

made accessible. Fisher's early modern audience recognizes the metaphysical comparison of Christ to a book because of their familiarity with contemporary books and the materials from which they are made. The metaphor endures centuries past the days of wood boards and vellum leaves because early modern manuscript books have been preserved as historical artifacts. Discussions of girdle books come to life when an example that survives in the collections at Yale University is available for the scholar to study and reproduced for the reader to view. We do live in a time when the book is typically viewed as "a vehicle for the transmission of text" not "an instrument and not an icon," not "a part of the world of bodies and things" (6). But scholars will continue to study how writers and readers imagined books, if physical examples of the books they imagined are preserved as artifacts. — *Steven K. Galbraith, Folger Shakespeare Library.*

**Anthony Grafton and Megan Williams.**

*Christianity and the Transformation of the Book: Origen, Eusebius, and the Library of Caesarea.* Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006. xvi + 367p. \$18.95 (ISBN 9780674023147). LC 2007-273343.

Modern readers often take for granted that the book as we now know it—the traditional assembly of printed (or manuscript) sheets folded and assembled into quires and bound together between two covers—has always been with us. We have become so inured to its form and function that we overlook the significance of the codex's development to the evolution of how information has been packaged, organized, processed, disseminated, and accessed throughout history. While the possibilities and advantages promised by digital technologies excite us today, the late-antique Hellenistic and Roman world was caught up in its own exciting information (r)evolution as the first several hundred years of the first millennium witnessed a struggle for supremacy between a variety of media designed

for the transmission of texts. Media for recording and housing the written word such as metal or wood sheets, wax tablets, and ostraca, to name only a few writing supports, were appropriate for working with shorter, more ephemeral texts, but proved unsuitable for transmitting longer and more complex works such as the theological, philosophical, and historical writings that were emerging at the time. The relatively small size and irregularity of ostraca, while useful for recording brief lists or school lessons, could not accommodate longer texts. Wood and metal sheets could be hard to inscribe and harder still to handle and transport once individual sheets were bound together. And wax tablets, although water-resistant, easy to write on, and reusable, were not suitable for long-term storage or easy manipulation of larger texts. All of these media also greatly restricted a scribe's ability to lay text out in efficient, easy-to-use ways.

The most popular writing support of the day was the papyrus scroll. But while scrolls allowed for the creation of longer texts and were relatively cost-effective and portable, the form had a number of fundamental weaknesses necessitating the creation of a new physical format that would facilitate scribal innovations and reader interactions with more complex texts. As a rule, scribes wrote only on a single side of the scroll, wasting potentially usable space on its verso. The act of reading required constant rolling and unrolling of the scroll, a problem that forced scribes to write only in regularly-spaced columns rather than experiment with and develop potentially more useful and efficient textual layouts. It was also impossible for readers to jump easily from one portion of the text to another; and, unless they used weights to restrain the scroll's ends, readers had to hold the text open themselves, making it difficult to consult other works or make notes while reading. And when rolled and stored, it was difficult to differentiate one scroll from another. All of these restrictions encouraged scribes and consumers to look

for new ways to write and read; and, by the close of the first century, a new, alternative format for packaging information had emerged: the codex.

Although it was slow to catch on, not coming into everyday use for several hundred years, the codex was clearly superior to earlier modes of textual transmission. Bound between protective covers, the codex's pages allowed scribes to maximize the space available to them for writing while at the same time making it easier for readers to navigate through the text. The new format was convenient to transport and store, and its covers and page edges provided handy space upon which to write titles and other information that could help readers more easily identify texts. Although the first innovators of the codex did not know it, they had created the single greatest technological advancement in information packaging and transmission the world would know until the advent of the computer.

*Christianity and the Transformation of the Book* captures the spirit of this fundamental technological change and the impact it had on early Christian and late-antique intellectual culture. Grafton and Williams divide their book into four chapters describing the intellectual and bibliographic culture of the third and fourth centuries C.E. and the major innovations in knowledge creation and book production that emerged during this period. Although their chosen topic is large and complex, the authors focus their attention on three

major subjects: Origen (ca. 184–254) and his groundbreaking biblical reference work, the *Hexapla*; Eusebius (ca. 260–339), and his revolutionary reconceptualization of history in his *Chronicle*; and the great library at Caesarea developed by Pamphilus (d. 310) and Eusebius and the power it exerted as a center of book production, knowledge creation, and intellectual and cultural exchange. Their narrative spans a 100-year period that witnessed the emergence of the codex as the dominant form of textual transmission and saw fundamental changes in the ways knowledge was created and packaged. Between Origen's production of the *Hexapla* in the second quarter of the third century, and Eusebius's death in 339, literary production had shifted from a system of private patronage to public sponsorship; major libraries became recognized influence-brokers that both helped establish and preserve cultural, intellectual, and political power; and new, more sophisticated methods of book production and distribution began to emerge. Origen, Eusebius, and their library at Caesarea, the authors argue, forever changed the landscape of textual culture.

Chapter 1 provides a useful overview of the intellectual milieu in which Origen lived and worked. Drawing on a variety of texts that offer glimpses of contemporary scholarly attitudes toward books and their utility as transmitters of knowledge and custodians of memory, Grafton and Williams articulate the tensions between traditional intellectual authority and the new discursive scholarly methods and literary forms that were emerging in the third century. Traditional philosophical attitudes toward knowledge valued esotericism and intellectual privilege above clear expression and accessibility. The more obscure or incomprehensible the thought, the better, for only those who were among the initiated were worthy to perceive the truth of an argument. Pitted against this old-fashioned attitude toward knowledge was a new philological appreciation for the literary styles that shaped textual content. To put it simply, the new

### Index to advertisers

ACRL 2011	138
Amer. Scientific Publishers	cover 4
Annual Reviews	92
Archival Products	183
ARL/ACRL	159
Carrick Enterprises	115
CHOICE Reviews Online	194
EBSCO	cover 3
Joblist	156
Palgrave	cover 2, 91, 95
Wilfrid Laurier University Press	170

philologists emphasized the utility of style in aid of promoting accessibility, while more traditional philosophers maintained that content must always outweigh form.

Fixed firmly in the midst of this conceptual war was Origen, a renowned Christian thinker who left no intellectual stone unturned in his pursuit of biblical truth. A polyglot scholar of the first order who drew equally upon Christian, Jewish, and pagan resources in his academic pursuits, Origen shared the philosophers' preoccupation with truth, but also subscribed to the philologists' desire for textual accessibility. Chapter 2 reveals how he synthesized these two competing points of view in his monumentally influential *Hexapla*, a work that not only changed the way serious biblical scholarship was conducted but also ushered in a new awareness of how innovative textual layouts and designs could impose order on complex texts, create new kinds of scholarly authority, and influence how readers interacted with and asked questions of texts. Origen's *Hexapla* was a biblical text, but it was different from any other book ever before produced. Unlike earlier writers who arranged their texts in single columns, Origen attempted to harmonize and synthesize the original Hebrew Old Testament with its various Greek translations by arranging the texts in six side-by-side columns that allowed readers to compare each version against its counterparts. This complex textual layout allowed readers to see the competing translations together for the first time, provoking a new interest in scriptural authority and textual transmission and providing a new set of critical tools scholars could use to help themselves determine the "true" form and content of the Bible. In addition to describing the impact this new layout had on the way readers interacted with the text, the authors also explain how this radically new textual format affected every aspect of book production, including locating and obtaining reliable source texts to serve as scribal exemplars; navigating

the complexities inherent in dealing with bilingual texts; securing the substantial financial patronage necessary to undertake such a large and complex project; recruiting enough competent scribes to produce the book; and adapting new methods of textual layout that could best take advantage of the unique qualities of the codex format. Without necessarily intending to, Origen completely revolutionized previous understandings of the book and its capabilities.

Chapter 3 examines how Origen's intellectual successor, Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea, integrated his predecessor's textual innovations into his own *Chronicle* (ca. 300), an elaborate two-part text that aimed to synthesize the competing histories produced by all the great civilizations that had existed or were then in power. In the first part of the *Chronicle*, the "Chronography," Eusebius attempted to work out a single historical timeline for the entire world by comparing rival narratives and calendars from different cultures. The second part, the "Canon," built on the "Chronography" by placing all of the basic chronological data it presented into schematic tables that allowed readers to easily compare opposing timelines. In presenting his information in this bipartite way, Eusebius created a unified textual database of the ancient world's known historical accounts and all their harmonies and inconsistencies. The *Chronicle* was a pioneering work in historiography, marking the first concerted attempt to package the entire sum of the world's historical knowledge for easy interpretation and use while at the same time proving that all of history, no matter how diverse the accounts, had been designed to culminate in the secular truth of Roman history and the spiritual verity of Christian salvation history. Like the *Hexapla*, the *Chronicle's* creative and unusual textual layout provided scholars with a means to easily access and adjudicate competing claims of authority and truth.

For Eusebius to complete a project as wide-ranging and complex as the *Chron-*

icle (and later groundbreaking works like his Canon Tables of the Gospels), he would have needed a remarkable scholarly team to help him gather, collate, and process the many texts upon which he would have based his writing. In chapter 4, the authors reveal that the key to Eusebius's revolutionary textual successes was Caesarea's library, the hub of Christian scholarship in the ancient world. The library owed its existence to Pamphilus (d. 310), a wealthy Christian presbyter who dedicated much of his fortune to amassing a remarkable collection of writings, including Origen's works and correspondence. But he did more than just accumulate texts; he also catalogued and organized them, transforming a gentleman's collection into a true scholarly resource. Caesarea's library was home to more than a notable assembly of texts, however. It also played host to a large and active scriptorium whose scribes produced books for the entire Christian world. Grafton and Williams place Eusebius and his work firmly within the larger scholarly, political, economic, and sociocultural contexts of the library and its diverse network of users, patrons, scribes, and partners, paying particular attention to how Eusebius assumed administrative control of the library after Pamphilus' death and built upon his predecessor's work to create a remarkable center of knowledge creation and preservation, textual production, and intellectual exchange. What emerges is a compelling picture of how scholarship and librarianship worked together in the late-antique world to produce new modes of writing, reading, and learning.

Although it deals with a world of information production, packaging, dissemination, and reception that initially might seem foreign to our modern understandings of these concepts, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book* clearly reveals that a better understanding of book culture in the ancient world can teach us much about textual culture—whether print or digital—today. In their concern for the architecture and mediation

of knowledge, the early scholar-librarians of Caesarea presuppose the concerns and practices of modern librarians and their efforts to develop new and efficient ways to organize and promote information to meet changing reader tastes and support the emerging needs of new, more technologically sophisticated user communities. Lively, accessible, and extremely informative, Grafton and Williams' book should be essential reading for any librarian wanting a fuller understanding of the historical and practical evolution of the written and printed word, the creation and organization of knowledge, and the cooperative role that early scholars, librarians, and their libraries played in these processes.—*Eric J. Johnson, The Ohio State University.*

*Periodicals and Publishers: The Newspaper and Journal Trade, 1740–1914.* Eds. John Hinks, Catherine Armstrong, and Matthew Day. New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Press; London: British Library, 2009. 251p. alk. paper, \$49.95 (ISBN 9781584562665). LC 2009-015098.

This is the tenth volume in the series of proceedings published from the "Print Networks" conferences. Unlike the previous volumes, however, this is the first "themed" collection—that is, the eleven papers offered herein are not from one conference, but rather were selected from multiple meetings (Dublin 2006, Chester 2007, and Lincoln 2008). Opening up the selection in this way allows the further development of broad themes—in this instance, the close examination of so-called "provincial" print networks.

The first paper, by Iain Beavan (retired Keeper of Rare Books at the University of Aberdeen), is a think-piece on the uses and abuses of the term "provincial" and the utility of its orthodox definition in the scholarship of the book trade in England. It functions as a prefatory framework of sorts, and Beavan's remarks are borne out by the end of the book: as one will see, simple dichotomies (center/fringe, or cosmopolitan/local) break down once enough mapping of the relationships