often deficient in spelling and appearance. The simple reason is that copying by hand involves more diligence and industry.<sup>249</sup>

Trithemius was well aware of contemporary criticism of bibliomania and must have heard these same reproaches applied to himself many times.<sup>250</sup> In his attempt to justify his passion for manuscripts, Trithemius reveals his own deep nostalgia. Repeatedly he returns to the example of classical antiquity, which makes "our own efforts appear insignificant and childish. They did not mind either the expense or the labor to acquire as many books as possible."<sup>251</sup> True to his reformist tradition, Trithemius finds his best models in the ancient golden age of Christianity.<sup>252</sup> Not that he thought that the men of his day could equal the level of devotion shown by the ancients. Still, their example provides him with what he considers an unanswerable argument:

If it is wrong to acquire so many books, why then did the holy Fathers take such pains to collect and write books? . . . Since in good conscience you cannot blame the zeal of the saints, you had better stop reproaching their imitators. What was good for the one cannot be bad for the other.<sup>253</sup>

Trithemius's antiquarian concerns can also be seen in his other writings. Like most of the German humanists, he was fascinated with the early history of his country and his order.<sup>254</sup> Indeed, his obsession with German antiquity may have led him into intellectual dishonesty. Trithemius has been condemned for deliberate falsifications in his later historical writings, freely inventing historical sources such as fictitious chroniclers in order to flesh out the early history of his native land.<sup>255</sup> But he was not the only Renaissance book collector in whom nostalgia merged into nationalism.

## Nationalistic Motivations

One motivation apparently not important to Brant's book-fool was the nationalistic desire to preserve the heritage and treasures of a country in the form of books. But many other Renaissance bibliomanes were chiefly interested in the literature, history, and records of their own lands. Merged with the nostalgic impulse, this produced a familiar sixteenth-century type of antiquarian.

It was in England that this nationalistic type of bibliomania was to become most prominent. Already in De Bury's time there was some feeling in English intellectual circles that the torch of Minerva had most "happily come to Britain, the most noble of islands, nay, rather a microcosm in itself, that she may show herself a debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians."<sup>256</sup>

Much of this interest in England seems to have been inspired by the widespread destruction of libraries in the process of the Reformation. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Erasmus wrote of England that "it is marvellous what a treasure of old books is to be found here, far and wide."<sup>257</sup> But the various acts passed between 1536 and 1539, mandating the immediate dispersal of the library contents of all the ancient religious institutions changed all that. And the policies during the reign of Edward VI not only scattered the ancient libraries but demanded the destruction of many of their treasures. And just as hazardous to these precious volumes was "the indifference and ignorance of the laymen who purchased monastic property. Most of them possessed little appreciation for the old books that had no apparent monetary value."<sup>258</sup>

There was no official organized effort to save manuscripts of even the most obvious importance for English history. Much of value was preserved only by private persons of no great eminence. For example, John Bale (1495-1563), prebendary of Canterbury, was a central figure in this struggle.<sup>259</sup> In 1549 he wrote:

Never had we bene offended for the loss of our lybraryes, beyng so many in nombre and in so desolate places for the more part, yf the chiefe monumentes and most notable workes of our excellent wyters, had bene reserued. . . . But to destroye all without consyderacyon, is and wyll be vnto Englande for euer, a moste horryble infamy amonge the graue senyours of other nacyons. A great nombre of them whych purchased those superstycyous mansyons, reserued of those lybrarye bokes, some to serue theyr iakes, some to scoure theyr candelstyckes, and some to rubbe their bootes. Some they solde to the grossers and sopesellers, and some they sent ouersee to the bokebynders, not in small nombre, but at tymes whole shyppes

full, to the wonderynge of the foren nacyons. . . . Yea, what maye bryng  
our realme to more shame and rebuke, than to haue it noysed abroad,  
that we are despysers of lernynge?<sup>260</sup>

Bale made considerable efforts to stem this devastation. He later (1560) wrote to Matthew Parker about his manuscripts from the despoiled monasteries, saying that "onle conscyence, with a fervent love to my Contrey moved me to save that myghte be saved."<sup>261</sup> In contrast to so many previous book-fools, Bale's interest lay more in saving the texts than in preserving the ancient and beautiful artifacts. By advising that they "anon be imprinted and so brynge them into a nombre of coppys . . . and so to restore us to such a truthe in hystories, as we haue longe wanted," Bale demonstrated his concern for their contents but showed no special regard for the originals.<sup>262</sup>

Bale valued these old books only insofar as they promoted social virtue and, by revealing her glorious heritage, served to increase England's fame among other nations, dispelling its reputation of being a "barbarouse nacyon." Most important, they could be used to combat the propagandistic attacks of Roman Catholics against Protestantism by "proving" the antiquity of the English church.<sup>263</sup>

But other early collectors of the ancient volumes had quite different motivations. Many former monks carried away treasured volumes from the monastic libraries upon dissolution; some laymen, like Sir Henry Savile, "collected old monastic books purely for personal enjoyment."<sup>264</sup> Bale referred to several other private persons who were moved to collect manuscripts from the dissolved institutions. One of the most important was Robert Talbot (1505?-58), a scholar and an early reformer at Oxford.<sup>265</sup> He was the earliest known collector of manuscripts in Anglo-Saxon<sup>266</sup> and had a special interest in runes and runic alphabets.<sup>267</sup>

Sir John Prise is also notable among the book collectors active between the time of the Dissolution and the great collectors such as Parker and Cotton. As the principal registrar in ecclesiastical causes and one of the appointed visitors to the monasteries, he made a collection of the foundation charters of monastic houses.<sup>268</sup> His particular interest lay in the history and antiquities of Britain, particularly Wales; he published a copiously documented treatise defending the historicity of Geoffrey of Monmouth's account of Arthur. "History was Prise's subject, but he was prepared to rescue worthy theological manuscripts from destruction, especially manuscripts containing the works of Bede."<sup>269</sup>

In this Prize was unusual. For the most part, the subject matter of the books rescued immediately after the Dissolution was depressingly uniform:

The kinds of books which had on the whole the best chance of surviving were historical, patristic, and biblical, and mainly of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and the kinds of book which had the least chance of surviving were those containing the scholastic theology and philosophy of the later Middle Ages, and the law books. . . . Evidently the survivors are not a chance residue, but, in the main, a deliberate selection: certain sections of the library have been preferred and certain sections have been neglected.<sup>270</sup>

*Case Study: John Leland (c. 1506-52)*

Among these early nationalistic book-fools, none was of more significance than John Leland. An accomplished scholar in the court of Thomas Howard, duke of Norfolk, he recommended himself to Henry VIII with his elegant Latin panegyrics. By 1530 he had gained acquaintances within the foremost intellectual circles of England and had been made the keeper of the royal library. In 1533 he received the unique commission to search throughout the libraries of England for all records, writings, and secrets of antiquity. For this he later became known as "the king's antiquary."<sup>271</sup> After he had concluded his expeditions, he presented a summary of his methods and results in an address to the king, later titled his "New Year's Gift."<sup>272</sup>

Leland had entreated Cromwell to extend his commission so that he might collect manuscripts as well as describe them. In his opinion, nothing less than the national honor was at stake. He wrote that

it would be a great profit to students and honour to this realm, whereas now the Germans, perceiving our desiduousness and negligence, do send daily young scholars hither that spoileth them and cutteth them out of libraries, returning home and putteng them abroad as monuments of their own country.<sup>273</sup>

Leland did not obtain the blanket permission he sought, but his tour still considerably enriched the royal library. The existence of one of Leland's lists annotated and marked in the king's own hand indicates that the antiquary's observations "were compiled not merely as the personal records of his own antiquarian curiosity but with the very definite purpose of enabling his master to secure suitable manuscripts for the Royal Library."<sup>274</sup> Leland himself testified that he had "conservid many good autors, the which other wise had beene like to have perischid to no smaull incommodite of good letters, of the whiche parte remayne yn the moste magnificent libraries of yowr royal Palacis. Parte also remayne yn my custodie."<sup>275</sup>

After reading the ancient British historians and chroniclers, he was fired by a nationalistic zeal to visit all of England to observe and make note of the conditions and monuments of every village and field.<sup>276</sup> This exhaustive antiquarian and topographical tour, occupying the years 1534 to 1543, was designed to serve as research for a "History and Antiquities of This Nation." He examined not only libraries but also Roman, Saxon, and Danish ruins, as well as coins and inscriptions.<sup>277</sup>

But manuscripts attracted him the most. He gathered together for himself a collection of old books and manuscripts to use in his historical researches. His great project was never completed, but his investigations and notes remain in his *Itinerary* and *Collectanea*.<sup>278</sup> Unfortunately, "at length his antiquarian studies overtaxed his brain and he became incurably insane." In 1550 he was put in the custody of his elder brother.<sup>279</sup>

Much of Leland's motivation can be deduced from the address presented to Henry VIII and subsequently published by Bale in 1549. In his preface to this edition, Bale quotes a childhood friend of Leland's, who says "that he from his youth was so studious and desirous of our antiquities that always his whole studies were directed to that end," including the studying of the Briton, Saxon, and Welsh tongues.<sup>280</sup> And Leland signed himself as "antiquarius." But he was scarcely motivated by a nostalgic reverence for the mementos of the past. "He had no antiquarian prejudices or exclusive obsession with ruins and ancient monuments. . . . Antiquities were just a part of the numerous interesting things he saw as he rode along the highways and lanes of England and Wales."<sup>281</sup>

Instead, Leland's driving urge was an excessive, almost xenophobic, nationalism. His efforts were all pressed to display the greatness of England's glorious present and past to scornful foreigners:

To say Leland was fanatical is a fair comment on his known vanity and passionate patriotism. The slightest criticism of anything that pertained to the glory of the Tudor monarchs or their realm turned Leland immediately into an angry, irrational creature, gibbering with indignation. He stormed against anyone who doubted the story of our Trojan founder, King Brutus, and the history of the British kings who followed Brutus; he raged against those who belittled our all-conquering King Arthur; he was infuriated by papal challenges to British sovereignty.<sup>282</sup>

Even while rescuing ancient books and manuscripts, preservation was subservient to nationalism. Leland described his task as

to peruse and diligently to serche all the libraries of monasteries and collegies of this yowre noble reaulme, to the intente that the monumentes of auncient writers as welle of other nations, as of this yowr owne province mighte

be brought owte of deadely darkenes to lyvelye lighte, and to receyve like thankes of the posterite, as they hoped for at such tyme as they employed their long and greate studies to the publique wealth; yea, and farthermore that the holy Scripture of God might bothe be sincerely taughte and lernid, al maner of supersition and craftely coloured doctrine of a rowte of Romaine bishopes totally expellid oute of this your moste catholique realme.<sup>283</sup>

His interest in antiquities was clearly centered around their usefulness for historical and religious propaganda.

The result of his preservation of ancient manuscripts, Leland said, would be "that al the worlde shaul evidently perceyve that no particular region may justly be more extollid than yours for trewe nobilite and vertues al pointes renoumed."<sup>284</sup>

His travels provided him with a formidable arsenal of weapons against those who would denigrate Britain's former glory. His main research interest was British literature and history. And thus his grand opus describing the antiquities of Britain would

so to open this wyndow that the lighte shall be seene so longe, that is to say, by the space of a thousand yeres, stoppid up, and the olde glory of your renownid Britaine to reflorisch thorough the worlde . . . that this yowr realme shaul so welle be knowen, ons payntid with his natives coloures, that the renoume ther of shaul gyve place to the glory of no other region.<sup>285</sup>

Around the middle of the sixteenth century, the character of antiquarian book collecting in England changed radically:

In the years immediately following the accession of Elizabeth in 1558, however, we detect a change; the process of dispersal and destruction is arrested. Men begin to be not only aware of the need to preserve but become very soon even intensely interested in bringing together again the material that had been scattered.<sup>286</sup>

Book collectors were much more aware of the historical value of the ancient volumes. Thomas Becon, prebendary of Canterbury, reported in 1567 that he had sent to Parker a fourteenth-century manuscript, which he described as "an olde monument worthy to be preserved and embrased for the antiquities sake."<sup>287</sup>

Around 1602, several of the most prominent antiquaries tried to involve the government in an organized effort to protect England's ancient books. They petitioned Queen Elizabeth to charter an "academy for the study of antiquity and history," the chief function of which was the management of a library to be formed

to preserve old books concerning the matter of history of this realm, original charters, and monuments . . . for the better information of all noblemen

and gentlemen studious of antiquity; whereby they may be enabled to do unto her Majesty and the realm such service as shall be requisite for their place.<sup>288</sup>

This project, although never realized, was intimately bound up with the aims of the Society of Antiquaries.

But much of the work of the preservation of antique books was carried on not by organizations but by individuals such as Henry Fitzalan, earl of Arundel; Lord William Howard of Naworth and Henry Savile of Banke; Sir Robert Cotton; and by more modestly placed individuals such as John Dee and Laurence Nowell, who owned the famous manuscript of *Beowulf*.<sup>289</sup> In John Dee's own account of his library, he notes that he possesses all manner of books, "printed and anciently written, bound and unbound, in all near four thousand, the fourth part of which were written books." He had "spent forty years in divers places beyond the seas, and in England getting these books together."<sup>290</sup> Unlike many of these book collectors, Dee had no apparent utilitarian motive for preserving the old books; he was more interested in the advancement of learning in general.<sup>291</sup> He emphasized how "such doubts and points of learning, as much cumber and vex their [scholars'] heads, are most pithly in such old monuments debated and discussed."<sup>292</sup>

Sir William Cecil's household, in which Laurence Nowell also resided for a while, was the center of another group of manuscript collectors. The group was especially active in the 1560s, exactly at the same time as the even more successful efforts of Matthew Parker's circle, and there are several letters that reveal a degree of competition between Parker's and Cecil's groups in the acquisition of ancient manuscripts.<sup>293</sup>

Possibly most successful of these manuscript collectors was Sir Robert Bruce Cotton, who gathered together a number of collections formed by earlier antiquaries such as Leland and Talbot.<sup>294</sup> He pursued the acquisition of manuscripts for his library with such immense zest and pertinacity that when he heard a rumor that some of John Dee's manuscripts were buried in a certain field, Cotton purchased it and dug up the entire field in search of them.<sup>295</sup>

His library was exceptionally rich in government records; "the quantity of state papers that found their way into Cotton's hands is nothing less than astonishing."<sup>296</sup> His political influence made it very easy for him to obtain a number of official documents on more-or-less permanent "loan." He collected these government records partly out of ambition. "It was on the knowledge derived from them that such political power

or influence as Cotton possessed was based—it was the sort of knowledge that made him of course at one time useful and at another a nuisance.”<sup>297</sup> He was frequently consulted by governmental advisors on historical issues of precedents, rights, and duties. But the nationalistic motivations that mostly inspired Cotton also created “a strong feeling that such a large and important collection of official papers should rather be preserved in the Record Office than left in the possession of a private individual.”<sup>298</sup> His library was twice sequestered by the government “in the national interest”; after the second confiscation, he died before his collection could be returned to him.<sup>299</sup>

All of these collectors had in common a keen interest in the antiquities of their country. However, antiquarian studies in the sixteenth and seventeenth century often exhibited a strictly utilitarian nature. “It is remarkable to observe how the shift of emphasis in the character of these reflects exactly the corresponding change of emphasis in political affairs.”<sup>300</sup> This combination of genuine antiquarian interest and political savvy is well illustrated by the great book-collecting archbishop of Canterbury.

#### *Case Study: Matthew Parker (1504-75)*

Matthew Parker, archbishop of Canterbury, known principally for his role as an Elizabethan statesman and tireless promoter of the Anglican church, has also been called “England’s first great bibliophile.”<sup>301</sup> In 1581, some years after Parker’s death, Stephen Bateman wrote:

Thys reuerende Father by vertue of commission from oure soueraigne Queene hyr Maiestie, didde cause to be diligently gathered many bookes of Antiquitie . . . wythin foure yeares, of Diuinitie, Astronomie, Historie, Phisicke, and others of sundrye Artes and Sciences (as I can truely auouche, hauing his Grace’s Commission . . .) sixe thousand seauen hundred Bookes, by my onelye trauaile . . . I was not the onelye man in this businesse.<sup>302</sup>

Parker’s antiquarian activities mainly involved collecting old books, printing them in new editions, and compiling bibliographies listing their locations. Although involved in the preservation of England’s heritage for most of his life—he was a founding member of the Society of Antiquaries<sup>303</sup>—he put the most energy into these efforts during the last decade of his life.<sup>304</sup> Then, indeed, he was “a mighty collector of books . . . to preserve, as much as could be, the ancient monuments of the learned men of our nation from perishing.”<sup>305</sup> He employed an entire force of book hunters like Bateman, searching all over Britain

for books on all topics, both modern and ancient. On the continent, his agents were equally active, helping him to arrest the large-scale exportation of invaluable literary treasures from the country. At his residence, he employed a complete staff of copyists, illuminators, binders, and engravers.<sup>306</sup>

Parker's activities as a collector occasionally brought him into rivalries with other such antiquaries as Stephen Nevinson, John Twyne, and especially William Cecil. Espionage, false rumors, petty jealousies, extreme secrecy about sources, and even the use of political and ecclesiastical authority were not uncommon forms of the skulduggery employed by the foremost collectors of the time.<sup>307</sup>

Much of his collecting and preserving was done as a private individual, but already in 1561 he was considering Flacius Illyricus's proposal that the collection and preservation of written monuments and records was his duty as a state official.<sup>308</sup> In 1568 he directly involved the government in his antiquarian pursuits. Parker wrote to Secretary William Cecil that "the nation was deprived of such choice monuments, so much as he saw they were in those days, partly by being spent in shops, and used as waste paper, or conveyed over beyond seas, by some who considered more their private gain than the honour of their country."<sup>309</sup>

Between them they convinced the Privy Council to issue on 7 July 1568 a letter, apparently drafted by Parker himself, dealing specifically with such manuscripts. It stated that

whereas the Queenes maiestie, hauyng lyke care and zeale as diuers of her progenitours haue had before tymes for the conseruation of such auncient recordes and monumentes, written of the state and affaires of these her realmes. . . . And for that most of the same wrytynges and recordes so kept in the Monasteries, are nowe come to the possession of sundry priuate persons, and so partly remayne obscure and unknowne: in which sayde recordes be mentioned such historicall matters and monumentes of antiquitie, both for the state ecclesiasticall and civile gouernement.

It therefore appoints "our very good lorde, the Archbishop of Canterbury, [who] shoulde haue a speciall care and ouersyght in these matters," to become in effect the archives of the nation, "so as both when any neede shall require, resort may be made for the testimonie that may be founde in them, and also by conference of them, the antiquitie of the state of these cuntryes may be restored to the knowledge of the world."<sup>310</sup>

Parker's library was not just a personal indulgence, for he opened it to the use of scholars. He was, like Bale, also diligent in printing old

manuscript books as a means of increasing their distribution and preserving their contents from loss: Between 1566 and 1574, he sponsored the publication of nine Anglo-Saxon historical and literary works.<sup>311</sup> He gave numerous books, as well as other gifts, to the collegial libraries at Cambridge, including bequeathing his own magnificent personal collection to Corpus Christi. The great affection he placed upon this collection can be seen in the singular conditions he placed upon the bequest. In particular, he required annual inspections of the collection, to ensure that no more than 25 books were missing, upon penalty of forfeiture to the other colleges of the university.<sup>312</sup>

In part, Parker was clearly motivated by a disinterested love of antiquity. He was passionately devoted to stimulating the study of the Anglo-Saxon language and literature; thus he printed the Latin text of Asser in Saxon characters, had John Day make the first Saxon print-type in 1566, and even planned to compile an Anglo-Saxon dictionary.<sup>313</sup> His antiquarian fancy led him to retain in his household such copyists as could imitate the ancient scripts. One Lyly could counterfeit an antique hand so well that Parker would have him supply missing pages to defective books.<sup>314</sup>

But Parker also perceived the collection and preservation of the old books as an extension of his religious duties—indeed, after the commission of the Privy Council, as part of the office of Archbishop. The state put this onus on him as well:

On Parker as Primate rested the responsibility for securing the necessary material to supply the official propaganda for those constitutional and doctrinal principles on which the "Ecclesia Anglicana" was to be established. . . . The Archbishop had therefore to obtain as far as possible material from before the period of the fully developed papal claims, that is, as much as possible pre-thirteenth century.<sup>315</sup>

In the same fashion, his numerous historical works served more as propaganda to justify the existence of the English church than as truly objective historical writing. Indeed, Parker has been criticized for gross historical errors and even tampering with the texts of such authors as Asser and Matthew Paris to achieve his end.<sup>316</sup>

Examination of his annotations in his own volumes reveals virtually no literary, and only secondarily archaeological, interest in the manuscripts. "The library that Parker collected was therefore emphatically a working library, an arsenal, on which he and his assistants were to draw for the materials they needed."<sup>317</sup>

Thus for the nationalist book-fool in England, the first concern was the use of the ancient books as religious propaganda, as historical sources for the antiquity of an independent "Ecclesia Anglicana." But as the reign of Elizabeth progressed, and the Church of England became more firmly entrenched, the need for this kind of material decreased. The emphasis in political controversy gradually shifted to constitutional problems, a change reflected in the topics studied by the Society of Antiquaries. "The overwhelmingly political character of the Society's discussions in the last decade of the sixteenth century" is evident in the private diaries of its members; and "although the government may have used the antiquaries to find precedents, equally soon it grew suspicious of their activities."<sup>318</sup> James I's dislike of the society, like his suspicion of Cotton's activities, resulted in a prolonged neglect of organized antiquarianism among the English elite after the meetings were abandoned in 1614.<sup>319</sup> Meanwhile, new kinds of libraries were established during the last part of the Renaissance period, resembling more closely "the modern antiquarian and book collector, who is not motivated by any great desire to prove something."<sup>320</sup>

### **Altruistic Motivations**

Paradoxically, the book-fool could be motivated for the benefit of others; or, at any rate, so he would have it appear:

Human beings are inclined to gather more books than they have time to use as much as they wish, and reluctance to let the potential utility of their collections be lost, together with a wish for a memorial, always conspire to enlarge communal libraries by benefactions, and many medieval institutions depended on them for most of their growth.<sup>321</sup>

And so some Renaissance figures indulged their bibliomania in the creation of collections for others, and of lasting monuments for themselves. The nationalistic kind of book collecting described above then takes the form of a sort of "good citizenship"—piling up great collections for the advancement of one's city, school, or nation.

The earliest "public" libraries seem to have been those of monastic institutions, which opened some part of their collection to the use of any interested reader. These depended largely upon the donations of private individuals.<sup>322</sup> A secular version of this kind of library appeared in the form of the municipal government library, which also grew mostly through the gifts of wealthy citizens.<sup>323</sup> Germany was particularly rich in these town libraries, having founded at least 16 during the fifteenth century.<sup>324</sup>

Such impulses led in the sixteenth century to the formation of national libraries. In France, for example, Henry IV moved the royal library begun by Louis XII to Paris in 1595, where it formed the nucleus of what was to become the Bibliothèque Nationale.<sup>325</sup> In the same way, the Hapsburg emperors, the kings of Spain, and even the Vatican were all busy forming great national libraries.<sup>326</sup>

But England, for some reason, lagged far behind these other countries in the building of a national library. The royal library, despite sporadic spurts of enthusiasm, showed no systematic plan of organization or enlargement:

As late as Henry VIII, the lists of [royal] books are mixed up with lists of beds and tables. And even in the reign of Elizabeth, the office of "Keeper of the Books" is conjoined with that of "Distiller of Oderiferous Herbs"—the worthy pluralist having, it may be noted, a better salary as a perfumer than as a Librarian.<sup>327</sup>

Under both Mary and Elizabeth, proposals were presented to the government to create a national library. But even the learned and accomplished Elizabeth rejected the representations made by the Society of Antiquaries of "the advantages which would accrue from the establishment of a great national collection of books, adequately endowed." Even the examples of "the more civilised nations . . . Germany, Italy, and France," countries in which pains had been taken "to encourage learning by Public Lectures, Libraries, and Academies," failed to move the Queen.<sup>328</sup>

Although the Tudor monarchs remained indifferent to the prestige that could result from a national library, some of their subjects made efforts as private individuals to rebuild the great collections dissolved at the time of the Reformation. By the very end of the period, a few collectors, such as Cotton and John, Lord Lumley, began to bring together the ancient and contemporary volumes into collections available to scholars. But for the most part, unless they were so fortunate as to gain access to one of these splendid private libraries, those interested in furthering the reputation of English learning were forced to rely upon the university and college libraries.

Unfortunately, "from the Henrican Reformation until the accession of Elizabeth, the English Universities had been in turmoil, and this turmoil adversely affected the college libraries, which were severely diminished." The fluctuating fortunes of Protestant and Catholic resulted in repeated purges of the library collections of the schools.<sup>329</sup>

“Political and ecclesiastical vicissitudes were not, however, the only causes of the weakening of college libraries in the sixteenth century. Fully as many books—perhaps more—were lost by the mismanagement of the collections.”<sup>330</sup> Even before the end of the fifteenth century, the collection of the colleges began to disappear: “stolen, damaged, worn out, pledged and never redeemed, sold, or given away.”<sup>331</sup> The evidence of inventories and catalogs suggests that the holdings of academic libraries declined by as much as two-thirds during this period.<sup>332</sup>

By 1584, however, this trend had been arrested. In all respects, the period from about 1585 to 1640 represented a “new era” for the academic libraries. A flurry of major donations indicated the new interest taken by bibliophiles in the state of English education. The generosity of Parker to Corpus Christi College at Cambridge has already been noted. Through his encouragement, Bacon, Sir William Cecil, the bishops of Winton and Durham, and others gave many books more to the library.<sup>333</sup> Similar revivals took place in the other Cambridge college libraries during the last third of the century. Nor was Cambridge the only recipient of such largesse. Nearly every Oxford college library was virtually refounded between 1585 and 1700.<sup>334</sup>

It is worth noting that most of these donors had no formal affiliation with the particular colleges they benefited. Many, like Sir Walter Mildmay, prevailed upon their friends and acquaintances to contribute books, and even cash and real estate.<sup>335</sup> Both during the Middle Ages and later in the seventeenth century, such donations were customarily reserved for the giver’s own college, a sort of reward owed to alma mater.<sup>336</sup> And this practice, of course, continued during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. But only during the English Renaissance was it just as customary to enrich unrelated institutions, out of a sense of civic duty and an interest in enriching the reputation of English scholarship. No one serves as a better example of this kind of motivation than Sir Thomas Bodley.

*Case Study: Thomas Bodley (1545-1613)*

Sir Thomas Bodley “was an extraordinary man—a scholar and diplomat of distinction, as well as a philanthropist.”<sup>337</sup> Educated at Oxford, he was learned in both Latin and Greek. He served in many important diplomatic posts, including as Queen Elizabeth’s ambassador to Denmark, France, and the Netherlands.

“Like every patriotic Elizabethan, Bodley believed that he had an obligation to the state”<sup>338</sup>; therefore, when he decided to retire from his political career, he looked for some other manner in which he could fulfill his civic duties. He decided upon founding a great library at Oxford in his name. He described his thought processes in his autobiography, written in 1609:

My dutie towards God, the expectation of the world, my naturall inclination, and very moralitie did require, that I shoulde not wholly so hide those little habilities that I had, but that in some measuer, in one kinde or other, I shoulde do the true part of a profitable member in the State; wherevpon . . . I concluded at the last, to set vp my Staffe at the Librarie dore in Oxon; being throughly perswaded, that in my solitude, and surcease from the Commonwealth affayers, I coule not busie my selfe to better purpose, then by redusing that place (which then in euery part laye ruined and wast), to the publike vse of Studentis.<sup>339</sup>

Accordingly, in 1597 he proposed to the vice-chancellor at Oxford that he restore the library originally bestowed by Duke Humphrey of Gloucester. Bodley’s offer was gratefully accepted, and by 1600 Bodley had appointed a keeper in the person of Thomas James and was busy collecting books for the newly refitted rooms.

Bodley’s personal fortune was not large enough to fulfill his ambition to give Oxford the finest university library in existence. It was therefore necessary, as he put it, to “stir up other men’s benevolence, to help furnish it with books.”<sup>340</sup> He prevailed upon his numerous friends to donate both books and cash. No device was neglected in the effort to interest potential donors. Through his strenuous efforts, as of 1605 the library contained about 6,000 volumes, and “the Library was regarded as being substantially complete in every respect.”<sup>341</sup>

Bodley always ostensibly considered the library to be the property of the university and constantly disclaimed any special authority:

It was not fitte for me to signifie to any man in priuat, what I liked or disliked; vnles that some had bin appointed, by consent among themselues, to require my opinion. For otherwise I will allowe whatsoever it is, that they shall resolue, although they aske not my aduise.<sup>342</sup>

He frequently asserted that he made no decision without consultation; and he even refused personally to thank donors in the university’s name, “for which we haue no comission, as they will easely coniecture.”<sup>343</sup>

But as the library was completely dependent on Bodley during his lifetime for the payment of all charges, great or small, Bodley in fact retained the direction of its affairs entirely in his own hands. Bodley evidently considered the function of the various university bodies for

the administration of the library to be purely advisory, noting sarcastically at one point that he was “gladde that my courses are so pleasing to the Delegates.”<sup>344</sup> Furthermore, despite the existence of library statutes, which he himself drew up in 1609, Bodley evidently did not consider them to be in force until shortly before he died.<sup>345</sup>

Unlike most of the contemporary donors to academic libraries, Bodley took a personal interest in every detail of administration. “I can not choose but impart my fansie vnto yow in the smallest maters of the Libr.”<sup>346</sup> In 1604 Bodley would tell James bluntly, “no Innouation might be made without my priuitie.”<sup>347</sup> A contemporary critic noted of Bodley that “he was so carried away with the vanity and vainglory of his library that he forgot all other respects and duties almost.”<sup>348</sup> And indeed in his 1613 will, Bodley described the library as that which “dothe greatly surpasse all my other worldly cares,” and as a result left it the great bulk of his estate.<sup>349</sup>

Even James “appears to have done hardly anything without first obtaining Bodley’s sanction, and in all that he did was subject to constant criticism.” Bodley criticized his classification of specific books, his form for making catalog entries, and even his handwriting.<sup>350</sup> Bodley was so far short of trusting the library to the direction of any other that a few months before his death he wrote to James bitterly “whensoeuer God shall calle me, the whole Institution will quickly goe to wracke.”<sup>351</sup>

Bodley was always eager to accumulate more books for his library, and he was not overly scrupulous about the provenance of the works donated. In 1603 Sir Walter Raleigh bestowed upon Oxford the valuable library of Bishop Osorius, captured five years previously in a naval foray in Portugal. “Fine folios of the Church Fathers thus reached the Bodleian Library by a method only a shade better than piracy.”<sup>352</sup> Similarly, some suspect that many of the manuscripts and volumes “donated” by James were actually looted from some of Oxford’s collegiate libraries.<sup>353</sup>

Bodley reserved his most scrupulous supervision for the selection of books. He took almost entirely upon himself the responsibility for the purchases of books with donated money.<sup>354</sup> But he was always very conscious of the library’s reputation and refused to jeopardize it by preserving what he called “riff-raff” books. He wrote in 1612:

I can see no good reason to alter my opinion, for excluding suche bookes, as almanackes, plaies, & an infinit number, that are dailly printed, of very vnworthy maters & handling, suche as, me thinkes, both the keeper and vnderkeeper should disdain to seeke out, to deliuer vnto any man. Happely

some plaies may be worthy the keeping: but hardly one in fortie. . . . The benefit therof will nothing neere conteruaile the harme that the scandal will bring vnto the Librarie, when it shalbe giuen out, that we stuffe it full of baggage bookes. . . . The more I thinke vpon it, the more it doth distast me, that suche kinde of bookes should be vouchesafed a rowme in so noble a Librarie.<sup>355</sup>

Bodley's selection criteria sometimes seemed arbitrary, concerned more with format than with any appreciation of their content. His blanket rejection of plays, for example, cost the library the finest treasures of Elizabethan literature. He was also distrustful of books in English and preferred Latin translations of English works to the originals.<sup>356</sup>

On the other hand, large-sized books tended to impress him. He "looked askance at trifling little octavos, but a folio on almost any subject pleased him."<sup>357</sup> In his first draft of the statutes of the library, Bodley seemed to imply that books smaller than the folios should only be purchased if they were "bookes of special worth, for their antiquitie, or raritie, costlinesse, or beautie, or other note of prime account."<sup>358</sup> In 1602 he wrote contemptuously that donors "may not expect for a couple of litle books in octavo to be recorded on the Register."<sup>359</sup> He occasionally commanded the exchange of particular works in smaller sizes for the same texts in folio editions.<sup>360</sup> Of another donation, he noted scornfully, "if his mony be bestowed on octauo bookes, and suche other smalle volumes, as yow seeme to signifie, it would not make his gifte so commendable."<sup>361</sup>

It has been suggested that Bodley's zealous bibliomania was inspired by the same sort of religious nationalism that motivated Bale and Parker. Oxford University at this time was indeed a center of especially radical Protestant thought. But where Bodley himself stood on the militant Protestant use of his library is more difficult to determine. Certainly from the beginning he made special efforts to acquire a complete collection of Protestant theological writings. "My hope was and is that the greatest part of our Protestant writers will be giuen; but whether they be or no, they shall all be had, before the place be frequented."<sup>362</sup> He enthusiastically supported James in capitalizing upon both the resources of the library and his own position as librarian to publish Protestant tracts; but Bodley seemed less interested in religious controversy than in using the "pretense . . . of vndertaking speedily the Collation of the fathers" as a "motife" for securing a grant of books from James I.<sup>363</sup> When that hope was abandoned, Bodley became noticeably cooler towards James's researches, repeatedly reminding him

“that nothing [should be] omitted, while that worke is in hand, of the duties belonging to the custodie of the Librarie.”<sup>364</sup>

In part Bodley’s objection to James’s pet project seems to have been some concern that it “would not proue a worke worthy the expectation raised, nor the fame of the Librarie.”<sup>365</sup> As in so many other matters, Bodley’s overriding concern seems to have been less the actual quality of the library than its reputation. For example, his vigilance to keep the “idle bookes and riffe raffes” out of the library was lest they should “raise a scandal vpon it, when it shall be giuen out, by suche as would disgrace it.”<sup>366</sup>

This care extended even to the smallest matters. He asked James to keep “secret to your self, whatsoever defectes or imperfections, you may finde among the bookes in the binding, or otherwise. . . . For it may be that all suche errorrs and defectes will be, vpon your report, talked of more and otherwise, than were meete.”<sup>367</sup> Duplicates were to be avoided, “sith it rather tended to the disgracing, then to any commendation of the Librarie.”<sup>368</sup> Similarly, he insisted on “sightly and methodical contriuing and writing” of the lists displayed of the content of each bookshelf; “for I would not by no meanes, that any suche errorr be committed, as may iustly be censured, by all commers in, at their first accesse.”<sup>369</sup>

In the end, Bodley seems chiefly motivated by the self-centered altruism of a late Renaissance book-fool. He built a lasting memorial to himself by creating a library for his nation. The speed and completeness with which he built a collection that became the pride not only of Oxford but of England deeply impressed his contemporaries. As the introduction to the 1647 edition of his autobiography proudly notes, “his single worke clouds the proud fame of the AEgyptian Library; and shames the tedious growth o’ the wealthy Vatican.”<sup>370</sup>

Before the founding of the British Museum, Bodley’s library at Oxford was generally regarded as filling the role of a national library for England. There is some evidence that Bodley himself intended his collection serve this purpose:

It may suffice in my conceat . . . to what forwardnesse that worke of so great a publike benefit, is already brought by my meanes in special, and then by the aide of suche my honorable frindes and others, as in affection to me, and for the aduancement of learning, haue bin moued to sette their helping hand to it; so as in time it is like, and perhaps very shortly, [to be] a most admirable ornament as well of the state, as of the Vniuersitie.<sup>371</sup>

Yet the benefit to his country was *not* enough. Almost plaintively he pleads that in the glory of the accomplishment, his name be not forgotten:

Yet the plotting and ordering of all thinges, and the bulke of all the burden for mater of cost and otherwise, both hath and will be mine; wherein as I will not assume the desertes to my self of other mens bounties, so I would not that mine owne in a publike memorial should be lessened.<sup>372</sup>

It would not be inappropriate to conclude with a comparison of Bodley, the last bibliomane of this study, with De Bury, the first. Both were learned Englishmen, perhaps in life more notable for their political achievements than for their intellectual attainment. Both found justification for their love of books in the foundation of a library "for the common use of scholars" at Oxford University; only slightly secondary to the service of learning was the function of that library in the furtherance of religious goals. Both found satisfaction in the sheer quantity of books and stressed completeness in their collections; neither spared expense or labor in the accumulation of books. Both gained a large part of their collection through donation, and neither was overscrupulous as to the ethics of these contributions. They were both broad in their acceptance of subject areas, but guilty of perhaps unjustifiable prejudices (De Bury against law and Bodley against English literature). Each claimed to love books for the texts they contained; yet each displayed an excessive concern for the physical handling of the volume. De Bury perhaps lay greater stress upon the careless mistreatment of books, while Bodley had a morbid fear of theft and mutilation.

The difference seems to be in the lasting nature of their achievement. Perhaps if De Bury had been imbued with a culture that demanded civic duty override self-interest, he could have carried out his plan for an Oxford library within his own lifetime. Modern judgment of him might then not have been so harsh. He, like Bodley, could have been hailed as a "potent influence" for making "our civilization better and finer,"<sup>373</sup> instead of being eternally relegated to the helm of the Ship of Fools.

## CONCLUSIONS AND QUESTIONS

To some extent, current librarianship can be accused of displaying the same kinds of book-folly:

It is wise for librarians, and also for other collectors of books, to ask themselves, from time to time, critical questions about their own as well

as their predecessors' purposes, procedures, and achievements. Similar tendencies are observable in both medieval and modern circumstances, despite the disparity in the numbers of books and collections involved. . . . Books were wanted and assembled for veneration, ceremony and prestige, not only for learning, meditation, argument or amusement.<sup>374</sup>

If they no longer build collections purely as financial investments, librarians still often appear to make selection decisions based upon price. Some seem more concerned with having an appropriately scholarly collection than with having a usable one; others let political or nationalistic prejudices drive their choices; and librarians are as guilty as anyone of judging books by their covers.

More importantly, most librarians would confess to a passion for books as objects as well as information carriers. But libraries currently have available to them radically new formats even more different from the printed book than the latter is from the manuscript. In fact, many are predicting the ultimate demise of the book collection in favor of electronic databases. Is the message truly that preeminent over the media? Do libraries exist only to collect information, or does the format matter? Is there some value in preserving books even if other formats become cheaper or more convenient?

"Clearly, the chief function of any book should be to perpetuate learning and culture. If a volume filled with text and pictures fails to fulfill this function, whatever aesthetic values it may possess, it can hardly be thought to be performing the proper function of a book."<sup>375</sup> Librarians may be clinging too tightly to outmoded formats out of a sheer resistance to change.

But these same accusations were leveled against all of the bibliomaniacs in this study. Yet each in his own way proved "fruitful in the dissemination of ideas and images."<sup>376</sup> Even the most anachronistic book-fool, feverishly collecting manuscripts, cannot outdo modern scholars in historical and aesthetic appreciation of these handwritten fragments. "Later ages may wonder at our optimistic belief in continuous progress to a utopia whose prophets try in all seriousness to convince us that books are already obsolete and that the future belongs exclusively to mass media and electronic communication."<sup>377</sup>

These Renaissance book-fools, with all their different attitudes towards the value of the book, are not only of arcane historical interest but are in fact related to the most current arguments in librarianship. Understanding the motivations—admirable, dishonest, or simply

eccentric—of our bibliomaniac ancestors can help shed some light on the questions faced by their descendants—and perhaps preserve us from our place in the Narrenshiff.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> T. H. Jamieson, introduction, *The Ship of Fools*, by Sebastian Brant, trans. Alexander Barclay (Edinburgh: William Paterson, 1874) ix.

<sup>2</sup> Sebastian Brant, *The Ship of Fools*, trans. Alexander Barclay (Edinburgh: William Paterson, 1874) 20-22. The ellipses mark the lengthy addition to the text by Barclay in which he vents his personal grievances against the incumbent of a local benefice. For Brant's original German text (Zarncke edition) and the first Latin and French translations, see Brant 347-51.

<sup>3</sup> Jamieson xii-xiii.

<sup>4</sup> Jon Thiem, "Humanism and Bibliomania: Transfigurations of King Ptolemy and His Library in Renaissance Literature," *Res Publica Litterarum* 5 (1982): 237-38.

<sup>5</sup> Thiem 230.

<sup>6</sup> N. R. Ker, *Books, Collectors, and Libraries: Studies in the Medieval Heritage*, ed. Andrew G. Watson (London: Hambledon, 1985) 459.

<sup>7</sup> Raymond Irwin, general introduction, *The English Library before 1700: Studies in Its History*, ed. Francis Wormald and C. E. Wright (London: U of London, 1958) 11.

<sup>8</sup> Thiem 227.

<sup>9</sup> Thiem.

<sup>10</sup> Thomas Bartholin, *On the Burning of His Library and On Medical Travel*, trans. Charles D. O'Malley (Lawrence, KS: U of Kansas Libraries, 1961) 19.

<sup>11</sup> Quoted in Marc Drogin, *Anathema! Medieval Scribes and the History of Book Curses* (Totowa, NJ: Allanheld Osmun, 1983) xx. In fact, for many books, the decoration was not only subservient to the text but cannot be meaningfully understood apart from it. Flourishes such as capital letters, paragraph marks, and catchword may have later taken on their own life but were invented to help the reader to understand the contents of the work. These ornamental elements are "never pure decoration. They function as a part of an effort to elucidate the text." (Linda L. Brownrigg, "Ornament: Purpose and Play in Medieval Manuscripts," *Fine Print* 8 [1982] 73.)

<sup>12</sup> One peculiar ramification of this focus on the contents of the book can be seen in the dispute between St. Columba and Finnian of Moville over the proper owner of a copied book. It resulted in the decision against the former that "to borrow a book in manuscript and make an unauthorized copy of it constituted embezzlement." (Lawrence S. Thompson, *Bibliologia Comica, or, The Humorous Aspects of the Caparisoning and Conservation of Books* [Archon, 1968] 51.)

<sup>13</sup> Ernest A. Savage, *Old English Libraries: The Making, Collection, and Use of Books during the Middle Ages* (London: Methuen, 1911) 176.

<sup>14</sup> Pearl Kibre, "The Intellectual Interests Reflected in Libraries of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 7 (1946): 257. On the same page,

she gives Gottlieb's numbers broken down by country and century, which can be tabulated as follows:

Century	Germany	France	Italy	Britain	Iberia	Low Countries
15th	64	40	65	27	9	14
14th	34	29	23	23	3	4
13th	22	18	11	6	2	1
12th	30	29	6	5	4	4
11th	22	14	4	0	0	2
10th	6	5	2	2	1	1
9th	18	4	0	0	1	0

The chronological listing in Savage, Appendix C, "List of Medieval Collections of Books" (263-85), also reveals an increase in private collections during the fourteenth century, which swells enormously throughout the fifteenth century.

<sup>15</sup> Quoted in Beverly Boyd, *Chaucer and the Medieval Book* (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1973) 89.

<sup>16</sup> Karl Christ, *The Handbook of Medieval Library History*, trans. and ed. Theophil M. Otto (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow, 1984) 282.

<sup>17</sup> Curt F. Bühler, *The Fifteenth-Century Book: The Scribes, the Printers, the Decorators* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1960) 101n40.

<sup>18</sup> G. A. Lester, "The Books of a Fifteenth-Century English Gentleman: Sir John Paston, *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 88 (1987): 200.

<sup>19</sup> Lester 213.

<sup>20</sup> Kibre 296.

<sup>21</sup> Michael R. Hackenberg, "Books in Artisan Homes of Sixteenth-Century Germany," *Journal of Library History, Philosophy, and Comparative Librarianship* 21 (1986): 76-78.

<sup>22</sup> Quoted in Hackenberg 73.

<sup>23</sup> Hackenberg 86.

<sup>24</sup> C. H. Talbot, "The Universities and the Medieval Library," *The English Library before 1700: Studies in Its History*, ed. Francis Wormald and C. E. Wright (London: U of London, 1958) 67.

<sup>25</sup> Richard H. Rouse, "Manuscript books, production of," *The Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, ed. Joseph Strayer (New York: Scribner's, 1987). The new professional classes were unlikely to revere books as such apart from their contents; indeed, they would have become accustomed "to treat books as necessary equipment rather than as aesthetic objects"—an evaluation attested to by the number of annotated, scribbled over, even mutilated professional books that have survived to the present. (Martin Lowry, *The World of Aldus Manutius: Business and Scholarship in Renaissance Venice* [Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1979] 23.)

<sup>26</sup> From W. Roberts, ed., *Book-Verse: An Anthology of Poems of Books and Bookmen from the Earliest Times to Recent Years* (London: Elliot Stock, 1896) 3.

<sup>27</sup> Dorothy M. Robathan, "Libraries of the Italian Renaissance," *The Medieval Library*, James Westfall Thompson (New York: Hafner, 1957) 511-12.

<sup>28</sup> Wilfrid Hynes, "Book-Collecting in Italy at the Renaissance," *Library Association Record* 1st ser. 16 (1914): 532; see also Vespasiano da Bisticci, *Renaissance Princes, Popes and Prelates: The Vespasiano Memoirs, Lives of Illustrious Men of the XVth Century*, trans. William George and Emily Waters (New York: Harper, 1963) 398.

<sup>29</sup> The wool-dealer Dietisalvi di Nerone, for example, had by 1433 put together a small but choice collection of 37 manuscripts; it even included Cicero's *Brutus*, discovered only the decade previously. (Robathan 581.)

<sup>30</sup> Albert Derolez, *The Library of Raphael de Marcatellis: Abbot of St. Bavon's, Ghent, 1437-1508* (Ghent: E. Story Scientia, 1979) 292.

<sup>31</sup> Henry Curwen, *A History of Booksellers: The Old and the New* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1873) 17.

- <sup>32</sup> Kibre 277.
- <sup>33</sup> David Cressy, "Books as Totems in Seventeenth-Century England and New England," *Journal of Library History, Philosophy, and Comparative Librarianship* 21 (1986): 98.
- <sup>34</sup> Cressy 92ff.
- <sup>35</sup> Cressy 99.
- <sup>36</sup> Stephen Ozment, *The Age of Reform, 1250-1550: An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1980) 202.
- <sup>37</sup> Frederick C. Avis, "Book-Smuggling into England during the Sixteenth Century," *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* (1972): 185.
- <sup>38</sup> James Westfall Thompson, *The Medieval Library* (New York: Hafner, 1957) 371.
- <sup>39</sup> Lester 215-16.
- <sup>40</sup> Strayer 103.
- <sup>41</sup> Irwin 5.
- <sup>42</sup> Hackenberg 73.
- <sup>43</sup> Lester 216.
- <sup>44</sup> Ozment 202.
- <sup>45</sup> The most exhaustive analysis of the effects of printing upon the intellectual and spiritual life of Europe can be found in Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1979). While focusing more upon the development of the early modern "scientific" culture from the seventeenth century on, Eisenstein finds the root of profound transformations in religious fundamentalism, modern science, and humanistic scholarship in the so-called "communications shift" of the fifteenth century.
- <sup>46</sup> Grady Smith, "Books and the Development of English Humanism," *Fifteenth-Century Studies* 6 (1983): 239.
- <sup>47</sup> K. W. Humphreys, "The Book and the Library in Society," *Library History* 7 (1985[6]): 11.
- <sup>48</sup> See, for example, Roberto Weiss, "The Private Collector and the Revival of Greek Learning," *The English Library before 1700: Studies in Its History*, ed. Francis Wormald and C. E. Wright (London, U of London, 1958) 112ff.
- <sup>49</sup> L. Thompson 103-04.
- <sup>50</sup> Francis Higman, "A Heretic's Library: The Drilhon Inventory, 1545," *Book Production and Letters in the Western European Renaissance: Essays in Honour of Conon Fahy*, ed. Anna Laura Lepschy, John Took, Conon Fahy, and Dennis E. Rhodes (London: Modern Humanities Research Association, 1986) 184.
- <sup>51</sup> D. W. Doughty, "Renaissance Books, Bindings, and Owners in St. Andrews and Elsewhere: The Humanists," *Bibliothek* 7 (1975): 117ff.
- <sup>52</sup> Robathan 577.
- <sup>53</sup> For example, his bitter comments about the noted book collector Cardinal de Ursinus. (Poggio Bracciolini, *Two Renaissance Book Hunters: The Letters of Poggius Bracciolini to Nicolaus de Niccolis*, trans. Phyllis G. Gordon [New York: Columbia UP, 1974] Letter LXXXIII.)
- <sup>54</sup> Bracciolini, Letter XXV.
- <sup>55</sup> Phyllis G. Gordon, ed., *Two Renaissance Book Hunters: The Letters of Poggius Bracciolini to Nicolaus de Niccolis* (New York: Columbia UP, 1974) 298n6.
- <sup>56</sup> J. Thompson 5-6. Lucian's *Pros ton apaidenton kai polla biblia onoumenon* [To the ignorant book collector] is especially savage and touches on many of the themes to be discussed later. For a translation, see *The Works of Lucian of Samosata*, vol. 3, trans. H. W. Fowler and F. G. Fowler (Oxford: Clarendon, 1905).
- <sup>57</sup> Quoted in Thiem 229.
- <sup>58</sup> J. Thompson 637; see also examples in Beatrice White, *Philobiblon: The Love of Books in Life and Literature* (London: Library Association, 1966) 7; and Edward Edwards, *Libraries and the Founders of Libraries: From Ancient Times to the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century* (Amsterdam, Gerard th. van Heusden, 1968) 104-05.
- <sup>59</sup> Hynes 527.

<sup>60</sup> Drogin 33-34.

<sup>61</sup> Quoted in William Targ, ed., *Bouillabaisse for Bibliophiles: A Treasury of Bookish Lore, Wit, & Wisdom, Tales, Poetry, & Narratives & Certain Curious Studies of Interest to Bookmen and Collectors* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Reprint Corp., 1955) 401.

<sup>62</sup> Christ 301.

<sup>63</sup> Francesco Petrarch, *Petrarch: Four Dialogues for Scholars . . . from De Remediis Utriusque Fortune*, ed. and trans. Conrad H. Rawski (Cleveland: Western Reserve U, 1967) 31.

<sup>64</sup> Brant would surely have been very familiar with the earlier work through his editing of Petrarch's collected Latin works for publication. (Thiem 245n41.)

<sup>65</sup> Thiem 231-32.

<sup>66</sup> Scholars have speculated that Richard served as the model for Gaudium in Petrarch's dialogue. Petrarch had met De Bury in Rome and noted that he "had much talk with him on themes of literature and antiquarianism, and about the abundant supply of fine books which the Englishman had already gathered." (Edwards 61.)

<sup>67</sup> Christ 301.

<sup>68</sup> J. Thompson 383.

<sup>69</sup> Richard De Bury, *The Love of Books: The Philobiblon of Richard De Bury*, trans. E. C. Thomas (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, 1888. New York: Cooper Square, 1966) 78.

<sup>70</sup> Quoted in J. Thompson 384.

<sup>71</sup> J. Thompson 384, cf. n37. Adam Murimuth (1275-1347) was an almost exact contemporary of Richard's and followed a very similar career. In the course of his lifelong involvement in political and ecclesiastical intrigue, it is not unlikely that he found himself at some point in opposition to Richard; this may account for the markedly caustic tone Adam takes when writing of the Bishop of Durham.

<sup>72</sup> De Bury 53-54.

<sup>73</sup> De Bury 63.

<sup>74</sup> De Bury 54.

<sup>75</sup> De Bury 55-56.

<sup>76</sup> Some dispute his authorship and attribute the work to his close friend the Dominican Robert Holcot; but for the most part, the work is accepted as his. The case both for and against De Bury's authorship is summarized in J. Thompson 383-84n36.

<sup>77</sup> De Bury 94.

<sup>78</sup> In fact, apparently only two of De Bury's manuscripts still survive. Currently in the possession of the British Museum (Royal 8 G.i, 13 D.iv), they have been identified by inscriptions that indicate that they were purchased upon the breakup of the bishop's library at his death. (Neil Ripley Ker, ed., *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain: A List of Surviving Books*, 2nd ed. (London: Royal Historical Society, 1964) 301, cf. vii.

<sup>79</sup> Ker 83-86.

<sup>80</sup> Ker 77-80.

<sup>81</sup> Ker 104.

<sup>82</sup> Ker 109, cf. 104ff.

<sup>83</sup> Ker 5, cf. 2ff.

<sup>84</sup> Ker 5.

<sup>85</sup> Ker 111.

<sup>86</sup> Christ 302.

<sup>87</sup> All quoted in Savage 181.

<sup>88</sup> Savage 181-82.

<sup>89</sup> Christ 301.

<sup>90</sup> Brant 20-22.

<sup>91</sup> Petrarch 31.

<sup>92</sup> Boyd 96. For some examples of the enormous variety of values assigned to medieval and Renaissance books, see Savage, Appendix A, "Prices of Books and Materials for Bookmaking" (243-57).

- <sup>93</sup> Ironically, he died very poor, forced to sell off his books merely to buy his meals. (William Younger Fletcher, *English Book Collectors* [New York: Burt Franklin, 1902] 46-48.)
- <sup>94</sup> Savage 205.
- <sup>95</sup> See, for example, the sad case of Francesco Sassetti, general manager of the Medici bank. (Albinia De la Mare, "The Library of Francesco Sassetti (1421-90)," *Cultural Aspects of the Italian Renaissance: Essays in Honour of Paul Oskar Kristeller*, ed. Cecil H. Clough [Manchester: Manchester UP, 1976] 170.)
- <sup>96</sup> Poggio, Letter XXXV.
- <sup>97</sup> For example, in Poggio, Letter LXV.
- <sup>98</sup> Smith 227; see also Robathan 513-17.
- <sup>99</sup> Gordon 306n3.
- <sup>100</sup> Poggio, Letter LV.
- <sup>101</sup> Gordon 231n11.
- <sup>102</sup> A. J. V. Le Roux de Lincy, *Researches Concerning Jean Grolier: His Life and His Library*, ed. Roger Portalis, trans. and rev. Carolyn Shipman (New York: Grolier Club, 1907. New York: Burt Franklin, 1971) 53n2.
- <sup>103</sup> Curwen 15.
- <sup>104</sup> One fifteenth-century book-dealer's inventory includes 238 manuscripts and 29 printed books, for the most part vernacular romances and devotional works, but also a few of the most popular and familiar Latin works. (Geneva Drinkwater, "French Libraries in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries," *The Medieval Library*, James Westfall Thompson [New York: Hafner, 1957] 424-25.)
- <sup>105</sup> Timothy A. Shonk, "A Study of the Auchinleck Manuscript: Bookmen and Bookmaking in the Early Fourteenth Century," *Speculum* 60 (1985): 88.
- <sup>106</sup> Shonk 88.
- <sup>107</sup> Hynes 534-35.
- <sup>108</sup> Boyd 94.
- <sup>109</sup> Hynes 535.
- <sup>110</sup> Marcella Grendler, "Book Collecting in Counter-Reformation Italy: The Library of Gian Vincenzo Pinelli (1535-1601)," *Journal of Library History, Philosophy, and Comparative Librarianship* 16 (1981): 145.
- <sup>111</sup> George Wither, "An Honest Stationer," Targ 49.
- <sup>112</sup> Wither, "A Meere Stationer," Targ 50-51.
- <sup>113</sup> Brant 20-21, spelling modernized.
- <sup>114</sup> Robert Sebastiano Lopez, "Hard Times and Investment in Culture," *The Renaissance: A Symposium* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1953) 30-31.
- <sup>115</sup> E. P. Goldschmidt, "The Period before Printing," *Talks on Book-Collecting, Delivered under the Authority of the Antiquarian Booksellers' Association*, ed. P. H. Muir (London: Cassell, 1952) 30.
- <sup>116</sup> Quoted in Petrarch 128-29n3.
- <sup>117</sup> Thomas Fuller, "Multiplicity of Books," Targ 225.
- <sup>118</sup> Quoted in Targ 367.
- <sup>119</sup> Robathan 524.
- <sup>120</sup> Hynes 534.
- <sup>121</sup> Vespasiano 102.
- <sup>122</sup> Vespasiano 104.
- <sup>123</sup> Robathan 543.
- <sup>124</sup> Hynes 531-32.
- <sup>125</sup> Vespasiano 213.
- <sup>126</sup> Hynes 535.
- <sup>127</sup> Robathan 549.
- <sup>128</sup> Hynes 536.
- <sup>129</sup> Robathan 529.
- <sup>130</sup> Drinkwater 414.

- <sup>131</sup> Quoted in Christ 281-82.
- <sup>132</sup> Kibre 269-70.
- <sup>133</sup> Christ 283-84.
- <sup>134</sup> Thiem 234.
- <sup>135</sup> E. Stewart Saunders, "Politics and Scholarship in Seventeenth-Century France: The Library of Nicolaus Fouquet and the College Royal," *Journal of Library History, Philosophy, and Comparative Librarianship* 20 (1985): 11.
- <sup>136</sup> Roughly translated: "I have seen a huge number of books printed to draw the poor into studying. Through this newfangled technology we'll end up with many a student buying decretals, bibles, and codices [i.e., the attributes of the professional] for hardly any money." (The original verse is quoted in *Book-verse*, xxxiii; the translation provided is my own.) Molinet's contemporary, the Italian friar Filippo di Strata, similarly based his contempt for printing on the resulting "vulgarisation of intellectual life." (Lowry 26.)
- <sup>137</sup> Saunders 4ff.
- <sup>138</sup> Saunders 1.
- <sup>139</sup> Unfortunately, only 216 of the volumes can be identified today; of these, a scant 39 remain in Hungary. (H. R. Trevor-Roper, "Reunion in Budapest," *New York Review of Books* 19 July 1990: 8.)
- <sup>140</sup> S. K. Padover, "German Libraries in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries," *The Medieval Library*, James Westfall Thompson (New York: Hafner, 1957) 473.
- <sup>141</sup> Padover 474.
- <sup>142</sup> Quoted in Trevor-Roper 10.
- <sup>143</sup> Jan Pirozynski, "Royal Book Collections in Poland during the Renaissance," *Libraries and Culture*, 24 (1989): 26.
- <sup>144</sup> Pirozynski 29.
- <sup>145</sup> Pirozynski 403.
- <sup>146</sup> Weiss 118.
- <sup>147</sup> Thiem 236-37.
- <sup>148</sup> Boyd 107.
- <sup>149</sup> Quoted in Thiem 234.
- <sup>150</sup> Savage 188.
- <sup>151</sup> J. Thompson 411.
- <sup>152</sup> Smith 241.
- <sup>153</sup> R. J. Mitchell, "A Renaissance Library: The Collection of John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester," *Library* 4th ser. 18 (1938): 67.
- <sup>154</sup> Boyd 108; cf. Vespasiano's account of the earl's arrest and execution for his "Italianate" style of rule. (Vespasiano 337.)
- <sup>155</sup> Smith 240.
- <sup>156</sup> Mitchell 72.
- <sup>157</sup> Mitchell 70.
- <sup>158</sup> Weiss 123.
- <sup>159</sup> Weiss 120-21.
- <sup>160</sup> Cf. Boyd 108.
- <sup>161</sup> Weiss 120.
- <sup>162</sup> Brant 20-21, spelling modernized.
- <sup>163</sup> *Book-Verse* 11-12.
- <sup>164</sup> J. Thompson 644.
- <sup>165</sup> Vespasiano 6.
- <sup>166</sup> Bühler 104-05n66.
- <sup>167</sup> Goldschmidt 34.
- <sup>168</sup> Alfred W. Pollard, *Early Illustrated Books: A History of the Decoration and Illustration of Books in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1893) 14-15.
- <sup>169</sup> Boyd 4.
- <sup>170</sup> Bühler 84.
- <sup>171</sup> Edwards 71-76.

- 172 Derolez 1-2.
- 173 Derolez 2.
- 174 Derolez ix.
- 175 Derolez 300.
- 176 Derolez 7.
- 177 Derolez 305.
- 178 Derolez 9.
- 179 Derolez 15.
- 180 Derolez 16-18.
- 181 Derolez 19.
- 182 Derolez 308.
- 183 Derolez 298.
- 184 Derolez 302ff.
- 185 Derolez 306.
- 186 Derolez 306.
- 187 Derolez 19.
- 188 For example, Jan van den Veren, a follower of Valla, was one of the bishop's closest advisors, and his *De Arte Epistolandi* contains some unusual variants that can also be found in Marcatellis's collection. (Derolez 307-08.)
- 189 Roger Portalis, introduction, *Researches Concerning Jean Grolier: His Life and His Library*, by Jean Victor Le Roux de Lincy, trans. and rev. Carolyn Shipman (New York: Grolier Club, 1907. New York: Burt Franklin, 1971) xxiii.
- 190 Quoted in Le Roux 82.
- 191 The latest catalog issued by the Grolier Club of New York lists 616 volumes, of which 32 are "still uncertain." (Gabriel Austin, *The Library of Jean Grolier: A Preliminary Catalogue* [New York: Grolier Club, 1971] vi.)
- 192 Bühler 82.
- 193 Le Roux 29, cf. 49.
- 194 Lowry 280.
- 195 Le Roux 36.
- 196 In a letter dated April 1518, quoted in Le Roux 32.
- 197 Le Roux 76-77.
- 198 Quoted in Le Roux 35.
- 199 Le Roux 62.
- 200 Portalis xviii.
- 201 Portalis xix.
- 202 Lowry 280-81.
- 203 Of the surviving volumes, 48 are duplicates, 19 triplicates, 3 quadruplicates, 4 quintuplicates, and 3 sextuplicates. (Austin vi.)
- 204 Bühler 82.
- 205 Le Roux 60.
- 206 Portalis xv-xvi.
- 207 Ilse Schunke, quoted in Colin Eisler, "Jean Grolier and the Renaissance," *The Library of Jean Grolier: A Preliminary Catalogue*, by Gabriel Austin (New York: Grolier Club, 1971) 18.
- 208 Bühler 82.
- 209 Eisler 3.
- 210 Quoted in Le Roux 82.
- 211 Richard De Bury, for example, believed that in ancient times, men were not only wiser and more virtuous, but "of a more excellent degree of bodily development"; the very food they ate and air they breathed having been more salubrious. (De Bury 66; cf. 101-02.)
- 212 Brant 22, spelling modernized.
- 213 Indeed, the very word "antiquarian" derives from the classical term for those scribes who copied old books using ancient scripts (see Johannes Trithemius, *De Laude*

- Scriptorum* [In Praise of Scribes], trans. Roland Behrendt [Lawrence, KS: Coronado, 1974] 79).
- 214 Sheila R. Herstein, "The Library of Federigo da Montefeltro, Duke of Urbino: Renaissance Book Collecting at Its Height," *Private Library* 4 (1971): 113.
- 215 Christ 305-06.
- 216 Quoted in Christ 306.
- 217 Christ 306.
- 218 C. E. Wright, "The Elizabethan Society of Antiquaries and the Formation of the Cottonian Library," *The English Library before 1700: Studies in Its History*, ed. Francis Wormald and C. E. Wright (London: U of London, 1958) 182.
- 219 Wright 186.
- 220 Quoted in C. Wright, "Elizabethan" 176.
- 221 Derolez 3.
- 222 Bühler 16.
- 223 Lister M. Matheson, "Printer and Scribe: Caxton, the *Polychronicon*, and the *Brut*," *Speculum* 60 (1985): 596-97.
- 224 Herstein 116. This statement has been the cause of great controversy, especially since it has often been exaggerated to indicate an even greater disdain for printing than actually existed. Vespasiano da Bisticci is the ultimate source for the story, and his reliance on the trade in luxury manuscripts probably led to some degree of wishful thinking on his part. In fact, it is known that Guidobaldo da Montefeltro undoubtedly acquired printed books and even set up a press at Urbino in 1482. Nonetheless, Federigo's fabled scorn for printed books has become emblematic for an undeniably genuine and widespread disdain for the products of the press. (Eisenstein 49.)
- 225 Bühler 29.
- 226 Grendler 145.
- 227 Bühler 41.
- 228 De la Mare 171.
- 229 Hynes 528.
- 230 Bühler 20.
- 231 Bühler 64-65.
- 232 Bühler 36.
- 233 Klaus Arnold, introduction, *De Laude Scriptorum* [In Praise of Scribes], by Johannes Trithemius, trans. Roland Behrendt (Lawrence, KS: Coronado, 1974) 1-3.
- 234 Padover 464-65.
- 235 Quoted from *Nepiachus*, in Arnold 4-5.
- 236 Arnold 4.
- 237 Padover 464-65.
- 238 Arnold 4.
- 239 Padover 465.
- 240 Bühler 20.
- 241 Padover 465. It is worth noting, however, that his professed scorn for the printed book did not prevent him from acquiring a number of fine Aldine editions. (Lowry 266.)
- 242 Arnold 8.
- 243 Arnold 9.
- 244 Arnold 14-15.
- 245 Trithemius 95.
- 246 Trithemius 93-95.
- 247 Trithemius 69.
- 248 Trithemius 63.
- 249 Trithemius 65.
- 250 Trithemius 69.
- 251 Trithemius 45.
- 252 Trithemius 47.
- 253 Trithemius 89.
- 254 Arnold 7.

- 255 Arnold 9-11.
- 256 De Bury 71.
- 257 Quoted in Edwards 35-36.
- 258 Ronald Harold Fritze, " 'Truth Hath Lacked Witness, Tyme Wanted Light': The Dispersal of the English Monastic Libraries and the Protestant Efforts at Preservation, ca. 1535-1625," *Journal of Library History* 18 (1983): 278.
- 259 Ker 472.
- 260 Quoted in C. E. Wright, "The Dispersal of the Libraries in the Sixteenth Century," *English Library before 1700: Studies in Its History*, ed. Francis Wormald and C. E. Wright (London: U of London, 1958) 153.
- 261 Wright 154.
- 262 Fritze 277-78.
- 263 Fritze 281-82.
- 264 Fritze 282.
- 265 C. E. Wright, "The Dispersal of the Monastic Libraries and the Beginnings of Anglo-Saxon Studies: Matthew Parker and His Circle: A Preliminary Study," ["Parker"] *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 1 (1951): 236.
- 266 Ker 472.
- 267 C. Wright, "Parker" 229n1.
- 268 Ker 472.
- 269 Ker 476.
- 270 Ker 464-65.
- 271 For a complete account of Leland's life and activities, see Lucy Toulmin Smith, introduction, *Itinerary of John Leland in or about the Years 1535-1543*, by John Leland (London: Centaur, 1964) vii-xx.
- 272 For a complete text, see Leland xxxvii-xliii.
- 273 Quoted in "Leland or Leyland, John," *Dictionary of National Biography: From the Earliest Times to 1900* (1917-).
- 274 C. Wright, "Dispersal" 162.
- 275 Leland xxxviii.
- 276 Leland xli.
- 277 "Leland," DNB.
- 278 Fritze 280.
- 279 "Leland," DNB.
- 280 Quoted in Smith xii.
- 281 Foreword, *Itinerary of John Leland in or about the Years 1535-1543*, by John Leland (London: Centaur, 1964) (s.p.).
- 282 Foreword.
- 283 Leland xxxviii.
- 284 Leland.
- 285 Leland xlii.
- 286 C. Wright, "Parker" 170.
- 287 Quoted in C. Wright, "Parker" 222.
- 288 Quoted in C. Wright, "Elizabethan" 189.
- 289 C. Wright, "Dispersal" 170-71.
- 290 Quoted in Fletcher 45-46.
- 291 However, Dee did have sufficient interest in format (as opposed to content) meticulously to distinguish the Aldine editions in his own catalog of his collection. (Lowry 300.)
- 292 Quoted in Fritze 283-84.
- 293 C. Wright, "Parker" 220-21.
- 294 C. Wright, "Elizabethan" 197-98.
- 295 C. Wright, "Elizabethan" 198.
- 296 C. Wright, "Elizabethan" 194-95.
- 297 C. Wright, "Elizabethan" 196.
- 298 Fletcher 63-64.
- 299 Padover 10-11.

- 300 C. Wright, "Parker" 226.
- 301 Seymour De Ricci, *English Collectors of Books and Manuscripts (1530-1930) and Their Marks of Ownership* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1969) 15.
- 302 Quoted in C. Wright, "Parker" 220.
- 303 Fletcher 28.
- 304 C. Wright, "Parker" 226.
- 305 John Strype, quoted in Louis B. Wright, "Some Early 'Friends' of Libraries," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 2 (1939): 366.
- 306 "Parker, Matthew," *Dictionary of National Biography: From the Earliest Times to 1900* (1917-).
- 307 Cf., e.g., Pamela Black, "Matthew Parker's Search for Cranmer's 'Great Notable Written Books,'" *Library* 5th ser. 29 (1974): 320ff.
- 308 Fritze 284.
- 309 Quoted in L. Wright, "Friends" 366-67.
- 310 Quoted in C. Wright, "Parker" 212-13.
- 311 Fritze 284-85.
- 312 Fletcher 23-24.
- 313 "Parker," DNB.
- 314 Fletcher 28.
- 315 C. Wright, "Parker" 227.
- 316 Fritze 285.
- 317 C. Wright, "Parker" 227-29.
- 318 C. Wright, "Parker" 226-27.
- 319 C. Wright, "Parker" nl.
- 320 Fritze 286-87.
- 321 A. I. Doyle, introduction, *The Role of the Book in Medieval Culture*, vol. 2, ed. Peter Ganz (Brepols: Turnhout, 1986) 9.
- 322 Christ 318.
- 323 Christ 315.
- 324 For example, Dantzic and Brunswick in 1413, Aachen in 1419, Regensburg in 1430, Ulm in 1440, Nuremberg in 1445, and Hamburg in 1469 (Padover 470-71; cf. Edwards 33).
- 325 Drinkwater 449.
- 326 J. N. L. Myres, "Oxford Libraries in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," *The English Library before 1700: Studies in Its History*, ed. Francis Wormald and C. E. Wright (London: U of London, 1958) 243.
- 327 Edwards 144-45.
- 328 Quoted in Edwards 160.
- 329 Sargent Bush, Jr., and Carl J. Rasmussen, *The Library of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, 1584-1637* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986) 4-5.
- 330 Bush 5.
- 331 J. Thompson 397.
- 332 Bush 5.
- 333 J. C. T. Oates, "The Libraries of Cambridge 1570-1700," *The English Library before 1700: Studies in Its History*, ed. Francis Wormald and C. E. Wright (London: U of London, 1958) 214-15.
- 334 Myres 236.
- 335 Bush 22.
- 336 J. B. Friedman, "Books, Owners and Makers in Fifteenth-Century Yorkshire," *Latin and Vernacular: Studies in Late Medieval Texts and Manuscripts*, ed. A. J. Minnis (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1989) 117-18.
- 337 L. Wright, "Friends" 355.
- 338 L. Wright 356-57.
- 339 Thomas Bodley, *Trecentale Bodleianum: A Memorial Volume* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1913) 18-19.

- <sup>340</sup> L. Wright, "Friends" 359.  
<sup>341</sup> G. W. Wheeler, introduction, *The Letters of Sir Thomas Bodley to Thomas James*, by Thomas Bodley (Oxford: Clarendon, 1926) xxxi.  
<sup>342</sup> Bodley, *Letters*, Letter 53.  
<sup>343</sup> Bodley, Letter 13.  
<sup>344</sup> Bodley, Letter 190.  
<sup>345</sup> Wheeler xl-xli.  
<sup>346</sup> Bodley, *Letters*, Letter 50.  
<sup>347</sup> Bodley, Letter 113.  
<sup>348</sup> L. Wright, "Friends" 364.  
<sup>349</sup> Bodley, *Trecentale* 71, cf. 73.  
<sup>350</sup> Wheeler xx.  
<sup>351</sup> Bodley, *Letters*, Letter 231.  
<sup>352</sup> L. Wright, "Friends" 363.  
<sup>353</sup> L. Wright 358; cf. Bodley, *Letters*, Letter 169.  
<sup>354</sup> Wheeler xv.  
<sup>355</sup> Bodley, *Letters*, Letter 221; cf. Letters 26, 162.  
<sup>356</sup> Wheeler xvi; cf. Bodley, *Letters*, Letter 198.  
<sup>357</sup> L. Wright, "Friends" 363.  
<sup>358</sup> Bodley, *Trecentale* 41-42.  
<sup>359</sup> Bodley, *Letters*, Letter 39.  
<sup>360</sup> For example, Bodley, *Letters*, Letter 31.  
<sup>361</sup> Bodley, *Letters*, Letter 56.  
<sup>362</sup> Bodley, Letter 9.  
<sup>363</sup> Bodley, Letter 149.  
<sup>364</sup> Bodley, Letter 156.  
<sup>365</sup> Bodley, Letter 163.  
<sup>366</sup> Bodley, Letter 220.  
<sup>367</sup> Bodley, Letter 8; cf. Letters 9, 11.  
<sup>368</sup> Bodley, Letter 161.  
<sup>369</sup> Bodley, Letter 48.  
<sup>370</sup> Quoted in Myres 243.  
<sup>371</sup> Bodley, *Letters*, Letter 83.  
<sup>372</sup> Bodley, Letter 83.  
<sup>373</sup> L. Wright, "Friends" 365.  
<sup>374</sup> Doyle 9.  
<sup>375</sup> Bühler 162n29.  
<sup>376</sup> Doyle 9.  
<sup>377</sup> Arnold 13.

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