

ANZTLA Affairs

In October Helen Greenwood and I were privileged to participate in the 2nd Forum of Asian Theological Librarians in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Further details of this consultation are included in this issue. As we prepared for the consultation we looked back on the work that we have achieved as an Association and when it was done we were amazed at what we have managed to do in a relatively short period of time. These achievements should not prompt us to become complacent or to rest on our laurels. The decision of the 1997 AGM to revise the "Standards for Theological Libraries" is a timely one and those appointed to this task should be encouraged. They are Wendy Davis and Jocelyn Morris and they would welcome any thoughts you may be able to send them.

I have received correspondence from Andre J Geuns, President of the Conseil International des Associations de Bibliothèques de Théologie who is keen to keep up the contacts established by Trevor Zweck. After the Asian experience I can see the benefit of keeping these international contacts going, not just for what we can gain from them but equally importantly what we can offer them from our experience and achievements.

The preparations for the 1998 Sydney Conference are firming up and the brochure for registration should be mailed to members early February. The dates for the conference are Wednesday 1st to Sunday 5th July and it will be held at Moore Theological College in Newtown.

Kim Robinson
President

Forum of Asian Theological Librarians

Helen Greenwood & Kim Robinson

In October 1997 we were privileged to attend the Forum of Asian Theological Librarians in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. It was a gathering of librarians from countries throughout Asia and Australasia, India, Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia and Taiwan as well as Australia and New Zealand. There were a number of papers presented, copies of which are available from either of us. One of them is reproduced in this edition of the *ANZTLA newsletter* as is the Forum's final report.

Theological librarianship in Asia

- * most librarians we met are trained in both theology and librarianship which is a reflection on the Asian attitude to professional qualifications and the importance of academic degrees.
- * there are existing theological library associations in India, Korea, and The Philippines as well as Australia / New Zealand.
- * that the existing Forum includes Protestant libraries only - there are no Catholic or non-Christian members.

- * the problems (and their solutions) faced are mainly the same as those faced by our own members. As we have found from our own association the ability to share these matters with each other is extremely helpful.

Problems faced

- Language. English appears to be the lingua franca, but there are obvious difficulties when it comes to collecting materials and producing printed products like periodical indexes.
- While the global village is shrinking, there are areas within this region that have to contend with such basic problems as reliable, power supplies and getting telephone lines to the library.
- Politics. There are countries within the region in which the establishment of a theological library association is not legally possible. This led to discussion on bypassing the problem by either establishing informal networks as opposed to constituted associations, or exploring the possibility of becoming a special interest group within the wider library association of the country in question. There is also the problem that in some countries there are governmental restrictions on the acquisition of material for the library.
- Conservation. Libraries in the Asian region face major conservation problems because of the climate and the quality of much of the local book production.

What of the future?

Many of the aims outlined in the accompanying Forum document are the same as those discussed at the First meeting of the Forum in 1991. The challenge for the new Executive Committee (which includes Kim) is to move ForATL from discussing these ideas to implementing them. One of the key questions that the two of us kept coming back to is: Is there a future if ForATL remains a random grouping of individuals, or is the way ahead for the forum to become an umbrella organisation for national theological library associations and networks?

ANZTLA and ForATL

So, what are the implications for ANZTLA?? One of the heartening things for us was the realisation of the strength of our own Association. When we compiled a list of ANZTLA achievements, it was with some pride that we reviewed what we had accomplished in 12 years. Kim was able to share our experiences with ARI, so that the other participants could see what could be accomplished through the cooperative efforts of association members.

Many of the aims listed by the Forum have already been undertaken by ANZTLA as a group or ANZTLA members individually - a tribute to the foresight and initiative of ANZTLA members and a challenge to all of us to maintain that creative impetus.

- Do we feel that we belong in this Asian grouping? This question was asked directly of us by one of the Asian participants.
- What about our colleagues in the Pacific?
- Can we look at the Aims identified by the Forum and identify any projects for ANZTLA such as a bibliography of theological publications in Australia and New Zealand?

We will have a time at the Sydney conference to discuss these issues and if anyone wishes to raise anything with us prior to the conference we would be happy hear from them.

Forum of Asian Theological Librarians

Yogyakarta, Indonesia

8 - 13 October 1997

Librarians from Australia, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, The Philippines, and Taiwan met at Duta Wacana Christian University Guest House, Yogyakarta, Indonesia from 8-13 October for the Second Forum of Asian Theological Librarians (ForATL). The Consultation was warmly welcomed by the Rector of Duta Wacana Christian University, Dr. Aristarchus Sukarto.

The speakers for the program included Dr. John T. Titaley who spoke on "The Role of Librarians in the library network among Seminaries and Christian Universities in Indonesia", Dr. Sulisty-Basuki on "Theological Libraries in Indonesia: a Library management-based brief view", Dr. E. G. Singgih on "An Axe for the Frozen Sea: the Emerging Task of Theological Education and the Role of the Librarians", John and Rita England on "Priority for Asian Resources", Dr. Joseph Patmury on "Conservation in Libraries and Archives" and Karmito on "Librarians of Indonesian Theological College Libraries: Roles, Functions and Activities".

Participants also contributed information from their home seminaries and national theological library associations. There were lively discussion groups, exchange of publications and bibliographies, intercultural worship, library and publisher visits, cultural events, exchange of publications and rich personal interaction and fellowship.

All participants reaffirmed the value of such a meeting or consultation between Asian theological librarians as a means of strengthening and encouraging one another, learning from each other and building cooperation for the task of theological libraries in Asia. A network to facilitate on-going mutual support, exchange and training opportunities made possible by a regional association of theological librarians will be an essential ingredient for the future of theological education in Asia. We are grateful for the support of the funding agencies and individual seminaries who made this consultation possible.

As a result of this Consultation, ForATL has been firmly established with a new and representative Executive Committee entrusted with the responsibility of carrying through the following aims:

- To facilitate the development and exchange of resources for theology in the Asian context.
- To encourage and support the formation of:
 - National theological library associations or networks
 - National depositories of Christian literature
 - Union listings, directory of Asian theological libraries, guidelines, indexes, bibliographies, etc., for publication
- To promote co-operation among, and training of, theological librarians
- To arrange short-term courses and workshops
- To develop an Asia-wide network of theological libraries.

The Executive Committee of ForATL consists of: Karmito - Convenor; Ms. Elizabeth T. Pulanco - Executive Secretary; Kim Robinson - Treasurer; Ms. Phyllis Chan, Ms. K. Sarala

David and Ms. Kim Kyoung-Hee. They have each taken particular responsibilities in order to implement the various aims and projects of ForATL.

For further information contact:

Karmito (Mr.)

Librarian, Duta Wacana Christian University

Jl. Dr. Wahidin S. 5-19

Yogyakarta 55224, Indonesia. Fax (62 274) 513235

Elizabeth T. Pulanco (Ms.)

Librarian, Asian Theological Seminary

54 Scout Madrinan, Quezon City,

Philippines

or mailing address:

QCCPO Box 14554-1154 Quezon City 1102 Philippines

Fax. (63 2) 9285114; e-mail: ats@ats.jmf.org.ph

