

erature" entry, which is written almost entirely as a summary of literary works that have been filmed, with only one director being named, the editors clearly do not perceive Arab cinema to be part and parcel of Arabic literary activity.

Compared to even the new edition of *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, this new and much shorter work is obviously more reader-friendly in terms of both the layout of pages and the length of the entries, as well as through the elimination of figures not of literary interest. In addition, there are more entries for more recent authors than in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Even with a 1998 publication date, however, the cutoff date for emerging authors was 1980. It seems inevitable that an online version will eventually be needed and that this work will form part of some larger database. The focus of this work on its selected realm of Arabic literature, ancient and modern, is both a strength and a weakness. If a would-be user does not know whether the subject person is Persian, Turkish, or Arab or actually a literary figure or perhaps a scientist, she or he will not know whether to consult it, although Persians writing in Arabic have been included as well as Arabs writing in French.

If a much-less-expensive paper edition were available and perhaps limited to modern authors, whose coverage seems to be a major strength of this work, that smaller book might well be a student's best friend when studying for an examination in Arabic literature in translation. In its current form, it will, instead, be of most use to instructors preparing a class, wondering at the last minute, for example, whether Moulud Mammeri (1917–1989) was Algerian or Tunisian and wrote in French or Arabic.

All of the many people associated with this labor of love are to be congratulated. It would have been interesting, however, to see what would have issued from them had they been given a longer leash in the form of more lines and encouraged to write only about figures and topics they found passionately engaging. If one rea-

son for the 1980 cutoff date was the editors' fear of letting new authors into the canon prematurely, this encyclopedia constitutes a canon and stands as a statement of the status of the study of Arabic literature among, primarily, English-language scholars. The work contains a great quantity of carefully sifted, useful information on Arabic literature and authors, but few pyrotechnics. In short, the editors and contributors may end up preaching to the choir by providing information for those best able to discover it on their own in other sources, rather than finding new readers for Arabic literature.—*William Maynard Hutchins, Appalachian State University, Boone.*

Jones, Plummer Alston, Jr. *Libraries, Immigrants, and the American Experience.* Westport, Conn.: Greenwood (Contributions in Librarianship and Information Science, no. 29), 1999. 236p. \$59.95, alk. paper (ISBN 0-313-30769-5). LC 98-26439.

"Bustling Queens [New York] Library Speaks in Many Tongues," proclaimed the headline of a recent *New York Times* article on the nation's busiest library system. Describing collections that include Hindi newspapers, Chinese mystery novels, Harlequin romances in Spanish, and Urdu potboilers (not to mention *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus* in Chinese), along with children's story hours and English classes, the article captured the purposefulness and dynamism of the library system's operations as they pertain to immigrant populations. The interaction between American public libraries and immigrant communities is, of course, not new; and some of its history may be found in Plummer Alston Jones Jr.'s thoughtful, well-documented new volume. It is nicely illustrated and contains a good index.

Jones focuses on two particular eras in American immigration: the years of "free immigration," from 1876 to 1924; and the time of "restricted immigration," from 1924 to 1948. Interspersed with general discussions of each period's political cli-

mate, Jones profiles several of the key figures who best characterized each era. There is a fine account of Jane Maud Campbell's (1869–1947) career as an advocate for “the downtrodden,” and a nicely objective discussion of the publication efforts of John Foster Carr (1869–1939), who, although not a librarian, had a distinct impact on library work with immigrants. (Jones appropriately entitles this chapter “The Publisher as Propagandist.”) Other subjects include Cleveland Public Librarian Eleanor (Edwards) Ledbetter (1870–1954) (“The Librarian as Social Worker”) and Edna Phillips (1890–1968) (“The Librarian as Educator”). The various organizations with whom these individuals were affiliated and the posts they held are duly reported by Jones.

Jones, director of the library services and professor of library science at Catawba College in Salisbury, North Carolina, has previously written the histories of two North Carolina families. He is usually careful to walk the often-precarious line between what is and is not “PC,” but his great enthusiasm for his subject—librarians and the impact they had on immigrants—sometimes gets in the way. Describing American librarians as “sovereign alchemists” who turned “the base metal of immigrant potentialities into the gold of American realities” smacks a little uncomfortably, I think, of

“The White Man’s Burden.” (“Librarians possessed the magic—the know-how—to impose Americanization on immigrants,” Jones declares at one point.) One also might suggest that the picture has not been (and continues not to be) all that rosy. For instance, in his fascinating (and very chilling) article, “The Origins of the Dewey Decimal Classification Scheme” (*Libraries & Culture*, Spring 1998), library historian Wayne Wiegand describes how the world’s most widely used library classification scheme was based on the alarmingly narrow and presumptuous moral and intellectual climate that prevailed at the tiny Amherst College campus in the 1870s.

How are librarians faring today with respect to multicultural patrons? The Queens borough public library system is obviously a success story. Programs such as “The Challenge to Change: Creating Diversity in Our Libraries” (held Oct. 1–2, 1998 at Penn State University and co-sponsored by ARL, and the Penn State, Rutgers, University of Maryland, and University of Pittsburgh Libraries) speak to librarians’ interest in adopting diversity-conscious policies and practices in personnel and management operations, library services, and collection development. On the other hand, foreign-language books are usually among the first victims of budget cuts, and our standard reference tools often fall far short of the mark: a social worker or psychiatrist wanting to respond to a Korean patient’s complaint of *hwa-byung* (symptoms attributed to suppression of anger, such as insomnia, fatigue, panic, fear of death, depression, etc.) is not going to find that ailment listed in the DSM-IV (how on earth to fill out the insurance form?).

The recently mounted Holocaust Memorial Museum’s exhibit, “Voyage of the St. Louis,” documents how 937 passengers who set sail to escape Hitler’s Europe in 1939 were turned away from American shores. Jones’s chronicle is a small, happier take on an extremely complex, perennially troubling issue.—*Ellen D. Gilbert, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.*

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