Theological libraries in Indonesia: a library-management-based brief view

L. Sulistyo-Basuki

1. Historical background

Theological libraries are a phenomena of early twentieth-century-Indonesia when various church denominations established their own theological institutions in Indonesia. The earliest known theological library was founded sometime before 1940 when the Netherlands Zendings Vereeniging founded its library in Bandoeng (now Bandung), West Java.[1]

When Indonesia declared her independence in 1945, followed by armed struggle against the Dutch, the government paid hardly any attention to higher education matters, let alone library matters. After the Dutch government recognised the Indonesian independence in 1949, the government established various universities in Indonesia in 1950s. Also the establishment of various theological libraries by various denominations began in 1950s.

However, the rise and growth of theological institutions and seminaries in Indonesia was not followed by publications on theological libraries. A search of *Index of Indonesian Learned Periodicals: 1950-1996* yields disappointing results as no journal articles have been written on Indonesian theological libraries. Little is known about theological librarianship as it happened in USA and New Zealand.[2] Karp wrote that a search of *Library Literature* (1984-1994) yields fewer than forty citations on the topic of theological libraries or librarians.[3]

2. Data on theological libraries

When Theology, as distinguished from Religious Studies, is taught at tertiary level, then the theology library as part of theological seminary is considered an academic library, albeit part of a special library. However, a check of various resources on theological libraries in Indonesia does not yield satisfactory results. A check against *The directory of special libraries and information sources in Indonesia = Direktori Perpustakaan khusus dan sumber informasi di Indonesia: 1993,*[4] *An International Directory of Theological Colleges,*[5] *Direktori perpustakaan jaringan informasi di Indonesia tahun 1995/1996*[6] and *Directory of Asian Theological Libraries 1992-1993*[7] yield results as given below:

Table 1: Theological libraries in Indonesia
(based on existing directory)

Names	City	Province
Sekolah Tinggi Theologia Jakarta (Theological Seminary of Jakarta)	Jakarta	Jakarta
Sekolah Tinggi Theologia GKIIS. Kijne (GKIIS Kiine Theological College)	Jayapura	Irian Jaya
Sekolah Tinggi Theolpgia "I-3" (Indonesian Bible Institute)	Batu	East Java
Sekolah Tinggi Theologia JAFFRAY	Ujung Pandang	South Sulawesi

(JAFFRAY Theological College)		
Fakultas Theologia Universitas Kristen Duta Wacana (Faculty of Theology, Duta Wacana United Theological College	Yogyakarta	Yogyakarta
Institut Theologia Abdi Sabda	Medan	North Sumatra
Sekolah Tinggi Theologia HKBP	Pematang Siantar	North Sumatra
Sekolah Tinggi Theologia GKE	Banjarmasin	South Kalimantan
Sekolah Tinggi Theologia GMIH	Tobelo, Halmahera	Moluccas
Sekolah Tinggi Theologia Indonesia Timur	Ujung Pandang	South Sulawesi
Fakultas Theologia UKIM (Theology Department, The Christian University in Moluccas)	Ambon	Moluccas
Seminari Alkitab Nusantara	Malang	East Java
Salvation Army Training College	Jakarta	Jakarta
South East Asia Bible Seminary	Malang	East Java
Seminary Ledalero	Ledalero	West Lesser
Sekolah Tinggi Filsafat Driyarkara (School of Philosophy Driyarkara)*	Jakarta	Jakarta
Sekolah Tinggi Filsafat Theologi Fajar Timur*	Jayapura	Irian Jaya
Sekolah Tinggi Theologi Widya Sasana*	Malang	East Java
Sekolah Tinggi Filsafat Seminari Pinelang*	Manado	North Sulawesi
Sekolah Tinggi Filsafat Kateketik Pradnyawidya	Yogyakarta	Yogyakarta
Weda Bhakti Pontificiat Faculty of Theology* (now part of Universitas Sanata Dharma)	Yogyakarta	Yogyakarta

*Operated by Roman Catholic Church

The list above deliberately includes the Catholic seminaries because their participation provided the possibility of a larger potential membership and the possibility of enrichment by contributions of Catholic librarians. The same happened with the American Theological Library Association.[8] The available data, albeit sparse, is the basis of this paper.

3. Library characteristics

Based on available data, the following characteristics of theological libraries in Indonesia are:

- Collections vary from 1000 to 60,000 books; special collections such as of the missionaries, early printed bibles, early translation editions of the Scriptures in vernacular languages are interesting features.

- No library cooperation has been mentioned; some regional and local academic library cooperation schemes are not yet being utilized by theological libraries. For example the State University Libraries Cooperation Scheme for Eastern and Western Indonesia. Although this scheme is a state-university-based cooperation, the theological libraries could utilize them for their users' benefit.

- Library automation is minimal. More than 10 years ago when the Micro CDS ISIS a Unesco-released software was distributed freely to universities in Less Developed Countries,[9] none of the existing theological libraries used them. Lately there has been an effort by Christian University Cooperation Board to operate Dynix, with Satya Wacana Christian University as the coordinating university. However, this scheme was abandoned owing to internal disturbance in the university.

- Lack of skilled professional manpower. Not all the theological libraries have a professional librarian while the information professionals are needed to serve the users, i.e. the students and the lecturers.

- Very few publications by theological seminaries and even by members of the Persekutuan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia (Communion of Churches in Indonesia) have been deposited at the National Library as required by the Deposit Act. A check at the deposit yields the result that fewer than forty denominations deposit their publications with the National Library.

With such conditions the users (students as well as lecturers) cannot utilize the existing collection as they are unable to borrow from other libraries. It is time to rethink the role of theological libraries in Indonesia: its mission, objectives, goals, programmes and activities.

4. Mission statement

The mission of theological libraries is to provide access to information and information services in a timely, useful and effective manner to support the teaching, learning and research functions of the students and staff of the seminary by acquiring and making resource materials available and to assist users to become skilled in locating information relevant to their interests.

With such a mission statement, the goals of the theological libraries are as follows:

- To support the teaching, learning and research functions of the seminary by identifying, acquiring, cataloguing, processing and making available library resources to constitute a relevant, up-to-date, well balanced and well maintained collection of monographs and serials irrespective of medium.
- To facilitate the effective use of the library, its resources and services, for learning and research.
- To plan, promote, implement and evaluate the activities of the library in the educational process of the seminary.
- To ensure that library services are provided effectively and efficiently, taking advantage of developing information technology.
- To provide an appropriate physical environment to meet the different needs of the collection, users and staff.
- To optimise resource sharing and networking at a local, regional, national and international level.

With such goals, the theological librarian can decide the objectives, such as goal number 4:

To obtain academic and seminary agreement to the goals and programmes of the library.

Goal number 5 yields the following objectives:

- To fully implement an effective, integrated computer-based library system.
- To provide external user access to library databases via local area networks.

Goal number 9 yields the objective of providing mechanism for consultation between the library, seminary administration, academic staff and students in the provision of services by and for the library.

5. Toward implementation programmes

As there are general inadequacies in library staff, library cooperation and the automation project, the following programmes are proposed, based on the present condition of Indonesian theological libraries.

(a) the development of human resources

Based on the existing data, the majority of theological libraries have no professional staff, most of the present staffs are priests and administrative personnel without formal training in librarianship. This paper proposes that present library staff who have a bachelor degree in theology and/or other disciplines should be encouraged to pursue a qualification in librarianship. This scheme is known in Indonesia as dual programmes in which a librarian who has a first degree in any discipline continues to study for a first degree in librarianship. Such programmes were conducted by Universitas Indonesia in Jakarta and have been introduced at other universities where there is also a shortage of professional librarians. The course runs for four semesters. This second degree programme conducted by the Department of Library Science Universitas Indonesia has been introduced at various state academic libraries (three classes), librarians from the Association of Catholic Universities in Indonesia (for two consecutive years) and State Institute of Islamic Studies (for three consecutive years). This method is a short cut to overcome the shortage of trained librarians.

(b) library cooperation and resource sharing

Library co-operation as a system for organizing library activities such as acquisitions, cataloguing, storage of less-used books. Interlibrary loan hardly exists among Indonesian theological libraries. As no libraries, including theological libraries, could afford its collection to serve its users, it is necessary to work closely in a cooperative scheme.

(c) a condition for resource sharing

is improvement in cataloguing and processing in order to facilitate the retrieval activities. Also a library cooperation needs a union catalogue and union list to find materials and their location. A manual union catalogue is a must for library cooperation and establishing this catalogue requires a lot of work, including the standardisation of cataloguing rules, coding the participating libraries, editing and managing the interlibrary loan scheme.

(d) introduction of information technology

The inadequacy of finance to proceed for library automation could be solved by using a cheap library- and documentation-designed-software which is available in the form of Unesco-released documentation software called Micro CDS ISIS (hereafter called CDS ISIS). This software is easy to use and designed for libraries in developing countries. In Indonesia, CDS ISIS is the most widely used software, including among the state academic and special libraries.[10] There was a plan among Christian universities in Indonesia to use the Dynix system with Christian University Satya Wacana in Salatiga, Central Java as the coordinator. However, owing to internal conflict this programme was postponed for an indefinite time. Right now the library of the Christian University Duta Wacana is beginning to automate its collection.

6. New orientation

As the library mission and the goals and objectives have been clearly stated then it is time for theological libraries in Indonesia to be geared toward new orientation in the form of the following activities:

* to set priorities for library development and to utilise resource sharing among its colleagues in Indonesia as well as outside Indonesia.
* to compile bibliographies of Christian writings which are available in the theological schools as a part of bibliographical aids for teaching and research. The National Library of Indonesia

has compiled a list of books on Christianity based on its collection. Some of the bibliographies on Christianity already published include:

- *Christianity in Southeast Asia: a bibliographical guide: an annotated bibliography of selected references in Western languages,* edited by Gerald H. Anderson. New York: The Missionary Research Library; New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1966.
- J.A.B. Jongeneel. *Bibliografi ilmu agama dan theologi Kristen dalam bahasa Indonesia = Bibliography of the scientific study of religions and Christian theology in the Indonesian languages* Jakarta: Gunung Mulia, 1975 - 1976.
- *Indonesian theologians on women-men relationship in Church and society.* Leiden: Interuniversity Institute for Missiological and Ecumenical Research, 1987.

It is necessary to mention some indices like *Registers* or Index to the periodical *Wolanda Hindia,* a journal on Protestant missions in Netherlands East Indies, Suriname, Netherlands Antilles in 19th and 20th century published in Dutch language. With these data then the librarian can propose the compilation of bibliographies on Christian writings published in Indonesia after 1980 or an index of journal articles on Christianity in Bahasa Indonesia.

- the development of professional theological librarians who could serve library users so that these theological librarians could develop further their role in faculty, centre or country in reclaiming, collecting and promoting Asian Christian writings.
- utilisation of the available information technology for the benefit of all users.
  This is a part of consolidation and exchange network among theological libraries for the tasks in Indonesia and Asia. The theological librarians could learn from their colleagues in private or state academic libraries on the methods, mistakes and experiences, etc.

  Perhaps the theological libraries could utilize the *Internet* which is becoming more and more popular among Indonesian librarians. Right now all provinces can be connected to the Internet through the Internet Service Provider Wasantaranet, operated by the Indonesian Postal Service.

- providing skill training in resource collection, documentation, storage and promotion and basic library functions. The theological library should change its paradigm from collecting books to serving its users.
- further thought should be directed to how theological libraries define and interpret the proper role and function of libraries in theological education.

7. Closing remarks
Theological libraries in Indonesia have not been mentioned in library literature. However, their existence can be traced from early twentieth century when the Dutch mission established its own theological library in the then Netherlands East Indies.

Our theological libraries face increasing pressure on their collections as well as financial and other constraints common to most libraries in Indonesia. The impact of new information technology is less noticeable than in some other libraries, such as special libraries or state university libraries. With that situation, then it is time for initiating cooperative efforts, developing human resources and utilizing the new technology.

Endnotes

1. See *Nieuwsblad voor den Boekhandel Nederlandsch Oost Indie*, Juni 1941:42. The library has a collection of 5000 volumes mainly on Theology and Missions.

2. B. Frame, "Theological librarianship in New Zealand," *New Zealand Libraries*, 48 (3) Sept 1995, pp52-4

3. Rashelle S. Karp and Andrew J. Keck, "Theological librarianship: toward a profile of a profession," *College & Research Libraries*, 51 (1) January 1996, p35.

4. Published by Center for Scientific Documentation and Information, Indonesian Institute of Sciences, Jakarta 1995.

5. Edited by Alec Gilmore, published by WCC Geneva, 1996.

6. Published by Perpustakaan Nasional RI (National Library of Indonesia), 1995.

7. Published by Forum for Asian Theological Librarians, 1993, compiled by Mr Karmito and Cahyana E. Purnama.

8. "American Theological Library Association," in *Encyclopedia of library and information science*. New York : Marcel Dekker, 1968. vol. 1.

9. Now it costs about US $70 for the Version 3.07.

10. Although the state university libraries are supposed to use Dynix, only two out of 45, state university libraries are currently using Dynix, the others still maintain their automation programme using CDS ISIS.

Bibliography

"American Theological Library Association", *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*. New York: Marcel Dekker, 1968. v.1 pp332-34.

Duckett, R. J. "Theological and philosophical libraries and librarianship", in *British librarianship and information work*. Edited by H. A. Whatley. London: Library Association, 1977. pp252-259.

Frame, B. "Theological librarianship in New Zealand," *New Zealand Libraries*, 48 (3) September 1995. pp52-4.

"Introduction to ATLA" at : http://atla.library.vanderbilt.edu/atla/intro.html.

Jordahl, Ron. "The interdisciplinary nature of theological librarianship in the United States," *Libraries & Culture*, 25, Spring 1990. pp153-70.

Karp, Rashelle S. and Keck, Andrew J. "Theological librarianship: toward a profile of a profession," *College & Research Libraries*, 51 (1) January 1996 pp35-42.

Woods, Jean M. "Theological libraries today and tomorrow: the missionary collection," *Bulletin of the Association of British Theological and Philosophical Libraries*, 33, June 1985. pp8-9.

"Zending (Protestantsche,)" in *Encyclopeaedie van Nederlandsch-Indie*, 's Gravenhage: Martinus Nijoff: Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1921. v.4.