



ForATL News

Newsletter of the Forum of Asian Theological Librarians

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ForATL News

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Editor : Christabel Wong

Address :
STM Library
P.O. Box 175
70720 Seremban
Negeri Sembilan
Malaysia.

Fax : +60-6-6329766

Email : christabel@seminary-stm.com.my

ForATL Website : <http://www.geocities.com/foratl>

ForATL mailing list : foratl-subscribe@yahogroups.com

ForATL News welcomes contributions related to theological librarianship and the development of theological resources in Asia. All manuscripts or correspondence should be sent to the Editor, who reserves the right to determine suitability for publication.

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THE TRAINING OF ASIAN SEMINARY LIBRARIANS

In answer to the need among Asian seminary libraries, Lutheran Theological Seminary (Hong Kong) started the Theological Librarianship Programme in 1998. To-date, over 14 students have graduated from the programme and are serving in various Asian seminary libraries, including Hong Kong, China, Myanmar, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines. Having been the Coordinator of the Programme for 5 years, I would like to offer three brief reflections on the training of Asian theological librarians:

- 1) There is a great need for training.** Through my students, I have heard the loud cry for training in Asia. In China, for example, there are 18 seminary libraries but none of them has a professionally trained librarian. A Myanmar librarian told me: "Before having proper training, the librarian himself may have a hard time to answer why he is so busy." In the past ten years, I have had the chance to visit various seminary libraries in Hong Kong, China and Malaysia to provide consultation on automation, library design and cataloguing. Through these visits, I strongly felt that even though I could provide short-term help, formal librarianship training is still the long-term solution.
- 2) Western library science is essential in training.** In the training programme, I have observed that exposing seminary librarians' to Western library technology, practices and standards is rewarding. As most Asian seminary libraries have some English language collections, the knowledge of up-to-date Western librarianship practices helps librarians handle these collections more efficiently through standardization and copy cataloguing. At the same time, Western library philosophy also helps them be more aware of the importance of the library in theological education and to no longer regard themselves as second-class staff in the seminaries. They are more service-orientated in attitude and innovative in library practices.
- 3) Contextualisation is most challenging in training.** Being equipped with Western knowledge is not enough. Asian seminary librarians should have a contextualisation mindset. In order to handle their local materials, they should be aware of national practices and standards in their own contexts. Failure to do so could result in the neglect or poor use of local resources, and the possibility of being isolated from other local libraries in the area of standardization and networking practices. Especially in library automation, Asian seminary libraries should find a contextual strategy and library software that can handle both Western and local language materials, as well as the national standard. However, in many Asian countries with non-Christian cultures, the national standard may not be suitable for Christian materials. For example, in China, because of her communist background, her standard library classification scheme has only one page on Christianity in its total of 1,100 pages. Hence, we may sometimes even need to contextualise the national standard to our Christian and seminary context. The tension between standardisation and contextualisation is always a big challenge to Asian seminary librarians.

- Tang Sui Tung (Head Librarian, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Hong Kong)

JAKARTA THEOLOGICAL LIBRARIANS UNDERGO TRAINING

Jakarta has more than 25 theological seminaries, with some offering theological education up to the doctoral level. As these seminaries grow and develop, likewise their libraries require constant development and upgrading.

In response to a growing concern among theological librarians in Jakarta regarding the lack of common knowledge about the special collections and services available in existing theological libraries, an informal meeting was organized by Jakarta Theological Seminary. It was hoped that such meetings would promote cooperation among the libraries to develop and enrich theological education in Indonesia. After meeting informally for over a year, the consensus was that, since library development largely depended on the abilities of the librarians, it was necessary to provide training for the many untrained theological librarians in Jakarta.

A training course was consequently conducted on 7-8 August 2003 at Jakarta Theological Seminary, attended by thirty-nine librarians from thirteen seminaries, two churches and two Christian organizations in Jakarta, and a seminary in Bandung.

The first day began with a call to participants to offer their vocations as librarians to God at the opening service led by Rev. Dr. Samuel Hakh, the Dean of Studies of Jakarta Theological Seminary. The keynote address was then given by Rev. Dr. Marthin L. Sinaga, a lecturer at Jakarta Theological Seminary, who spoke on the important role of theological libraries and librarians in theological education. He emphasized that libraries needed the right persons as librarians in order to be effective. Theological librarians played important roles in the development of theological libraries, which, in turn, contributed towards the development of theological education. Thus, theological librarians are themselves theological educators.



Also on the first day, participants were taught the principles of library management by Mr. Karmito, MTh., the librarian of Duta Wacana Library and the Convenor of ForATL. Those without formal library training found this session a good introduction to how management skills related to library work. The day concluded with a session on circulation services techniques by Dr. Adwityani S. Subagyo, the chairwoman of the Indonesian Library Club, who gave some new insights on the technical problems encountered in the area of circulation services, so that participants could offer better service to library users.



The second day commenced with an extended session on cataloguing techniques conducted by Dr. Adolfine A. M. Kalangie-Pandey, a lecturer at the University of Indonesia. Due to time constraints, the session focused mainly on bibliographic cataloguing, during which participants were assigned various exercises to familiarize them with standard bibliographic formats. Following this, Mr. Karmito talked about acquisitions and management of serials and periodicals. Again, it was felt that the time allotted was too short to effectively cover the subject matter.

This led participants to realize how much there was to learn and the importance of being trained. The organizing committee were also made aware of the need to plan further follow-up training sessions for the theological librarians in Jakarta.

To sum up, the issue of networking among theological libraries was addressed. This session conducted by Nurdiana Sari Wijaya, librarian of Jakarta Theological Seminary, served to reiterate the enormity and importance of the developmental task carried out by theological librarians. This task could be lightened by networking with other libraries and librarians. Although concrete details for networking could not be finalized at the session and required more thought and discussion in future, participants recognized the need to work together.

The training course concluded with a closing service led by Rev. Izack Rudy, MTh., the Dean of Studies at Bethel Seminary in Jakarta. Participants were again reminded of their vocation as librarians and asked to return to their respective libraries with renewed spirits, knowing the important part they played and the great impact their work had on theological education in Indonesia.

- Nurdiana Sari Wijaya (Librarian, STT Jakarta, Indonesia) -

Training on Library Automation



Participants and Instructors at the Library Automation Training Course

(UK Petra) in Surabaya, East Java. The goals of the course were to train the librarians and provide automation software applications to develop their libraries. This training was part of an ongoing programme for the application of Information and Communication Technology, which was launched in April 2002 for PERSETIA member schools. Some of the participants attending the course came from the eastern part of Indonesia, where the infrastructure and facilities are not as good as those on Java island. The training introduced participants to the processing of books and non-book materials with emphasis on classification, cataloguing (LC & DDC), Indomarc and New Spektra.

New Spektra is a library automation software application from the Library of UK Petra. Some member schools that already use New Spektra are linked to the Spektra Virtual Library (<http://svl.petra.ac.id>) and are also members of the Indonesian Christian University Virtual Library (InCU-VL) (<http://incuvl.petra.ac.id>). Participants learnt four New Spektra modules (cataloguing, processing, circulation, operator management), as well as installation and database backup.



Trying their hand at cataloguing and classification



Learning New Spektra in the computer lab

PERSETIA (The Association of Theological Schools in Indonesia) recently conducted a training course on library automation for librarians from member schools of PERSETIA. The course was held from 8-19 September 2003 at the campus of Petra Christian University

During the training, participants showed great enthusiasm to learn and a strong commitment to develop their respective libraries. Now, thirteen theological libraries of PERSETIA member schools are using the same automation software, which will help towards developing a network of theological libraries in Indonesia.

- Hilda V. Putong (Librarian, STT INTIM MAKASSAR, Indonesia) -

ADVERTISEMENT: THEOLOGICAL LIBRARIANSHIP PROGRAMME Lutheran Theological Seminary, Hong Kong

Goals and Objectives

1. Equip students with theories and practices of theology and library science to manage Asian theological libraries, especially seminary libraries.
2. Enable students to handle theological information efficiently.
3. Help students to understand current library automation technology.
4. Encourage students to face the challenges of Asian theological libraries.

Programmes

1. Diploma in Theological Librarianship (30 credits, 1 year)
2. Master of Arts (Theology) (M.A.) (33 credits, 1 year)
3. Master of Divinity (M.Div.) (with Theological Librarianship emphasis) (68 credits, 2 years)

Characteristics

1. Training both in library science and theology.
2. Balance of emphases on computerisation and the Asian context.
3. Taught mainly in English.

Library Course Instructors

- Mrs. Hsiao, Anna Wang
Master of Librarianship, University of Washington, USA, 1979; M.Div., Lutheran Theological Seminary, 1992; Librarian, Emeritus, Lutheran Theological Seminary 1998-
- Mr. Tang, Sui-tung
Master of Library Science, University of Pittsburgh, USA, 1988; M.Div., Lutheran Theological Seminary, 1994; Head Librarian, Lutheran Theological Seminary, 1998-

For further information:

Address: 50 Tao Fung Shan Road,
Shatin, Hong Kong.

Website: www.lts.edu

Email: lts@lts.edu or ltslib@hotmail.com

Tel: (852)2691-1520

Fax: (852)2691-8458

GROUP TRAINING ON ARCHIVES MANAGEMENT
A Program Jointly Organized by
Ecumenical Theological Education – WCC/CCA,
Forum for Association of Theological Librarians &
South Asia Theological Research Institute (SATHRI)
June 1-30, 2004, United Theological College, Bangalore, India

PROGRAMME: The training programme on archives management would, among other things, equip the participants with the necessary skills to develop a Christian [theological, missionary, and church] archival centre; namely:

1. The support and encouragement of preservation for theological, missionary, and church archives and documentation for the needs of the region.
2. Understanding the theory and practice of theological, missionary, and church archival work in such areas as: archival management, collecting policy, acquisition, arrangement and description, serving researchers, oral history interviewing and processing, and physical facilities.
3. Gaining practical experience in the methods used by theological archivists for archival problems in general, and in one particular area of archival work.

FOCUS: The training will focus especially on library and archival management. There would be sessions covering the importance of archival materials and what they are (as distinct from library holdings); determining the focus of the collection to be made; how to go about acquiring the materials; preserving and storing them; classifying them and making them available for use. Sessions on oral history practice and interview techniques; networking with other archival centres, both secular within a country and between related institutions within the region (i.e. not only between colleges, seminaries and national churches but also with such places as CCA, FABC, NGO holding, etc) will be also be part of the training programme. The trainee will also be given opportunity to experience the techniques of preservation and interview. At the end of the course, the trainee will be awarded a certificate in archival course and work.

PARTICIPATION: Participation at the training programme is by invitation only.

CONTACT PERSON: Mr. Wati Longchar, ETE Consultant for Asia/Pacific
c/o Eastern Theological College, Rajabari, Jorhat 785014, Assam, India
Fax/Tel: 91-376-2360856 Email: longchar@sancharnet.in, longchar43@hotmail.com

