
Libraries and Cultural Memory
An International Conference of the Doctoral School in History,
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Pázmány Péter Catholic University

FOREWORD

IDA FRÖHLICH, *Pázmány Péter Catholic University Budapest*

The studies presented here are based on the papers of the workshop held under the title *Libraries and Cultural Memory. An International Conference of the Doctoral School in History, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Pázmány Péter Catholic University, October 17-18, 2012*. The theme of early libraries shows an increasing popularity in our times. A comprehensive volume on ancient libraries – the result of a conference held in 2008 in Saint Andrews – was edited by Jason König, Katarina Oikonomopoulou, and Greg Woolf.¹ The volume gives a systematic overview of ancient libraries in Egypt, Assyria and Babylonia, Athens, Alexandria, Pergamum, Rome, as well as libraries in the Greek world and the Roman Empire (including the High Empire). The volume gives a wide panorama, presenting literacy, and reading culture in various societies, and the effects of special libraries on scholars, historians and doctors. Following our Budapest conference two more volumes were published focusing on the theme of the Qumran library.²

The present volume aims at perambulating a special subject related to ancient and modern libraries, namely, how book collections reflect the interest and knowledge of their owners, and how the works collected in a library form at the same time the spiritual world of their owners; which are the themes and traditions maintained in the owners' memories – which are the books and themes that were important for them, and formed their views, moulded their identity. Libraries are not only sites of collecting books but also those of producing new ones – books that may become yet again part of the same library. Studying the content of a library means not only mapping the spiritual world of the library's owner but also to trace intellectual trends, developing traditions. Our volume is focused on Qumran. Cases from neighbouring ancient Near Eastern cultures as well as from Medieval and

¹ J. König - K. Oikonomopoulou - G. Woolf, *Ancient Libraries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

² S. White Crawford - C. Wassen (eds.), *The Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran and the Concept of a Library* (Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah 116; Leiden: Brill, 2016); K. Silver, *Alexandria and Qumran: Back to the Beginning* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2017).

early modern ages show parallel phenomena and can give new insights to our understanding of ancient libraries.

Collections from the ancient Near East are represented in two studies. Markham J. **Geller**, *Library of Archive in Qumran? The View from Mesopotamia* overviews Mesopotamian collections observing differences between archives and libraries. The difference between archives and libraries depends upon is not genre but the contexts in which the texts are found. Archives are pragmatic collections containing administrative, legal, economic, epistolary texts or even prayers and omens, normally in just one copy while library collections contain a variety of texts (several of them belonging to the same genres as texts found in archives). Multiple copies of libraries are intended 'for use in different places at different times.' However, categories between archives and libraries are not always clear. The collection of manuscripts from Qumran shows both characteristics of archives and libraries: besides Hebrew and Aramaic works found in several copies there are Aramaic texts found in just one copy.

Dolores G. **Kamrada**, *Kings and Ancestors: Ugaritic Libraries and Biblical Literature* investigates the libraries found in Ugarit/Ras Shamra as collections that maintain social coherence. Mythical texts from the royal library provide a certain cultural basis for the community: common stories shared by the members of a culture are necessary to build up a common cultural identity. The biblical texts played a very similar role in their own cultural context. Dead ancestors and especially royal ancestors lie in the focus of attention in both the Ugaritic and the biblical literature.

Five studies deal with the Qumran collection. Corrado **Martone**, *From Universal to Sectarian. The Zadokites, Qumran, the Temple and their Libraries* approaches the theme from the point of view of Hellenistic libraries, founded with the aim at collecting certain corpuses of tradition. The founders of the library of Alexandria aimed at collecting the cultural heritage of the Greek speaking world of their time (among them the most ancient translation of the Pentateuch). 2 Maccabees 2:13-14 refers to Nehemiah's library and the books collected by Judas Maccabee. The collection of manuscripts found at Qumran has been often referred to as a library. There is no clear archaeological evidence of a physical library space at Qumran, and what we can see is an abstract library, a "textual community" – a term often used for medieval religious communities. They comprehend their identities thanks to written texts, which were interpreted for them by individuals. Commentating the texts owned generated new texts. The redactional history of some of the Qumran texts (1QS, for example) might shed some light on the group's historical evolution and in particular on the establishment of the Zadokite element within it. A virtual library in which the Zadokite element grew over the years until it became overwhelming and transformed a sectarian library, – or, to put it in J. Collins's terminology, a grey area library – into a Zadokite library containing sectarian texts.

Armin **Lange**, *The Qumran Library in Context. The Canonical History and Textual Standardization of the Hebrew Bible in Light of the Qumran*

Library recalls the opinion that the reestablishment of the Temple library by Judah Maccabee was one of the key events leading to the establishment of the canon of the Hebrew Bible and its proto-Masoretic standard text. Lange shows that during the rule of the Hasmoneans the Qumran library attests to textual plurality rather than to the hegemony of one text type. Several non-Biblical books occur in more copies than the less prominent biblical ones. These intertextual references feature a similar prominence of the Torah, Isaiah, the Minor Prophets, and Psalms, although in some works (Hodayot) the Torah seems to be less prominent than some prophetic texts or psalms.

Devorah **Dimant**, *The Library of Qumran: Variety versus Unity* lays down that the writings found in the Qumran caves constitute an intentional library, created by a purposeful selection. The collection reveals a remarkable variety of forms, genres and sources. She widens the scope of the initial classification (biblical texts; sectarian works related to the community, with a specific thematic, style and vocabulary; and a third group of non-sectarian manuscripts, which do not include these particular features) by analyzing the specific sectarian vocabulary, and introduces sub-categories as dualistic texts, and halakhic texts. She calls up to a more nuanced treatment of the group of non-sectarian texts-nek that do not display the particular sectarian style and vocabulary. Firstly the Qumran Aramaic texts should be discussed separately. Hebrew non-sectarian texts consist of a large array of forms and involve a distinct set of problems. She indicates that Hebrew and Aramaic Texts rework the Hebrew Bible in different ways. Thus, the picture of the library as a complete entity should be re-drawn, and the inter-connections among its components, may be better assessed.

Ida **Fröhlich**, *Qumran Library and Cultural Memory* examines the Qumran library collection as a depository of cultural memory. Traditions and ideas contained in works of the earliest collection were sources of inspiration of later works. The paper traces the way of a founding tradition that was maintained in various forms in the cultural memory of the community that owned the library. The founding tradition was shaped in the story of the Watchers, a myth on the origin of the physical evil and a narrative expression of the identity of a community. Evil was meant to be originated from the violation of the divine laws which resulted in genetical impurity, and demonic beings born from these union. Shaped first in Aramaic in the Enochic writings, long before the establishment of the Qumran community this founding tradition was later reworked and merged with biblical traditions in the Hebrew book of Jubilees. A third work, the book of Tobit reworked the same tradition in an inverted way, giving again a narrative expression of the identity of a pious group, and a founding tradition of the practice of magical healing. The shaping and recurrent reworking of the tradition in three authoritative, non-canonical and non-sectarian works substantiated and developed sectarian identity, without using sectarian terminology.

Russell E. **Fuller**, *Cultural Memory, the Qumran Library, and Identity* focuses on some general comments which will lead to what Jan Assmann

called “presentification” – the bringing of the past into the present in the construction of identity. In a sense, at least partially, the library at Qumran was an eclectic collection the focus of which was on religious compositions which were either traditional to the various Judaismisms of the second temple period, i.e. Bible, or of specific interest to the community at Qumran, i.e. calendars, rules, religious law, etc. Nevertheless, even though the collection was comparatively small and selective, it apparently fulfilled the function of a library in that it preserved (and transmitted) the cultural heritage of the Qumran community. The focus of the collection was reflective of the cultural memory and the identity or attempts at constructing an identity/identities of the group at Qumran. The process of identity construction is exemplified in two of the well-known rule compositions, the Community Rule (CR) and the Damascus Document (CD). Fuller compares the way that both documents use quotations or allusions in their common goal of constructing identity.

Peculiarities of libraries and library use from various later periods offer parallels and new insights to ancient libraries and library use in antiquity. Three studies deal with medieval and later collections. Szabolcs A. **Szuromi**, *Exemplars of the Ecclesiastical Libraries at the Dawn of the High Middle Ages in Europe – their Goals, Sources, and Peculiarities* investigates medieval libraries of monastic communities – socio-religious groups similar to the Qumran community. The content of these libraries were developed by the activities of their owners. Books of the religious fathers were of special importance in the daily life of the community, and the particular place of these volumes within the monastery – the so called “Bibliotheca” – were crucial. Public readings were liturgical and table readings. The table readings were (and are still) arranged in the presence of the entire community of the house, basically in the refectory. The material of these readings involved a short part of the rules of community; the commemoration of the saints or deceased confreres; a part of the founder’s life; and a reading from some spiritual or any edifying source (which could be the Bible itself). The members of the communities were obliged to read. The private spiritual reading basically meant the personal reading of the Bible and the rules of the order, but it could be also writings of patristic authors, or commentary on the Holy Scripture. Instruction – another field of the owners’ activities – needed a special collection on the fields of theology, Church history and law, supplemented with compendia “reading-books” on the same fields. Library collections were completed with gifts donated for the library by former students.

Kinga **Dévényi**, *A Legacy of Islamic Presence. Manuscript Collections in Hungary* examines the presence of Islamic religion and culture in the Islamic manuscript collections of present day Hungary, presented against their cultural background. After giving a brief overview of the institutions of Islamic learning in Hungary and their curricula, she surveys the contents of the existing Hungarian collections. The founder of the *masjid* could decide and determine in the foundation document which one of the Islamic sciences should be taught in the institution. Bigger mosques also functioned as institutions

of learning on a larger scale. The Friday congregational mosque (*jāmiʿ*) had *ḥalqas*, i.e. study-circles, in which the various Islamic sciences were taught.

Our last study, Avriel **Bar-Levav**, *Libraries and cultural memory* focuses on library awareness in Jewish culture since the medieval period. These are not physical but virtual libraries, a network that helps to create intellectual products. Library awareness was dynamic and changing. It has complicated relations with the reality of libraries, but it is, if at all, in the metal world of ideas. They come into being even on places without books. Professional library awareness – and later complete library awareness – did change this situation, emerging the new idea that true and authoritative knowledge is only the one that comes from inspecting all the books.