

(1914), the losses due to World War II cannot yet be estimated but must have been considerable, especially in France (Chartres, Tours), Poland (Warsaw), and Germany. Nobody knows what the future may bring, and it is the responsibility of scholars, librarians, and government officials alike to provide in advance for the protection and preservation of this irreplaceable material. Otherwise, medieval and Renaissance civilisation may suffer the same fate as ancient civilisation did, through the destruction of the library in Alexandria.

This bibliography, in the main, takes for its basis the manuscript collections as they existed in the period between the two world wars, and also follows the political geography and place names of that period. Its emphasis is definitely upon public collections extant during that period, and upon the content rather than the external characteristics or provenance of the manuscripts. Although the list doubtless contains gaps and errors due to oversight, many categories were consciously omitted as irrelevant to our purpose, i. e.: general works on manuscripts or on paleography; travel books containing occasional mention of libraries; books dealing with the history or condition of particular libraries; old inventories of collections no longer extant, except when those collections survive as parts of larger collections, or when the present locations and content of their scattered manuscripts have been indicated;¹ catalogues of manuscripts in Greek, Oriental, or modern vernacular languages; studies dealing with individual manuscripts, or with the manuscripts of individual authors; catalogues of archives, unless they include manuscript books; sales catalogues, and other catalogues of private collections; catalogues that are either antiquated or unverifiable; studies dealing with scribes, miniatures, or bindings without reference to content; and catalogues of printed books. I have tended to be more inclusive in the case of collections for which no systematic catalogues are available, and hence borderline studies must serve as substitutes. Unless indicated otherwise, I have inspected the books described, and this is more important than it may seem, since the titles are often wrongly listed in previous bibliographies and in library catalogues, and bibliographical ghosts are not infrequent in this type of literature. I have included lists compiled for very special scholarly purposes, such as catalogues of illuminated, classical, patristic, juristic, theological, philosophical, hagiographical, liturgical, historical, or scientific manuscripts, but the reader should remember that such lists are rarely complete for the libraries they cover.

1) A bibliography of the old inventories of medieval and Renaissance libraries would be an important task all by itself but is beyond the scope of this bibliography, which is intended to serve as a guide to extant manuscripts according to their content.