

Theme three looks at usability and accessibility of digital library services. The papers in this section are quite diverse, moving from a broad and general examination of the characteristics of the truly usable and accessible digital library to far narrower studies involving barriers to library use by Nigerian professionals and digital library services at the Italian Health Institute library. Theme four is similarly structured. Its focus is on designing the information environment from the national and institutional perspective, and, again, the papers vary in content, from an examination of broad principles involving researchers and resources to specific studies such as those involving Web services in Portuguese public libraries and Denmark's electronic research library.

The last section focuses on the creation of digital resources by user communities and the provision of "usable" repositories for others. These communities can be large or small—for instance, the general public that might wish to participate (aided by museums, libraries, or archives) in the sharing of cultural heritage information online or the "closed" community of a university where an "open archive" is established to store an institution's scholarly output such as papers (published or not), data, reports, and so on.

The diversity of papers in this volume is indicative of a number of major ways in which libraries and librarians are

changing. Technology is occupying a tremendous amount of our time and energy, and "knowledge workers" are not afraid to experiment, customize, and play with various products and resources. Nor, if these papers are accurate, are we reluctant to specify when the results have been less than stellar: Great emphasis is now placed on pinning down and defining the ingredients that make up a successful service, project, or product via the use of social science research methods. Our profession seems hungrier than ever for statistics on anything and everything that can be measured, looking for the answer to such elusive matters as: What makes this thing tick, run, work, succeed? What doesn't? What characteristics are we looking for? How should we quantify this? Is it quantifiable? Could we do this again somewhere else? Do we really want to?

Nevertheless, until the day comes that librarians work from their homes in front of computers—in the same manner as the programmers and other computer workers we hear about who simply roll out of bed, make coffee, and start their day in front of the computer in their home office—libraries will continue to be places with walls. Accordingly, the idea of space, place, and geography in these papers is real and palpable even when discussing patrons not using the resources located within the actual building itself. The character of a physical institution—a place with walls from which projects and ideas emanate—is overwhelmingly evident in every single paper in this volume. And that rootedness in place is, quite frankly, the real joy in reading a collection such as this.—*Nancy McCormack, Queen's University.*

Staikos, Konstantinos Sp. *The History of the Library in Western Civilization, Vol. I: From Minos to Cleopatra: The Greek World from the Minoans' Archival Libraries to*

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the Universal Library of the Ptolemies. Trans. Timothy Cullen. New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll; The Netherlands: Hes & DeGraaf; and Athens: Kotinos. 2004. 351p. \$75 (ISBN: 1584561149, USA). LC 03-58221.

From Minos to Cleopatra is volume one of a proposed five-volume series. The other four are: Volume II, *The Roman World from Cicero to Hadrian: From the First Bilingual Collections to the Monumental Libraries of the Empire*; Volume III, *The Byzantine World, from Constantine the Great to Cardinal Bessarion: The Influence of the Church on the Spread of Learning and the Foundation of University Libraries*; Volume IV, *The Medieval World in the West, from Cassiodorus to Furnival: The Influence of the Church on the Spread of Learning and the Foundation of University Libraries*; and Volume V, *The Renaissance, from Petrarch to Michelangelo: The Role of the Revival of Ancient Literature and the Spread of Printing in the Foundation of Humanistic Libraries*.

From Minos to Cleopatra is divided into five chapters. Chapter I, *The Minoan and Mycenaean Civilizations*, covers ancient scripts, including the pictographic or hieroglyphic (2500–1800 BC), Linear A (1900–1450 BC), Phaistos Disc (circa 1700 BC), Linear B (1400–1200 BC), and the Cypriot syllabary (1050–320 BC), as well as the work of Bronze Age scribes in making tablets and storing them in archives. Evidence from excavations in the Near East, such as the state archives in the palace library at Ebla, indicates that the usual arrangement for filing tablets consisted of wooden shelves attached to the walls and supported on wooden posts. The shelves were often used to store wooden or plaster boxes or wicker baskets that served as bookcases. Other shelves were partitioned into pigeonholes, where tablets were arranged in a way similar to books today. Tablets often stood vertically like books in a bookcase with only the

edge showing; at other times, they were stacked lying flat so that only the text of the first side of the tablet on top of the stack was visible. Most tablets included a length of fiber or string inserted into the center. The free end of the string had to be long enough to be threaded through a clay sealing and firmly knotted. The sealings usually served as labels for individual tablets and also often used to indicate the contents of boxes or baskets of tablets or papyrus rolls.

Chapter II, *From Homer to the End of the Classical Period*, covers the development of public, academic, and private libraries in the Greek World from the time of Polycrates of Samos and Pisistratus (founder of the first public library Athens in the sixth century BC) to the formation of the first libraries in the Athenian philosophy schools, Plato's Academy, Aristotle's Lyceum, the Garden of Epicurus, and Zeno's Stoa (in the fourth century BC). Before the mid-fourth century BC, the value of the written word and its usefulness to education were vigorously debated. Evidence suggests that the era of the written word occurred in the Greek world in the early decades of the fifth century, accompanied by a decline in the oral tradition. Images of the scribe and the reader of the Aristotelian age came to symbolize the new era as the written word inexorably replaced oral recitation from memory of the Socratic and Platonic ages.

Although chapters III and IV both cover the Hellenistic Period, chapter III focuses on the Universal Library of the Ptolemies in Alexandria and chapter IV focuses on the monumental libraries of other dynasties that succeeded Alexander the Great in Asia Minor and the Near East, from Pergamum to Ai Khanoum to the libraries of the gymnasia. At the very mention of the Hellenistic period, most readers imagine the Alexandrian Library as a symbol of the Greeks' cultural

supremacy in the then known world. The three main factors that led to this accumulation of books included the opening up of relations between the Greek world and the East, the passionate love of books displayed by the Ptolemaic kings, and the rise to prominence of the new discipline of textual studies in literature. The founding of great libraries and the growth of textual studies were not limited to the Greeks but were also the characteristic feature of other kingdoms ruled by Alexander the Great's successors as well as other intellectual centers that managed to remain administratively independent of the ambitious Macedonian kings. Of the latter, the library at Pergamum in Asia Minor, founded by the Attalids, tried for a long time to create a library rivaling the Alexandrian Library. Also, the archives at Ai Khanoum in Bactira in the northeast of Afghanistan, one of the kingdoms through which the Silk Road ran, was a Greek cultural center located in one of the most remote spots on the globe.

Chapter V, *Architecture*, focuses on the architecture, interior layout, furniture, and fittings of libraries and archives toward the end of the second century BC. Drawing together the conclusions of architectural historians and evidence from excavations, Staikos has painted a picture of a typical library during this period. The library would have a main hall designed to house only a token quantity, not the main collection. These books would not necessarily have been the most used or useful, the concept of the reference library being a more modern concept. Around the main hall would be auxiliary buildings where the majority of the books were kept. As the process of collecting books continued over a long period and followed no preordained plan, it is reasonable to assume that the bulk of the collection was housed in outbuildings that grew up like the "cells of a beehive, with big and small rooms

connected to each other by roofed stoas and hidden corridors."

From Minos to Cleopatra is a handsome volume, which is printed on glossy paper and bound in maroon buckram-covered boards with title and publication data embossed in gold on the front cover and spine. An illustration of an imaginary reconstruction of the Museum in Alexandria from the title page of M. Meibonius's *Diogenes Laertius* (published in Amsterdam in 1698) is affixed to the cover and bordered with a gold-embossed frame. A dust jacket with illustrations from the Late Minoan period (1600–1550 BC) and from the time of Cleopatra VII (51 BC[?]) adds both protection and further detail. Lavishly reproduced illustrations in black, white, and sepia, as well as full color, bring the well-written (and skillfully translated from the original Greek) text to life.

Each chapter is documented copiously with endnotes that further illumine the text. An extensive twenty-three-page bibliography leads the reader to primary and secondary sources on the history of libraries in the ancient world, and a nineteen-page index provides detailed access to this volume. It was surprising that Lionel Casson's *Libraries in the Ancient World* (Yale 2001) was not in the bibliography. Although Casson's and Staikos's works cover some of the same territory, Casson's, with illustrations limited to black and white, sells at a third of the price of Staikos's. Academic and research libraries and serious collectors of library history will certainly want both for their different approaches and for their discussions of material that does not overlap.—*Plummer Alston Jones Jr., East Carolina University.*

Warner, Julian. *Humanizing Information Technology.* Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow, 2004. 156p. alk. paper, \$35 (ISBN: 0810849569). LC 2003-17048.