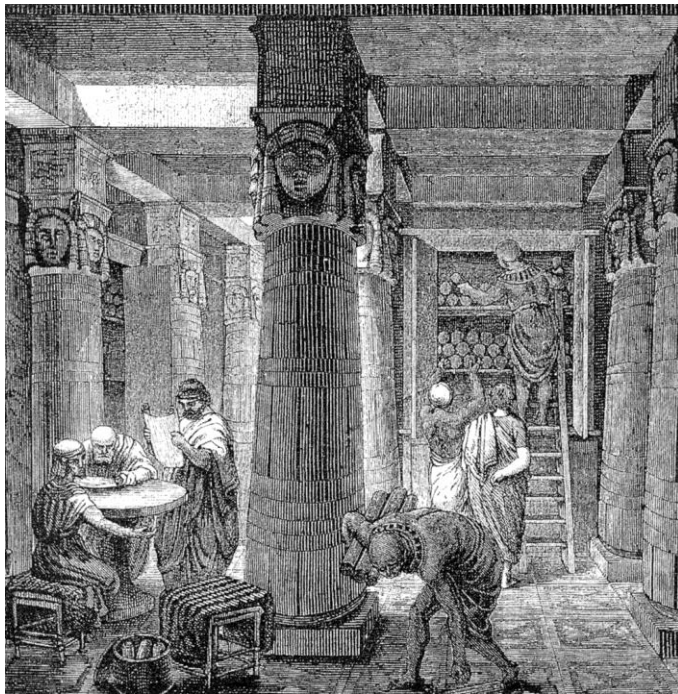


A Visit to the Jonstown Library

Dearest Felicitus,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am presently heading south towards Esrolia through Dragon Pass. I had the occasion while travelling through Jonstown to visit the Lhankor Mhy temple said to be the largest library in Sartar. Of course the ill-fated Reaching Moon Temple devoured in the Dragonrise was going to have an even larger collection but I don't imagine the interior of a dragon is conducive to any quiet reading. I've heard the collection was almost entirely composed of copies of scrolls from the Irrippi Ontor temple in Glamour so that part of the loss wasn't as, well never mind that.

I will tell you that no one was more surprised than I was that my writ of safe passage from Moonson was accepted by the Lhankor Mhy sages as entry to their temple library. You know that I have visited many libraries in my day, even if all I was looking for was exotic pornography and DIY volumes. I do know a good library when I see one. The library was well lit, no open fires of course and given a prominent place of honour was the pointy purple hat last worn by the late Minaryth Purple.



The collection is of course almost entirely made up of scrolls though they have an ever increasing collection of codices. What you ask is a codex? A fairly new introduction. It is a collection of sheets of papyrus or vellum bound between two wooden boards. It takes up much less room on a shelf than a scroll and it's easier to find information in. The papyrus is sourced from the Ducks of Ducktown who make it from reeds taken from the Upland Marsh. (I heard rumours from low level librarians when we were sharing a drink at the local watering hole that some of the papyrus is made from ghost reeds which are said to have magical properties.

Despite being members of a knowledge cult they didn't seem to know is this was true or not). Papyrus is not as durable as vellum but it is much cheaper. I asked if the codex was a Duck invention and the Librarian changed the topic which assures me that it is. As an aside the Librarian told me of a new material that may have great potential. They were approached by

an enterprising Argan Argar trader who had flat sheets of some sturdy material that was surprisingly easy to write on. At first he was loath to share his source but after much cajoling he admitted that it made by flattening the sides of abandoned giant wasp nests! Not something non-Trolls are going to be able to access very easily I suspect. The trader even admitted that he was experimenting with getting trolls to replicate the manner the wasps used to create their, what did he say it was called? Oh yes paper! He thought that this held promise and involved much less stinging. Apparently the trolls chew wood and spit the results into trays. That was as much as the trader shared.

The collection was organized in the standard manner that is according to the manner in which the world itself is ordered. But where a Buserian librarian would do it properly with materials related to the Sky or Stars being given precedence, then Fire, then Earth, then Water, then Air, then Darkness and finally Lunar. (An Irrippi Ontor librarian would of course put Lunar materials first). The Lhankor Mhy sages with their cockeyed view of the world put Air first, then Earth, then Water, then Fire, then Darkness and finally Lunar. They even have a restricted section for titles on Chaos! Within each section the materials are further organized by precedent with materials dedicated to the greatest of the gods being given prominence and then others being shelved in descending order of importance. Titles on Sartarite gods are given first place and then gods of other places, if any are included, again in order or precedence (if known). The Water section is surprisingly large. This is attributed to the importance of the Boranini river people in Jonstown.

The temple uses shelves marked with runes to indicate the various parts of the collection, and yes the Lunar section uses the Moon rune. I asked innocently if the Chaos section was marked with the Chaos rune but the Librarian again changed the topic, so yes it does. The scrolls themselves have tags attached that indicate the author and title of the work if any. Or authors since of course many scrolls contain more than one work connected together making shelving in some cases somewhat problematic. I asked if the collection contained any materials related to my own cult, Cora of the Two Appetites and the Librarian admitted that a particularly valuable scroll consisting of myths about the romances of Orlanth with well everyone also contained a copy of How the Tomato Came to Glamour. I asked why that section hadn't been removed and the Librarian just sighed and said that task was on "the list of things that needed doing".

The collection also contains fascinating things like extremely rare Second Age fragments on the EWF and at least one document the Librarian swore was a dragonewt text written on the inside of an uncomfortably large egg shell. I did not get to see that but I did get to see some actual Mostali documents somehow printed on a thin sheet of metal. The Librarian admitted that as exciting as this was it was only some sort of partial fastener inventory organized by permanency

and material. Apparently dwarves use a lot of different sizes of something called nuts and bolts. There were also two stelae, texts burnt into slabs of wood and clay tiles with arcane symbols on them. These were all a small portion of the entire collection

I also got to see the records section where government documents are stored. The documents, mostly sheets of papyrus have one corner pierced and a colour coded string threaded through. These files are then hung on hooks to sort them. Amazingly the tax records of the Lunar occupation for this area were preserved when the Lhankor Mhy sages locked the Irrippi Ontor officials out of the temple during the uprising. They were assisted in this by the temple wyter who is the spirit of the first Librarian. Apparently you do not want to misshelve anything or return it late! Anyway they saved the Lunar tax records and showed me the room where they were stored. There were dozens of files organized by tribe and then clans within the tribe in order of precedence and by steads, again in order of precedence. And then by individual! Again by precedence down to the lowliest stickpicker! We Lunars certainly know how to organize government records! All in all a fascinating library.

I hope this letter finds you well Felicitus and hope as always that Moonson will rescind my exile someday so I may wander back to your vicinity.

Yours as always,

Fresser

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