Editor's Note

Libraries, Archives, Properties

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This special issue of *Pacific Coast Philology* is made up of papers selected from the 114th Annual Conference of the Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association, held in Pasadena in 2016. The theme of the conference, "Libraries, Archives, Properties," was meant to address the looming crisis in the preservation of records of our cultures, mostly printed or written, but also visual and aural. The pressures on our institutions of memory are almost too obvious and too numerous to inventory: electronic reproduction, digital production, competition from the Internet, the disregard of traditional claims to ownership, the erosion of the public sphere, the consolidation of publishing firms into global conglomerates, and so forth. However, what many of the papers at the conference suggested, and the articles in this issue articulate, is how fragile our imposing monuments of conservatorship have always been and how varied and conflicted the pressures on them.

Conversely, it would have been easy enough to construct a grand narrative about the destruction of libraries, which seemed to punctuate the end of entire eras, such as the burning of the Library of Alexandria or Henry

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VIII's sacking of the monasteries with the consequent destruction of much of Britain's medieval legacy. Or we could have constructed an evolutionary chart of library development, from simple to complex forms, illustrating the survival of the most adaptive techniques and the extinction of inefficient practices. In place of these satisfying grand narratives, however, what emerges from the case studies in this issue is a more nuanced and complex picture, in which permanence and ephemerality come together in unexpected combinations. To reflect that implicit argument, we have purposely begun with the invention of tradition in imperial and national libraries, where all the possibilities for future developments are already latent, and ended with the traces of memory and forgetting in some more recent collections.

In the Forum section, "Wars of Knowledge," Marta Albalá Pelegrín has curated a series of articles analyzing "Iberian imperial hegemony and the assembly of libraries." Libraries are a form of war by other means, as it were. Diplomats and humanists, sometimes in the same person, engaged in legal and extralegal efforts to obtain the books and objects that would enhance the status and prestige, and hence the power, of the crown, and also benefit these agents themselves. In his contribution, Javier Patiño Loira analyzes two of the earliest proposals for a Spanish royal library accessible to the public, one in 1556 by Juan Páez de Castro, Phillip II's confessor, which served as a rough plan for Phillip II's library at El Escorial, and the other by Juan Bautista Cardona in 1579. They lobby, successfully, for a permanent abode for books with an uncertain future in private hands, as well as, unsuccessfully, for a printing press to accompany preservation and circulation and to create as well as conserve culture. As Valeria López Fadul demonstrates, Páez de Castro's vision of a library was an image of the world itself, in which the many different realms could be imagined as one body united under the monarch, negotiated and tended by humanists. In the other Forum contributions, Fabien Montcher and Stefano Gulizia show us how difficult it was to maintain this unified imperial vision. Montcher identifies an "Early Modern Biopolitics," in which exiled scholars and political figures generate an information network that cannot be contained by a single national entity. In Gulizia's example, the seventeenth-century library of Diego Hurtado de Mendoza adapts to its Venetian context, including the traffic with Greek books and libraries. In contrast to a view of collecting as a form of Renaissance self-fashioning, Gulizia gives a secret life to the objects themselves, in motion and subject to change in time, place, and materiality.

The articles that follow the Forum section shift attention to England, the American colonies, and revolutionary France. Lora Geriguis describes the Royal Society in the 1660s as a network of colleagues rather than an academy, defensive about the still new scientific outlook. These gentlemen-scholars

"seeded" each others libraries with their books and works, but excluded Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, potentially one of their most distinguished members. In so doing, they revealed the limits of their supposedly objective efforts to establish the parameters of scientific inquiry. Victoria Larson then moves us into the next century, and across the Atlantic, to the private libraries of William Byrd II and Thomas Jefferson, whose collections expressed their ambiguous status between the Old and New Worlds, virtuous country dwellers on the one hand and cosmopolites on the other. In the next essay, Alix Mazuet tells us what happens after the French revolution, when private libraries of the Ancien Régime were destroyed and the efforts to reconstitute them as part of a national patrimony began.

The three essays that conclude this issue continue to emphasize the fragile and ephemeral nature of collections and collecting during the same span of time, placing them in the context of region, gender, and politics. Joseph Morton takes us to early twentieth-century Los Angeles, where Dawson's Book Store opens in 1905. Its antiquarian section provided an imaginative tour of California's rapidly disappearing past, but commercial pressures and opportunities compromised the establishment of an archive. Jo Scott-Coe takes u into a newly released archives, the letters of Kathy Leissner Whitman, whose was murdered by her husband Charles Whitman. The next day, Charles Whitman took to the top of the Main Building Tower (once a library itself) at the University of Texas and began firing, becoming one of America's most notorious mass murderers and introducing a scenario that has become horrifyingly familiar. Scott-Coe reads the letters to uncover what she calls domestic terrorism, and which becomes the suppressed mirror image of the public terrorism that has consumed the media of our own time. Scott-Coe's reading, although rooted in an event that took place in 1966, would not have been possible were it not for a very recently opened archive of Kathy Whitman's letters, and the author's analysis destabilizes many of our current assumptions about public and private spheres. Sherrin Francis's essay also faces an unsettled present, in which private collections pour into a public space. She describes the Maidan Protest Library of 2014, established as a temporary institution to serve the protestors against the then government of Ukraine. She places the Kiev library into the context of other temporary protest libraries around the world, as well as tracing its dispersal across the Ukraine after the protests ended, helping to shape ongoing negotiations of national, local, and international identities. Finally, my own Presidential Address, originally presented as an illustrated lecture at the Pasadena conference, seeks to describe the ways in which the various contradictions and conflicts uncovered in these essays are dramatized, even performed, in the built form of library architecture in the twentieth century and after.

We are grateful to the editors of *Pacific Coast Philology*, Roswitha Burwick and Richard Sperber, and to the staff of the Pennsylvania State University Press, especially Astrid Meyer. Scholarship on libraries and archives has been especially rich and rewarding over the past few decades and is far too extensive to acknowledge in this brief introduction, but the notes to the following chapters will suggest some of this richness. The American Library Association, its conferences and journals, has been of course at the forefront of the field, and I would encourage scholars of language, literature and other media, including members of PAMLA, to inform themselves and participate in its debates and issues. Libraries and their professionals after all preserve, protect and also shape the archives that we teach and study, and we should make an effort to cross the disciplinary and physical borders which often keep us apart.