

history of the book.—Susan G. Swartzburg, *Rutgers University Library, New Brunswick, New Jersey.*

Wright, H. Curtis. ***The Oral Antecedents of Greek Librarianship.*** Foreword by Jesse H. Shera. Afterword by H. J. de Vleeschauwer. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young Univ. Pr., 1977. 237p. \$19.95. LC 77-73645. ISBN 0-8425-0623-3.

Librarians should not be deterred by the nondescript title, especially since so little scholarly research exists on the historical roots of the profession. *The Oral Antecedents of Greek Librarianship* seeks to fill a significant gap in the literature of librarianship. Wright attempts to deal with the antecedents of the Alexandrian library movement by focusing on the transition of classical civilization from an oral to a written tradition. Here, the author believes, can be found the origins of the library. This hypothesis is intriguing and entitles Wright to take his reader on a historical journey that recounts the function of information in classical society from preliterate times to classical Greece.

On the way, he introduces several unusual observations, some of which relate directly to his theme, others of which digress from it. One strong observation compares Homer to the librarian in terms of the information function of each within their societies—a unique argument that is well defended. Another observation of considerable merit details the heavy influence Oriental bibliographic methodology had on the Greeks. A third observation, however, involves Wright's defense of the "inventorist" against the "evolutionist" theory of writing. This one makes for a nice story, but hardly worth the lengthy effort in terms of his theme.

Of particular concern to this reviewer is Wright's heavy reliance on a few secondary sources, especially the works of S. H. Butcher, Rudolph Pfeiffer, and Chester G. Starr. It is obvious the author bought the ideas of all three, but his hopes that lengthy quotes from their works will serve to convince his own readers fall short of their mark. This is especially true for chapter Four, where Pfeiffer is referred to or quoted in nearly half the 246 footnotes.

The writing style is frequently burden-

some (especially in chapter One, "The Metaphysics of Information"), and the organization occasionally loose. Shera's Foreword is good, but de Vleeschauwer's essay has already appeared in *Toward a Theory of Librarianship: Papers in Honor of Jesse Hauk Shera*, edited by Conrad Rawski (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow, 1973). Taken together, the Foreword, Afterword, and text cover the subject; but a definitive study awaits the scholar who will put more stock in primary sources and be less influenced by second-party interpretations.—Wayne A. Wiegand, *College of Library Science, University of Kentucky.*

Kehr, Wolfgang; Neubauer, Karl Wilhelm; and Stoltzenburg, Joachim, eds. ***Zur Theorie und Praxis des modernen Bibliothekswesens.*** München: Verlag Dokumentation, 1976. 3v. DM 160. LC 77-463478.

German librarianship, like its counterpart in the United States, has undergone a decade and a half of rapid growth and change. This handbook represents an attempt to inform German librarians and educators of new theory and practice, organizational reforms, and new technology in the library profession. In translation its title reads *On the Theory and Practice of Modern Librarianship*; and its three volumes treat social aspects, technological aspects, and administrative aspects.

The editors, exercising the principle of "limited variety," have compiled three volumes of essays on the state of the art—recent developments, current problems, and future trends in German librarianship and, where appropriate, have included information about librarianship in other countries as well.

Written by noted German librarians and educators, these essays provide a wealth of current information on such topics as public relations, research in library use, library instruction, professional image and education, electronic data processing developments, automation of technical processes, audiovisual media, library building planning, cost-effectiveness studies, management theory, personal leadership styles, and library statistics in German public and research libraries.

Though some unevenness of style and

quality is to be expected in a collection of this nature, the overall quality is impressively high. Many of the essays are bibliographic in nature, and most contain extensive bibliographies or lists for further reading. Bibliographies are comprehensive and current and, although they emphasize German scholarship, they are by no means limited to it. Outlines of topics to be covered at the beginning of each essay and the inclusion in each volume of a comprehensive subject index to all three volumes enhance the handbook's value as a reference tool.

The editors note that library history and material on the history of the book and the art of printing have been excluded from these volumes because they are covered in other German reference tools.

A survey of English language literature published in the last decade on the theory and practice of librarianship produces no single reference source with the scope of this German handbook. Kent and Lancour's *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science* covers many of the same topics in its twenty volumes issued to date. Although it is comprehensive in coverage and international in scope and includes much historical material and emphasizes library education, it does not, however, provide the depth of coverage the handbook does on many topics. Frederick Kilgour's brief article on the Ohio College Library Center in the *Encyclopedia* is little more than a publicity release that identifies the topic and relates its history. The handbook's essay, by contrast, is packed with current statistics and information on costs, compares features of the OCLC system to BALLOTS and CAPTAIN, and describes several similar systems in operation in the U.S. and Germany. It also provides an extensive bibliography for further research.

The German handbook's essay on library instruction draws on American models; although it does little more than summarize current thinking in German libraries on this important topic, I found this straightforward overview preferable to the article in the *Encyclopedia*, which is flawed with trendy social science jargon.

Volume 2 of the handbook, on technological aspects of librarianship, can be most easily compared to the new edition of the

Hayes and Becker *Handbook of Data Processing for Libraries* (reviewed in *C&RL* 37:170-71 (March 1976)). Though the two reference tools differ in style and approach, they have similar purposes, address similar audiences, and cover much of the same material. A brief glance at the treatment of automated circulation systems in each tool will point up some essential differences, however. The Hayes and Becker *Handbook* provides detailed information in easily digested form. The text is replete with examples. Graphs, flowcharts, illustrations, and numerical tables supplement and highlight the written material. The German text is heavy sledding, and, although the theoretical information reflects current trends and problems, there are no charts or other concrete illustrations to break up page after page of dense print. Paragraphs are numbered and subnumbered, and all footnotes and bibliographic references are found at the end of the chapter. All of these features make it a less valuable reference source for the practitioner with limited time and a desire for graphic illustration of current practice.

Ralph Ellsworth's excellent, though now dated, essay on library buildings in volume 3 of Shaw's *The State of the Library Art* (1960) furnishes another point of comparison with Franz Kroller's essay on library building planning in volume 2 of the handbook. Ellsworth's article reflects the state of the art at the time it was written. It surveys and summarizes the literature on the topic and comments on the reliability of the data provided. It was intended as a planning guide and contains much empirical data to assist in planning new or remodeled facilities. Kroller's essay emphasizes the theory of planning and provides an excellent view of the current literature of planning but provides no data or standard for the practitioner.

A wealth of information for the library educator or specialist in international librarianship is contained in Hans-Peter Geh's essay on "Professional Image and Education" in volume 1 of the handbook. Geh offers a detailed outline of the professional levels for German librarians, the educational qualifications and practical experience necessary to achieve each level, and the career paths available for each. Choice of

curricula in library and information studies is tied closely to the professional level open to each student. A distinct graduate-level program in library and information science has only recently come into being at one or two German universities, but the long-range trend seems to be for its recognition as a distinct discipline of study, perhaps within the framework of communications research.

Perhaps the English language reference source that is most similar in purpose, format, and achievement to the German handbook is the excellent series *Advances in Librarianship*, edited by Melvin Voigt. The purpose of this series, like the handbook, is to present essays on current trends, which are timely and of interest to practitioners and educators in the field, and which reflect current research interests. Though its serial nature gives *Advances* opportunity for broader scope and permits topic specialization within an individual annual volume, many of the topics it addresses are also treated in the handbook. While the German source discusses cost-effectiveness studies and personal leadership styles, *Advances* focuses on productivity measures and the role of the middle manager in its most recent volume. The two tools complement one another nicely.

Kehr, Neubauer, and Stoltzenburg have provided a valuable sourcebook for German librarianship. They plan a future collection on the problems and trends in various types of libraries and library systems. May their plans come to fruition.

This handbook is recommended for large university and research collections and library science collections.—*Meredith A. Butler, Head of Public Services, State University College, Brockport, New York.*

**Library Acquisition Policies and Procedures.** Edited by Elizabeth Futas. A Neal-Schuman Professional Book. Phoenix, Ariz.: Oryx Press, 1977. 406p. \$14.50. LC 77-7275. ISBN 0-912700-02-5.

Written acquisition policies are either assumed or enthusiastically supported in the literature of librarianship. "*Library Acquisition Policies and Procedures* is designed to aid librarians, library school students, and publishers to understand some of the factors which underlie and influence library

materials selection." It is also intended as a help to those who may be in the process of developing acquisition policies. It will best serve this latter purpose.

This book is primarily a collection of acquisition policy statements, with 372 pages devoted to reprinting, in full or in part, 82 policies from both public and academic libraries. Including the preface and introduction, there are almost 450 pages. A significant portion of the preliminary pages reports the findings of a survey that started with a letter to 3,600 libraries requesting their selection policies and willingness to complete a follow-up questionnaire. The response to the initial letter and the follow-up questionnaire was some 300 selection policies and 246 usable questionnaires. In addition seven ALA-approved statements about selection are conveniently reprinted in the appendixes.

The most that can be said for the survey report on acquisition procedures is that it is interesting. For a questionnaire with only twelve questions it is difficult to imagine a greater incongruity in responses. Can we believe, for example, that one academic library spent 95 percent of its total library budget on library materials? Or that another spent only 3.9 percent? In addition, the editor draws attention to discrepancies between the policy statements received and the answers to questions in the survey. In the words of the editor, "The academic and public library questionnaire survey answers, although certainly not conclusive of any trends, do provide some interesting commentary on what happens in the practical world of library acquisitions."

It may be appropriate to comment on "acquisition policy" and "selection policy." Boyer and Eaton in *Book Selection Policies of American Libraries* (Austin, Texas: Armadillo Press, 1971) stress the distinction. Elizabeth Futas does not. If the distinction must be made, it would appear satisfactory to consider "selection policy" a vital section of any "acquisition policy."

The policies selected for reprinting are in three categories: public library policies, academic library policies, and partial library policies by category. The policies are representative of various types of libraries and are worthy examples. Twelve public library and fourteen academic library pol-