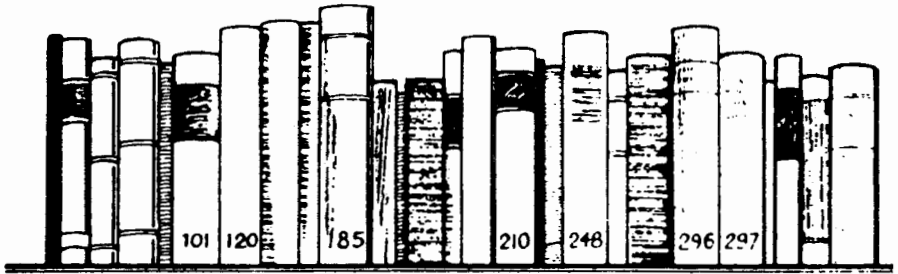


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BULLETIN

of the

*Association of British Theological
and Philosophical Libraries*

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March 1987

BULLETIN 1987

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**BULLETIN OF THE ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH
THEOLOGICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL LIBRARIES**

(in liaison with The Library Association)

No. 38, Edinburgh, March 1987

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Mr Alan F. Jesson is Bible Society Librarian, Cambridge University Library.

Mr Patrick J. Lambe is library assistant, United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, London.

LIBRARIES – 37

Salisbury & Wells Theological College Library

19 The Close,

Salisbury,

Wilts,

SP1 2EE

Tel: Salisbury (0722) 332235

Librarian

Mrs Rosemary M. Pugh, A.L.A.

Historical Background

Salisbury & Wells Theological College came into being in 1972 when Wells Theological College and Salisbury Theological College were amalgamated. New premises were designed and built to house the two individual library collections as a single unit and the Wells library was re-classified and catalogued to conform to the system in use in Salisbury since the mid-sixties.

The early material reflects each college's different traditions as well as their history. Wells, founded in 1840, was a college for graduates who wished to enter the Church of England ordained ministry, whereas, Salisbury, founded twenty years later by the forward thinking then Bishop of Salisbury, Walter Kerr Hamilton, was the first Anglican college to accept non-graduates for the ministry. From the early days of both colleges, the handful of students grew steadily (except in the war-time years), and now Salisbury & Wells has a total of eighty full-time residential students – women number eighty–, and approximately eighty-five part-time non-residential students – of whom half are women – in training at any one time. The non-residential course has further been broadened to train people for the United Reformed ministry alongside those for the Church of England.

Function and Coverage

The Library is designed, primarily, as a working collection for staff and students and the emphasis of the library reflects the needs of the subjects currently taught, together with suitable background material. About eight percent of the stock falls into the broad classification of religion, the remaining twenty percent covering philosophy, psychology, sociology, education and literature. The library is also able to support the research needs of graduate and post-graduate students and it has a further untapped source of potentially valuable historical research material amongst the seven thousand uncatalogued and unclassified volumes in store. These are the reserve stocks of the two colleges, which were omitted from the classification and cataloguing process when the amalgamation took place. At present work schedules for the classification and cataloguing of these volumes are being prepared for submission to the Manpower Services Commission Community Programme. Clergy of the Diocese are also welcomed as readers in accordance with the terms of the deposit of a large part of Bishop Hamilton's library by his executors in the early 1870's.

Stock

Approximately 35,000, 900 – 1000 volumes being added each year. 8 complete sets of periodicals, over 40 incomplete sets, 64 current subscriptions.

Special Collections The Markham Bequest of 292 volumes of bound periodicals dating from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the Bishop Hamilton deposit which is in the process of organisation.

Classification & Cataloguing

Stock is classified, using the 17th edition of the Dewey Decimal Classification with certain local deviations, such as the inclusion of Christian Ethics with moral philosophy, and the recasting and extension of the pastoral care schedule. Cataloguing is to the Anglo-American Code.

Access

Upon application to the Librarian

Staff

One part-time librarian, two part-time assistants



BIBLIOGRAPHIES & REFERENCE BOOKS -- 55

A Guide to Libraries of Judaica and Hebraica In Europe,

Compiler, F.J. Hoogewoud, with A.K. Offenburg and G.Weil. Copenhagen, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Association of Libraries of Judaica and Hebraica in Europe, 1986. DKr150, ISBN 87-7023-555-4

We all have horror stories of bindings ancient and modern, disintegrating to the point where the book is more a series of pages in loose association than a secure block. This book has pre-empted the future by appearing as a series of loose pages held together with a paper band.

There is, in fact, a very good reason for this: the same reason which I found so frustrating in the preparation of the *ABTAPL Guide*. As the introduction has it:

After the addition of some libraries (till then missing) and the correction and updating of all texts (by the libraries themselves), it is being realised (sic) that important libraries are still missing, because communication has not yet been established.

As a result, this *Guide* has been issued without pagination, series numbering, index and with printing on only one side of the sheet.

The volume contains approximately 124 leaves, 15 of which act as markers and bear the name of the country to which the following entries refer. There are three appendices: I, *Hebrew manuscript collections in Europe*; II, *Hebrew incunabula in European libraries: a provisional list of bibliographic tools*, and III, *names and addresses for information concerning national associations of Jewish studies*. The introduction contains a brief account of the history of the Association of Libraries of Judaica and Hebraica in Europe (founded in 1955), whose experiences seem to parallel that of ABTAPL, in that after a successful start all activity ceased (in 1974) until the Association was resurrected in 1980.

As the societies appear to have similar characteristics, so do their respective publications. Although at 238mm x 170mm it is slightly larger than the *ABTAPL Guide's* A5 format, the ALJHE's book has entries which are arranged under post town order within the country; which start with name, address and telephone number (including codes), and contact person or chief officer; which list stock holdings, opening hours, and services available, and give a short statement of the history of the organisation cited. Entries are, however, on average much shorter and — a feature about which I still cannot make up my mind — there is only one entry on each page. True, this makes it easy to insert manuscript amendments, but in many cases 75% of the page is left blank. No entry is long enough to require a second page and most finish about halfway. Thus, nearly three-quarters of the book consists of blank paper. At around £13 a copy there are grounds for feeling aggrieved.

Twenty-three libraries are listed for the UK, and they are divided into 'England' and 'Scotland' by marker sheets. Of these 23, 20 also appear in the *ABTAPL Guide* (one of the three which does not is the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, one is marginal to us and one will be listed in the next edition), but our *Guide* has five more entries for Jewish libraries in London alone. It may well be, however, that these five have been deliberately excluded because *It was considered important that libraries wishing to be mentioned in this guide should contain both Judaica and Hebraica* (Introduction). This makes it the more surprising that amongst other omissions is the Bible society's Library which (at the risk of being considered immodest) I should point out has had a published catalogue of printed Hebraica and Judaica available since 1911 in *Darlow and Moule*, and of similar manuscripts since 1982. I also note that the entry for Cambridge University Library is at least three years out of date, and that for the Bodleian Library at least two.

It is, of course, very easy to pick holes in a work of this sort, and despite the comments above, I do welcome the appearance of this book and the information therein. There is no doubt that this book is the result of a great deal of dedicated work. But despite the promise of correction sheets and additional information leaves to be supplied free of charge until all the information has been gathered, revised, updated, printed and issued in bound format, I do not think that this is a book which I would want to keep at my desk — at any rate not just yet.

Alan F. Jesson

EXCHANGE-OF-EXPERIENCE SEMINAR: *Staffing, Use of small computers, Book selection and acquisition.* Held on opening day of ABTAPL Conference 10 – 13 April 1986

1. Staffing

The first two subjects of the seminar were to be the use of non-professional staff in member libraries (opened by John Creasey), and the use of volunteers (opened by Alan Jesson), but in the event the discussion on these two topics merged, with a general theme of understaffing and possible ways of coping with it.

John Creasey and Jean Woods pointed out the difficulty of strict segregation of professional and non-professional tasks in a small organisation where staff often had to cover for each other's duties. Professional staff often did not have sufficient junior help to remove the burden of clerical chores – Michael Walsh's suggested ratio of one junior to every professional did not seem possible for many libraries. Mary Elliott said the King's College London Library had employed a high calibre of graduate staff in junior posts but at the cost of great frustration and resentment at their low status and pay compared to their actual value to the Library.

The use of (possibly professional) volunteers to carry some of the burdens was extensively discussed. Alan Jesson said that in his experience the process of selection and appointment should be just as formal as for paid appointments, with a written code of practice about the use of volunteers and clearly defined tasks for them to do. Use of volunteers was not a sort option. There was general agreement with this, and it was clear that the problem of discipline was uppermost here. Several examples were cited of erratic attendance, disruption of working patterns because of casual attitudes, independent ideas about how the job should be done, and the propensity of others to palm off unsuitable people onto a library as a supposedly unstressful environment. Again the use of professional volunteers for clerical tasks could produce frustration. The right people had to be found for the jobs to be done. Despite this, there was agreement that voluntary labour was valuable if managed properly. John Howard suggested a form of written conditions for voluntary posts – when it should end, agreement on notice, and so on. This could then be underwritten by the Librarian's principal, in case of any future problems.

A discussion of MSC schemes followed: Mary Elliott and Margaret Ecclestone spoke of the patchy quality of candidates from year to year. There were problems with continuity, with the time expended each year in initiation and administration of the scheme, in training and in supervision. Alena Warburton said that she preferred voluntary labour provided they remained for more than a year.

Within the discussion Margaret Ecclestone and Alena Warburton raised the question of the ethics of using graduate staff at low rates of pay or professional volunteers for professional tasks. Did this not depress an already depressed job market? Alena Warburton argued that these practices were merely palliative and perpetuated the poor situation because it did not encourage the holders of the purse strings to solve the problems of

understaffing by appointing more paid and professional staff. The Cathedral Library at Canterbury had at last increased its establishment because it was not possible to rely on volunteers. Michael Walsh, however, doubted that money was generally available. Permanent staff meant a commitment to perpetual drain on funds, and in universities at least, temporary contracts could not be renewed for more than three years, or the post-holder would gain tenure. Jean Woods said that she found temporary contracts more of a minefield than voluntary labour. There was disquiet at these problems in the area of staffing, but no clear solutions emerged.

2. Computerisation

Michael Walsh next opened a discussion of computerisation on a small budget; Computer equipment was now relatively cheap, he said. A ten to twenty megabyte machine could be purchased for under £2,000, and educational institutions could often get a 40–50% discount from companies competing with each other for business in this field. Library software, however, was a different story: it can be extremely expensive, and not always a good buy. In considering computerisation it is best to select the suitable software first, and then buy the compatible hardware.

The only early decision about hardware is that of whether one is going for a network or a stand alone system. A network system allows the microcomputers installed to communicate with each other, while each stand alone micro must be separately programmed and operated. A network system is more expensive to install for little extra advantage, and the cables between micros often don't carry the information well. Software for network systems was also more costly. Heythrop had bought a stand alone system and found it quite satisfactory.

As an example of costs Michael Walsh cited a Bookshelf programme of interrelated modules, at £2,000 per module. There were separate modules for cataloguing, acquisitions, public access, and circulation. Heythrop had had the benefit of the University of London's own software for libraries: for under £7,000 they had purchased two Zenith personal computers, a printer, and software for cataloguing, acquisitions and wordprocessing. The software had cost just under £2,000 of the total. Heythrop was very happy with what they had got. The University of London had also produced software for periodicals management, although this would not handle some foreign languages.

John Howard cited the case of the large retrospective online cataloguing

Michael Walsh stressed the value of computerisation and how cooperative cataloguing could help libraries to work more closely together in order to optimise resources. There was a need to know what other libraries were acquiring. Martin Weller said that negotiating on who should buy particular titles could be very time consuming, but Mary Elliott said that in her experience at Kings, such negotiations only took place for the more expensive titles.

3. Book selection and Acquisitions

John Howard began this discussion by recommending Jane te Newhall's *A Theological Library Manual* (Geneva: TEF of the WCC, 1970; London: SPCK, 1978). On general principles for an academic library, money would be allocated between departments, but it was important to keep a substantial amount back for 'general books, for supplementing subject areas that were under-represented, or for special purchases. Michael Walsh said that allocating money to different departments doesn't work well on a small budget. Patristic books, for example, are consistently more expensive than those on canon law. John Creasey pointed to occasional surges of interest in particular subjects in any one year. John Howard said that he was unhappy with fixed allocations, and that it was better to keep an informal eye on the balance of the allocations.

For ordering and gaining information about books, John Howard said that he used local booksellers or agents. Considerations to be kept in mind were: do the dealers charge postage on deliveries? Do they give a good service? Do they give a discount? Under the Net Book Agreement, libraries were supposed to register with the Booksellers' Association and used a named bookseller to qualify for trade discounts, but this rule was not rigorously enforced for academic libraries. In some cases, however, there could be

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the question about who the library staff were and what their qualifications were.

Michael Walsh pointed out that the role of the academic staff in selection often depended on the traditions of the place in question. Certainly the librarian should play an active role in the life of the institution, and this would involve interchange between librarian and academics. John Howard cited an instance where this did not happen, of academics who relied on their own private collections, as a result of which their particular areas in the library were neglected. Michael Walsh said that the further away from his own degrees he was, the less able he felt to select with authority. But on the other hand, there were now four areas being taught at Heythrop which would not have been taught if he had not been buying in those areas. The librarian could also play an anticipative and stimulative role for the academics. But to fulfil that role, the librarian had to have his or her hands

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undertaken at the University Library in Edinburgh, and said that one unforeseen cost was the maintenance contract. Michael Walsh said that this is calculated at 10% of the initial capital outlay, with a one year warranty on the equipment. One should expect to replace the equipment in 4-5 years. Other expenses included floppy discs and computer paper. One particular problem with computerisation was the speed at which systems were changing and equipment and software was becoming antiquated. One example was the reduction in availability of 5¼" floppy discs.

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On the question of who does the selection and ordering of books, John Howard first of all distinguished between systematic building up of the library collections, involving older publications as well as new, and simply keeping abreast of current publications. The latter was most often the librarian's main task. He agreed that the librarian should have consultation about purchases — it would be rare for large purchases or for a new periodical subscription to be made without reference to anyone else. But to say that teaching staff had more specialised knowledge than the librarian was to beg the question about who the library staff were and what their qualifications were.

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free to select. John Howard agreed, and said that when he had wanted to start buying *Religion Index 1*, the academics had turned it down; pressure from (particularly American) students and visitors, however, made it necessary to start taking it some time later. Mary Elliott had had a similar experience. Michael Walsh said that it was a complex business to get the balance right — for example, where a subject had not been taught for a few years, whether or not to continue buying. It was important not simply to reflect current teaching patterns, but to maintain a sense of responsibility for the future.

There followed a short discussion on unsolicited gifts. Gift horses, John Howard said, should be looked in the mouth. A gift should be worth the cost of processing and housing it. John Creasey said that even small gifts could be troublesome, and there were often problems with donors expecting to see their books in the library or receive acknowledgement. Jean Woods said that she generally acknowledges gifts and makes it clear that she will "place them to best advantage". Michael Walsh said that some of the most fascinating collections in libraries are precisely the things that most people have discarded or refused for their libraries — the literature of fringe religious sects, for example. While everyone could not keep such materials, there should be some means of ensuring that someone did. John Howard said that that was a question for interlibrary cooperation. The ideal, he said, was to have a written collection development policy, if only for self defence against unwanted gifts — this was American practice. Such a policy could then form the basis of all selection and acquisition policies. Michael Walsh agreed, and said that a written policy could also protect the future of one's collections. Alan Jesson pointed out that in cases of stock overflow, such a policy could also form the basis of *deselection* policies.

The session closed with a discussion of reclassification and stock moves at King's College London and St. John's College Nottingham, led by Mary Elliott. She pointed out the importance of using an established scheme which would not be likely to be abandoned by its creator before the project was complete. It was also advisable to bear in mind possible future cooperation with other university libraries in choosing the scheme to be used. In the end, everything depended upon time and person-power. There followed a short discussion of the mechanics of reclassification.

Patrick J. Lambe

Affiliation of participants:—

John Creasey	Dr Williams' Library London
Margaret Ecclestone	U.S.P.G. London
Mary Elliott	King's College, Univ. London
John Howard	New College, Univ. Edinburgh
Alan Jesson	Bible Society, Univ. Cambridge
Michael Walsh	Heythrop College, Univ. London
Alena Warburton	Hudson Memorial Lib., St. Alban's Abbey
Martin Weller	Franciscan Central Lib., Canterbury
Jean Woods	C.M.S., London

CHURCH LIBRARIES IN HUNGARY

John S. Andrews

This is a summary, with a few comments of my own, of *Der Staat und die kirchlichen Bibliotheken in Ungarn seit 1945* (The state and church libraries in Hungary from 1945 onwards) by Flóris Szabó and Béla Miksa Bánheygi. It forms pages 215-225 of a symposium edited by Paul Kaegbein and Peter Vodosek, *Staatliche Initiative und Bibliotheksentwicklung seit der Aufklärung* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1985). Szabó and Bánheygi are Benedictine priests of the Bibliotheca Archiabbatiae in Pannonhalma.

Historical Survey

In 1945 more than 60% of the Hungarian population was Roman Catholic and about 30% Protestant, of whom three quarters were Reformed and one quarter Lutheran. (This disparity in size between the Catholics and the Protestants no doubt explains why more information is given in this account about Catholic than about Protestant libraries.) Many church libraries had valuable holdings of medieval manuscripts, incunabula and early printed books as well as substantial collections of later works of scholarly interest.

The Catholic Church had three archiepiscopal and eight episcopal diocesan or seminar libraries. It had also a number of libraries belonging to various religious orders and communities and many belonging to local churches. There were also many Protestant as well as Catholic school and college libraries.

For the first few years after the Second World War Hungary was governed by a coalition; but at least by 1949 the Communists had gained the monopoly of power that they have maintained ever since despite the abortive national revolution of 1956.

As early as 1945 a ministerial decree indirectly established the practice whereby particularly valuable books had to be reported to a central office. In 1947 a decree acknowledged for the first time the importance of church libraries. In those years such libraries received financial support from the state for staff and essential acquisitions.

In 1948 all the 6505 denominational schools were nationalised together with their libraries. Since there was tension between the state and the Catholic Church, financial support was withdrawn. The Protestants soon made agreements with the state whereby they retained some of their theological colleges and grammar schools and also obtained grants for staffing their large libraries. The Catholics eventually made a similar agreement, but for various reasons had considerable difficulties.

Further decrees from 1952 to 1971 increased the centralised control over church libraries, but also ensured the preservation, restoration and recording of collections of high artistic, academic and historic value.

According to a 1976 decree, still in force, the work and working conditions in church libraries was to be inspected by the competent minister, who would promote their academic use with the agreement of the church authorities.

Those libraries with collections of significant scholarly or historic value might be classed as learned libraries. In 1978 the conditions for this classification were spelled out: the level of the exploitation of the stock and of its services; the extent of co-operation with other libraries; the library's research activity; the number and professional education of the senior staff; the total stock and its annual rate of growth and the conservation of the stock.

The Present Situation

Today there are 25 major Catholic libraries with in all over 1,500,000 volumes, five Reformed libraries with 850,000 volumes, three Lutheran libraries with 150,000 volumes, one Jewish, one Orthodox and one Unitarian library with a total of 175,000 volumes. Most of the libraries fulfil two main functions which, in the case of the most important libraries, the state supports: they serve research workers by preserving works of high cultural value; and they serve theological students by satisfying the need for professional literature.

1. The Cultural Inheritance

The long-established practice of reporting valuable accessions was part of the first function. Some libraries did not at first comply with this requirement since they did not acknowledge the competence of the state. So the state took over the reporting by using the catalogues in the libraries concerned.

The inventories thus prepared covered medieval codices, all modern manuscripts, pre-1711 Hungarian books, pre-1711 foreign-language books published in Hungary, pre-1711 books by Hungarians published abroad, old books relating to Hungary, and early printed books up to 1550 (later up to 1600). In 1975 these individual works were declared protected. Hungarian books published between 1711 and 1800 have also been reported by most libraries.

With the assistance of the Széchenyi National Library these inventories greatly benefited research. In all, 264 medieval codices were listed; 60 previously unknown incunabula were added to the *Catalogus incunabularum quae in Bibliothecis publicis Hungariae asservantur*, ed. Géza Sajó et Erzsébet Soltész, vol. 1.2 (Budapest, 1970); and 8,202 old Hungarian books were listed besides almost 20,000 foreign works of the 16th century.

Inventories are gradually being made of works in these categories held by the 4,000 or so Catholic and Protestant local churches. These have no professional librarians and for the most part no catalogues, and are also not properly housed. So it is intended to transfer the most valuable books from the small libraries to large diocesan ones.

2. Professional Literature

As mentioned above, modern manuscripts have been included in the inventories. Since there are more than 10,000 such items this is valuable for research in history and literature. The state has paid for the compilation and printing of a series of catalogues of the pre-1850 manuscripts held by the largest libraries: the *Catalogi mancriptorum quae in bibliothecis ecclesiasticis Hungariae asservantur*. So far three volumes have appeared (Budapest, 1979-84), and another was announced for the end of 1984.

The state has also paid for the microfilming by the National Library of all medieval codices. A one-volume analytical catalogue of these codices is in preparation. Where, as often, libraries lack professional staff the National Library will carry out the work.

State publishers have also produced fine facsimile editions, e.g. two books of hours: *Horae Beatae Mariae Virginis. Az egri Főegyházmegyei Könyvtárban őrzött kódex hasonmásá*, T. 1-2, Budapest, 1976; and *A Pannonhalmi Hóraskönyv. A Pannonhalmi Főapátsági Könyvtárban őrzött Kódex hasonmásá*, T. 1-2 (Budapest, 1983).

The Roles of the Church and the State

Church libraries and other collections belonging to the main denominations are administered centrally by the Churches: by a "state central agency" in the case of the Catholics and by a "council" in the case of the two Protestant Churches. All three bodies have their offices in Budapest, the presidents being bishops (or, presumably in the case of the Reformed Church, a leader of equivalent standing).

The task of the Catholic central agency established in 1969 by the Hungarian Bishops Conference, is to direct, co-ordinate and inspect the work of libraries, archives and museums belonging to the Church. Other tasks include the organising of new collections, their recording and preservation. There is a special adviser for libraries in the central agency.

The state, too, has an adviser for church libraries within the libraries department of the Ministry of Culture. The Ministry itself decides only matters of principle, and then always with the agreement of the State Office for Church Affairs.

In practice control is exercised by the National Library, where there is likewise an adviser for church libraries. He gives expert advice on problems with reporting and cataloguing and carries out inspections on the spot. He also communicates to libraries major papers from the state central agency.

Two state employees work in the National Library exclusively on the restoration of codices from church libraries. The Library organises occasional courses for the non-professional staff of such libraries. It is possible for these staff to matriculate at the University so that they can study for professional examinations.

The Ministry makes available for church libraries 185,000 Forint annually through the National Library. Funds are also provided for special purposes, e.g. in 1978 the library of the religious order of Piarists in Budapest was given 300,000 Forint to rehouse the most valuable part of its collections more appropriately. Assistance is often offered in the form of reference works or pieces of equipment.

The authors claim that despite initial difficulties the relationship between the state and the church libraries has developed well. Although the libraries have material and staffing difficulties, they have achieved much in preservation, exploitation and conservation of valuable and often irreplaceable cultural property. How much independence libraries have managed to keep can be only surmised.

EUROLIT SEMINAR AT OXFORD, *September 1986*

In September I attended a library development conference in Oxford for Eastern European theological teachers and librarians, organised under the aegis of the Association for Christian Communication (AFCC). This is a body which has evolved from the work of the United Society for Christian Literature and is sponsored by members of the Conference for World Mission, with a wide denominational base. One of its activities is the administration of the Feed the Minds charity, which makes grants for Christian literature and communication programmes in developing countries, and operates a free secondhand theology book service for theological colleges overseas. EuroLit is a similar programme for Eastern European countries, to try and lessen their sense of theological isolation. This does not involve colportage, but works openly and within the laws of the countries concerned.

For the last two years EuroLit has organised conferences in Oxford to enable theological teachers and librarians to come to England and to see and hear for themselves what developments are taking place in the theological scene. In addition, these seminars give the participants from different countries the opportunity to meet and discuss common concerns and interests. This year's seminar was attended by Orthodox, Reformed, Evangelical, Baptist and Roman Catholic participants, from Romania, Poland, East Germany and Hungary.

This week was largely taken up with bibliographical lectures on books and teaching materials in the subjects taught at theological colleges: biblical studies, systematic theology, missiology, and practical theology. There were also sessions on theological education by extension, lay training, and the organisation and development of theological libraries (the latter given by myself). There were also visits: to Blackwells bookshop where the participants had vouchers to spend on books, to local churches and Oxford colleges, and to the Bible Society in Swindon.

It was extremely interesting to exchange views and experiences with the participants: there was a strong sense of professionalism at the seminar. The Reformed Church in Hungary has a 'Ministry for Education' programme under which people may be sent to university to train as archivists and librarians for the church — this can be done because university courses are inexpensive, and study can be done by correspondence. The East German Association of Church Archives and Libraries has a Training and Examinations Committee which runs courses and practical exercises for its members. On the other hand, there are few links with other libraries, and only East Germany had a professional Association; none of the libraries had a proper library committee by which policy could be decided, or through which pressure could be put upon the parent institution for more support. It was an illuminating encounter.

The Feed the Minds book service at present gets most of its books from the Ranfurly Library Service, which passes on any theological books it receives. If any *ABTAPL Bulletin* readers have stocks of duplicate theology books, or are trying to fend off unwanted gifts, Feed the Minds may be able to find a good home for them. Write to: The Revd Alec Gilmore, Director, Feed the Minds, Robertson House, Leas Road, Guildford GU1 4QW, or telephone Guildford 577877. There is a real thirst for even seemingly unlikely or dated theological literature overseas, and Feed the Minds helps to assuage that thirst.

Patrick Lambe

of the rich story, both Buddhist and Christian, of such places in Asia as the Dunhuang Caves.

A library is obviously not just a collection of books for scholars. It is a Resource Centre interpreting the concern of people, a treasure house of a people's life and aspiration and suffering, undergirding and directing their actions, providing a deeper understanding of the way people's minds have worked and are now shaping the life lived. It is an essential source for the growth of selfhood and identity and for any creative involvement in today's history. The Resource Centre I have in mind has a particular locality, particular reasons for its existence, and a particular rooting in particular histories, which will of necessity produce a particular shape and variety to its emphasis and its holdings.

Rooted in Asia

My concern is with the developing of a Library/Resource Centre set in Asia — with "rice roots" rather than "grassroots" — not a Western collection of learning so much as one rooted in the culture and life of Asian peoples — in the paddy fields, terraces, and villages (both traditional and transplanted squatter communities), in the immensely rich, ancient and yet alive and resurgent cultural traditions. The roots are found not only in historical records of long religious traditions including those of Christianity, but also in the life and struggle of Asia's people today and how this is reflected in their talk, song, street drama, art, dance, and so on — the full range of written record, inscriptions or engravings, as well as in oral history. Within this ferment, the resources of Asian Christian communities (dating in at least half a dozen countries from the 6th century) provide particularly rich collections for our centres. The 'Asian-ness' of a Resource Centre will largely determine the type and content of a library's holdings, the way it is arranged and organized, and how it is made available.

We look in more detail at these three aspects from my experience in helping the growth of one such Asian Resource Centre.

Type and Content

The type and content of holdings in which we specialised included the philosophy and religions of China and of other major Asian countries: Christianity in Asia, including mission and Church history; ecumenical encounter, worship, arts and literature; social and cultural history (both past and in the making) along with related materials from the social sciences or from activist groups — all by, about, or relevant to Asians. The material is in a variety of formats — books of course, periodicals and pamphlets. But if we look at Christianity today we find that much of the material is in the form of mimeographed papers, theology found in poems, letters, statements (at trials for instance), while the context from which this material emerges can only be documents in clippings, articles in 'secular' periodicals and newspapers. There is in particular a major task in indexing and presenting the very large number of Christian and related periodicals, newsletters and academic journals now available for Asian Christianity and its context.

We soon discovered that much of the material needs to be reclaimed from, for instance, the well-meaning missionaries and collectors who have taken

THE GROWTH OF AN ASIAN RESOURCE CENTRE

Rita M. England

Raw Material

The library in my care at Tao Fong Shan Ecumenical Centre in Hong Kong came from several sources: (1) the library of Karl Ludvig Reichelt, a Norwegian missionary to China who early this century established a Christian Centre of Pilgrimage on the Buddhist network of monasteries, where 'dialogue' was practiced long before this word was used: (2) the library of the Christian Study Centre on Chinese Religion and Culture, set up in the early 1950s: (3) continuing accessions to extend and update the holdings, and (4) the addition of gifts which enhanced the specialist nature of the library. Some of the older material was by the 1970s in poor shape. It had been kept as a 'memorial', had been neither used nor cared for, and so was badly affected by worms and mould. Sadly, some volumes were beyond salvaging. A complete sorting and assessment of this memorial library was required as over the years anything whatever in book form had been carefully added by people who could not read anything but Chinese. Racy novels, school textbooks and invaluable material now rare, due to events of recent Chinese history, were to be seen side by side. Extensive repairing, restoration and fumigation had to be tackled and so a large can containing chemicals was long to be seen outside the door of the library into which damaged and 'alive' books were placed. The collections then required each major step of library organization: accessioning, classifying, cataloguing and promotion. The library now contains 12-13 thousand books, large sets of over 250 periodicals, collections of documents, archives, microform materials, clippings and manuscripts. Apart from small numbers in other languages, approximately half of all materials are in Chinese and half in English.

The Motivation.

But why be concerned? Why devote exhaustive work to the restoration and extension of a comparatively small specialist library? An orderly row of books is not a priority for many of our colleagues in Asian countries who place a concern for people and their need, their suffering, hunger or human rights, their health and spiritual growth first. I too had to struggle with this. And there are those, professional and/or Christian, who put all manner of other things prior, to the undergirding of their faith and actions or ecumenical involvement. Many training or mission centres see no need for a Resource Centre or for full-time staff to work at gathering and promoting materials. In my experience, some colleagues would require all expenditure of finance or staff-time upon a library to be justified by the extent to which it is immediately used, but I would underline that although a library needs to be relevant and at the growing edges of thought and endeavour, it has incalculable value for the future as well. The collection I worked with was not only relevant to today's Hong Kong people, or simply those who came to Tao Fong Shan for courses or periods of lengthy study, or for quiet meditation. It forms a vital resource for many years ahead in the life of the Chinese and Asian Churches. Chinese, or indeed Asian Christians, often have little knowledge of their own Christian or cultural history, of Asian ecumenical endeavour or of the role of their own Christian leaders, in historical movements, social reform, church development and within the world church in recent centuries. Then too, if someone had not cared about earlier manuscripts there would be no Dead Sea Scrolls and little knowledge

it "home", or from mission society records and correspondence. This needs to be returned, or micro-form or photostat copies made and returned. Much material needs to be reclaimed in the sense of being restored, once it has been unearthed in former church buildings or private collections. In almost every country of our region much material needs to be discovered and made known, through bibliographical work, continuing research, through concerted work in recording oral traditions, and in emphasising the value of even the smallest items. Some of this ends up on tapes, slides or film strips. In a region where turbulent history and destructive climatic conditions have lost to us large parts of the historical record and where contemporary developments call forth increasing response from thoughtful Christians, much material needs to be produced — so that those who can write for their people, or paint, compose or create, are given the encouragement and the space to do so. Hence study and writing areas had to be provided, and writing 'workshops' developed such as the series of Theology Seminar-Workshops on 'Doing Theology with Asian Resources' held in recent years at Tao Fong Shan.

Organization

When all this material, in its great variety, was gathered together we attempted to organise it in such a way that its emphasis and subject area was brought out and made available to users. The usual way of doing this is by grouping or classing materials according to subject-areas and assigning call numbers for retrievability. But here we have a problem. The cataloguing and classification system used should be a recognised one, both for inter-relationship between centres and libraries, and for continuity of practice within a library. At Tao Fong Shan all books had to be re-worked because the previous system was completely unknown to us or to any we consulted. Library of Congress call numbers and subject entries were chosen because of the elasticity of the system for a specialized library, and also because of a close relationship with the nearby Chinese University of Hong Kong Library. Card sets also can be obtained for many volumes from Washington saving much time. Problems arose however because recognised systems were Western in their conception and application and my work was in the development of an Asian Resource Centre. For example, the subject catalogue uses terms such as "Foreign mission", "Far" or "Near East", and puts all the variety of Christian Conference of Asia materials into something like "Christianity — Assia" Categories such as "Pastoral theology" in the West might relate largely to recognised needs of a local parish, but in Asian countries it must cover and resource the widest range of human situation, struggle and ministry. Again, not much of Asian theology can be included under "Liberation theology", for the context and variety of Asian theologies far transcend this. Much more thought and sharing is therefore necessary to root Library Science in Asian fields, if reflecting and developing Asian-ness is seen to be important. Large areas of the experience of Asian Christians have yet to be recognised in our existing classification systems.

Storage, retrievability and preservation are also closely linked to the organization of material. The variety of formats mentioned earlier all need different storage facilities, and yet need to be linked in some way to the more conventional books, if library users are going to be able to locate them. Even if we could have obtained in Hong Kong a range of library equipment now available for storage and retrieval purposes, many materials are not catered for, or not in a way that was cheap and user-friendly. So we had to

devise various containers and files and in some cases had them specially made. I have used pamphlet boxes, records boxes, hanging files, fiche books, filing cabinets for indexes and bibliographies, special containers for photographs and scrolls, and special mountings for art work. Each item has the necessary cataloguing or listing, but in today's world the question of technology must be addressed. The extremes in Asia are very great, from the possibility of plugging into American research facilities at tremendous cost on the one hand, to the offer from a Burmese theologian to copy out a book by hand on the other. Appropriate technology should be used, but what is appropriate in a third-world setting? As a middle way we indexed by card, photocopied extensively and used microfiche for special collections.

Two-way Availability

Turning now to the availability of materials, it was basic to our approach that collections of this material be located in Asia where many more Asians can reach it. It is not only a question of the costs of studying in the West, but also the environment in which the student works. If a Resource Centre is going to actually function as both resource and catalyst through its assembled materials, then the student, church leader, activist, or person looking for a quiet place of reflection and meditation, should be offered through the Centre's holdings a direct contact with the situations and ferment which produces it. The process is two-way — it feeds and strengthens the person in the field, who in turn stimulates the theologian and creative artist. Much of the material required by Asians is not in Asia: much is in Asia but is not widely known, or may not have been thought important enough to collect. We have begun to work on this gathering and returning of resources to the region. Much more needs to be done, so that for instance both the sending and the receiving churches have copies of all letters, minutes, and documents of mission societies. Catalogues and listings of all kinds, along with second-hand and antiquarian book-shops require constant searching. Informal networks within the region have been established so that those who have special collections or are working in particular areas, perhaps with a stimulating cultural dimension, are known. We offer encouragement (writing parties, reflection-in-action) to people who are creating Asian materials in whatever format, and this material is gathered and made available. A book stall in the Resource Centre to make available books produced in the region has also proved very useful.

Whatever the answers to some of the matters I have raised may be, one thing is certain. A re-orientation of library practice, and a concentration of effort and priority, must be made towards the development of, for example, the Asian-ness of an Asian Resource Centre, no matter what format this material is in. The recently-formalized Institute for Theology and Cultures in Asia has the aims "to strengthen, through concentrated joint efforts, the formation of living theology and to facilitate the growth of a creative theological community in Asia". The Institute's Resource Centre which I will be helping to develop in Osaka, Japan, for Asia-wide use, will be an integral part of this with a long-term emphasis on reclaiming and augmenting existing collections of theology and contextual materials in Asia, and upon establishing new ones, all within a working unity of study, reflection, action and resource.

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