

*Scriver veloce. Sistemi tachigrafici dall'antichità a Twitter.* Atti del convegno, Rovereto, 22–24 maggio 2014. Ed. by ALESSANDRO TEDESCO. (Biblioteca di bibliografia, 203.) Florence: Olschki. 2016. xxv + 261 pp. €29. ISBN 978 88 222 6461 9.

Acts of a chronologically wide-ranging conference on the history of writing quickly. The motive was the donation to the Biblioteca Civica 'Girolamo Tartarotti' at Rovereto of a collection of some three thousand books relating to stenography formed by Francesco Giulietti (1883–1978), author of numerous pioneering studies in the field. The essays in the volume go back to antiquity and inevitably take us up to the World Wide Web. Includes contributions by Francesco Ascoli, Edoardo Barbieri, Attilio Bartoli Angeli, Patrizia Bertini Malgarini, Marco Callegari, Andrea Caranti, Francesca Chiusaroli, Fabio Forner, Chiara Giberti, Nicoletta Giovè Marchioli, Alessandro Mininno, Paolo A. Paganini, Marco Petoletti, Paolo Poccetti, Riccardo Saccenti, Anna Maria Trombetti, and Ugo Vignuzzi. Not to be read in haste.

*Storia della Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vol. IV: La Biblioteca Vaticana e le arti nel secolo dei lumi (1700–1797).* Ed. by BARBARA JATTA. Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana. 2016. 510 pp. €120. ISBN 978 88 210 0975 4.

The fourth volume in this immense history of the Vatican Library. The first involved the creation (see *The Library*, VII, 13 (2012), 493); the second, the building (18 (2017), 529–30); the third, the growth of the collections (19 (2018), 264); and in the present one, which covers most of the eighteenth century, up to the watershed year 1797 and the invasion of Northern Italy by French troops led by General Bonaparte, nothing much happens. From being at the centre of European affairs, Italy had slipped into a quiet backwater, with the shift of political and economic power to the Atlantic seaboard, as well as the loss of most of Northern Europe to the various reformed churches. Matters were not entirely static, however. For the first and only time in its history the library had a significant budget for the purchase of new books and important collections were also acquired, such as the Ottoboni and Capponi libraries. It was a time for tourists, and a chapter here appropriately deals with English and French visitors to the library, which remained (as today) a private collection, with access very much subject to the whims of the librarian or the lesser custodians (see *The Library*, VII, 20 (2019), 111–13). Both Addison in 1700 and Hester Lynch Piozzi in 1786, albeit writing later, record that visits to the library for English visitors included shows of Henry VIII's letters to Anne Boleyn (hot stuff!); purposeful scholarship on the other hand seem to have been quietly discouraged. The main objective of the period was instead the creation of the 'Museo cristiano', originally an adjunct to the library, which formally opened in 1771 and has since become the enormous complex known as the Vatican Museums, one of the most visited in the world. The volume, edited by the actual director of the museum, therefore provides a lot of information about this process.

Florence

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