ideas on book history topics, Robinson would do well to provide a clear overarching rationale as to why certain topics have received more attention than others.

What is commendable about this book is that it makes the history of the book an approachable subject for students. Though the methodology is slightly confusing in parts, Robinson more than makes up for it with the selected bibliographies and other built-in learning tools, which will help to establish a solid book history foundation and also provide readers with a starting point for further exploration of other topics pertaining to the history of the book.

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Konstantinos Sp. Staikos. *The History of the Library in Western Civilization*. Vol. 5, *From Petrarch to Michelangelo: The Revival of the Study of the Classics and the First Humanistic Libraries Printing in the Service of the World of Books and Monumental Libraries*. Delaware: Oak Knoll Press, 2012. Approx. 600 pp.; €82.00 ISBN 9789061943204

The fifth and final volume of the *History of the Library in Western Civilization* covers the story of evolving libraries (public and private) as influenced by humanistic ideals and inspired by Greco-Roman tradition.

The first chapter, spanning the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, compares libraries in France, Germany, Switzerland, Spain, England, and the Netherlands. It tracks the coming into being of university libraries and the sinking down of monastic libraries, the latter's treasures destined to be rediscovered by scholars who created their own private libraries or established academic libraries. The second chapter reviews the first great libraries of the Renaissance. It includes a fairly large section on the Vatican library and dedicates about a page to celebrate the first librarian, Marco Antonio Coccio, who was appointed in 1488 to take charge of Cardinal Bessarion's library. Chapter 3 takes on the heavy topic of the invention of printing and its role in the dissemination of knowledge. It is a topic far too large for a book chapter; therefore, Staikos focuses his history on "the contribution of Aldus Manutius in the advancement of Greek and Roman literature" (123). The chapter also tells the story of the lost manuscripts of Janus Pannonius, the Bishop of Pécs, and looks into

notable private libraries, including that of the King of Hungary, Matthias Corvinus (1433–90), and the library of Medici in Florence, which was housed in a building designed by Michelangelo.

French humanism, as well as “the role of Parisian printing houses and the French royal libraries” (181) comes into the discussion in chapter 4. The chapter also includes a section on the formation of the French Royal library, the library of Louis de Bruges, and the library of François I, among others. The fifth chapter considers the role of Erasmus in the field, and also the further development of print during the Reformation. Also notable is a discussion of the first book fairs in Europe, including an overview of the printing of the first catalogues used by sellers to promote sales and by buyers to enrich libraries. Chapter 6 discusses humanist involvement in the emendation and translation of the Old and New Testaments. It includes entries on Hebrew, Latin, and English Bibles; Matthew’s Bible, the first officially recognized Bible by the Church of England; and the publication of the Paris Bible. It also discusses John Leland’s list, “the sole surviving document from pre-Dissolution England that provides evidence of the monastic libraries’ wealth” (327). This chapter also has a notable entry on Johann Reuchlin (1455–1522), a German intellectual, who was involved in a well-known “battle of books” with Johann Pfefferkorn over Hebrew works. Chapter 7 considers new forms of literature in the aftermath of the Italian Renaissance and the influence of the classics (e.g., Petrarch and the Pleiade), and overviews an exemplary university library: the Bodleian.

Staikos takes chapter 8 in a different direction, moving from discussions of the content of libraries and the contributions of the first humanist librarians to consider the evolution of library architecture from the Middle Ages to the Late Renaissance. This chapter has many wonderful illustrations and photos, and includes detailed reviews of many of the libraries mentioned in previous chapters, including descriptions of their reading rooms and, in some cases, their desks and other reading equipment.

The History of The Library in Western Civilization is a project that is meant to take its place as a reference tool and, as such, the reader is meant to be able to begin reading at any point in order to expand his or her research on a specific topic, whether a person, a book collection, or a library. This volume is no different. It draws on rich and diversified bibliographical resources and is an authoritative

introduction for any reader who is starting research in the field of early libraries and the pioneer librarians of Western Europe.

There is much to say for the beautiful print images in this volume and the high-quality paper that Oak Knoll Press has used for this book, but in an age when even the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* is no longer found in print, one wonders if this final volume in the series might herald a move in the same direction. In fact, moving away from print might even enhance sales. When Encyclopaedia Britannica announced its retirement from print in favour of an electronic format in 2012, fans rushed to buy the last print volumes available.

Formatting the series electronically would enhance its potential as a reference and bibliographical tool, as one could search major names, libraries, and bibliographical details across all five volumes. It would also enable full-text searching and might even include links to databases that would enhance the functionality of the bibliographical resources, taking readers to the authors and editors who have contributed to the wealth of knowledge that one finds in such an extensive endeavour to capture history.

An issue for the press would be the handling of copyright for the beautiful images included in this monograph, but if the aim is to use *The History of the Library in Western Civilization* as a reference tool, as opposed to, say, a coffee table book, then the book's functionality, perhaps best achieved by a move toward a digital format, should be the press's first priority.

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