

Conference Summary

by Philip Harvey



The outgoing President's Summary of the Twenty-Eighth ANZTLA Conference, held at Immanuel College, Novar Gardens, Adelaide, South Australia, from Thursday 4th to Sunday 7th July, 2013.

Jenny Clarke, presenter of the UNILINC representative (Youthworks College) gave this year's pre-conference cataloguing session on Resource Description and Access. Curiously, RDA became the new international rules on April Fools' Day. Jenny assured us that the world will not end if we don't instantly switch to RDA; we can go



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on with AACR2, if we wish. There are a whole lot of new tags, we were told, well actually about five or six. Of the making of rules there is no end, and then they change all the terms. And then there are differences: abbreviations have gone, likewise the holy “rule of three” with author entries. Tags have starting shifting, too. Publication, for example, is now 264, the copyright date alone at 264 Indicator 4. In one fell swoop 260 is obsolete. There are no prescribed sources from the work, only preferred sources. No wonder debate rages on the lists and blogs. We have to spell out all abbreviations, which was why it was nice to hear Jenny insist on making “local decisions” in our cataloguing room. If you do nothing else with RDA headings, Jenny advised, certainly try to rewrite the Bible.

Professor Ghil’ad Zuckermann (University of Adelaide) had other ideas about the Bible in his keynote address *Let My People Know*. Does the Hebrew Bible need to be translated into Israeli? Israeli, or Revived Hebrew, is Ghil’ad’s name for Modern Hebrew. Can Israelis understand the Book of Isaiah? Not possible, he thinks, because the language of modern Israel is not Biblical Hebrew. It is like a modern English reader being given Chaucer to read straight, as though Chaucer were modern English. Ghil’ad is a man with a cause, both for the past language of Biblical Hebrew and the hybrid language Revised Hebrew. Not surprisingly perhaps, he has created dispute in Israel itself, a country where, as he put it with some irony, “emotions run high.” Ghil’ad quoted Russell Hoban: “Language is a whole palimpsest of human effort and history.” We were warned not to confuse Russell Hoban with Russell Hogan, let alone Russell Bogan.

Artlab is a hospital for damaged cultural objects. Many delegates on Friday morning were led through the wards. We saw broken-backed books being repaired, ruined cloth Union banners being sewn together again, fractured picture frames being replastered. The staff had an elevated sense of purpose, we felt, as we descended again in the huge elevator. Thereafter all tours met up at the Beit Shalom Synagogue, which is home for the worshipping community of Adelaide Jews. Rabbi Shoshana Kaminsky has a sunny disposition, though warned that if she coughed too much she might die, “but not here.” Jewish humour was never far off. During her presentation of favourite books she started coughing again: “I should just quit now!” Her definition of Jewish denominations raised eyebrows: “At an Orthodox wedding the mother-in-law can be pregnant. At a Reformed wedding the bride can be pregnant. At a Progressive wedding the rabbi can be pregnant.” A seminar followed next door in the Synagogue on interreligious dialogue, conducted by Rabbi Kaminsky, Professor Stephen Downs (Flinders University), Trevor Schaefer (Australian Lutheran College, Adelaide), and yours truly (Carmelite Library, Melbourne).

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That afternoon, back at Immanuel College, Hilary Regan (Australian Theology Forum) introduced us to the project called *The Bible and the Traditions* emanating from the École Biblique in Jerusalem. Of the making of translations there is no end, which is why ATF is setting up a fund from translations of titles coming out of that project. As happened elsewhere in the conference, delegates were handed lots of bump for their satchels, to be the object of discernment back home next week.

How do we manage with cultural change? asked David Turnbull (Tabor Adelaide). Cultural intelligence is one response, the capability to function effectively across various cultural contexts (national, ethnic, organizational, religious). It's about putting yourself in their position, asking why others do what they do. It's about knowing how to deal with pop music suddenly jingling through the school PA system in the middle of the presentation. Dr David Wescombe-Down (also Tabor) was a self-confessed interloper and gamechanger who drew attention to different kinds of change: global, sector, delivery, and discipline change. We guessed the main reason for lack of understanding of change: lack of communication is the main offender, every time. It's not time to be an ostrich. We are in the position to be making plans. We can be at the table, communicating, making the changes. David even gave a suggested model of change for ANZTLA in these four key areas: technological, multicultural, consumer culture, generational. Some things for the incoming Board to wrestle with! Gavin Glenn spoke on the multicultural expectations of the Camden Library at Parramatta and Judith Bright on the bicultural expectations placed on the Kinder Library in Auckland.

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Do we purchase ebooks or buy licenses? What loan periods do we set against the cost of loan periods? Nathan Hobby (Vose Seminary) has been impressed by search functionality in Ebook Library and its Demand-Driven Acquisition options. He has found the system guides his searches. How often do we find this happening these days online with extended bibliographies? Due to authentication difficulties at the user end, on the other hand, the Library decided to allocate its own usernames and passwords. Ten percent or so of books currently loaned are ebooks at Vose. Nathan expects this to increase to 20% in the next year. Ebooks will remain a supplement to print books for say the next ten years. Deb Zott and Aliese Millington (Flinders University Library) admit ebooks look like a “big behemoth thing”, but don’t have to. Ebooks in tens of thousands are being added to their collection, which Deb and Aliese monitor for use. The assessment of their discovery layer was a recent project. Who doesn’t use ebooks? they asked. Two main reasons stood out: many users simply don’t know where to find the ebooks in the Library and many users prefer print. Flinders has started an ebook awareness program. They used zesty lemon yellow for their questionnaire. Data is being collected, followed by follows-ups, followed by analysis, followed by more questions, followed by what next?

Next morning, battling loud holiday worksite noise, Matt James Gray (Tabor Adelaide) talked about web research. There are hard resources, which are downloadable and soft resources, which can be accessed direct on the net. We were given lots of amazing places to find texts: Christian Classics Electronic Library, archive.org, Google Books. There is a whole world of freebies out there. Matt even waved a plastic card in the air declaring “This is the National Library of Australia!” It was his NLA Resources e-card, ticket to even more freebies than can be dreamt of. Then Rosanna Morales (Garratt Publishing) gave as an example of a religious publisher challenge

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the fact that there are 43 different curricula across the dioceses of Australia. Cultural intelligence might ask, can't all those dioceses do a bit more communicating? This is quite a complex picture, so what to do? Rosanna took us through the pre-publication process: choice of cover, page design, editorial permission, printing, marketing. For local distribution Garratt prints in China, for global distribution, print-on-demand. The whole publishing scene is highly competitive and shifting fast. The final speaker in the first Saturday session was researcher Marisa Young. She warned that collaboration is the buzz word today in information management. Print and digital must work together, sorry, collaborate. Research requires talking to the right people, otherwise known as collaborating, which can sometimes lead to fluke meetings that redirect the whole project, all experiences close to Marisa. Researchers need material in whatever media carries the relevance, which is how she got three doses of conjunctivitis reading 19th century microfilms. In her study of Adelaide Anglican clergy Marisa has discovered she still needs books in order to find what she is looking for online. She has found what she needs on Trove by reference to an old thesis list of South Australian clergy short biographies. Old and new media collaborate together.

Pam Zweck-Silcock (Australian Lutheran College, Adelaide) claimed that of volunteers there is no end and what we need is a coordinator of the coordinators. Volunteers in our libraries see it as part of their vocation. We need to be aware of our legal responsibilities toward our volunteers, who in fact are treated as 'workers' with a duty of care by the organization. We need to know about the national standards, police checks, &c. Lynn Pryor (Library Consultant, South Pacific Association of Theological Schools) invited us to think about using our 'retardment' being a volunteer in libraries here or overseas, or even our long service leave. We toured the world with Lynn, seeing her troubleshooting in short-term jobs in Africa, Australia, Asia, and the Pacific. Where next? Lynn made it



look exhilarating, but reminded us to be worded up on facilities, costs, medicine. The cross-cultural experience is great and you can greatly help the people you work with, she said. A productive panel session ensued where delegates could weigh up the positives of having volunteers like Evelyn Experienced or Terry Takes-Instruction (compound surname) against the negatives of dealing with Desi

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Double, Andy Acquaintance, or Chris Control. On Saturday we were introduced to the work of Jackson Ray at Fulton College in Fiji and were re-introduced to Jackson’s work on Sunday. Jackson and Lynn gave a presentation on libraries in the Pacific, the region to which ANZTLA dedicates resources outside of Australia and New Zealand.

Sunday morning we heard from our new President, Kerrie Stevens (Harvest Bible College, Melbourne), about why we are special, in fact especially special. Both our subject and our collections make us special, by definition. Kerrie’s list of synonyms for ‘special’ not only resonated with many but went for about two minutes. This knowledge should edify and inspire us in our work places. Hayley Evers (Adelaide Theological Library) warned us that much information wears the body; this is also known as infobesity or Information Fatigue Syndrome. We need to determine the nature and extent of information needed: define, locate, select, organise, present, assess. Half way through her presentation information started buzzing at Hayley’s phone on the

podium. Is there any escape? It’s our choice. Rachael Bahl (Australian Catholic University) got delegates to swear that they would not blame ACU for their incipient pin-addiction. Pinterest is “the hottest website” (CNN) and is about pinning down your favourite interests

on the internet. This is an addiction with lots of sensory experience, but be warned you can also have a bad trip when you encounter Copyright. As Neil the Hippy from the Young Ones would lament, “Oh no! Copyright! What a bummer, man.” Pinterest is infectious as well as being good for curation and research.

It is impossible to know what to include of a negative nature on this year’s Evaluation Form. Everyone in Adelaide did a remarkable job of bringing together a wealth of speakers and topics, venues and outings. ANZTLA must thank though in particular the South Australian Conference Committee: Wendy Davis (the indomitable and mercurial convenor), Barbara Cooper, Trevor Schaefer, Hayley Evers, Susan Melhuish, Sue Ryan, Liz Bor, and Katrina Dal Lago. The Association should also take note in future conference planning of the Committee’s outstanding pre-conference publicity machine, whether on the ANZTLA Forum with every kind of communication, in print, or online on the website. It is no wonder they were ready at a moment’s notice with Plan B and Plan C.

