HISTORY OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION CENTRE

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A library and information centre is a collection of sources, resources, and services, and the structure in which it is housed: it is organized for use and maintained by a public body, an institution, or a private individual. In the more traditional sense, a library is a collection of books. The term can mean the collection, the building that houses such a collection, or both.

Public and institutional collections and services may be intended for use by people who choose not to — or cannot afford to — purchase an extensive collection themselves, who need material no individual can reasonably be expected to have, or who require professional assistance with their research.

However, with the sets and collection of media and of media other than books for storing information, many libraries are now also repositories and access points for maps, prints, or other documents and various storage media such as microform (microfilm/microfiche), audio tapes, CDs, cassettes, videotapes, and DVDs. Libraries may also provide public facilities to access CD-ROMs, subscription databases, and the Internet.

Thus, modern libraries are increasingly being redefined as places to get unrestricted access to information in many formats and from many sources. In addition to

providing materials, they also provide the services of specialists, librarians, who are experts at finding and organizing information and at interpretin g information needs.

More recently, libraries are understood as extending beyond the physical walls of a building, by including material accessible by electronic means, and by providing the assistance of librarians in navigating and analyzing tremendous am ounts of knowledge with a variety of digital tools.

- **Early history**
  - **Antiquity**

The first two libraries were composed for the most part, of published records, a particular type of library called archives. Archaeological findings from the ancient city-states of summer have revealed temple rooms full of clay tablets in cuneiform script. These archives were made up almost completely of the records of commercial transactions or inventories, with only a few documents touching theological matters, historical records or legends. Things were much the same in the government and temple records on papyrus of Ancient Egypt.

The earliest discovered private archives were kept at Ugarit; besides correspondence and inventories, texts of myths may have been standardized practic e-texts for teaching new scribes. There is also evidence of libraries at Nippur about 1900 B.C. and those at Nineveh about 700 B.C. showing a library classification system.

Over 30,000 clay tablets from the Library of Ashurbanipal have been discovered at Ninevah, providing archaeologists with an amazing wealth of Mesopotamian literary, religious and administrative work. Among the findings were the Enuma Elish , also known as *the Epic of Creation,* which depicts a traditional Babylonian view of creation, the Epic of Gilgamesh, a large selection of “omen texts” including *Enuma Anu Enlil* which “contained omens dealing with the moon, its visibility, eclipses, and conjunction with planets and fixed stars, the sun, its corona, spots, and eclipses, the weather, namely lightning, thunder, and clouds, and the planets and their visibility, appearance, and stations.”, and astronomic/astrological texts, as well as standard lists

used by scribes and scholars such as word lists, bilingual vocabularies, lists of signs and synonyms, and lists of medical diagnoses.

- **Libraries in Persian Empire**

During the Achaemenid Persian Empire (558–330 BC) the religious and scientific books of Persia since Zoroaster, were archived in the libraries of "Ganj -i-hapigan" in Takht-i-Suleiman and "Dez-i-Napesht" in Persepolis.These books were probably in the fields of philosophy, astronomy, alchemy and medical sciences, the fields in which Magus of Persia were master in. After the invasion of Persia by Alexander the Great all these books were burned. It has been mentioned in the book Arda Viraf that:

"He came to Persia with severe cruelty and war and devastation... and destroyed the metropolis and empire, and made them desolate... all the avesta and zand, written upon prepared cow-skins and with gold ink, was deposited in the archives... he burned them up."

- **Libraries in the Hellenic world and Rome**

Private or personal libraries made up of non-fiction and fiction books (as opposed to the state or institutional records kept in archives) appeared in classical Greece in the 5th century BC. The celebrated book collectors of Hellenistic Antiquity were listed in the late second century in *Deipnosophistae:*

Polycrates of Samos and Pisistratus who was tyrant of Athens, and Euclides who was himself also an Athenian and Nicorrates of Samos and even the kings of Pergamos, and Euripides the poet and Aristotle the philosopher, and Nelius his librarian; from whom they say our countryman Ptolemæus, surnamed Philadelphus, bought them all, and transported them, with all those which he had collected at Athens and at Rhodes to his own beautiful Alexandria.

All these libraries were Greek; the cultivated Hellenized diners in *Deipnosophistae* pass over the libraries of Rome in silence. By the time of Augustus there were publi c libraries near the forums of Rome: there were libraries in the Porticus Octaviae near the Theatre of Marcellus, in the temple of Apollo Palatinus, and in the Biblioteca Ulpiana in the Forum of Trajan. The state archives were kept in a structure on the slope between the Roman Forum and the Capitoline Hill.

Private libraries appeared during the late republic: Seneca inveighed against libraries fitted out for show by non-reading owners who scarcely read their titles in the course of a lifetime, but displayed the scrolls in bookcases (*armaria*) of citrus wood inlaid with ivory that ran right to the ceiling: "by now, like bathrooms and hot water, a library is got up as standard equipment for a fine house (*domus*). Libraries were amenities suited to a villa, such as Cicero's at Tusculum, Maecenas's several villas, or Livy the Younger's, all described in surving letters. At the Villa of the Papyri at Herculaneum, apparently the villa of Caesar's father-in-law, the Greek library has been partly preserved in volcanic ash; archaeologists speculate that a Latin library, kept separate from the Greek one, may await discovery at the site.

In the West, the first public libraries were established under the Roman Empire as each succeeding emperor strove to open one or many whi ch outshone that of his predecessor. Unlike the Greek libraries, readers had direct access to the scrolls, which were kept on shelves built into the walls of a large room. Reading or copying was normally done in the room itself. The surviving records give only a few instances of lending features. As a rule Roman public libraries were bilingual: they had a Latin room and a Greek room. Most of the large Roman baths were also cultural centers, built from the start with a library, with the usual two room arrang ement for Greek and Latin texts.

Libraries were filled with parchment scrolls as at Library of Pergamum and on papyrus scrolls as at Alexandria: export of prepared writing materials was a staple of commerce. There were a few institutional or royal librarie s which were open to an educated public (like the Library of Alexandria, once the largest library in the ancient

world), but on the whole collections were private. In those rare cases where it was possible for a scholar to consult library books there seems to have been no direct access to the stacks. In all recorded cases the books were kept in a relatively small room where the staff went to get them for the readers, who had to consult them in an adjoining hall or covered walkway.

In the sixth century, at the very close of the Classical period, the great libraries of the Mediterranean world remained those of Constantinople and Alexandria. Cassiodorus, minister to Theodoric, established a monastery at Vivarium in the heel of Italy with a library where he attempted to bring Greek learning to Latin readers and preserve texts both sacred and secular for future generations. As its unofficial librarian, Cassiodorus not only collected as many manuscripts as he could, he also wrote treatises aimed at instructing his monks in the proper uses of reading and methods for copying texts accurately. In the end, however, the library at Vivarium was dispersed and lost within a century.

Through Origen and especially the scholarly presbyter Pamphilus of Caesarea, an avid collector of books of Scripture, the theological school of Caesarea won a reputation for having the most extensive ecclesiastical library of the time, containing more than 30,000 manuscripts: Gregory Nazianzus, Basil the Great, Jerome and others came to study there.

With education firmly in Christian hands, however, many of the works of classical antiquity were no longer considered useful. Old texts were washed off the valuable parchment and papyrus, which were reused, forming palimpsests. As scrolls gave way to the new book-form, the codex, which was universally used for Christian literature, old manuscript scrolls were cut apart and used to stiffen leather bindings.

By the middle of the second century BC, Rome also boasted rich library resources. Initially comprised of some scattered private collections, holdings eventually expanded through the spoils of war. Even Aristotle's famed collection was among the bounty.

Julius Caesar dreamed of establishing a public library in Rome, but his vision was cut short by his assassination. After Caesar's death, Asinius Pollio acquired the requisite funds to make the dream a reality. The library was divided into two sections - one for Greek and one for Latin, serving as a model for subsequent Roman libraries. Great statues adorned the walls. Books, typically acquired through donations by authors and others, as well as through copying, were placed along the walls and readers consulted them in the middle of the room. This marked a distinct departure from the Greek model, where readers could only consult their books in an atrium away from the rest of the collection.

- **Ancient Chinese libraries**

Little is known about early Chinese libraries, save what is written about the imperial library which began with the Qin Dynasty. One of the curators of the imperial library in the Han Dynasty is believed to have been the first to establish a library classification system and the first book notation system. At this time the library catalog was written on scrolls of fine silk and stored in silk bags.

- **Islamic libraries**

In Persia many libraries were established by the Zoroastrian elite and the Persian Kings. Among the first ones was a royal library in Isfahan. One of t he most important public libraries established around 667 AD in south -western Iran was the Library of Gundishapur. It was a part of a bigger scientific complex located at the Academy of Gundishapur. Upon the rise of Islam, libraries in newly Islamic lands knew a brief period of expansion in the Middle East, North Africa, Sicily and Spain. Like the Christian libraries, they mostly contained books which were made of paper, and took a codex or modern form instead of scrolls; they could be found in mosques, pri vate homes, and universities. In Aleppo, for example the largest and probably the oldest

mosque library, the Sufiya, located at the city's Grand Umayyad Mosque, contained a large book collection of which 10,000 volumes were reportedly bequeathed by the city's most famous ruler, Prince Sayf al-Dawla. Some mosques sponsored public libraries. Ibn al-Nadim's bibliography *Fihrist* demonstrates the devotion of medieval Muslim scholars to books and reliable sources; it contains a description of thousands of books circulating in the Islamic world circa 1000, including an entire section for books about the doctrines of other religions. Unfortunately, modern Islamic libraries for the most part do not hold these antique books; many were lost, destroyed by Mongols, or removed to European libraries and museums during the colonial period.

By the 8th century first Iranians and then Arabs had imported the craft of papermaking from China, with a paper mill already at work in Baghdad in 794. By the 9th century completely public libraries started to appear in many Islamic cities. They were called "halls of Science" or *dar al-'ilm*. They were each endowed by Islamic sects with the purpose of representing their tenets as well as promoting the dissemination of secular knowledge. The 9th century Abbasid Caliph al-Mutawakkil of Iraq, even ordered the construction of a ‘zawiyat qurra *literally an enclosure for readers which was `lavishly furnished and equipped.'* In Shiraz Adhud al-Daula (d. 983) set up a library, described by the medieval historian, al-Muqaddasi, as *`a complex of buildings surrounded by gardens with lakes and waterways. The buildings were topped with domes, and comprised an upper and a lower story with a total, according to the chief official, of 360 rooms.... In each department, catalogues were placed on a shelf... the rooms were furnished with carpets...'* The libraries often employed translators and copyists in large numbers, in order to render into Arabic the bulk of the available Persian, Greek, Roman and Sanskrit non-fiction and the classics of literature. This flowering of Islamic learning ceased centuries later when learning began declining in the Islamic world, after many of these libraries were destroyed by Mongol invasions. Others were victim of wars and religious strife in the Islamic world. However, a few examples of these medieval libraries, such as the libraries of Chinguetti in West Africa, remain intact and relatively unchanged even today. Another ancient library from this period

which is still operational and expanding is the Central Library of Astan Quds Razavi in the Iranian city of Mashhad, which has been operating for more than six centuries.

A number of distinct features of the modern library were introduced in the Islamic world, where libraries not only served as a collection of manuscripts as was the case in ancient libraries, but also as a public library and lending library, a centre for the instruction and spread of sciences and ideas, a place for meetings and discussions, and sometimes as a lodging for scholars or boarding school for pupils. The concept of the library catalogue was also introduced in medieval Islamic libraries, where books were organized into specific genres and categories.

The contents of these Islamic libraries were copied by Christian monks in Muslim/Christian border areas, particularly Spain and Sicily. From there they eventually made their way into other parts of Christian Europe. These copies joined works that had been preserved directly by Christian monks from Greek and Roman originals, as well as copies Western Christian monks made of Byzantine works. The resulting conglomerate libraries are the basis of every modern library today.

- **Medieval Christian libraries**

With the retrenchment of literacy in the Roman west during the fourth and fifth centuries, fewer private libraries were maintained, and those in unfortified villas proved to be among their most combustible contents.

In the Early Middle Ages, after the fall of the Western Roman Empire and before the rise of the large Western Christian monastery libraries beginning at Montecassino, libraries were found in scattered places in the Christian Middle East.

Medieval library design reflected the fact that these manuscripts —created via the labor-intensive process of hand copying— were valuable possessions. Library architecture developed in response to the need for security. Librarians often chained books to lecterns, armaria (wooden chests), or shelves, in well-lit rooms. Despite this protectiveness, many libraries were willing to lend their books if provided with security deposits (usually money or a book of equal value). Monastic libraries lent and borrowed books from each other frequently and lending policy was often theologically grounded. For example, the Franciscan monasteries loaned books to each other without a security deposit since according to their vow of poverty only the entire order could own property. In 1212 the council of Paris condemned those monasteries that still forbade loaning books, reminding them that lending is "one of the chief works of mercy."

Lending meant more than just having another work to read to librarians; while the work was in their possession, it could be copied, thus enriching the library's own collecion. The book lent as a counter effort was often copied in the same way, so both libraries ended up having an additional title.

The early libraries located in monastic cloisters and associated with scriptoria were collections of lecterns with books chained to them. Shelves built above and between back-to-back lecterns were the beginning of book presses. The chain was attached at the fore-edge of a book rather than to its spine. Book presses came to be arranged in carrels (perpendicular to the walls and therefore to the windows) in order to maximize lighting, with low bookcases in front of the windows. This *stall system* (fixed bookcases perpendicular to exterior walls pierced by closely spaced windows) was characteristic of English institutional libraries. In Continental libraries, bookcases were arranged parallel to and against the walls. This *wall system* was first introduced on a large scale in Spain's El Escorial.

- **Early modern libraries**

Johannes Gutenberg's movable type innovation in the 1400s revolutionized bookmaking. From the 15th century in central and northern Italy, the assiduously assembled libraries of humanists and their enlightened patrons provided a nucleus around which an "academy" of scholars congregated in each Italian city of consequence. Cosimo de Medici in Florence established his own collection, which formed the basis of the Laurentian Library. In Rome, the papal collections were brought together by Pope Nicholas V, in separate Greek and Latin libraries, and housed by Pope Sixtus IV, who consigned the Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana to the care of his librarian, the humanist Bartolomeo Platina in February 1475. In the 16th century Sixtus V bisected Bramante's Cortile del Belvedere with a cross-wing to house the Apostolic Library in suitable magnificence. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw other privately-endowed libraries assembled in Rome: the Vallicelliana, formed from the books of Saint Filippo Neri, with other distinguished libraries such as that of Cesare Baronio, the Biblioteca Angelica founded by the Augustinian Angelo Rocca, which was the only truly public library in Counter-Reformation Rome; the Biblioteca Alessandrina with which Pope Alexander VII endowed the University of Rome; the Biblioteca Casanatense of the Cardinal Girolamo Casanate; and finally the Biblioteca Corsiniana founded by the bibliophile Clement XII Corsini and his nephew Cardinal Neri Corsini, still housed in Palazzo Corsini in via della Lungara.

A lot of factors combined to create a "golden age of libraries" between 1600 and 1700: The quantity of books had gone up, as the cost had gone down, there was a renewal in the interest of classical literature and culture, nationalism was encouraging nations to build great libraries, universities were playing a more prominent role in education, and renaissance thinkers and writers were producing great works. Some of the more important libraries include the Bodleian Library at Oxford, the Library of the British Museum, the Mazarine Library in Paris, and the National Central Library in Italy, the Prussian State Library, the M.E. Saltykov-Shchedrin State Public Library of St. Petersburg, and many more.

- **Public libraries**

The Public Library of Police County in Police, a town in Pomerania, Poland Main article: Public library

The earliest example in England of a library to be endowed for the benefit of users who were not members of an institution such as a cathedral or college was the Francis Trigge Chained Library in Grantham, Lincolnshire, established in 1598. The library still exists and can justifiably claim to be the forerunner of later public library systems. The beginning of the modern, free, open access libraries really got its start in the U.K. in 1847. Parliament appointed a committee, led by William Ewart, on Public Libraries to consider the necessity of establishing libraries through the nation: In 1849 their report noted the poor condition of library service, it recommended the establishment of free public libraries all over the country, and it led to the Public Libraries Act in 1850, which allowed all cities with populations exceeding 10,000 to levy taxes for the support of public libraries. Another important act was the 1870 Public School Law, which increased literacy, thereby the demand for libraries, so by 1877, more than 75 cities had established free libraries, and by 1900 the number had reached 300. This finally marks the start of the public library as we know it. And these acts led to similar laws in other countries, most notably the U.S.

1876 is a well known year in the history of librarianship in the United States. The American Library Association was formed, as well as *The American Library Journal*, Melvil Dewey published his decimal based system of classification, and the United States Bureau of Education published its report, "Public libraries in the United States of America; their history, condition, and management." During the post-Civil War years, there was a rise in the establishment of public libraries, a movement led chiefly by newly formed women's clubs. They contributed their own collections of books, conducted lengthy fundraising campaigns for buildings, and lobbied within their communities for financial support for libraries, as well as with legislatures and the Carnegie Library Endowment founded in the 20th century. They led the establishment of 75-80 percent of the libraries in communities across the country. The American

Library Association continues to play a major role in libraries to this day, and Dewey's classification system, although under heavy criticism of late, still remains the prevailing method of classifying used in the United States.

As the number of books in libraries increased, so did the need for compact storage and access with adequate lighting, giving birth to the *stack system*, which involved keeping a library's collection of books in a space separate from the reading room. This arrangement arose in the 19th century. Book stacks quickly evolved into a fairly standard form in which the cast iron and steel frameworks supporting the bookshelves also supported the floors, which often were built of translucent blocks to permit the passage of light (but were not transparent, for reasons of modesty). The introduction of electrical lighting had a huge impact on how the library operated. The use of glass floors was largely discontinued, though floors were still often composed of metal grating to allow air to circulate in multi-story stacks. As more space was needed, a method of moving shelves on tracks (compact shelving) was introduced to cut down on otherwise wasted aisle space.

Library 2.0, a term coined in 2005, is the library's response to the challenge of Google and an attempt to meet the changing needs of users by using web 2.0 technologies. Some of the aspects of Library 2.0 include, commenting, tagging, book marking, discussions, using social software, plug-ins, and widgets. Inspired by web 2.0, it is an attempt to make the library a

- **Library use**

The Vietnam Center and Archive, which contains the largest collection of Vietnam War-related holdings outside the U.S. federal government, catalogs much of its material on the Internet.

Patrons may not know how to fully use the library's resources. This can be due to some individuals' unease in approaching a staff member. Ways in which a library's

content is displayed or accessed may have the most impact on use. An antiquated or clumsy search system, or staff unwilling or untrained to engage their patrons, will limit a library's usefulness. In United States public libraries, beginning in the 19th century, these problems drove the emergence of the library instruction movement, which advocated library user education. One of the early leaders was John Cotton Dana. The basic form of library instruction is generally known as information literacy.

Libraries inform their users of what materials are available in their collections and how to access that information. Before the computer age, this was accomplished by the card catalog — a cabinet containing many drawers filled with index cards that identified books and other materials. In a large library, the card catalog often filled a large room. The emergence of the Internet, however, has led to the adoption of electronic catalog databases (often referred to as "webcats" or as online public access catalogs, OPACs), which allow users to search the library's holdings from any location with Internet access. This style of catalog maintenance is compatible with new types of libraries, such as digital libraries and distributed libraries, as well as older libraries that have been retrofitted. Electronic catalog databases are criticized by some who believe that the old card catalog system was both easier to navigate and allowed retention of information, by writing directly on the cards, that is lost in the electronic systems. This argument is analogous to the debate over paper books and e-books. While libraries have been accused of precipitously throwing out valuable information in card catalogs, most modern ones have nonetheless made the move to electronic catalog databases. Large libraries may be scattered within multiple buildings across a town, each having multiple floors, with multiple rooms housing the resources across a series of shelves. Once a user has located a resource within the catalog, they must then use navigational guidance to retrieve the resource physically; a process that may be assisted through signage, maps, GPS systems or RFID tagging.

Finland has the highest number of registered book borrowers per capita in the world. Over half of Finland's population is registered borrowers. In the U.S., public library users have borrowed roughly 15 books per user per year from 1856 to 1978. From 1978 to 2004, book circulation per user declined approximately 50%. The

growth of audiovisuals circulation, estimated at 25% of total circulation in 2004, accounts for about half of this decline.

Reference:

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