

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE MARKET FOR SCHOLARLY BOOKS AND CONCEPTIONS OF GENRE IN NORTHERN EUROPE, 1570–1630

It is traditional, if not commonplace, to look on the last decades of the sixteenth century and the early decades of the seventeenth as the ‘autumn’ of the Renaissance, a period marked at best by consolidation, at worst by decline.<sup>1</sup> It is alleged that political crises and confessional strife disrupted intellectual life both directly and indirectly, giving rise to a mentality often described as ‘baroque’, in which the optimism of the high Renaissance was succeeded by scepticism or even pessimism, serenity by violence and instability, conviction by doubt.<sup>2</sup> The *Respublica Literaria* was threatened by the gradual disintegration of the encyclopaedic aspirations of earlier generations of humanists, by increasing uncertainty as to whether learning and ethics, *studia* and *mores*, were as intimately linked as Erasmus claimed, by the manifest failure of scholars to agree on matters concerning religious truth.<sup>3</sup> The antagonism between established centres of learning, still dominated by scholasticism or neo-Aristotelianism, and radical movements associated with neoplatonism, hermeticism, alchemy, and the observational and experimental sciences is reflected in the crisis faced by academic institutions, both long-established and of more recent foundation: a crisis exacerbated in German-speaking parts of Europe by the catastrophic events of the Thirty Years War.<sup>4</sup> While it has been shown that humanistic enquiry

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, *L'automne de la Renaissance, 1580–1630* (Actes du XXII<sup>e</sup> colloque international d'études humanistes, Tours), ed. Jean Lafond and André Stegmann, Paris: Vrin, 1981.

<sup>2</sup> For a general historical survey of this period in Northern Europe, see R.J.W. Evans, *The making of the Hapsburg monarchy, 1550–1700*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979, pp. 41–116; for a recent study of baroque, see Claude-Gilbert Dubois, *Le baroque*, Paris: Larousse, 1973.

<sup>3</sup> W.J. Ong, S.J., *Ramus, method and the decay of dialogue*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958, pp. 295–318; Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, *From humanism to the humanities*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986; W. Schmidt-Biggemann, *Topica universalis: eine Modellgeschichte humanistischer und barocker Wissenschaft*, Hamburg: Meiner, 1983.

<sup>4</sup> R.J.W. Evans, ‘German universities after the Thirty Years War’, *History of Universities*, 1 (1981), 169–90; Frances Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the hermetic tradition*, London:

continues to yield impressive scholarly results—the names of Joseph Scaliger, Denis Lambin, Marc-Antoine Muret, Justus Lipsius, Isaac Casaubon, Friedrich Sylburg spring to mind—this is often interpreted as yet another demonstration that the owl of Minerva flies at dusk.<sup>5</sup>

Not all of these assertions are uncontroversial;<sup>6</sup> but they find *prima facie* confirmation in the statistics of the trade in scholarly books. Schwetschke's figures for the Frankfurt Book Fair show a marked and lasting downturn in the number of Latin books advertised after 1630; and the most recent authoritative account of publishing in France talks also of a severe decline at the end of the sixteenth century, caused by the passing away of a generation of humanist printer-publishers and the saturation of available markets.<sup>7</sup> It would seem therefore unwise to deny the existence of a crisis in Northern European humanism at this time; but it is possible to ask whether this particular configuration of historical events and conditions is a sufficient explanation of it. It is traditional to assume that ideas emanating from scholars are freely received and exchanged; but these ideas are communicated in the material form of books, by a process which involves money at all levels: printing, advertising and distribution. I wish to investigate the economic conditions which may have contributed to intellectual decline, and especially the reciprocal relationship which exists between producer and consumer not in terms of author and reader, as is traditional, but publisher and purchaser. I hope to show that the material and legal conditions governing publication promoted certain trends in the marketing and consumption

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Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964; ead., *The occult philosophy in the Elizabethan age*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979; Brian Vickers (ed.), *Occult and scientific mentalities in the Renaissance*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984; Charles B. Schmitt, *The Aristotelian tradition and Renaissance universities*, London: Variorum, 1984.

<sup>5</sup> Anthony Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger: a study in the history of classical scholarship: i, textual criticism and exegesis*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983; Jean Jehasse, *La Renaissance de la critique: l'essor de l'humanisme érudit de 1560 à 1614*, Saint Etienne: Presses de l'université de St-Etienne, 1976.

<sup>6</sup> For accounts of such controversy, see Brian Vickers, 'Frances Yates and the writing of history', *Journal of Modern History*, 51 (1979), 287–316; Charles B. Schmitt, 'Aristotelianism in the Veneto and the origins of modern science: some considerations on the problem of continuity', *Aristotelismo Veneto e scienza moderna*, ed. Luigi Olivieri, Padua: Antenore, 1983, pp. 104–23; id., 'La cultura scientifica in Italia nel quattrocento: problemi d'interpretazione', *Studi filosofici*, 3 (1980), 55–70, esp. 68–9.

<sup>7</sup> Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, *L'Apparition du livre*, Paris: Albin Michel, 1958, pp. 233ff., 331ff.; and the statistical evidence in Gustav Schwetschke, *Codex nundinarius Germaniae literatae bisecularis*, Halle: Schwetschke, 1850–77.

of books which influenced conceptions of genre and contributed to the collapse—perhaps more accurately described as implosion—of the boom in scholarly books in the 1620s. To do this, it will be necessary to offer a general account of the Northern European book market, before focusing attention on publishers themselves and investigating their finances, their connections with the world of scholarship, and their influence on the way scholarly activity was categorized and described.

The market in scholarly books was international in that its lingua franca was Latin; it had broad geographical limits which may be established from various sources, notably the balance sheets of international publishers such as Sigismund Feyerabend of Frankfurt, who flourished between 1560 and 1590, Christophe Plantin of Paris and Antwerp who died in 1589, and the Basle and Strasbourg printers of the late sixteenth century whose activities have been examined by Bietenholz and Chrisman.<sup>8</sup> A glance at these half-yearly accounts—drawn up after the twice-yearly book fairs at Frankfurt—shows that their commercial activities extend throughout the German-speaking area of Europe and into France, Switzerland, the Low Countries, Northern Italy, and, later, England and Central Europe, mainly through agents and booksellers. The list of publishers cited in the general catalogue of the Frankfurt book fairs confirms this network of outlets for scholarly publication. Printers, publishers, booksellers, agents and scholars congregated there in remarkably favourable commercial and intellectual conditions, which the humanist publisher Henri Estienne describes in glowing terms in his famous eulogy of the Fair printed in 1574.<sup>9</sup> Andreas Wechel, the Paris-based publisher of classical texts, settled in Frankfurt in 1572, having been forced to flee from France after the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre in 1572, and his newly founded presses flourished there through three

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<sup>8</sup> Heinrich Pallmann, *Sigmund Feyerabend: sein Leben und seine geschäftlichen Verbindungen nach archivalischen Quellen*, Frankfurt: Völcker, 1881; Leon Voet, *The golden compasses*, 2 vols. Amsterdam and New York: van Gendt; Abner Schram, 1969–72; P.G. Bietenholz, *Basle and France in the sixteenth century. The Basle humanists and printers in their contacts with francophone culture*, Geneva: Droz, 1971; Miriam U. Chrisman, *Lay culture, learned culture: books and social change in Strasbourg, 1480–1599*, Yale: Yale University Press, 1982.

<sup>9</sup> *Der Frankfurter Markt oder die Frankfurter Messe von Henricus Stephanus*, ed. Julius Ziehen, Frankfurt: Frankfurter Buchmesse, 1919; also Hubert Languet, *Epistolae politicae et historicae scriptae quondam ad Philippum Sydnaeum*, Frankfurt: Fitzer, 1633, xciii, p. 339.

generations.<sup>10</sup> Eustache Vignon of Geneva, Jacques Dupuis of Paris, and Antoine de Harsy of Lyon travelled regularly to Frankfurt, whose attraction lay not only in its commercial possibilities and relative tolerance, but also in its position on a number of trade routes between Italy and Northern France and Eastern and Western Europe.<sup>11</sup> This happy state of affairs ceased abruptly in 1631, at the time of the siege of the Imperial City by Gustavus Adolphus, after which other publishing centres gained prominence, notably Leipzig and Leiden.<sup>12</sup>

The final decades of Frankfurt's success marked also its most extensive display of scholarly books—an annual average of 1000 new publications in Latin, a brute figure not to be equalled for more than a century in Germany, representing three times the number of books of a similar sort declared annually in the decade 1570–80.<sup>13</sup> It is of interest to ask by what means a threefold increase in production—which included a high percentage of new editions of classical texts, and of new commentaries and expositions—was generated, and how it was sustained, especially as there is some evidence that books produced in Germany did not readily find French and Italian outlets.<sup>14</sup> Does this increase betoken an expanding class of purchasers—expanding either by geographical extension (to England and Central and Eastern Europe) or by the spread of Latinity and erudition to new categories of readers? Or a widespread demand for the latest and best edition of a given text? Or is it the case that print runs were smaller during these decades and that the expansion is illusory? How was this impressive commercial expansion (if such it was) financed? Such questions are not answered directly by contemporaries in their assessments of the market for books: these, on the whole, are restricted on the one hand to lamentations (by the publishers themselves) about the precariousness of their trade, and on the other by claims that it brought them vast profits (claims made for the most part by aspirant

<sup>10</sup> R.J.W. Evans, *The Wechel presses: humanism and Calvinism in Central Europe, 1572–1627*, Oxford, 1975 [*Past and Present* supplement no. 2]; Ian Maclean, 'L'Economie du livre erudit: le cas Wechel (1572–1627)', in *Le livre dans l'Europe de la Renaissance*, ed. Henri-Jean Martin and Pierre Aquilon, Paris: Promodis, 1988, pp. 230–40.

<sup>11</sup> See note 9, above, and Friedrich Kapp, *Geschichte des deutschen Buchhandels*, Leipzig: Verlag des deutschen Börsenvereins, 1886, pp. 448–521.

<sup>12</sup> Johann Goldfriedrich, *Geschichte des deutschen Buchhandels, 1648–1740*, Leipzig: Verlag des deutschen Börsenvereins, 1908, pp. 163–7; Henri-Jean Martin and Roger Chartier (eds.), *Histoire de l'édition française*, Paris: Promodis, 1983, i.398.

<sup>13</sup> This estimate is based on Schwetschke's figures.

<sup>14</sup> Pallmann, *Feyerabend*, pp. 128–33; Maclean, 'André Wechel at Frankfurt, 1572–1581', below, p. 180; *ibid.*, 'Mediations of Zabarella in Northern Germany', below, p. 42.

authors whose manuscripts had been rejected).<sup>15</sup> An examination of the financial conditions of scholarly publication explains to some degree how these incompatible views come to be formulated.

Very few publishers in this sector of the book market were engaged solely in this activity. As well as taking the financial risks involved in printing, advertising and distributing manuscripts, they also acted as printers for other publishers, as booksellers (a role forced upon them by the practice of *Tauschhandel*, by which they exchanged their own books for those of competitors at the book fair), as hosts for visiting scholars and for scholar-proofreaders, as postal agents, as bankers and as money changers.<sup>16</sup> Even as publishers they often shared financial risks with colleagues and with other denizens of the book trade, notably booksellers and paper manufacturers. Such interdependence often reveals itself in the form of mortgages: not only did they make over their stock and printing materials as surety to obtain loans from fellow publishers, but they even sacrificed their houses and real estate. Thus it was that Sigismund Feyerabend took on the mortgage of his former colleague's, Simon Hüter's, house, collaborated with his paper manufacturer Heinrich Tack, employed Andreas Wechel to print books for him, but later sold his house at a moment of financial difficulty to Andreas's heirs, who at the same time had accepted from Christophe Plantin of Antwerp his valuable collection of Greek punches and dyes as surety for a loan.<sup>17</sup> It seems that a great deal of commercial activity in the book trade involved paper transactions of this kind: the half-yearly accounts of Feyerabend and others yield evidence of considerable movements of stock and exchange of goods, but few signs of satisfactory cash flow, causing frequent crises even in well-established publishing houses. The threefold increase in production between 1570 and 1630 seems even more extraordinary in the light of such financial conditions.

There were also important legal constraints on publishers. From the late 1560s, Imperial censorship in the form of a *Bücherkommission* operated fitfully in Frankfurt, designed to prevent the circulation

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 153; M. Magnien, 'Un humaniste face aux problèmes d'édition: J.-C. Scaliger et les imprimeurs', *Bibliothèque d'humanisme et Renaissance*, 44 (1982), 307–29.

<sup>16</sup> Goldfriedrich, *Geschichte*, pp. 89ff.; Evans, *The Wechel presses*; Maclean, 'Andre Wechel'. The botanist Charles de l'Escluse [Clusius] even used booksellers and publishers to distribute daffodil bulbs to his friends throughout Europe (see F.W.T. Hunger, *Charles de L'Escluse 1529–1609*, The Hague: Nijhoff, 1972–43, ii.75).

<sup>17</sup> Pallmann, *Feyerabend*, pp. 37–9; Maclean 'Andre Wechel', 161–4; Voet, *The golden compasses*, i.120, ii.91; Evans, *The Wechel presses*, p. 4.

of defamatory and seditious material. What successive Holy Roman Emperors did not envisage was that the commission would serve two masters—Empire and Roman Catholic Church—and that its activities would eventually concentrate on the question of the precedence of Catholic over Protestant books in the Fair Catalogues.<sup>18</sup> The religious bias of the commission has been cited as a cause for the decline of the Book Fair itself, in that it discouraged the presence of foreign protestant publishers, although it is not clear how far it was effective in imposing its desired reforms.<sup>19</sup> This is not the only point where questions of law affect the book trade; these are much more in evidence in the licences (*privilèges*, *impressoria*) granted to authors or publishers to protect new editions from piracy in a given geographical zone. Because the market in scholarly books written in Latin was particularly susceptible to piracy or at the very least unauthorized printing in different market zones, it is common to find licences attached to them, sometimes from more than one jurisdiction, for it was possible for non-nationals and even petitioners of different confessional persuasions to obtain them. Judging by the Imperial *impressoria* preserved in the Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv in Vienna, these were carefully drafted by several echelons of Chancery officials. The final text, complete with Imperial or royal seal, was an impressive and very expensive document.<sup>20</sup>

In many cases the genre of the protected book was cited, thus giving generic categories a legal status. When the son-in-law of Melancthon, Caspar Peucer, petitioned the Emperor for a licence to print his father-in-law's *Opera* (including his *Opera theologica*), the licence grants permission under the surprising general rubric 'res literaria, militaris disciplina et literaria monumenta', presumably because of the embarrassment implicit in a Holy Roman Emperor sanctioning the publication of Lutheran theology. In other cases,

<sup>18</sup> Kapp, *Geschichte*, pp. 607ff.; U. Eisenhardt, *Die kaiserliche Aufsicht über Buchdruck, Buchhandel und Presse im Heiligen Römischen Reich*, Karlsruhe: C.F. Müller, 1970, pp. 85ff.

<sup>19</sup> W. Bruckner, 'Der kaiserliche Bucherkommissar Valentin Leucht', *Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens*, 3 (1961), cols. 97–178, and Evans, *The Wechsel Presses*, pp. 29–31.

<sup>20</sup> The cost of licences is attested by Erasmus in a letter to Willibald Pirckheimer (see *Opus epistolarum*, ed. P.S. Allen and H.M. Allen, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924, 1341, pp. 201–2 and 1344, pp. 232–3). See also Albert Labarre, 'Editions et privilèges des héritiers d'André Wechel à Francfort et à Hanau 1582–1627', *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch*, 46 (1970), pp. 238ff.

petitioners' requests were attenuated, and the term 'Christian' preferred to 'Catholic', suggesting an irenic influence at work in the Chancery. Publishers could also be granted general licences: the French refugee Andreas Wechel received one in 1574 which afforded protection for all his books except those in the domain of theology and history.<sup>21</sup> The former exclusion is readily comprehensible, as Wechel was a protestant; the latter is more unusual, especially as Wechel declares his intention to specialize in the publication of ancient and medieval historical documents in 1575.<sup>22</sup> The category 'libri historici' in Frankfurt Book Fair Catalogues included, however, tendentious accounts of very recent history; it may be for this reason that the category was denied Imperial protection.<sup>23</sup> If so, it suggests that the generic categories cited in licences are those of the Fair Catalogues themselves.

It is also common to find references to the combined personal and public interest served by scholarly books: the publisher acted 'in the public interest' ('ad commodum rei literariae': 'in bonum publicum') in promoting learning and scholarship, but desired 'fair recompense' ('speratum laborum suorum emolumentum') for his 'heavy outlay of money' ('gravissima impensa'; 'magna sumpta'). This is one of the very rare occasions on which the commercial interests involved in intellectual life become explicit.<sup>24</sup>

The most important feature of the licence for our purposes, however, is the fact that it can only be granted for a new or improved edition. In order to obtain protection for a book, publishers were obliged to claim that it is 'editio nova' or 'recognita', or 'locupletior'. As the licence was expensive, publishers must only have sought it when they were reasonably sure that a book would be profitable: this inference is confirmed by the readiness of publishers to reprint each other's scholarly productions outside the jurisdiction of the licence protecting them.<sup>25</sup> Such activity, which is very common in the period under discussion, suggests that the whole academic sector of the market was lucrative, but not all historians

<sup>21</sup> Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Vienna, Impressoria, FZ 2, ff. 251–6; FZ 76, ff. 253–5, FZ 79, ff. 174–206.

<sup>22</sup> Wechel's dedicatory letter in Albert Krantz, *Wandalia*, Frankfurt: Andreas Wechel, 1575, Aa2.

<sup>23</sup> See 'André Wechel at Frankfurt, 1572–81', below, Appendix II, p. 189.

<sup>24</sup> Impressoria, FZ 2, F 251; FZ 65 s.v. Wechel; FZ 56f. 25', 245'; FZ 79, ff. 181–4.

<sup>25</sup> On examples of this practice, and the disputes which arise from it, see Maclean, 'André Wechel', below, pp. 173–8.

agree on this point. Robert Kingdon has argued that humanist publishers such as Christophe Plantin or Henri Estienne chose to subsidize the publication of grandiose scholarly projects from the profits to be made from the sales of liturgical books in the first (Catholic) case, and psalters in the second.<sup>26</sup> Dyroff's account of the activities of Gotthard Vögelin suggests that he subsidized scholarship by the sale of text books and manuals; this may be true also in the case of Andreas Wechel.<sup>27</sup>

One might also argue—with equal, if not greater, plausibility from the available data—that publishers did not take risk on books which they thought would not make a profit. The point is of some importance and can be tested by using the evidence provided by contemporary publishers' catalogues. Were these no more than means for advertising all available stock? Or do they contain judgements as to the desirability of certain sorts of publication? Did they aspire to comprehensive coverage in certain specialized areas? In what ways do they reflect the publishers' conception of the market and its divisions?

Such catalogues, which were distributed both as broadsheets and in the form of pamphlets, varied considerably, but the majority listed more than just the most recently published volumes. Most were arranged not alphabetically but by genre, no doubt to assist the potential purchaser; it is extremely rare to find any reference either to the year of publication or the price. In many cases, they included a fairly complete back list including books inherited from previous owners of the presses; sometimes they recorded the results of *Tauschhandel* or speculative bookselling. Some followed the order of categories laid down in the Book Fair catalogues, that is, the precedence of subjects in universities: theology, law, medicine, liberal arts, followed by extra-curricular subjects. Most others gave prominence to the specialties of the press in question: such is the case for Johannes Gymnich of Cologne and Zacharias Palthen of Frankfurt, both of whom concentrate on legal publications.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>26</sup> R.M. Kingdon, 'The business activities of printers Henri and François Estienne', in *Aspects de la propagande religieuse*, ed. Gabrielle Berthoud, Geneva: Droz, 1957, pp. 258–75.

<sup>27</sup> H.D. Dyroff, 'Gotthard Vögelin—Verleger, Drucker, Buchhandler 1597–1631', *Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens*, 4 (1963), cols. 1131–1423; Maclean, 'André Wechel'.

<sup>28</sup> *Die Messkataloge des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts 1564–1600*, ed. Bernhard Fabian, 5 vols., Hildesheim and New York: Olms, 1972–2001; G. Pollard and A. Ehrman, *The distribution of books by catalogue from the invention of printing to A.D. 1800, based on material in the Broxbourne Library*, Cambridge: Roxburghe Club, 1965; G. Richter, 'Bibliographische Beiträge zur Geschichte buchhändlerischer Kataloge im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert', in *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Buches und seiner Funktion in der Gesellschaft*,



A well-documented set of examples of such lists is provided by the Wechel press: as well as the manuscript catalogue submitted by Andreas Wechel to the Bücherkommission in 1579, the printed lists of 1594, 1602 and 1618 survive.<sup>29</sup> The number of entries increased from 190 to 523 in this time: more or less all of the catalogue of 1594 was available in 1618, as well as some Wechel publications dating from the 1560s which were not declared in 1594. The order of entries changes in 1618 to conform to that of the Book Fair; in earlier catalogues the innovative textbooks of Greek grammar, logic and rhetoric, the prestigious editions of the classics, the collection of historical documents begun in 1575, and the writings of Ramus were given pride of place. It is possible to construct from these lists a number of academic preferences and objectives—an investment in Ramus's pedagogical texts, and his encyclopedic view of learning; an irenic version of Calvinism; a conviction that the classical heritage should be preserved and purified; but it is difficult to separate such objectives from notions of profit.<sup>30</sup> Kingdon's hypothesis that humanist publishers financed marginal scholarly publication from staples in the form of liturgical books or school books seems, even in this case, implausible; a more reasonable inference from the available data is that no risk was taken unless there was a good chance of uptake by the market. It is tempting to interpret the retention of all titles on the list as a sign of faith in the intrinsic value of their products; but it is more plausible to assume that nothing was to be lost by the continued advertisement of unsold stock.

The Wechel presses exemplify also the importance of insuring that books have known outlets. From the 1570s onwards, the Wechels were associated with an international set of scholars, court officials and schoolteachers who assisted with sales and supplied copy. This network, which extended from England to the Imperial court and beyond, has been skillfully uncovered by Robert Evans; a similar configuration has

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*Festschrift für Hans Widman*, Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1974, pp. 183–229; R. Engelsing, "Deutsche Verlegerplakate des 17. Jahrhunderts", *Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens*, ix (1969), 217–338; Reinhart Wittmann (ed.), *Bücherkataloge als buchgeschichtliche Quellen in der frühen Neuzeit*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1984.

<sup>29</sup> The present location of these catalogues is respectively the Stadtbibliothek, Mainz, the Staatsbibliothek, Bamberg, and the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

<sup>30</sup> Evans, *The Wechel presses*; Maclean, 'L'Economie du livre erudit' and 'André Wechel'.

been shown to feature in the success of the Plantin press by Leon Voet.<sup>31</sup> Such networks, which are, in effect, a form of patronage, often represent fairly narrow confessional interests which publishers, as their clients, reflect. Thus their lists are influenced by a number of commercial and sectarian interests, at the same time as presenting to the broad public what purports to be timeless learning. But this is not all. As well as subscribing to the view that the truths of scholarship were eternal, publishers were obliged, by the system of licences and the nature of the market in which they operated—a market which required that new and better editions were forever pressed on the potential purchasers of scholarly books—to accede to the view that there was continual improvement and expansion in the world of letters, and thereby to commit themselves both to an ideology of progress and, in practical terms, to the view that publishing was an expanding economy.

These paradoxes reappear if we turn our attention to institutional and private purchasers at this time, and to the bibliographers through whom they acceded to the market. We have already seen that the Frankfurt Book Fair Catalogues follow approximately the precedence of university faculties: theology, law, medicine, philosophy. When Georg Draut of Marburg published the second edition of his immense cumulative bibliography of these fairs (which he supplemented from the catalogues and broadsheets ('nomenclaturae') of individual publishers) in 1625, he justified this order in a portentous prefatory letter to his patrons, the professorate of the University of Marburg, his alma mater. Knowledge is here portrayed as the colossus of Babylon, whose head is theology, arms and chest are law, stomach is medicine and legs are philosophy, the propedeutic discipline which leads to ('supports', in this metaphor) the higher faculties. The contents of theology and philosophy contain much which does not relate to those disciplines in themselves—either as propaganda or polemics, or as informal accounts of the mysteries of the universe; the category 'libri historici, geographici et politici' is intercalated between medicine and philosophy; and the categories 'libri poetici' and 'libri musici' come at the end, and contain humanistic schoolbooks such as Virgil and Ovid which one might have expected to be listed

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<sup>31</sup> Evans, *The Wechel presses*, pp. 6–37; Voet, *The golden compasses*, i.60–73; also Ursula Baumeister, 'Gilles Beys, 1541/2–1595', in *Imprimeurs et libraires parisiens du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle: ouvrage publié d'après les manuscrits de Philippe Renouard*, Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1979, iii.312–73; Kingdon, 'The business activities of printers Henri and François Estienne'.

with the liberal arts. This general order has some sort of justification based on notions of disciplinary precedence.<sup>32</sup> It is recommended also by the French scholar and librarian Gabriel Naudé in his *Advis pour dresser une bibliothèque* of 1627 because, he avers, it is the traditional manner in which libraries are arranged and thus simplifies the task of those seeking given texts;<sup>33</sup> and it even is used as the general principle of organisation by the speculative bibliographer François Grudé de la Croix du Maine in his *Desseins ou projets pour dresser une bibliothèque parfaite* which were composed in the 1580s.<sup>34</sup>

The sub-categories of bibliographical arrangement are, however, often less conservative, and reflect the intellectual trends of this period more clearly. In La Croix du Maine's ideal library, alchemy is placed between philosophy, mathematics and music, and Naudé, a known habitué of scientific and *libertin* circles in Paris, recommends the purchase of many subversive modern thinkers under innocuous headings, and even goes so far as to suggest that books altogether beyond the disciplinary map on 'matieres peu cognues' should be purchased.<sup>35</sup> These suggestions were put into effect by the important French patron of scholarship and book collector Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc.<sup>36</sup> Another practical example of the shifts in the disciplinary map is provided by Thomas James's subject catalogue of arts produced in 1624/5 to help Oxford graduates and possibly undergraduates consulting the holdings of the newly founded Bodleian Library.<sup>37</sup> The entries in this bibliography were all acquired between 1600 and the date of its composition; the majority were bought fresh from Book Fair Catalogues or through the bookseller John Bill of London, who was dispatched abroad in 1603 in quest of specific books.<sup>38</sup> This catalogue represents therefore a selection made

<sup>32</sup> Draut, *Bibliotheca classica*, Frankfurt: Balthasar Oster, 1625, esp.\*2–4. The books about disciplinary precedence are listed in cols. 1451–2.

<sup>33</sup> Guillaume Naudé, *Advis pour dresser une bibliothèque*, Leipzig: VEB, 1963, pp. 100–1.

<sup>34</sup> *Les bibliothèques françaises de la Croix de Maine et de Du Verdier*, ed. M. de la Monnoye et al., Paris: Saillant et Nyon; Lambert, 1772, ii.xxv–xxx.

<sup>35</sup> *Advis*, pp. 45–6.

<sup>36</sup> *La Bibliothèque de Peiresc*, ed. Edith Bayle, Agnès Bresson and Jean-François Mailard, Paris: Editions du CNRS, 1990.

<sup>37</sup> G.W. Wheeler, *The earliest catalogues of the Bodleian Library*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1928, pp. 104–14; the copy I have consulted of James's subject catalogue is that preserved in Queen's College, Oxford (MS 199).

<sup>38</sup> W.D. Macray, *Annals of the Bodleian Library*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1890, p. 50, quoted by Pollard and Ehrman, *The distribution of books*, p. 77; Thomas

to be of use to scholars in Oxford as well as to enhance the prestige of the newly-founded library. It lists in turn books on grammar, geometry, astronomy, architecture, arithmetic, optics, cosmography, geography, chronology, music, logic, Aristotle, metaphysics, military arts, moral philosophy, politics, natural philosophy, rhetoric and history: each subject has sub-divisions within which titles are arranged alphabetically by author. History is the largest category, but the proliferation of mathematical genres should be noted, as well as the low priority given to Aristotle. James's spread of subjects does not accord well with the arts curriculum at Oxford in his time; this would suggest that the Bodleian Library was seen to be somewhat distanced from the immediate pedagogical concerns of the University.

The emergence of finding lists such as that of Draut or that of Philibert Mareschal which appeared at Paris in 1598<sup>39</sup> may well have had its own effect on the world of letters. Draut's *Bibliotheca classica* is notable for its complex and exhaustive sub-categories and for its cross-referencing. Under each general rubric, there is an alphabetical series of topics by which it is possible to establish a crude bibliography for almost any subject from Hebrew grammar to sleepwalking, from anagrammology to the lives of famous Jesuits, from naval battles to exorcism. Under the names of classical authors, all known editions are listed according to date and editor, but no value judgements are made; this is also the case with topic headings. Indeed, Draut, a Lutheran pastor, even went so far as to cite—and occasionally to intermingle—Catholic, Lutheran and other Protestant theological books under such inflammatory headings as justification by faith, the real presence, and predestination, perhaps in the hope that some super-theologian would emerge who would be capable, having read all the available material, of reaching a definitive verdict on a given issue. This is in fact not far-fetched, as Draut was a graduate of a University which actively encouraged such accumulation of opinions and their assessment.<sup>40</sup> Draut's cross-references reflect another feature of intellectual life of the late Renaissance: the interpenetration of disciplines. It had of course long been the case that lawyers had invoked medicine and theology, doctors law and theology, theologians

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Hearne, *Reliquiae Bodleianae*, Oxford, 1703, p. 66, quoted by Pollard and Ehrman, *ibid.*, p. 86.

<sup>39</sup> Viz. *La guide des arts et sciences, et promptuaire de tous livres, tant composez que traduits en françois*, Paris: F. Jacquin, 1598.

<sup>40</sup> See below, 'English books on the continent, 1570–1630', p. 345.

medicine and law, and philosophers all three. The scholastic reliance on the corpus and logical method of Aristotle had ensured to some degree the communication from one discipline to another.<sup>41</sup> But titles like *Idea morborum Hermetico~Hippocratica methodo Ramea adornata*, *Tractatus politicoiuridicus de Nobilitate et mercatura* or *Physica Christiana, seu de rerum creaturarum creatione* suggest a more radical transgression of disciplinary boundaries.<sup>42</sup>

How do these finding lists and bibliographical aids relate to the purchasers of scholarly books at this time? Connections are sometimes hard to establish. It seems, for example, that in spite of Draut's listing of all available editions of a given classic, and Naudé's recommendation that the most recent and best editions should be purchased together with all available commentaries and expositions, most libraries did not possess more than one copy of any given text, and, indeed, did not necessarily substitute their edition for the latest one to appear. Such an inference can be drawn from the extant catalogues of religious houses whose libraries were founded in the late Renaissance; it is also true of the Bodleian Library at Oxford, although there are counter-examples in a number of Cambridge colleges.<sup>43</sup> This suggests that there must have been an expanding market for humanistic texts at the end of the sixteenth century, presumably supplying the plethora of new educational establishments of various confessional kinds throughout Europe. Noncurricular subjects, especially history and philosophy in its broader sense, did not have such an obvious outlet. There is ample evidence that a market existed not only for topical historical books, but also texts relating to much earlier periods. When Andreas Wechel set up his printing presses anew in Frankfurt in 1574, he confided to his friend and protector Hubert Languet that he had decided to specialise in historical books and documents because these are attractive to 'many different kinds

<sup>41</sup> See in general, Charles B. Schmitt, *Aristotle and the Renaissance*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1983; also Edward Grant, 'Aristotelianism and the longevity of the medieval world view', *History of Science*, xvi (1978), 93–106.

<sup>42</sup> These examples are taken from Draut, *Bibliotheca classica*, cols. 948, 790, 491.

<sup>43</sup> See, for example, Dom Abrassart, *Catalogue alphabétique de la Bibliothèque de Tours* (Bibliothèque municipale, Tours, MS 1482), an inventory of confiscated libraries prepared for the Comite d'Instruction in the early 1790s, including many religious houses founded in the period 1580–1640; Wheeler, *Catalogues of the Bodleian Library*, p. 17. Dr. Elizabeth Leedham-Green, the author of *Books in Cambridge Inventories: book lists from Vice-Chancellor's Court Probate Inventories in the Tudor and Stuart Periods*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986, has informed me of counter-examples in Cambridge colleges.

of reader' ('ad plurima genera lectorum'): he and his heirs produce a series of folio volumes of immense erudition, density and cost between 1575 and the 1620s which seem to have been collected as a series; their purchasers, such as Jan Rutgers, a court official of Gustavus Adolphus, may have read them for their intrinsic interest, but it is more likely that they looked upon them as investments or as prestigious possessions. Certainly, they were beyond the purse of University students.<sup>44</sup>

A more accessible category of book is found under the rubric 'libri philosophici'. This included not only the manuals and texts associated with the arts course of most universities, but also texts explaining the wonders of nature, of human procreation and of the secrets of the universe. These proliferated between the middle of the sixteenth century and 1630; they were produced in small formats and frequently reprinted. One such book was the *De subtilitate* by Cardano, which first appeared in 1550. In it, the author set out to lay bare the principles by which the universe operates in a manner accessible to Latinate non-specialists.<sup>45</sup> Many other such works, often associated with magic and the occult, followed in its wake, written by such authors as Levinus Lemnius, Giambattista della Porta, John Dee, Pierre de la Primaudaye, and Robert Fludd.<sup>46</sup> Draut's general rubric of philosophy, in this and other cases, conflated a number of different purchasing groups from which a tripartite division can be deduced: buyers of textbooks in schools and universities; specialists in a given profession; and general readers, the 'studiosi', on whose purchases much of the speculative part of the market depended.<sup>47</sup>

The case of Cardano illustrates the relative profitability of different market sectors quite well. His book enjoyed a spasm of success in the 1550s and again in the 1580s, but is thereafter not reprinted in the period which concerns us. But the text of Julius Caesar Scaliger, the neo-Aristotelian who undertook to refute Cardano in a series of

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<sup>44</sup> Wechel's dedicatory letter in Albert Krantz, *Wandalia*; Evans, *The Wechel presses*, pp. 11–14; *Catalogus Bibliothecae Jani Rutgersii Dordraceni... quorum auctio habebitur in aedibus Elzevierianis I. Martii Anno 1633*, Leiden: Elzevier, 1633.

<sup>45</sup> On this topic in general, see *Occult and scientific mentalities in the Renaissance*, ed. Brian Vickers, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> Ian Maclean, 'Philosophical books in European markets, 1570–1630: the case of Ramus', in *New perspectives in Renaissance thought*, ed. S. Hutton and J. Henry, London: Duckworth, 1990, pp. 253–63; *Histoire de l'édition française*, i.543–83; Chrisman, *Lay culture, learned culture*, pp. 71ff.; Rudolf Hirsch, *Printing, selling and reading 1450–1550*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1967, p. 31.

*Exercitationes* first published in 1557, was reprinted again in 1576 as a university textbook and thereafter reappeared at least once a decade for the next fifty years. Scaliger's refutation was taken to be a statement of orthodox Aristotelianism in German Universities, or was used to provide subjects for short theses.<sup>48</sup> Both Cardano and Scaliger were frequently cited by turn-of-the-century scholars;<sup>49</sup> but from the point of view of the publisher and bookseller, only Scaliger is worthy of mention. Cardano's book may have fallen victim to its own claim to have explained natural phenomena more completely, more clearly and with greater authority than ever before; such a claim could be repeated by subsequent popular authors in the same field, and was in any case open to refutation by the advances made in observational and experimental science.

This survey of the scholarly book market from the point of view of its material producers has been necessarily elementary and sketchy; but it seems worthwhile in conclusion to measure the distance we have travelled from the commonplace view of academic decline in the late sixteenth century, and from the ideals of the early humanists. For them a library was a *locus amoenus* in which all texts would be restored to their first and authoritative state by palingenesis, would be provided once and for all with wholly adequate critical apparatus, and be placed at the appropriate point, on the appropriate shelf, under the appropriate rubric which itself formed part of the ideal encyclopaedia.<sup>50</sup> It was to this end that the praiseworthy and indefatigable efforts of late Renaissance scholars were directed, and I wish to stress that I have not set out in any way to vilify their work or impugn their motives. Seen in a commercial light, however, their texts and critical apparatus were not immaterial idealities, but the very life blood of the publishing industry, and were reproduced as much for financial as for scholarly ends. Palingenesis—the perfect restitution of texts—could never be allowed to come about, because it would make redundant new 'improved' editions with the protection they enjoyed by licence or *privilege* and bring an expanding market to a premature end. Genre was no longer an ideal

<sup>48</sup> Ian Maclean, 'The interpretation of natural signs: Cardano's *De subtilitate* versus Scaliger's *Exercitationes*', in *Occult and scientific mentalities*, pp. 231–52.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, and Kristian Jensen, 'Protestant rivalry, metaphysics and rhetoric in Germany, 1590–1620', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 41 (1990), 24–43.

<sup>50</sup> *Histoire de l'édition française*, i.429–57; H. Fischer, 'Conrad Gessner (1516–65) as bibliographer and encyclopaedist', *The Library*, v. 21 (1966), 269–81; R. McKeon, 'The transformation of the liberal arts in the Renaissance', in *Developments in the early Renaissance*, ed. B.S. Levy, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1972, pp. 158–223.

category belonging to a closed and sufficient system of categories; rather it was, at best, a crude reflection of the contemporary state of knowledge in relation to existing academic institutions, at worst a means by which potential purchasers could be attracted to the parts of a sale catalogue most susceptible to be of interest to them: our humanist encyclopaedia has become open-ended and rough-and-ready. The cry was no longer 'abeant studia in mores', but rather 'abeant studia in libros', or even 'abeant libri in libros'.<sup>51</sup> The book became, furthermore, an object to be preserved and catalogued for itself, thus making the fact of publication culturally significant no matter through what means or in whose interest it first came about. The book became also an object to be collected as a potentially valuable possession, as a token of social or intellectual prestige, as an item of exchange, and not just the physical manifestation of a message to be consumed by an intellect.<sup>52</sup> Part of this development can be ascribed to the technology of printing, which facilitated the production and distribution of texts; part can be laid at the door of the laws governing publishing in Europe at this time; part can be seen as the logical extension of bibliographical activities which encourage the production of books on books. But whatever causes one ascribes to the publishing boom, and especially the boom in the interpretation and mediation of texts, between 1570 and 1630, it seems difficult to deny it a role in the decline and eventual demise of the world of humanism of which it was the material expression.

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<sup>51</sup> Cf. Montaigne, *Essais*, ed. A. Thibaudet and M. Rat, Paris: Gallimard, 1962, iii.13, p. 1045: 'Il y a plus affaire à interpreter les interpretations qu'à interpreter les choses, et plus de livres sur les livres que sur autre subject: nous ne faisons que nous entregloser.'

<sup>52</sup> Cf. the subtitle of Gessner's *Bibliotheca universalis* of 1545: 'sive catalogus omnium scriptorum locupletissimus, in tribus linguis, latina, graeca et hebraica: extantium et non extantium, veterum et recentiorum in hunc usque diem, doctorum et indoctorum, publicatorum et in bibliothecis latentium.' See also, *Les usages de l'imprimé (XV<sup>e</sup>-XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, ed. Roger Chartier. Paris: Fayard, 1987.