ForATL News

is published twice a year (June and December) by the Forum of Asian Theological Librarians as a channel for updates on ForATL activities, as well as a forum for discussion and exchange in the field of Asian theological librarianship.

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ForATL mailing list : foratl-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

ForATL News welcomes contributions related to theological librarianship and the development of theological resources in Asia. All manuscripts or correspondence should be sent to the Editor, who reserves the right to determine suitability for publication.

Contents

EXCITING NEWS!
4TH ForATL WORKSHOP AND CONSULTATION

Plans for the Fourth Workshop and Consultation of the Forum of Asian Theological Librarians are gradually taking shape as the event draws closer. The theme chosen by the ForATL Executive Committee for the coming Consultation is "Strengthening The Colloboration Between Theological Librarians And Scholars Toward Growth in Asia". This arose out of a concern for better librarian-scholar working relations to promote more effective and wholistic development of theological education in Asia, with special emphasis on local Asian resources.

Details

Dates : 19-23 April 2006 (Wednesday – Sunday)

Venue : Seminari Theoloji Malaysia
Lot 3011 Taman South East
Jalan Tampin Lama Batu 3
70100 Seremban, Negeri Sembilan
MALAYSIA.
(Cost : US$60.00 (or RM220.00)

Programme

1. *Keynote address* : "The Emerging Tasks of Theological Education and the Role of Scholars and Theological Librarians in Asian Theological Formation"
   Speaker : Dr. Michael Poon, Director of the Centre for the Study of Christianity in Asia (Trinity Theological College, Singapore) and Convenor of the Documentation, Archives, Bibliography and Oral History Study Group (International Association for Mission Studies).

2. *Talks :*
   - Documentation in Asia Pilot Programme – Dr. Michael Poon
   - Other talks to be confirmed

3. *Ongoing and future projects :*
   - Documentation in Asia
   - Directory of Asian Theological Libraries (DATL)
   - Publication of theses bibliography
   - Newsletter and brochures
   - Website and mailing list
   - Internet database and index of Asian theological journals*
   - Short-term and long-term training
   - Resource-sharing and networking
   - and more …

* A fuller description of the Internet database and index project can be found on page 5.

4th ForATL Consultation … *(Continued from page 1)*

4. *Business sessions :*
    - Election of the ForATL Executive Committee
    - ForATL Constitution

5. *Who can come?*
    - Individual and institutional members of ForATL
    - Persons from theological instutions/organisations who are committed to the development of resources in Asian theology and church history
    - Those willing to actively work with ForATL towards the development of such resources
    - Selected participants and guests

An invitation letter, together with timetable and registration form, can be viewed on the ForATL website (www.geocities.com/foratl). Please send registration forms by 20 February 2006 to:

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Seminari Theoloji Malaysia
P.O. Box 175, 70720 Seremban
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See you in Seremban!

Source : http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/my.html

Find out more about ...

- Malaysia : http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malaysia

- Negeri Sembilan : http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Negeri_Sembilan, http://www.journeymalaysia.com/Mstate_negerisembilan.htm

- Seremban : http://www.journeymalaysia.com/MC_seremban.htm

- Seminari Theoloji Malaysia : http://www.stm.edu.my

IN MEMORIAM

MRS. RITA M. ENGLAND
*Called home to the Lord
Monday, 13 June 2005*

The Forum of Asian Theological Librarians was saddened by news of the passing of Mrs. Rita M. England in New Zealand in June 2005. Together with her husband, Rev. Dr. John England, Rita was instrumental in initiating the first Consultation of Asian Theological Librarians in 1991, which led to the formation of ForATL. At the time, she was the Librarian for the Programme for Theology and Cultures in Asia (PTCA). Since the inception of ForATL, Rita actively took part in its programmes and projects. The Englands also authored *Ministering Asian faith and wisdom: a manual for theological librarians in Asia*, which remains an invaluable resource for Asian theological librarians. Rita truly served as an example to all of us and her works with ForATL will be long remembered.

We want to echo the prayer said at Rita's "Celebration of Life and Pilgrimage" service, held at Lamb & Hayward's Chapel, Christchurch, on 17 June :

*"Eternal Spirit of hope, of all distant landings and near pathways,
of far havens and journeys home,
grant us courage in our departures,
trust in our travelling,
and expectancy in our arrivals;
with Him whose life-with-others calls us on.
May this be so."*

PAST ForATL CONSULTATIONS : an outline

1st Consultation

Venue and date
McGilvary Faculty of Theology
Chiang Mai, Thailand
22-25 May 1991

Focus
Asian Resources and Library Development

Elected Core Group
Dr. Huang Po Ho (Taiwan)
Dr. Joseph Patmury (India)
Ms. Lau Jen Sin (Singapore)
Mr. Karmito (Indonesia)
Mrs. Rita M. England (New Zealand)

2nd Consultation

Venue and date
Duta Wacana Christian University Guest House
Yogyakarta, Indonesia
8-13 October 1997

Theme
Creativity and Partnership : Resourcing Asian
Theological Libraries

Speakers
- Dr. John T Titaley : "The Role of Librarians in the Library-network among seminaries and Christian Universities in Indonesia"
- Dr. Sulistyo-Basuki : "Theological Libraries in Indonesia : a library management-based brief view"
- Dr. E.G. Singgih : "An Axe for the Frozen Sea : the emerging task of theological education and the role of librarians"
- Dr. John C. & Mrs. Rita M. England : "The Priority for Asian Resources"
- Dr. Joseph Patmury : "Conservation in Libraries and Archives"

- Mr. Karmito : "The Librarian of Indonesian Theological College Libraries : roles, functions and activities"

Elected Executive Committee office-bearers
Mr. Karmito (Indonesia) - Convenor
Ms. Elizabeth T. Pulanco (Philippines) - Secretary
Mr. Kim Robinson (Australia) - Treasurer
Ms. Phyllis Chan (Malaysia)
Ms. K. Sarala David (India)
Ms. Kim Kyoung Hee (Korea)

3rd Consultation

Venue and date
Student Christian Center
Bangkok, Thailand
15-22 February 2003

Speakers
- Mrs. Rita M. England : "Building Up Resources for Theological Education in Asia"
- Dr. John England : "Understanding the Spirituality and Theological Thought of Our Region"
- Mr. Tang Sui-Tung : "The Impact of Technology and Training on Asian Theological Librarians"
- Dr. Sientje Merentek-Abram (Executive Director of ATESEA)
- Dr. Wati Longchar (WCC-ETE Consultant, Asia-Pacific region)

Elected Executive Committee office-bearers
Mr. Karmito (Indonesia) - Convenor
Ms. Elizabeth T. Pulanco (Philippines) - Secretary
Mr. Joseph Shi-Yang Lin (Taiwan) - Treasurer
Ms. Jocelyn Morris (Australia)
Ms. Christabel Wong (Malaysia)
Ms. Nurdiana Sari Wijaya (Indonesia)
Rev. Stephenson Manuel (India) - appointed 2004

NEWS IN BRIEF : ForATL Executive Committee Meeting

The ForATL Executive Committee met in Taipei from 13-18 April 2005 to present progress reports, as well as to plan for the 4th Consultation in Malaysia the following year. The meeting was hosted and sponsored by Taiwan Theological College & Seminary and Joseph Shi-Yang Lin.

Picture : ForATL Exco members with Rev. Dr. Lin Hong-Hsin, Principal of Taiwan Theological College & Seminary (in black, third from right)

DESA INFORMASI : Where Technology and Tradition Meet

"Desa Informasi", or Information Village, is the name adopted for the Local eContent (digital information resources with local flavor) development project carried out in Petra Christian University Library as a pilot project by the Indonesian Christian Universities - Virtual Library (InCU-VL) to build a Local eContent network among its member institutions. Through this project, Local eContent collections are made freely available through the Internet to be used as learning resources for various user communities. Local eContent collections currently available on the "Desa Informasi" website (www.petra.ac.id/desa-informasi) are Surabaya Memory, eDIMENSI, Digital Theses, Petra@rt Gallery, Petra iPoster and Petra Chronicle.

In conjunction with the "Desa Informasi" project, a one-day seminar, entitled "Local eContent: Local Treasure Global Reach", was conducted on 24 January 2005 at the Petra Christian University in Surabaya. The seminar focused on the need to identify and develop Local eContent as learning resources. This was followed by a two-day training on "Digitizing Paper-based Documents". Both events were very well-attended by participants from across the country.

Seminar Nasional Local eContent
"Kekayaan Lokal Jangkauan Global"

A "Desa Informasi" exhibition was then held on 26 January 2005. The exhibition tried to visualize the virtual Information Village being developed in order to communicate about Local eContent to people, especially non-librarians/archivists. To reflect the theme, local information resources were displayed in a village-like setting. The exhibition proved to be so popular that it had to be extended for a further three days. Pictures of the seminar, training and exhibition can be viewed on the website.

Pelatihan Digitalisasi Dokumen Tekstual
Lab Komputer Gedung T

Local eContent development, such as the "Desa Informasi" project, blurs the boundaries among libraries, archives, and museums. Although the focus is on the development of learning resources, some of these resources may fall within the domain of archives and museums. The methods by which the resources are presented to users may also mimic methods employed by museums (online and physical exhibition, the provision of customized/specialized user and display interface for each collection).

Recent social unrests and natural disasters that occurred in Indonesia serve as further impetus to promote Local eContent development in microfilm or digital format. It was sad to hear how numerous libraries, archives, and museums were destroyed across the country, especially as a result of the tsunami in Aceh and other parts of south Asia. So many wonderful local resources vanished without any chance of restoring or replacing them. "Desa Informasi" can also play an important role in preserving, digitally at least, local historical and cultural heritage, thus preserving the collective memory of a local society.

Pameran Desa Informasi
Selasar Ruang Konferensi Gedung W lt. 10

- Adapted and compiled by the Editor from ForATL mailing-list postings and website content written by Aditya Nugraha, Head of Library at Petra Christian University -

(Note: On 6-9 Sept 2005, Aditya was invited to present a paper on the "Desa Informasi" project at the 2005 Annual Seminar of the International Council on Archives, Section on University and Research Institution Archives, held at Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, USA.)

Internet Database for Asia Theological Journals: A Proposal
By Tang, Sui Tung
Head Librarian, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Hong Kong

1. Need for the Project

Asian theologies are gradually achieving greater significance in the field of theology. However, currently available theological journal indexes (e.g. Religion Index One, ATLA Religion Database, New Testament Abstracts etc.) largely neglect journals published in Asia or in Asian languages. As such, there is a lack of comprehensive index tools for Asian theological journals, which are important for both Asian and non-Asian theological studies and development. If members of the Forum of Asian Theological Librarians (ForATL) could cooperatively develop an Internet Database for Asia Theological Journals, it would help fill the huge gap in research information. This information infrastructure will surely benefit researchers, seminarians and ministers within and outside Asia.

2. Process to Develop Such a Database

ForATL presently has members from Malaysia, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Indonesia, Philippines, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, Australia and New Zealand, and membership is expanding to include other Asian countries. The proposal is to assign various theological libraries in the ForATL network the task of indexing 5-10 selected key theological journals in each country. The selected journals selected should be academic in nature, preferably in the local language or with both English and local language articles. The assigned libraries will input article citations of the selected journals in their holdings into the Internet database, and providing abstracts in English, as well as English translations for citations in the local language.

3. Advantages of the Project

3.1 Comprehensive and Asian

By assigning theological libraries to index 5-10 of the most important theological journals in each country, the database will comprehensively cover 50–100 important Asian theological journals, most of which will not be covered by currently available indexes. As such, this database will be unique and of great use to Asian theologians for constructing Asian theologies. Non-Asian theologians may also use the database to keep informed of Asian theological resources.

3.2 Readily Accessible

As the proposed database will provide English translations of article citations and English abstracts, it can overcome the problem of language diversity in Asia and provides a common language link to journals in different Asian local languages. Furthermore, the database will be on Internet, making it easy to access and update. This database will also enable researchers to identify journal holdings of the various participating theological libraries and facilitate resource sharing.

3.3 Inexpensive and Easy

With the present advances in technology, it will not be too difficult nor expensive to develop a Internet database platform for indexing purposes. The greatest challenge lies in the task of indexing, abstracting and translating. If the task is too heavy for a single library in each country, 2 or 3 libraries may be assigned to share the workload, with each indexing about 4-5 journals. Assuming each selected journal publishes twice a year with an average of 8 articles per issue, each library only has to index and abstract about 64-80 articles per year. This is not too heavy a load to bear. Hence, the keyword here is cooperation! May God give us vision and faith to build an essential information infrastructure for Asian theological study!

Editor's note:

The above proposal will be one of the items tabled for discussion and adoption at the 4th ForATL Workshop & Consultation to be held in Seremban in April 2006.

THEOLOGICAL LIBRARIANS AS VOCATION FORMATORS AND PASTORAL COUNSELLORS TO THEOLOGICAL STUDENTS

The role of theological librarians as vocation formators and pastoral counsellors to theological students was one of the topics discussed at the 1996 Philippine Theological Library Association Conference held on 14-16 October at the Philippine Baptist Theological Seminary, Baguio City.

Some points raised …

- Primarily, perform the librarian's duty to its highest level. Know your role and responsibilities as a librarian
- A librarian should learn to love the work and understand it
- Prioritise work and exercise discretion
- Teach discipline by strictly enforcing policies
- Model proper Christian lifestyle in terms of character and behaviour
- Develop rapport with students while maintaining their sense of respect
- Develop respect among colleagues and users
- Develop teamwork, rapport and smooth personal relationships with fellow workers, faculty, administrators, staff and clientele
- Be accommodating, approachable, discreet, friendly, but professional
- Be flexible
- Be committed to the students
- Spend time with the student, but you must also provide helpful literature
- Suggest books and topics to be read
- Be a good resource person. Give titles of important books and movies that will challenge them
- Help students in their research paper
- Encourage students to read books on vacation

- Put posters in the library that will encourage the student
- Develop good relationships through prayer and by being a friend to them
- Maintain personal dialogue with the students
- Be a good listener and communicator
- Be available to counsel students
- Refer prospective counselees to counselling professionals
- Maintain confidentiality in counselling
- Do not be judgmental as a counsellor, but offer alternatives instead
- Set an appointment outside your schedule for counselling
- Be sensitive to the students' needs
- Pay attention to the need. You may not find a quick solution, but at least, take time to talk, listen and pray
- Treat needs of the clientele on a case-to-case basis
- Set schedules for the non-library needs of the clientele
- If the student is financially not able, interview and try to understand the student's situation. Sacrifice a little amount of money to help pay the student's tuition. Help the student find available scholarship.
- Invite to the home, share a meal in the park
- Be objective in analysing things, not subjective

- Contributed by Elizabeth T. Pulanco, Head Librarian of Philippine Baptist Theological Seminary -

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OUR APOLOGIES

Did you miss us? (*or,* What happened to ForATL News 2:2?)

Due to various reasons and circumstances, we were unable to publish ForATL News volume 2:2 (December 2004). We resume publication with this double issue, volume 3:1&2 (June/Dec 2005). Please accept our sincere apologies for the gap in your collection. Contributions for future issues of ForATL News are most welcome … and *necessary* to ensure no further gaps in your collection! Kindly send your articles to : Christabel Wong, Seminari Theoloji Malaysia, P.O. Box 175, 70720 Seremban, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia; Fax: 606-6329766; Email: christabel@stm.edu.my.

Introducing …
The Centre for the Study of Christianity in Asia (CSCA)
Trinity Theological College, Singapore

The Centre for the Study of Christianity in Asia (CSCA) is the mission arm of Trinity Theological College, Singapore, and is currently headed by Dr. Michael Poon. The Centre was launched in 2001 to be a regional research centre on mission : to articulate the theologies and mission concerns in East Asia, to be a place where researchers can conduct such studies, and to establish channels for findings to be shared with the wider world. The Centre has three major research concentrations :

1. Church History and Documentation
2. Asian Hermeneutics
3. Socio-Economic Policies and their Impact on Mission

The journal *Church and Society in Asia Today*, is published three times a year by the Centre, to serve as resource aids and study guides for churches to engage with public issues in the region. From 2006, CSCA also intends to publish at least one substantial volume on any of the three main research concentrations.

Besides print publications, the Centre has developed an on-line Mission Research Gateway. Source documents, bibliography databases, research articles and study guides are posted to enable access to the latest findings in mission studies in the region. This Gateway was developed by Dr. Michael Poon in collaboration with the Documentation, Archives, Bibliography and Oral History Study Group of the International Association of Mission Studies, and with assistance from Asia Research Institute of the National University of Singapore.

CSCA is also involved in an *Singapore-Malaysia Church History Resource Centre Initiative* to promote preservation of church records by identifying and collecting archives and printed material on Singapore and Malaysia. More information on CSCA can be found on their website http://www.ttc.edu.sg/csca/csca.htm.

(Edited excerpts from Dr. Michael Poon's introduction to CSCA on http://www.ttc.edu.sg/csca/csca.pdf)

CONGRATULATIONS!

Ms. Nurdiana Sari Wijaya
(ForATL Country Representative for Indonesia)
&
Dr. Göran Nils Gudmund Wiking
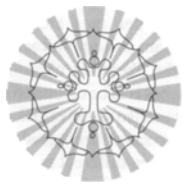(Faculty member of Lutheran Theological Seminary, Hong Kong)

← Married in Hong Kong, January 2005

… and proud parents to baby boy, Sven Surya Noel Wiking (3.79 kg), born in Union Hospital, Hong Kong, on 28 December 2005 →

More photos of Sven at http://home.netvigator.com/~goranwiking/index.htm

As Nurdiana herself admits, 2005 has certainly been a very "productive" year for her!