

# Global Theological Librarianship Panel Discussion

**ABSTRACT** Three global librarians attending the 2019 Atla International Theological Librarian Leadership Institute described their own libraries and challenges. They reflected on their experience at the Institute and at the Atla Annual Conference.

Global Theological Librarianship was the subject of a panel discussion moderated by Kelly Campbell, Associate Dean of Information Services at Columbia Theological Seminary. The panelists, invited to the conference as participants in Atla's first International Theological Librarian Leadership Institute, were the Rev. Arnel Z. Faller, theological librarian at Silliman University Divinity School in Damaguete City, Philippines; Nalini Premadish, librarian at Pacific Theological College in Suva, Fiji; and Roman Shvets, library director at the Ukrainian Evangelical Theological Seminary in Kiev, Ukraine. Besides attending the conference, the three panelists were participating in the invitational Institute which bracketed the conference with instructional workshop sessions and local theological library tours. The panel discussion offered Atla conference attendees the opportunity to learn about three theological libraries from widely differing geographical, educational, and cultural settings, to understand the challenges faced by the librarians, and to appreciate the value of worldwide collegiality.

The panelists each described their libraries' location, mission, organization and staffing, users, and collections. They noted special concerns about collection policy, archival preservation, electronic resources, and conflict management. "It's an amazing experience learning and growing in a global context and a warm fellowship with librarians mostly in theological institutions in North America and other parts of the world," commented Rev. Faller. "My engagement in this training and conference opened more doors for possible connection and collaboration," he said. Mr. Shvets commented that,

while at the conference, “I could hear many practical approaches to challenges with which the library dealt.” He also noted appreciation for the Institute’s emphasis on collection policy and archives. Ms. Premadish observed that the conference is “a great way to connect with new people in the field of Librarianship from different geographical areas who share the same discipline. It was a wonderful experience. I cannot wait to implement the innovative ideas that were shared.”

The Institute is a project of the International Theological Librarianship Education Task Force, a committee of twelve Atla librarians from North America, Central America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Australia appointed by executive director Brenda Bailey-Hainer to create and enhance educational opportunities and resources for theological librarians worldwide.