

ausführliche Vorstudien zu weiteren, noch unbearbeiteten Themenfeldern, für deren jedes vergleichbar zahlreiches und kontroverses Material aufgearbeitet werden müsste. Mit Blick auf die Kernproblematik der Studie, die Begründung von Unfreiheit und die Rekrutierung von Unfreien jeweils gemäss dem römischen Bedarf, wäre zunächst die Entwicklung dieses Bedarfs in unterschiedlichen Phasen systematisch herauszuarbeiten (wenngleich man dabei wohl nicht wesentlich über Welweis abgewogene Schätzungen hinauskommen dürfte). Neben der Kriegsgefangenschaft müssten erheblich stärker weitere Bezugskontexte und deren jeweilige Relevanz untersucht werden: Menschenraub (Piraterie) in eigener Regie oder durch Kauf geraubter Personen von ausserhalb des römischen Bereichs, Geburten durch eigene Sklavinnen, Schuldknechtschaft (*nexum*; Aufhebung per *lex Poetelia* von 326). Darüber hinaus hätte die Lebenswelt frühromischer Sklaven manche Klärung auch im Hinblick auf die Rekrutierungsproblematik gebracht: die Stellung von Unfreien innerhalb der altrömischen *familia*, aitiologische, meist idealisierende Konstruktionen vor dem Hintergrund regional benachbarter ausserrömischer Gesellschaften (Etrusker, Umbrer, unteritalische Griechen, Karthager) vorrangig als Ausdruck römischen Selbstverständnisses auch in späterer Zeit, frührepublikanische Rechtsnormen (völkerrechtlich sanktionierte Verträge, XII-Tafelrecht), Behandlung, Verwendungsbereiche, wirtschaftliche Bedeutung und kulturelle Leistung, Freilassung und deren rechtliche Implikationen. Damit wäre ein Gesamtbild entstanden, das als Hintergrund für das Verständnis des frühromischen Sklavensystems in seiner Entwicklung unabdingbar ist.

Wie dargelegt, kann sich Welwei für alle diese von ihm angerissenen Aspekte noch nicht auf systematische Untersuchungen stützen. Er trifft denn auch nur sehr generelle, durch Literaturverweise nicht immer überzeugend fundierbare Aussagen, um darin das relativierte Prachnersche Material einzubetten; eine Behandlung der hinzugezogenen Aspekte im sachlich gebotenen Umfang hätte den Rahmen der Prachnerschen Konzeption gesprengt. Eigenständige laterale Forschungen im mehrfachen Umfang des übernommenen Manuskripts sind Welwei nicht abzuverlangen. Offenbar fühlt er sich dem Andenken Gottfried Prachners verpflichtet, der Wesentliches zur Erforschung der römischen Sklaverei beigetragen hat. Welweis Bearbeitung auf Bitte der Mainzer Akademie rückt vieles zurecht und verhindert zweifellos Schlimmeres. Prachners letztlich aus einer unrealistisch optimistischen Bewertung der Quellennachrichten resultierende konzeptionelle Fehler auszuräumen und darüber hinaus ein brauchbares Instrument für künftige Forschungen bereitzustellen, hätte indes eine völlige Neubearbeitung erfordert. Man darf hoffen, dass hierzu erforderliche Vorstudien ebenfalls von der Mainzer Akademie angeregt und gefördert werden. Angesichts der schwierigen Quellensituation für die frühe und mittlere Republik sollte man allerdings den thematischen Rahmen weiter stecken.

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Lionel Casson, *Libraries in the Ancient World*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2001. xii + 177 pp. ISBN 0 300 08809 4; Roy MacLeod (ed.), *The Library of Alexandria. Centre of Learning in the Ancient World*, London and New York, I.B. Tauris, 2000. xii + 196 pp. ISBN 1 86064 428 7.

Two new books on ancient libraries in a single year. The re-creation of what it is hoped will become a major library in Alexandria in the last couple of years, with the support of UNESCO, doubtless has a share in this sudden growth in interest, though only MacLeod's book refers to this new project. The two books are very different in surface appearance; and, while their coverage is in some ways not dissimilar, they differ very considerably in quality. Casson's is by a single author and deals with ancient libraries (not only in the classical world) as a whole. MacLeod's is a collective enterprise by Australian 'friends' of the new Alexandrian library project, and fixes its

focus specifically on the great library in that city, though, as the sub-title shows, it takes the opportunity also to use that library as the starting point for exploration in a variety of directions.

Casson is the ideal tour-guide, unobtrusively learned, elegant of expression, wide-ranging, with many odd tidbits of information scattered through the book. In the end, however, this is a thin volume, even if not through any fault of the author. We simply do not have that much material. In a book of just over a hundred and fifty small pages (including illustrations) Casson manages to cover a good deal of ground. He tells us about the beginnings of libraries in the ancient near east; though it must be said that he rather finesses here the distinction between archives and libraries (as do a couple of the contributors to MacLeod's volume too), he lays stress on the importance of clay, and of clay tablets, both for their use then and for their survival until now. He discusses ancient education, sketchily but sufficiently to hint at widespread public concern with, and considerable private endowment for, the education of children (not always just boys). He describes book-manufacture (he lays stress on the significance of Egypt, because of the importance of papyrus, and explains the later innovation of the massive use of parchment; he devotes much space to the roll, as distinct from the codex, which makes a late appearance in this story, being taken up especially by the Christians), literacy in the ancient world (a surprising amount of it, according to him), book-selling (little of it much of the time, since most people could simply copy what they wanted from their friends' copies of works, or get them as gifts from the authors. The reader wonders just a little about this, especially in view of the nice story about a Roman bookseller in MacLeod's book). Casson tells us about the architecture and lay-out of libraries in the Greek and Roman worlds, the staffing arrangement of libraries (large and varied, with little apparent worry about budgets), the career-patterns of senior imperial librarians in Rome (at first they were slaves, for whom such a job might be a long-term post in the second half of their lives; later they came to be free citizens from distinguished families of senior civil service background, for whom such a job was merely one post in the series making up their total career, and not very far along it. The difference mattered, for the libraries). He does not, somehow, go far into the effects of ancient libraries in their societies and as cultural influences there.

Casson also discusses the contents of the shelves of these institutions. Here he is less successful. We learn about the invention of cataloguing, of Callimachus and his fellows in Alexandria, of the innovation of a primitive form of alphabetisation. But, as generally in such discussions, we read such words as 'may' and 'might', 'presumably' and 'probably' too often in these sections of the work. Acquisition patterns appear: the famous story of how Ptolemy stole the original copies of the tragedians' works from the Athenians; the only slightly less well known history of Aristotle's library; and more. But Casson seems to think that Greek is the natural, and ancient Egyptian, say, an unnatural language for a library's holdings (pp. 34-5), when he discusses the 'problem' faced by Ptolemy in filling the shelves of his new library. And though the medieval story about how the Arabs destroyed the library of Alexandria is described here as 'picturesque', it is retailed apparently as though Casson believes it to be at least close to the truth (p. 138); and later on the same page he suggests that 'After 642 ... the cities where the other notable collections were located ... were now under the domination of the Arabs, who presumably applied Caliph Omar's reasoning to whatever libraries they came across'. Even non-Arabists know better than this, or should.

Casson's principal witnesses in the Roman world are from Rome itself, perhaps not very surprisingly; but he points to the fact that we know of only two other libraries, outside Rome, in the western half of the Roman empire: one in Timgad (in modern Algeria) and one in Carthage. This fact, like our knowledge of ancient libraries in general, shows how very greatly dependent we are on the chance survival of tiny and isolated pieces of information for our knowledge of even such a subject as this. There clearly must have been other libraries. Casson shows also that, thanks both to literary sources and, far more, to archaeological study, we know a good deal about the lay-out of quite a number of ancient libraries — Greek ones tended to have the books in storerooms, with

colonnades for readers to work in, while Roman ones might have the books in the same room as the readers, making access much simpler. Light was a major consideration in the design of such buildings. He also includes a fine selection of illustrations, which do much to bring to life his many descriptions of the architecture and interior of the libraries which he discusses. One of these, for example, shows a section of the interior of the library of Trajan in Rome (from Packer's large work on the Forum of Trajan). This is a magnificent structure, which would put many a modern library to shame, and must have been a joy to work in. Later on libraries were part of the accoutrements in Roman public baths, and Casson has some useful remarks here on the function of the library in the public life of ancient Rome.

Sometimes Casson's enthusiasm for his subject makes him run just a little ahead of the little evidence that we have. At pp. 63-5, for instance, we have a long discussion of theatrical management practice in ancient Rome, reminiscent of nothing so much as Shakespearean England. We learn here of 'comprehensive collections of Latin and Greek drama owned by theater managers' (p. 65). This sounds very impressive, but it turns out to be based wholly on the single isolated fact that Plautus once adapted a Greek play by an otherwise unknown Demophilus. Similarly, we learn (pp. 67-8) that C. Sulpicius Gallus and Polybius possessed extensive libraries in, respectively, astronomy and history. The evidence for this is the fact that they wrote (and can be shown to have read widely) in these fields. But we should at least consider the possibility that they used the public libraries and the private collections of other scholars in Rome. Slips are rare, but it is worth suggesting that the word *melygion*, the name for a drink made of honey, manufactured by Scythians, which is described by Casson (p. 44) as a 'loan-word from some language spoken in the region of the Black Sea', looks extremely Greek, at least to me.

These are all minor criticisms. Casson is generally a sure guide and there is much to stimulate here. The book is also written in a manner which makes it a pleasure to read, unlike so many academic books today. Casson's work is an excellent introduction to the broader subject of books, learning and libraries in the ancient world.

MacLeod's collection aims to cover much of the same ground, starting from the Library of Alexandria. And indeed many of the same subjects appear here too. Following an introduction on Alexandria in history and myth by the editor, the first paper in this collection, by D.T. Potts, looks at libraries in the ancient near east before Alexandria; we have a paper on Alexandria as the 'umbilicus' of the ancient world, another on the 'cloistered bookworms in the chicken-coop of the Muses', and another on the books of Aristotle; these are followed by a series of studies of 'scholarship in the Alexandrian manner'.

The book is not universally reliable: MacLeod in his 'Introduction' has Aristarchus of Samothrace appointed as Librarian in 175 BCE in succession to Aristophanes of Byzantium, 'during the reign of Ptolemy VII'. Except for the fact that Aristarchus did hold the post, virtually none of this is correct. Aristarchus was appointed in around 153, in succession to someone called Apollonius (Aristophanes had died in 180, as MacLeod notes in the same paragraph), and he probably received his appointment from the then king, Ptolemy VI (Ptolemy VII could hardly have given him the job in 175, as he was not born until ca. 162 BCE). Similarly, MacLeod suggests (p. 7) that during the first century BCE there was a great emphasis upon the systematic study of Greek literature and the translation of non-Greek works. He adds that for this the library had unrivalled opportunities. It may have owned e.g. the Egyptian 'sacred records', from which Hecataeus of Abdera wrote the *Aegyptiaca*. The problem with this is that Hecataeus lived under Ptolemy I, who died in the early third century BCE. Little to do with the first century. And the word 'may', in relation to what the Library possessed, is also not without serious problems in this context. Nor is it always clear how closely tied to the Library people or incidents in this book are. Sotades of Maronea is described as being dropped into the sea in a leaden jar for writing ribald verses about the marriage of Ptolemy II Philadelphus to his sister Arsinoe II (he attacked others in

his verses too, so presumably he deserved his punishment). But such little interest as he offers seems to derive from his status as a *littérateur* at court, rather than from any link he may (or, given the paucity of our information about him, may not) have had with the Library. MacLeod says also (p. 10) that the Arabs who took Alexandria in the first half of the seventh century were ‘learned in optics and astronomy, versed in mathematics and geography’: this is wholly untrue. It is true that Arabs acquired and created such learning hundreds of years later. But this is no licence for unfounded retrojection. He says that the burning of the Library by the Arabs ‘is legend’, but he adds ‘it may also be history’. There is no reason to think so.

Wendy Brazil, in ‘Alexandria: The Umbilicus of the Ancient World’, adopts the persona of an ancient (though it is not so easy to tell just how ancient — she knows material of the third century CE, but also claims to anticipate Shakespeare by 1600 years) bookseller-cum-tourist visiting Alexandria. She is a very enthusiastic traveller, in love with her subject, switching easily between periods and using a variety of texts as her guides, both ancient (Arrian and Plutarch, Diodorus and Philo) and modern (Durrell is far and away her favourite). She provides much information in her text and notes. Alas, as a *cicerone*, she is not untypical of the profession. Much of what she tells us is wrong. Cassius Dio is not Dio Cocceianus. About Philo’s birth she manages to give us two different dates — 15 BC and ‘about 20 BC’; the generally accepted date-range is 30-25 BCE. In 181, she tells us (p. 57, n. 35), Polybius was ‘selected to serve on an embassy to Egypt but the audition [sic] was cancelled because of the sudden death of King Ptolemy VI Eupator’. Actually, Polybius was selected in 180, not 181; it was Ptolemy V, not Ptolemy VI, who died, and he died in 180, not 181; Ptolemy Eupator is someone completely different, a son of Ptolemy VI. She manages to mis-set two hexameters in Greek (n. 36). She describes the Ptolemy ruling Egypt in 87 BCE as ‘young’ (p. 45): this was Ptolemy IX Soter, and he was born in ca. 143, so he will have been around 56 in 87 BCE. Not a pensioner yet, but young? In discussing the library of Lucullus at Rome (on which Casson has some useful remarks) she tells us that ‘a Greek *prytaneum*’ is ‘a house of intellectual hospitality and entertainment for visitors to Rome’. This is not what the *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, or Liddell and Scott, think the word means; I doubt that Lucullus differed from them. The information about Appian’s *Roman History* is best described as incomplete: ‘Books 13 to 17 have survived in entirety, but only fragments of the other books remain’: what about the surviving books vi and vii, xi and xii, which are all complete; and where are the fragments of ‘the other books’, x and xviii-xxiv, which scholarship regards as lost in their entirety? She also makes Appian Procurator of Egypt; he was in fact (offered the post of) Procurator Augusti (but may have turned the offer down): presumably this error derives from a mis-reading of Augusti as Aegypti. Enthusiasm is good, but it is not enough.

Robert Barnes’ ‘Cloistered Bookworms in the Chicken-Coop of the Muses: the Ancient Library of Alexandria’, takes its title from Timon of Phlius, a poet and dancer of the third century. Despite the title, this is the most sober piece in the volume. Barnes looks at the history of the Library, summarising what little is known of its foundation, its contents, its running, its librarians, and its end. Perhaps inevitably, there is some degree of speculation here too, but Barnes briskly despatches the accusation that the Arabs burnt the library as a late legend of no reliability.

R.G. Tanner studies the history of the Alexandrian holdings of Aristotle’s works. We find here a reference to Diogenes Laertius giving us ‘what he considers a full list of the works by Aristotle in the Library at Alexandria’. I can find no support in the text of Diogenes Laertius for the, or indeed any, association with the Library. The list in DL, like every other ancient list of Aristotle’s works that we have, is simply a list of Aristotle’s works, not of where they could be found. Tanner also has Theophrastus visiting Ptolemy Soter to be consulted about the Library: the relevant source (DL V, 37) says only that Soter ‘sent for him’; it says nothing about whether he actually came to Alexandria (we have no evidence that he did), still less about the motive behind the summons. Overall, the argument presented here in favour of an Alexandrian destination for the works seems to derive more from wishful thinking than from hard evidence.

The second part of this volume is where the meat is. Here John Vallance offers an informed and cautious discussion of medicine in Alexandria. He stresses, rightly, that we should not over-interpret the possible influence of the Library in this area (though he is himself guilty of the sin of over-interpretation when he tells us that Strabo 'suggests that Aristotle himself offered advice which influenced its establishment and early administration' (p. 96). All Aristotle, who died in 322, long before the foundation of the Library of Alexandria, did was leave his library to someone else, who may, or may not, have offered such advice. Strabo's text says nothing to support Vallance's claim.). Medical as opposed to other kinds of patronage is difficult to identify, he points out, under the early Ptolemies, and the 'general intellectual climate' of the Library 'proved a dampener of enthusiasm' for medical research, as distinct from research into medical texts.

J.R. Green offers some 'first thoughts' on the relationship of the theatre of Paphos, which he has been excavating, to that, as yet undiscovered, of Alexandria. He argues that the evidence for Alexandrian contact with and influence upon Paphos is strong, and hence we should assume also Alexandrian influence in the design of the Paphian theatre. This leads him to posit a shape like that of the theatre at Paphos for that at Alexandria. And from this he argues for Alexandrian influence in theatrical design over a wide area. His argument does not quite convince: he points to the positioning of the Paphian theatre so as to provide a good view 'across the town towards the harbour' (p.116), yet suggests that the classical Roman theatres (like that of Alexandria, which on his argument influenced that at Paphos too) 'were very different from those of the Greeks which often had extensive views' (p. 120).

Sam Lieu looks entertainingly at scholars and students in the Roman east. He seems a little too ready to accept the huge figures retailed by our sources for the sizes of the holdings in the libraries of Alexandria and Pergamum. But he has some delightful vignettes too: no booklover will fail to be touched by Libanius' account of the loss to thieves of a favourite copy of Thucydides, and its subsequent recovery.

A curious offering on the mystical tradition, with little connection to the Library or even to Alexandria, by Patricia Cannon Johnson, and (from J.O. Ward) a short piece on Alexandria and *The Name of the Rose*, complete the work.

The proof-reading of this book is poor, and there are misprints: p. 7 has 237 for 257 (the birth year of Aristophanes of Byzantium); p. 9 has an intrusive 'of'; p. 9 also has A.D. (as against [B]CE generally so far. But later on the practice seems to vary a good deal). Page 31 has some misprints which only misplaced charity could see as odd transliterations. Page 32: 'Idem.' (with an unnecessary dot) (for Ibid.). Is this poor proof-reading? or, since it occurs more than once in the work, ignorance of Latin? Page 57 has 'Xiplilinus'. Page 23 has, almost unbelievably, 'Illiad'. But that is at least in English. Greek, the very language of Alexandria, fares much worse here: on page 55, n. 9, we find μέας for μέγας (in Greek); at page 56, n. 11, Periegegesis (sic); there are five errors in a two-line quotation of what is otherwise a very fine fragment of Sophocles (p. 58, n. 51), seven in a quotation from Strabo (p. 110). Worse than all of these, however, are the four lines from the Odyssey on p. 35, in which there are some eight misprints. The Library of Alexandria, where textual criticism and attention to detail were invented, surely deserves better than this, especially from its 'friends'.

MacLeod's book makes for depressing reading. It raises questions about the function of an editor: this surely includes reading the contributions, eliminating mistakes and minimising overlap. But that is not the only reason why I have felt it worth listing all these errors. It is also because this book deals with the history and influence of such a centrally important feature of ancient culture, and of our understanding of it, as the Library of Alexandria, and not just with one small, isolated, provincial and unimportant aspect of the ancient world. After four hundred years of intensive

European and American study of the ancient world, and the production of a number of scholarly, or supposedly scholarly, works dealing with the Library, it is a striking fact that we still lack a good independent study, based solidly in the sources, of the institution, of its contents and administration, and of its wider meaning and influence. The best treatments available are still those in larger works on broader themes, like those of Pfeiffer and Fraser. This work in no way changes the situation.

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Armin Eich, *Politische Literatur in der römischen Gesellschaft: Studien zum Verhältnis von politischer und literarischer Öffentlichkeit in der späten Republik und frühen Kaiserzeit* [Passauer Historische Forschungen 11]. Böhlau, Köln/Weimar/Wien, 2000. VIII + 413 pp. ISBN 3 412 14999 3.

This book, a revision of a Passau dissertation of 1998, argues that in the Rome of the late Republic and early Empire our modern concept that certain kinds of literature can be intended to influence a reading public towards or against particular political ideas is simply inapplicable, for two main reasons: the lack in effect of a wide reading public, and the lack of literary promotion of identifiable political policies and ideas (as opposed to literary support for this or that individual or group). This is supported by further arguments which claim that for similar reasons neither propaganda nor censorship in the modern sense has much validity for Roman society of this period. The methodological groundwork for this argument is laid in the first half of the book, where terms and parameters are defined. Here it is hard to disagree that the idea of a mass political audience and the persuasive address of it are anachronistic for ancient Rome; but the larger depoliticisation of Roman literature which Eich in effect argues for deserves further discussion.

Eich rightly argues that Ciceronian speeches performed a particular political or forensic function at a particular time, and that though they could be recalled as evidence for what Cicero had said at the time on a particular question, they were not explicitly received as expressing general and enduring political policies. While this seems to be convincing overall as an exposure of the ideological paucity of Roman politics, almost always based on personal loyalty rather than ideas, the view that previous speeches could not be manipulated for overtly political purposes in a later context seems at least questionable. To take a famous example discussed by Eich (196-8), the collection of Cicero's consular speeches in 60 BC, which he himself claimed would make him appear more statesmanlike, surely had a clear political purpose in attempting to justify his actions in 63 against the (ultimately successful) attacks of Clodius. This is not of course the consistent advocacy of a particular policy over time, but it does seem to show that speeches when published could have a further political influence outside their original context of delivery.

Another Ciceronian context where some ideological content would appear to be at stake is the Cato controversy of 46/5 (cf. 284-5), in which various Roman literati, including Cicero and Caesar, wrote competing pamphlets in praise or vituperation of Cato after his suicide at Thapsus. Though this too fits in some sense into Eich's pattern of non-policy writing, centered as it is on encomium or invective of an individual, it is difficult to divorce these pamphlets from some association with the rigid republicanism of their subject: the very multiplicity of the works spurred by Cato's death strongly suggests that they were more than favourable or hostile obituaries and that they reflected on the polity of Rome in general, though in the absence of their texts it is of course difficult to be sure. Likewise, it is difficult to hold that the Ciceronian political treatises *De Legibus* and *De Republica* have nothing to say about the ideas and policies which their author saw as fundamental in Roman politics, both in their particular contexts of composition and more generally.