

The Library of the Universidad Bíblica Latinoamericana: 75th Anniversary in the Midst of Changes

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ABSTRACT: This essay offers a brief account of the library of the Universidad Bíblica Latinoamericana (U.B.L.) in San José, Costa Rica. It has been shaped by a variety of theological outlooks during its nearly seventy-five years of existence. It begins in the “Old Country,” where evangelistic revivals provided much of the impetus for missionary approaches then being taken in Latin America. Another theological wave, as conservative as the European, arose from the United States. In the Sixties, social and political changes in the Latin American region brought about changes in the way theology was produced and practiced, giving birth to a new form, later on embraced by the institution, with significant effects on its library. The U.B.L. library is evolving in the midst of theological changes, leaving behind its “home-grown” character, shifting to a more professional model as it prepares for new challenges.

EVANGELICAL ROOTS IN EUROPE

In the twentieth century, following his conversion at the age of eighteen in 1853, the Irish Protestant preacher Henry Grattan Guinness (1835-1910)¹ appeared on the European religious scene. The Ulster Revival of 1859 brought nearly 100,000 converts into the Protestant church. Guinness’s eloquent open-air preaching attracted great crowds. His evangelistic zeal enabled him to train and send a great number of “faith missionaries” to different places around the world. Guinness wrote numerous books with eye-catching titles: *The Approaching End of the Age* (1878), *Light for the Last Days* (1887), *Romanism and the Reformation* (1887), *The Divine Program of World History* (1888), *City of Seven Hills* (1891), and *History Unveiling Prophecy* (1906).² He succeeded in establishing a well-managed missionary enterprise, whose activities occupied him almost to the end of his life.

In 1873 Henry and his wife founded the East London Missionary Training Institute, also called Harley College. A successful venture, it still continues to this day, training Christians for missions and evangelism. His deep concern for Christianizing the world led Dr. Guinness to found several missionary organizations: Livingstone Inland Mission (1877), Congo-Balolo Mission (1888), Regions Beyond Missionary Union (1898).

Guinness would likely have had almost no role in the development of Christianity in Costa Rica had it not been for a Scottish lad who was tremendously influenced by his preaching, and the way that the great Irish preacher conducted his campaigns. Harry Strachan (1872-1945), son of Scottish parents, was born in Fergus, Ontario, Canada.³ In 1874 Susan Beamish, whom Strachan later married, was born near Dunmanway in Cork County, Ireland. When Harry was seven years old, his family returned to Scotland. The Beamish family attended the Anglican Church, but Susan later joined a small Methodist Church in Cork County. At the age of 21 Harry Strachan joined the Bethesda Free Church in Sunderland Street, where he came for the first time under the influence of H. G. Guinness.⁴

¹ A nephew of Arthur Guinness, Irish founder of the Guinness Brewery.

² The H. Grattan Guinness Archive: <http://www.historicism.com/Guinness/guinnessitles.htm>.

³ Nelson, Wilton M. *A History of Protestantism in Costa Rica* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton Theological Seminary, 1957), 258.

⁴ Roberts, W. Dayton. *One Step Ahead: the Innovative Strachans and the Birth of the Latin American Mission* (Miami: Latin American Mission, 1996), 4.

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The young Strachan was admitted to Harley and Cliff College.⁵ Miss Beamish also studied in this institution, where she eventually met Harry in 1896, and love would find its way between the two some time later. Both of them were attracted to the idea of missionary work in Africa with the Congo-Balolo Mission, but their plans had to be altered due to health reasons. A new opportunity emerged in the southern region of the American continent, where Guinness had just started another missionary venture, the Regions Beyond Missionary Union.⁶ At the age of 25 Miss Beamish left for Argentina, leaving behind her beloved Harry. He later rejoined her three years later. They finally married in 1903, and remained in Tandil, Argentina until 1918.⁷ During this period, two major missionary events took place. One was the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh, Scotland, in June 1910. One of its eight commissions was “Carrying the Gospel to all the Non-Christian World.” The Conference itself proposed the evangelization of the world within the present generation.

Second, the Latin American mission boards were utterly surprised when the Congress gave priority to the continents of Africa and Asia, on the assumption that Latin America had already been Christianized thoroughly by the Catholic Church. In response, the Committee of Reference and Counsel and the Foreign Missions Conference of North America created in 1913 the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, called the “Congress on Christian Work in Latin America.” It first met in Panama City from February 10 to 20, 1916. The attendees included officers and members of mission boards, missionaries, Latin American church leaders, Christian laypersons from North America and Europe, and businessmen from the region who sympathized with the Protestant missionary effort.

THE EVANGELIZATION DRIVE IN LATIN AMERICA

Shortly after the Congress on Christian Work in Latin America, the Strachans began to explore the idea of a continental evangelism. This was proposed to the Mission’s headquarters in England, but the reply was not what was hoped for: the missionary dreams of Dr. Guinness were falling apart, largely as a result of financial problems. Hence the Strachans had to look elsewhere for support.

With their minds made up, the Strachans travelled to the United States in search of financial backing for their new venture. In the Hepzibah House (a missionary guest residence in New York City) they met the evangelist A.B. Winchester (1858-1943)⁸ who seemed to be interested, and temporarily secured some financial support for their endeavour.⁹ Winchester was also a member of the Canadian Council of the Regions Beyond Missionary Union,¹⁰ and somehow aware of the Strachans’ previous work in Argentina. After a survey trip in 1918 it was decided to base the new mission in Costa Rica. In July 1921 a group of supporters met in the Stony Brook School on Long Island to create the Latin American Evangelization Campaign (LAEC).¹¹ Its doctrinal basis is clearly stated in the second issue of the *Latin American Evangelist*:

Adheres to the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, as originally given; the Virgin Birth and Deity of Christ; His Bodily Resurrection; the doctrine of Salvation through the Blood of Christ, whose vicarious sacrifice is the only remedy for man’s lost condition; the doctrine of the eternal salvation of the regenerate and the eternal condemnation of the unregenerate; the scriptural doctrine of a life of victory over sin through the power of the indwelling Holy

⁵ Strachan, R. Kenneth. *Harry and Susan: The Early Days of the Latin American Mission* (San José, unpublished manuscript 1981), 10.

⁶ Guinness, H. Grattan. *These Thirty Years: The Story of the R.B.M.U.* (London: Harley House, 1903).

⁷ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁸ A Canadian who lent his support to the Fundamentalist movement.

⁹ Strachan, *Harry and Susan . . .*, 65.

¹⁰ Guinness, H. Grattan. “*Not Unto Us:*” *A Record of Twenty One Years’ Missionary Service.* (London: Harley House, 1908).

¹¹ In 1938 the name was changed to Latin American Mission.

Spirit of God, and the imminence of the premillennial coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.¹²

L.A.E.C. was a project to be developed in stages, more or less in the Guinness's way: a Bible institute would be established to prepare workers who would be sent to do evangelistic work, with what it was hoped would be a multiplying effect.

Theological education was thus understood as training for the missionary effort.¹³ While in Argentina, Susan Strachan became interested in the condition of women.¹⁴ This concern was evident when she established the Instituto Bíblico de Costa Rica, which started in 1922 as a women's training school. The training of women as missionaries was common in the Regions Beyond Missionary Union. A year later the student body began to include men as well. A major expansion soon added a hospital, a school for nurses, a broadcasting radio station ("Lighthouse of the Caribbean," on the air since 1948 in San José, Costa Rica), a publishing department ("Editorial Caribe," now under different ownership), an orphanage, a church planting project, and a significant number of missionary personnel. Changes took place in the institution as theological training grew in complexity. The Instituto Bíblico de Costa Rica became Seminario Bíblico Latinoamericano in 1941, and in 1997, after being state accredited, changed its name to Universidad Bíblica Latinoamericana (U.B.L.). The school's first class graduated in 1926. After receiving their diplomas, the first three women graduates set out immediately for mission work in Central America.

THEOLOGICAL TRAINING

Most of the school's training and theological education was centered on the lecture method. Because the professors relied on their personal book collections, the subject of a library was only occasionally mentioned. The program of study for 1923 included subjects as diverse as Old and New Testaments, Christian Doctrine, Bible History, Church History, Homiletics, Dispensational truth, Organ and Singing Lessons, and Sewing and Housework. At first there were few Protestant Spanish-language publications. Later, Casa Unida de Publicaciones, Editorial Caribe, and Ediciones La Aurora, among others, would assume this task. For some time the American Tract Society, a nonprofit evangelical organization founded for the purpose of publishing and disseminating Christian literature, played a part. This Society, under the name Sociedad Americana de Tratados, translated and published religious materials for the Spanish-speaking world. Protestant theological resources were drawn from the established collections in Europe and later on also from the United States.

THE LIBRARY

By 1930 the Institute was progressing quite well, with an increase both in enrollment and in the number of faculty. Since 1923, ninety-three students, representing thirteen countries, came to study. In 1936, one of the Strachans' sons, Robert Kenneth, graduated from Dallas Theological Seminary. While there he had been a student worker in the library and was able to gain some knowledge about its work and organization. When he returned to Costa Rica he became interested in a library for the Institute. In 1921 Mary G. France,¹⁵ a librarian, had also arrived with the Strachans, but she was assigned to evangelistic training work. She became one of the first members of the teaching

¹²December, 1921. See also Roberts, *One Step Ahead*.

¹³Marsh, Theodore Henry. *Protestant Missionary Education in Central America* (Dallas: Dallas Theological Seminary, 1952). This resource provides helpful insight into the process of theological education in this part of the continent.

¹⁴*El Testigo*, Julio, 1916, vol. 16, no. 1, p. 20; *El Testigo*, Noviembre, 1916, vol. 16, no. 5, 20; *El Testigo*, Marzo, 1917, vol. 16, no. 9, 168; *Latin American Evangelist*, Octubre, 1921, vol. 1, no. 1, 10-11.

¹⁵*Latin American Evangelist*, Octubre, 1921, vol. 1, no. 1, 12.

staff.¹⁶ A library for the Institute was finally opened in 1937. (In a faculty meeting on March 22, 1956, it was suggested and quickly accepted that the library be named after Harry Strachan, because it contained a great deal of his personal collection.) The three-year curriculum had increased in size and sophistication and now included the following subjects: analysis of Old and New Testaments, Arithmetic, Christian Evidences, Church History, Elements of Logic and Rhetoric, Elements of Pedagogy and Psychology, English, Geography, Hermeneutics, Homiletics, Introduction to the Bible, Organ and Singing lessons, Pastoral Theology, Physical Drill, Prophecy, Romanism, Spanish Grammar and Literature, Synthetic Study of Old and New Testaments, the Epistles, Theology, and Universal History. This institution was still primarily devoted to training people for evangelistic work, and Mr. Strachan himself traveled throughout Latin America in evangelization campaigns. The library was in its early stages, but the needs of the current curriculum still could be met.

In 1939 Julia Pettee (1872-1967) became the main cataloging librarian of Union Theological Seminary, in New York City. There she developed a classification system, which came to be known as the Pettee, or Union Classification.¹⁷ This system was adopted by a number of libraries in the U.S. and around the world. The Institute's library used the Dewey system from 1937 to 1941, but when it became the Seminario Bíblico Latinoamericano in 1941 it shifted to Pettee's system, most likely convinced that a specific theological classification system would more appropriate to the new status.

BUSINESS AS USUAL

Harry Strachan's 1921-1939 evangelistic crusades provided a tremendous boost to Latin American Protestant church growth. As time passed, the older generation gave way to a new one. Harry Strachan died in 1945, followed by his wife in 1955. After his mother's death, R. Kenneth became the General Director of the Mission. From 1950 to 1958, Kenneth Strachan was also involved in evangelism. The Caribbean Crusade of Billy Graham was a high point of this period. This was followed by a program known as Evangelism-in-Depth (1959-1971),¹⁸ which had significant impact upon several Latin American countries.

Since its foundation the Seminary had deliberately been a missionary endeavor, in support of LAM's goals. The missionaries taught, were in charge of administrative matters, and also ran the library at the Seminary. Typically, one of them would be assigned responsibility to oversee the library. Institutional business was all conducted in English. Starting in the 1960s, minutes of business meetings began to be kept in Spanish, and a decision was made to merge the English and Spanish collections. In 1952 two card catalogs were created, one for each language. The institution's faculty continued to be drawn from conservative Protestant seminaries in the U.S.A. and evangelical conservative social values were upheld. Even as late as 1959, male and female students were not allowed to study together in the library without supervision; in 1962, dating had to be approved by the institution.

CHANGES IN THE REGION AND BEYOND

Yale Divinity Librarian Raymond Philip Morris (1904-1990)¹⁹ provided some consultation for the Theological Education Fund (TEF).²⁰ While in Southeast Asia, by invitation of the Founding Board of Nanking Theological

¹⁶*Latin American Evangelist*, Noviembre, 1922, vol. 2, no.2, 8.

¹⁷Pettee, Julia. *Classification of the Library of Union Theological Seminary in New York* (New York: Union Theological Seminary, 1967).

¹⁸Roberts, W. Dayton. *Revolution in Evangelism: the Story of Evangelism-in-Depth in Latin America* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1967); *Evangelism-in-Depth: Experimenting With a New Type of Evangelism: as Told by Team Members of the Latin American Mission* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1961); Cruz Aceituno, Rodolfo. *Reminiscencias de la Evangelización en Costa Rica*. (San José: Publicaciones IINDEF, 1984).

¹⁹At that time Morris was Emeritus Librarian of Yale Divinity School, where he worked for forty years.

²⁰This organization had its origins in the 1910 World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh. Russell, William. O. *Contextualization: Origins, Meaning and Implications* (Roma: Facultate S. Theologiae, Apud Pontificiam Universitatem S. Thomae, 1995). Disertación.

Seminary, he noticed in the libraries he visited a lack of trained staff, and frequently very little correlation between the books donated from America and the theological education work carried on locally. With the assistance of an international group of scholars, Morris was able to compile the *Theological Book List* as a selection guide to support seminaries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Southeast Pacific.²¹ This document was sent to theological institutions in those regions. This raised some eyebrows at the seminary in Costa Rica, since the perspective of the list seemed to be highly ecumenical in spirit. A decision was made to consult LAM's top officers,²² who decided to request books from the TEF after all because John A. Mackay was a member of this board as well as a friend of the Seminary. In 1949, the first Latin American Evangelical conference (CELA I) took place in Buenos Aires, and cooperation between different church bodies was one of the gathering's primary concerns. In the early 1960s Latin America was in the midst of economic, political, and social change, which gained strength following the socialist revolution in Cuba in 1959. The second Latin American Evangelical conference (CELA II), in Lima, Peru, in 1961, called for a deeper involvement of the churches in the social reality of the continent. Iglesia y Sociedad en América Latina (ISAL), one of those church-related movements, favored dialogue between theology and the social sciences. Comisión Evangélica Latinoamericana de Educación Cristiana (CELADEC), created on October 10, 1962,²³ outlined its "evangelical option on behalf of the poor," with a clear desire for "the construction of a Latin American church." From July 23 to 27, 1961, the Latin American Evangelical Consultation took place at Huampani, Peru. At this conference, the seminary's alumni had dinner with Kenneth Strachan, LAM's General Director. It was evident that LAM had some significant concerns with some developments afoot in the Latin American Church. In 1963, representatives of church organizations from different countries called for the creation of UNELAM (Unidad Evangélica Latinoamericana), which was founded in Montevideo, Uruguay, in 1964. CELA III was held in 1969 in Buenos Aires, with representation by twenty-three Latin American countries and forty denominations, including Roman Catholic Church observers.

The second general conference of Latin American Bishops (CELAM II) was convened in Medellín, Colombia, in 1968. Pentecostal church leaders were invited for the first time. This effervescent movement began to gain momentum in the region during the 1960s and played a significant part in the rise of Latin American theology. This was rooted in the pastoral activity of the churches rather than in academic reflection. Liberation Theology ("teología de la liberación" in Spanish) was first introduced by Alves and Gutiérrez in 1971.

THE LIBRARY'S NEW PATH

An effective library matches its information services with its users' information needs. Since its initial days, the library had collected resources on Evangelism, particularly from the conservative point of view, in the necessary areas for evangelistic and pastoral work. Books on Homiletics, History and Methods of Missions, Biblical Studies, Sunday school, and Practical Evangelistic Work were also collected. This emphasis continued well into the Sixties. As expected, these information needs were clearly stated in the Seminary's prospectus. The faculty's interests were similar.

The conflicts between the Seminary and the Costa Rican Catholic Church, which at one point had deteriorated to the point of the stoning of evangelical students, were gradually being resolved. There was now room for more

²¹Davis, Donald G., ed. *Dictionary of American Library Biography*. Second supplement. (Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited, 2003), 164

²²Minutes of the Seminary's Faculty Meeting, November 6, 1961.

²³Comisión Evangélica Latinoamericana de Educación Cristiana. See Bastián, Jean-Pierre, *Historia del Protestantismo en América Latina* (México: CUPSA, 1990).

openness, even the exchange of professors.²⁴ In July 1963, the faculty addressed the issue of relations with the Catholics. It was not an easy subject.

In February 1965, Robert K. Strachan, the last family member with a strong grip on LAM, died. As changes took place in Latin America, there were also changes in the institution. Initially, professors came from conservative theological schools in the United States.²⁵ By the mid-1950s some had attended Princeton Theological Seminary, a more mainstream institution. By now two of eighteen faculty were Latin American. There were still strong ties to the past, but in the Sixties some professors had done graduate work in Europe, something that brought still further changes to the theological conversation.

In 1971, LAM granted autonomy to all of its major ministries. Some years later the Seminary embraced a Latin American vision for theology, developed within the regional social movements that gave birth to liberation theology. It shifted away from the evangelical and mission-oriented approach it had inherited, which in many ways had essentially been a form of practical theology. The missionaries had brought with them a Western viewpoint, carrying with it a great many assumptions and cultural impositions. Besides the training of leaders for the Latin American Church, the seminary now began to give added focus to theological reflection. In doing so, it acknowledged that theology has to be approached contextually.

Shortly afterwards LAM decided to withdraw financial support from the seminary entirely, and this had significant implications for the library. Now it had to develop its collection and services with a different orientation. For the library's visitors it is still disconcerting to see that a significant percentage of the collection is in English.

The Latin American Biblical Seminary launched PRODIADIS (Programa Diversificado a Distancia) in 1976.²⁶ It is a theological education by extension program, and provides theological education to students located in different countries of the region, who otherwise would not be able to pursue such studies. A PRODIADIS student is able to carry on theological study independently, for which the library provides an anthology of readings for a given course.

THE ROAD TO PROFESSIONALIZATION

In adjusting to the school's new autonomy, the library began connecting with more developed libraries in the U.S.A. One was the library of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, beginning in 1969.²⁷ In December 1975, Dr. Burton L. Goddard, library director of that seminary, arrived at the Seminario Bíblico Latinoamericano for a short visit. On January 3, he delivered a 134-page report to the President (Plutarco Bonilla) of the School and the Faculty. The report included an evaluation of the library, suggestions, and a practical manual, since there was no professional librarian. It was an excellent report, but in the end this contact had little impact on the Seminary's library. In 1981 the Seminary was shocked to realize that Goddard's report had not been considered at all in its library development.

Early in 1982 a staff librarian was hired, and eventually a few years later the Seminary considered his professional librarianship training as a solution to the institutional need. Once graduated, he was appointed as the librarian, a position previously held only by missionary staff or professors of the school. This change was at best a partial

²⁴*Acta del Cuerpo Docente*, 5 de julio, 1963.

²⁵This can be seen in the seminary's prospectus of this period.

²⁶Diversified Extension Program.

²⁷*Acta de la Comisión de Asuntos Académicos*, no. 70-2, 4 de febrero, 1970.

solution, since staff resources were not the only area of weakness. Changes were also needed in bibliography, infrastructure, and equipment, all of which required additional funding. Financial resources remained a pressing concern throughout. Therefore, the need for establishing some form of endowment fund has been an ongoing concern. At the end of 1986 the last professor vacated his role as designated library-supervisor, and from that point on the library would no longer be supervised by a member of the teaching faculty. The acting librarian went to library school, and the library slowly shifted to professional management.

LENDING A HAND

An important contribution from the U.B.L. library to other libraries of the region was the training of staff for library work. The state of the other theological libraries in the Latin American region was similar: inadequate collections, lack of funding, shortages of staff, etc. In 1972, the Seminary Library Committee decided that "...any library assistant should be capable of performing any library task, such as cataloguing, classifying, be in charge of administrative matters, secretarial tasks, compiling bibliographies, taking care of users, book mending, etc."²⁸ Actually, that was the way library work was already being performed in many theological institutions. Even a secretary, in addition to her work, would also do some library work. But a more demanding theological education requires better library services. Suddenly regional theological organizations such as Asociación de Seminarios e Instituciones Teológicas (ASIT)²⁹ and Asociación Latinoamericana de Instituciones de Educación Teológica (ALIET) became deeply concerned about the state of the seminaries' libraries and set up plans to improve skills and knowledge of library staff. It was a major change, a step from a "home grown" to a more professional approach. For some time librarianship workshops were provided throughout the region, and the Seminary library staff was now ready to support such efforts. A move was made by the regional seminaries toward the professionalization of library work. This new situation led the librarians to find ways of working together. It was a new challenge, requiring adjustments and hard work, and the collective benefits to the library community were not always immediate.

ADDITIONAL CHALLENGES

For many years the Seminary functioned as a residential school. The correspondence courses begun between the 1940s and the 1960s eventually gave way to PRODIADIS. This paved the way to the so-called new model, when the resident and theological education by extension programs become one. This represented a new challenge to the library, which it was at first unable to face. Students were geographically spread out, and other than the traditional means, involving use of postal services, there were no technological resources available to the library at this time. Therefore, this long-distance community remained largely unserved.

In 1988 steps were taken to implement library automation. It is a process that will take years to complete. Retrospective conversion is still in progress, with nearly 60 percent of the collection complete. Beginning in the 1990s, additional contact was made in an effort to learn how theological librarianship was conducted in the United States. This time the librarian visited different libraries to get some insights from a more developed practice. During March 2-16, 1993, John A. Bollier, Director of Development of the American Theological Library Association, visited the Seminary. In the short term this visit had very little impact on the library. However, in the long run, it sharpened the vision and showed the necessity and importance of a collective approach to theological librarianship in the region, which would also benefit the Seminary's library. Shortly after, ALIET published the SBL librarian's *Manual para bibliotecas teológicas*. It represented a very technical approach, but at least marks a beginning.

²⁸Acta del Comité de Biblioteca, 27 de octubre de 1972.

²⁹An entire issue of *Encuentro y Diálogo* (no., 10, 1994), ASIT's journal, is dedicated to the subject of libraries and library work.

Essentially, theological education in Latin America is still a form of ministry. It is understood as a special call, and no particular financial reward is expected from it. As such, financial resources must be found from different funding agencies, such as church organizations from the developed regions. Occasionally there has been an institutional financial crisis, severely affecting the library's services and its development.

After many years of functioning in an inadequate space, the institution moved to new facilities in 1998, which greatly benefited the library. Professionalization finally settled in at the library. Pettee's classification system was no longer serviceable for the library. Prior to the rise of Latin American theology, most of the library's theological literature came from Europe and the United States, where this literature had been published, and it had a mainly white male viewpoint. Suddenly there were feminist, black, indigenous, Asian, and other forms of theologies that are not represented in Pettee's classification. The Dewey Decimal Classification was adopted at the library in 1999, and the reclassification process still continues, along with the retrospective conversion. An unexpected financial contribution enabled the library to acquire new technological equipment, so the CDS/ISIS UNESCO library software was replaced by much better and more affordable software. Between 2001 and 2003 security strips were placed in the books, and the whole collection was bar-coded. As part of the preservation process, old VHS and some audiocassette recordings were digitized. These tasks, including retrospective conversion, would not have been possible without the assistance of volunteers. Internet access, a reality in some other libraries, finally reached the library, and sometime after a modest website was constructed. By 2010, with the financial help of the Methodist Church of Ireland, the library's OPAC was put on the Internet.

SUMMARY

Theology in this region is not the same as it once was. Latin America has gone through some major political, economic, and social changes, with dramatic implications for the church. It is no longer considered sufficient simply to evangelize people, and appropriate attention needs to be given to social and economic concerns. In light of this, the seminary and its library have needed to change. It is necessary to train students who can think theologically and critically approach theology from an interdisciplinary perspective. For the library it means providing information services that match these needs. Essentially, performing theological library work is a ministry, as outlined so memorably by Raymond P. Morris.³⁰ The way current theological education is provided challenges the library to envision different means of supporting theological education. There is also the need to support the library services of organizations related to the U.B.L. (satellites), sometimes *in situ*. While this would not represent a major challenge for a financially well-provided library, it certainly does in Costa Rica. Theological librarianship is indeed a ministry, a call to gather and coordinate the best available resources that will improve the training of future Latin American church leaders. There is no doubt that the future holds new challenges, and they will be met in due time.



³⁰"Theological Librarianship as a Ministry," *Annual Conference Proceedings*, American Theological Library Association, vol. 7, 1953, 31-39.