

## The Athenaeum in the Twenty-First Century

The collection of materials in a so called “brick and mortar” facility such as an athenaeum, museum or a library suggests that a collection, if seen alone as a hoard of artifacts or books, could be digitally replicated. I argue that the nature of the internet and internet fora are largely still quite anonymous, subject to capricious trending, falsified information potential data mining, data monetization, and its “freedom” in world power countries, such as China, Russia and North Korea, is already controlled, very limited and censored by the State. Therefore, I argue here for the value of preserving original printed material and research libraries as a gateway to “live and personal” interdisciplinary human research and discourse. It not only interrogates and employs data presently available in databases, scanned volumes, library and museum “virtual” access, etc., but allows for the critically reasoned application and interpretation of such data to unique questions. While prestigious online databases can be extremely useful (British Museum, British Library and in France the Louvre and the BNL for example) they often do not include all of the collections (including the British Museum, which does not include their “mistake” purchases(embarrassing fakes) for example, destined to the purgatory of unpublished storage.

I argue in the spirit of Raphael’s “Suola d’ Atene” we “Causarum Cognitio” as we gather at the University of Texas at Dallas, libraries and resources acquired by independent scholars, collectors and institutions and make them available in a 21<sup>st</sup> century Athenaeum.