



# BULLETIN

*of the*

*Association of British Theological  
and Philosophical Libraries*

Volume 2 No. 1  
March 1988

## BULLETIN 1988

*Subscriptions*            Libraries and personal members £8.00 (\$15.00)  
per annum. Retired personal members £2.00 payable  
to the Honorary Treasurer (address below)

*Back numbers* (if available)    £1.00 each

*Advertising*                Rates on application to the Honorary Secretary  
(address below)

## COMMITTEE 1988

*Chairman*                    Mr John Creasey, Dr Williams's Library,  
14 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0AG

*Hon. Secretary*            Mr Alan F. Jesson, Bible Society's Library,  
University Library, West Road, Cambridge CB3 9DR

*Hon. Treasurer*            Mr Michael J. Walsh, Heythrop College Library,  
11-13 Cavendish Square, London, W1M 0AN

*Editor*                        Mr Patrick J. Lambe, New College Library,  
Oxford OX1 3BN

*Elected members*        Rev G.P. Cornish, British Library, Boston Spa,  
Wetherby, West Yorkshire  
Mr R.J. Duckett, Reference Services, Bradford  
Libraries and Information Service  
Mrs M. Ecclestone, Partnership House Library, London  
Mr L. Gage, Gage Postal Books, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex  
Miss R. Gibson, St John's College Library, Nottingham  
Mr P. Larkin, University of Warwick Library, Coventry  
Mrs J. Powles, Spurgeon's College Library, London

Editorial — A safe job? 2

Developing a Theological Library in Malaysia by John Roxborough 4

Book Reviews: Librarianship and Publishing in S.E.Asia by

P.J. Lambe 11

*Malaysia (World Bibliographical Series)*

*Issues in Southeast Asian Librarianship*

*The new information professionals*

*Academic publishing in ASEAN: problems and prospects*

News and Notes 18

\*\*\*\*\*

Our Contributors

---

P.J. Lambe is Assistant Librarian at New College, Oxford.

John Roxborough is Lecturer in Church History and Librarian at Seminari Theoloji Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur.

"Who said librarianship was a safe job?" was a question in a letter recently received from Malaysia, referring to the detention on October 27 of Ms Lim Chin Chin, Librarian of the Research, Resources and Communication Unit of the Council of Churches of Malaysia, under that country's Internal Security Act. Ms Lim is a 31 year old Roman Catholic who had been involved with social welfare and women's rights work. She was also active in Aliran, a non-racial reformist pressure group formed in Malaysia in 1977, composed mainly of intellectuals and professionals of all races and religions. It was such people who were warned publicly in a mid-August speech of the Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir, that the government would not tolerate criticism from intellectuals. The implications, as it turned out, were ominous.

It has been a depressing few months for theological librarians. The October detentions in Malaysia were not specifically directed at Christian groups, but swept the board clean of 106 prominent opponents of a struggling nationalist government. The reason given for the arrests was to reduce ethnic — predominantly Chinese-Malay — tensions within the country, although observers note that the Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir, took the opportunity to rid himself of all of his outspoken opponents, Aliran being a predictable victim. Church groups with social or communal action interests were particular targets because race and religion are especially sensitive issues in Malaysian politics, and Christians are a significant non-Malay minority in an increasingly intolerant Islamic state.

In November we heard of a police raid on the church library of Zionskirche, Prenzlauer Berg, East Berlin, a resource and unofficial publications centre for independent groups loosely affiliated with the church. According to Keston News Service, those detained were since released, but the event signals a crackdown on freedom of publishing and circulation of literature which is unwelcome to the State.

Finally, in the wake of the Singapore government's extraordinary vendetta against the foreign press (developing directly out of the detentions of 22 so-called Marxist activists including 10 Roman Catholic lay workers in May and June of last year, all but one of whom have since been released), on December 30, the Special Branch raided the offices of the Christian Conference of Asia. The assets of the CCA were frozen, the organisation 'dissolved', and its five expatriate staff (from India, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Japan and South Korea) were given two weeks to leave the country. The reasons given were that the CCA had been involved in political activities, including making a grant towards the dependents of Vincent Cheng, the only May detainee still in custody. The CCA's publishing programme sponsored by the WCC is one of

the most significant in S.E. Asia, being regional in scope, and it also administers the WCC consolidated subscription scheme which subsidises the supply of books and journals to regional libraries. It has been under particular suspicion from the government because of its publication of material influenced by liberation theologies, and for that very reason its current list will not be found; for example, in *Singapore Books in Print*. The library of the CCA was the best local source for WCC and related publications.

The motives behind each of these governmental actions are all quite distinct. The internal politics of Malaysia, Singapore and East Germany, to which these incidents are closely related, are very different. But there are common elements in the nature of the bodies affected. Each was seen to be a threat because it engaged in activities promoting information and self-expression among the unprivileged. The groups in East Berlin were involved in social and ecological concerns. The Council of Churches of Malaysia was closely involved with workshops and seminars on social concerns and interfaith issues — in Malaysia, it is easy for interfaith issues to be identified with offensive attempts at proselytisation. Whatever is said about the involvement of CCA with the promotion of liberation theologies, it is clear that the weight of the government's action was greatly induced by the grant to Vincent Cheng's family. The Prime Minister has taken the issue of the Singaporean detainees almost as a personal crusade. But publishing and dissemination of information was seen as the activity to be crushed.

Who said librarianship was a safe job? We who hide meekly in our sometimes decaying bookstacks find it hard to imagine any greater persecution than the finance committee's refusal to increase the budget (if we have one). What role do we play in our churches and in our society that we should be so insignificant? What should we do when our colleagues, who are fulfilling their Christian vision to the best of their professional abilities, find themselves attacked, restricted and detained without trial? It is easy to make intemperate protests about human rights and authoritarian regimes, but we have to think of the consequences for those still vulnerable. Singapore and Malaysia are, sometimes with justification, very sensitive — at times paranoid — about overseas press reporting of affairs they judge to be their own business and no-one else's. Church groups in Singapore and Malaysia have specifically asked for low key and restrained responses from agencies overseas — because they have to take the consequences of any further escalation.

Should we then remain silent? In Chinua Achebe's most recent novel, *Anthills of the Savannah*, there is a story about a leopard who met a tortoise in the road, and told him that he was about to kill him. The tortoise asked for a few moments to prepare himself before he died, and seeing no harm in that, the leopard agreed. But to his amazement, the tortoise began to scratch in the sand with his feet, throwing it in all directions. "Why are you doing that?"

asked the puzzled leopard. The tortoise replied: "Because even after I am dead I would want anyone passing this spot to say, yes, a fellow and his match struggled here."

It may not be that we want to simulate the marks of a great struggle here, but we should not allow our professional colleagues to be swallowed up unnoticed. The Malaysian Internal Security Act, under which Ms Lim, the CCM Librarian, is detained, allows persons to be held indefinitely without being charged, in two year renewable stretches. The ABTAPL Easter meeting will consider a proposal to send a letter to the Malaysian Prime Minister respectfully asking for Ms Lim Chin Chin to be given access to the due process of law, or to be released from detention. Members may write separately to: The Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohammed, Prime Minister's Department, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, or to the Malaysian High Commission in London.

P.J.L.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **DEVELOPING A THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY IN MALAYSIA by John Roxborough**

---

Seminari Theoloji Malaysia (STM) is an ecumenical theological training centre serving particularly the Anglican, Methodist and Evangelical Lutheran Churches. It was established in 1979 and moved to its present site in Sentul, Kuala Lumpur, in 1983.

The Library now approaches 20,000 volumes, about 20% of which are Chinese. As a resource centre for the Seminary and for others outside the Seminary community the Library faces special constraints owing to its location and the diversity of the needs it seeks to meet.

The Seminary was established when the need for separate centres for theological education within Malaysia itself was recognised. Historically Trinity College Singapore had been developed to serve the 'main-line' churches of the region, and Trinity still remains a focus of advanced theological training for Malaysia as for other countries. A similar role for more independent churches is served by Singapore Bible College. However the cultural and religious mix of society and the character and special needs of Malaysia require a properly established theological training and resource centre within the country itself. There are also a number of other seminaries which have been developed by other groups in both East and West Malaysia.

Although of modest size the STM Library has sought to develop along clearly defined lines with an emphasis on quality and relevance in its purchasing, and a generous standard of service to those who use our resources despite a consciously modest level of staffing. Beyond a microfiche reader and a computer for word-processing we have not felt the need to go particularly 'high-tech' although the provision of video play-back facilities within the Library itself would be a useful development.

Librarianship involves a peculiar combination of mundane repetition, endless attention to detail and occasionally rewarding intellectual and personal stimulation. If at times it feels that it might be much easier to run the place without students or visitors that is one of the occupational temptations of any service institution. STM Library seems to provide these joys and hazards in full measure. Like others we are discovering that it is one thing to obtain training in the technical aspects of library management, another to develop efficient administrative procedures and transfer to others the skills of sensitive and economical purchasing.

## **AREAS OF EMPHASIS**

As a specialist Library there are a number of areas which are regarded as particularly important. Although many of these are unexceptional they indicate a focus on our geographical, cultural and denominational situation and a concern for the mission of the church and the training of those of a wide range of academic ability:

- \* Biblical studies
- \* Church history
- \* Theology, including Asian theology
- \* Denominational theology, history and liturgy (Anglican, Methodist, Lutheran)
- \* Ecumenical studies, world-wide and Asian
- \* Mission studies, world-wide and Asian
- \* Asian history, religions and cultures
- \* Malaysian history, religions and cultures
- \* General information, including seminary and university catalogues
- \* Archival resources relating to Malaysian church history

The closer one gets to Malaysia geographically, the broader our interest in wider social and economic life. The aim is to have core material that is common to Christians in general together with material that is particularly relevant because of the denominational composition of the Seminary and our location in South-East Asia.

These criteria also apply to the Chinese section of the Library although the emphasis there is towards more Chinese authorship and fewer translations from English material. We have a small Tamil section and seek to purchase whatever relevant material is available in the National Language, Bahasa Malaysia. Some purchases are made of Indonesian publications. These are useful although the national languages of Malaysia and Indonesia are increasingly distinct and the theological vocabulary used in Indonesian Christian publications is influenced by Dutch and German which is not always appropriate here, since Malaysia is at an earlier stage in the development of a Christian terminology in the national language. Although the media of instruction in the Seminary are Chinese and English and will in due course include Bahasa Malaysia, the major part of the collection will remain English. Following local library practice, books in Bahasa Malaysia and Bahasa Indonesia are integrated with the English section of the Library, while Chinese and Tamil are catalogued and shelved separately.

The Library also serves the wider Christian community as a resource centre for information about Christianity in general and Malaysia in particular. We have a small audio-visual collection and an expanding microfiche collection of research material. The microfiche collections which are available have enabled us to provide access to invaluable primary archival material, some of which (eg. Council of Churches records) appear to be no longer locatable locally but which are sometimes to be found in overseas depositories. These collections are of immense significance for the writing of Malaysian Church History.

#### ACADEMIC LEVEL

We have a range of users all of whom must be catered for to some extent at least. Hence we aim to have some material at a very basic level, a good deal in the level of the average student and also whatever is necessary for the research requirements of lecturers, senior and post-graduate students and visiting scholars.

It is not quite superfluous to say that there should be a good proportion of books that people find here which they cannot find any where else. If we only provide what can be found in any bookshop we are not doing our job. There are some differences of opinion about how much popular and devotional material we ought to carry. Some of our books, if not too many, should be rare, and having a few antiquarian titles is important in a country where a sense of history for the Christian community does not extend as far back in time as it might in a European context, where evidence of the ancient presence of Christian faith is more or less all around. Some occasional purchases are more expensive still - but these days even very ordinary texts are pricey and beyond the reach of most of our students. (Malaysia does not have access to



the cheap republication arrangements found in India and the Philippines. Some European publishers in particular have pricing policies which border on the irresponsible). It is very basic that we provide access to titles which individuals could/would never buy for themselves, but which they will find relevant. We want to provide resources that are useful, stimulating, and will be mind and soul stretching. Given that local Christian bookshops have limited stocks, especially of academic texts, it is the more important that we seek to provide this sort of service.

## QUALITY AND THEOLOGY

A primary concern is quality. We would like at least to aspire to the situation whereby the majority of books in the Library could be noted for their high standard of writing and research. Part of the reason for our failure to achieve this aim is our own fault — we do not know the books well enough before we purchase. For recent publications, we tend to shop too much from catalogues and sometimes discover when books arrive that they are unexceptional in content or laced with trendy idiomatic English if not — equally obscure to the uninitiated and sometimes even to the initiated — liberally peppered with unnecessary technical terms. It is also intimidating to third world students (and I suspect many others) to pick up books which assume a familiar knowledge of a European/American theological cast of thousands. Used to thinking that any difficulty in understanding is due to English being their second language it is reassuring for local staff as well as students to discover that Western-educated lecturers often cannot make sense of some of this material either. There is an acceptable and expected level of technical terminology and complexity, but this should not excuse woolly thinking and lazy editing. It is a matter of concern how much of this still gets published and how much of it we unwittingly purchase.

Nevertheless the Library does wish to major on serious books. We have not got the time, the shelf-space or the money to indulge overmuch in the merely popular. Given what might be called 'the range of opinion that is fairly allowable in our churches', our concern is that particular theological positions are included by their best and more representative writers rather than by those who are extreme or second-rate. For instance, there is good "Charismatic" material and there is rubbish — we want the good. The same can be said for liberation theology, Anglo-Catholic spirituality, Christian feminism and indeed any other area of interest. What is difficult for us is when there is an obvious world market for material on a certain theme and authors and publishers old and new start producing books to order. Obviously we must have some — any issue of concern to the churches at large must be represented in our collection — yet it is hard to know what will stand the test of time. I rather fear that

quite a bit of culling will be necessary at some point in the future.

A point that affects not so much the quality as the useful scope of new publications is that despite Western interest in South Africa and South America and in a limited number of Asian theologians, the bulk of European and American writing still seems to assume that the rest of the world does not exist or is at best unimportant. Orbis publications and the TEF/SPCK Study Guides series seem almost alone in taking the rest of the world seriously. The TEF church history guides, although basic, are the only ones known to me other than material published in India or Pakistan which take note of the churches east of Jerusalem, if not Rome or Geneva.

Despite these limitations, good books do abound and we try to select them quite apart from personal inclination towards one Christian tradition or another. It is vital for our Faculty and students and for the churches that they discover the better material of a range of theological traditions and that they learn to discriminate the good from the second and the third rate. The fact that we are an ecumenical institution exposes people to traditions other than their own up to a point, but since many theological distinctives and styles cross denominational boundaries, the potential learning does not accrue without effort, and the development of discernment is not automatic.

Part of the problem is of course a matter of education level. There is a tendency for students working in a second language and who have not read widely to have an undue reverence for the authority of anything that appears in print and to find difficulty coping with questions of interpretation and judgement. We don't apologise too much for having books in the Library which contain information that is plain wrong or misleading, providing there are other features which justify their retention. Students have to learn to detect this and cope for themselves.

A moderate amount of our purchasing is of secondhand material. Although some of this is gifted through donor agencies, the main problem is not so much the funding — though that is of course an issue — it is, as with new publications, the selection of the material. A new theological library does not have a history of accessions stretching back over the period for which it must provide resources. Theology and related disciplines are not areas where the latest is always the best: they are subjects where material from different historical contexts must be preserved in order to be able to trace the history and development of the faith — not just its current expression.

Secondhand purchasing requires a knowledge of books and authors and of the interests of the users of the Library; it also requires some familiarity with sources and prices. However it is hard to compete with European and American purchasers as catalogues usually reach us later than elsewhere and so far we have not been inclined to telephone orders. It is clear that a number of Asian theological libraries have difficulty feeling confident about purchases

in this area, although there is no doubt that careful selection of secondhand material is a major element in raising the quality of library holdings relative to their size. The recent gift to us of the personal library of Charles Forman, retiring professor of missions at Yale, has been very significant for us in this respect. It is interesting to note that the Assemblies of God seminaries in the region are benefitting from having a trained librarian with experience in the secondhand book trade doing the purchasing for all their South-East Asian seminaries together from his base at the AOG graduate seminary (F.E.A.S.T.) in Baguio, the Philippines.

## ADMINISTRATION AND FUNDING

Where possible our purchasing is done directly with publishers, although the openings for this are limited. We look to a wide range of suppliers in Britain, America and different parts of Asia as very significant savings are possible by comparing American and British editions and by avoiding local retail purchases unless a book is urgently required and happens to be available in the country.

The funding for purchases of books, equipment and stationery is limited to donations for that purpose, and this is a separate item in the Seminary budget and in its fund-raising publicity. This is not as bad a constraint as it may appear, as libraries are favoured by many donors — local and overseas — as providing a tangible result from their giving, and as being a destination less open to abuse than some others appear. This has meant that the Library has been able to maintain a fairly consistent level of purchasing during a period when other aspects of the Seminary have faced more stringent financial constraints. It is important that we earn and continue to develop the confidence of our supporters and prove ourselves worthy of their interest and generosity.

Dewey 19 is used for classification, and we were fortunate to have had an experienced librarian completely check and revise the catalogue when the collection was a quarter of its present size. It has been much easier to maintain a good standard given the rigorous standard applied at that stage. We have some difficulty knowing what to do with pamphlet material which is nevertheless important, and with the endless ecumenical material which seems to make fewer concessions than most to the needs of librarians and library users when it comes to choice of titles and clarity about authors. "Cataloguing In Publication" is a help, but not at all infallible, and proof-readers don't seem to extend their purview to the fine print of the fly pages. Subject headings also don't seem to bear a lot of relationship to common sense or to how library users actually think, and I am not entirely convinced that the customer is the one who ought to change as far as this is concerned.

Our staffing is at present one full-time librarian who is yet to undertake more than limited formal training, and a faculty member in charge who has special responsibility for purchasing. There is no library committee to vet book orders or anything else, but faculty suggestions are encouraged and usually taken seriously. Providing lecturers are reasonable in their demands it will be possible to continue on this basis. We manage to cope with the present level of staffing by having extended loan periods (to the end of each semester) and a self-service operation for checking books in and out. Students are rostered to do shelving with variable results. We experience some losses, especially as the Library is open after hours without a staff person present at all times. The point will no doubt be reached when it will be necessary to have more staff and longer invigilated hours but the costs and benefits will have to be carefully considered.

We seek to co-operate with other libraries, especially theological libraries in this country, and a fairly informal system of inter-library loans operates. It has not been possible to become part of international loan or data-bank networks, although help in obtaining journal articles where we don't hold the issue is something where other libraries overseas might be of assistance to us. At the moment we tend to be more the source of local inter-library loans than the recipient, and students from other colleges are among our external users.

As a library in a country where the official religion is Islam we have to respect the sensitivities of the situation in which we find ourselves. Just as there is not unlimited freedom with regard to the publication and distribution of Christian literature, so also it is important that we provide resources which enable our users to understand the environment in which we bear witness, and that do so in a spirit of objectivity and fairness towards the viewpoints of others. Historically libraries have not been immune from the tragedies of history, and one day ours may be no exception, but we must build in faith and hope while the opportunities continue to exist.

*The Revd Dr. John Roxborough,  
Seminari Theoloji Malaysia,  
Jalan Lima, Off Jalan Sentul,  
Pejabat Pos Sentul,  
51000 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.*

\*\*\*\*\*

*Malaysia*. Compiled by Ian Brown and Rajeswary Ampalavanar. (World Bibliographical Series: Volume 12). (Oxford: Clio Press, 1986). xxxv, 311pp., maps, index. ISBN 0-903450-23-2. £39.95

This is an attractive, if expensive series, previous volumes of which have been reviewed in this *Bulletin* before. This volume has a particularly fine introduction, with a clear and balanced account of a peculiarly complicated racial and political history which is still a significant problem for the country today. The fact that this bibliography was compiled in Britain shows however in the organisation and range of materials listed: 60-70% of the items listed are published by British or American publishers or their Asian offices. As we shall see when we look at the items for religions and librarianship, this means that some important but easily missed local material is missed. To some extent the official West Malaysia view of the political demography of the country as being largely a Malay/Chinese balance is followed too uncritically: sections on indigenous *bumiputra* peoples are found, rather patronisingly, largely under anthropological subjects, and not much under politics or directly under population and demography. Works on Indian peoples are also difficult to track down via the classification system, and only the presence of a good index helps.

Clearly, the shape of the published literature itself and the necessity to be rigorously selective will influence such choices, but it would have helped if the selection policy and the reasons for arranging materials in their present positions had been clearly set out. In particular, an introduction which gave background information on the major subject divisions (current religious or economic situation, for example) would have increased the usefulness of the materials listed as well as explaining something of the rationale for their inclusion.

The section on religions is not entirely satisfactory. The single work listed under General Religion (Putra *et al.*, *Contemporary Issues on Malaysian Religions*, 1984) is good of its kind, as a collection of essays surveying the religious scene, but it reflects more tolerant attitudes between religions which, in recent resurgences of Islamic nationalism, no longer hold such force. The section on Islam is the best, bringing out very well the relationship between Islam and politics in Malaysia. Buddhism and Hinduism receive a poor showing, while Christianity is scarcely covered by four entries describing works on missionary and denominational histories — there is nothing listed

which would be useful for an in-depth insight into contemporary Malaysian Christianity. In particular, the political implications for Christianity of a government which is increasingly influenced by militant Islamic Malay elements, and the issue of race and Christianity, significant though they be, are neglected.

In a sense, the problem of this kind of bibliography is that it is often overtaken by events. The sections on Librarianship and Media might well have included some of the publications reviewed below had the compilers been issuing the work in 1988; similarly, the very important *Trends in Christian-Muslim Relations in Malaysia* which scans local and national press for items revealing official and social attitudes to religions and began publication in 1986, is a must for any subsequent edition. The problem for British bibliographers of Malaysian Christianity is that the significant literature is often ephemeral, and, to the extent that it comments on politics, is always subject to the risk of censorship or gazetting. Recent literature which might serve as a supplement to this section of the bibliography will be listed in a future issue of this Bulletin. Other omissions which are less excusable are *The Straits Times*, a newspaper published in Singapore which has good coverage of regional affairs, and *The Asia Journal of Theology*, also from Singapore and regional in scope, but the only major international outlet for current Malaysian theology.

Despite these critical comments, I found this a well-designed, pleasant and informative bibliography to use. The maps are not particularly good, and the cross referencing is not as good as it could be (no.7 should have been cross referenced from Travel, and there should have been a reference from 336 to 407), but the index makes up for other disadvantages, and there is a helpful glossary.

*Issues in Southeast Asian librarianship. A selection of papers and articles.* By Hedwig Anuar. (Aldershot: Gower, 1985). xv, 214pp., maps, tables, bibliogs., index. ISBN 0-566-03523-5. £19.50. *The new information professionals. Proceedings of the Singapore-Malaysia Congress of Librarian and Information Scientists: Singapore 4-6 September 1986.* Edited by Ajita Thuraisingham. (Aldershot: Gower, 1987). xx, 361pp., figs., tables. ISBN 0-566-05519-8. £35.00.

The two books are reviewed together here because they supply an informative backdrop to the current condition and prospects of the librarianship profession in South-East Asia. Hedwig Anuar's book is a collection of articles written between 1972 and 1983, but they have been brought up to date, including the statistical tables which support her arguments, but not, unfortunately, including the bibliographies, which in some cases now look a

little dated. The arrangement of the book is tripartite. The first section covers the idea of the national library, both from the idealist standpoint of Unesco utterances, and from the practical facts of history and circumstance. A particularly useful appendix to her first, background chapter, supplies synopses of the aims and functions of the national library services of Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and South Vietnam, although her bibliography on regional national libraries has not been updated past 1974. The section ends with a case study of the development of the National Library of Singapore, of which Anuar is now Director. It is an interesting case study, but in many ways atypical, given the small size of the Republic, its high level of development, and the way in which the national library is not differentiated in any way from the public library system.

The second section of the book looks at the planning and development of public library services in the region. In a sense this is the interesting core of the book, especially in the two chapters, 'The need to know' and 'The Southeast Asian public and the disappearing barefoot librarian'. Here the focus is less on planning and more on the ideas behind the planning: Anuar's piece on 'The need to know' and the whys and wherefores of how this need can be supplied is a splendid one applicable to any justification of public library services anywhere in the world. Even the remarks specifically directed at an underdeveloped context (non-duplication of resources, cooperation, clearer definition of the informational, educational, recreational roles of library services in relation to the needs of the people, willingness to collect non-print format materials) are, in this present economic climate, quite as applicable in Britain as in, say, Malaysia. The advantage for a country like Malaysia being, of course, that planning (if not the execution) from an almost bare slate was much easier than was the restructuring of an archaic Victorian edifice such as the British public library service. Anuar's essay on the 'barefoot librarian' is equally pungent, taking a hard look at the relationship between social strata, public libraries, and the spread of literacy. Public library services planned on a western model, she notes, develop from centralised urban bases where, in most developing nations, only the minority of the populations live. These are the relatively wealthy, educated, social elites. These library services are not at all in the forefront of the war against illiteracy: on the contrary, they preserve social divisions and remain quite inaccessible to the rural, illiterate majority. Anuar has positive things to say about the role of the library in motivating this majority to pursue its need to know: through involvement in communal activities, through special emphasis on the needs of children and young people, and so on. The final section of the book takes several issues related to readership development in greater detail.

The thematic wholeness even of such a collection of chronologically distinct essays is not matched by the conference proceedings edited by

Thuraisingham. As some conference proceedings tend to have, this volume has a bitty, patchwork feel. Sandwiched amongst welcoming speeches and innumerable appendices, the topics addressed are: the mutation of librarianship into an information profession, the impact of technology on the book trade and its implications for libraries, information professionals in the mass media, consultancy in information science and systems analysis, computer networks, information technology and access, human resources planning, and case studies from New Zealand, Singapore, Britain, Australia and Malaysia.

The book is also less representative of the Southeast Asian context than Anuar's book, being dominated by contributions from highly developed Singapore, expatriate or overseas experts, and Malaysia coming in an informative third. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the information revolution (particularly in the availability of cheap microcomputers) has provided the means for a quantum leap in the context of the developing country. Now almost anyone, for example, can compile and maintain a small database — as many small third world libraries, and church-related, or political groups, often do. (Publishing the contents of such a database is quite a different matter, of course). In this sense, it is understandable that this conference should have such a western feel: the developing nation is in some degree brought to an equal level with the developed nation because we all have to cope with an entirely new phenomenon and set of possibilities. These possibilities are the same wherever one is: and in this respect, this volume is a marvellous compendium of information for the librarian on the problems and possibilities available in the new technology, in the mass media, publishing and the booktrade, and so on. The articles on the Singapore book trade are particularly illuminating here, although they focus in some respects less on the new technology than on current problems in the library-bookseller-publisher triangle.

But there are two considerations which militate against accepting too easily the assumption that we all have the same problems when it comes to information technology. The first is found by looking over our shoulders, as it were, at the issues addressed in Anuar's book: libraries, it seems now, give way to information networks in the broadest sense — in broadcasting, in the book trade, computer networking, data transfer. What is not dealt with in this conference, and what makes the volume so ultimately unsatisfying, despite its array of hopeful developments, is the sense of disparity with what we (presumably) felt important in 1985 when Anuar's book was published. Where is the concern with literacy, with the learning process, with the participation of a people in their country's development through library provision? The stratospheric heights of information science (with appropriate boosts from overseas experts) as represented in this volume, and increasingly in jargon-filled library school courses in this country, do not feed the needs of the



illiterate or informationless. Nor do they help a librarian to set up a library with limited resources, training and subject knowledge — a situation common to theological libraries in this country as to any small library in a developing country. If information technology is so good, should we not be told how it will help us in this kind of context, as well as in the large-scale technologised operations of business, national databases, and information consultancy?

Having displayed my reviewer's bias, however, it is worth appending the following thought: it may well be that the abrupt transition from illiteracy and information poverty to technologised gaming occasioned by the information revolution is the shape of things to come. In this case, this volume is an indicator of issues which must be grasped whether they relate to Southeast Asia or not. But to those of us who are still grappling with burning issues of finance, education, and the provision of good books, our interest in these questions recedes into the background if they give no apparent balm to our wounds.

The second consideration which makes us doubt the applicability of the westernised feel of this conference to the Southeast Asian context is that the totalitarian seduction of information technology is, at least in western nations, balanced by a relatively long and stable tradition of humanistic, literature-based education. This is what we mean (mostly) when we, as librarians, talk about information provision. In the undeveloped context, it is no solution to "the need to know" to assemble databases and institute computer networks. Even the much-heralded text databases, encyclopaedias on compact disc, and so on, are far from widespread, nor do they (as yet) match the printed format for design, clarity and illustrative potential. These things will perpetuate the success of the literary elites in developing countries, but will not feed the needs of the majority. The danger is that the enthusiasm for Information Technology will pass by and entirely ignore the simpler needs that continue unabated and unsatisfied.

Perhaps it is a matter of emphasis. Perhaps this kind of conference is an introduction to the *O altitudo!* of information technology, and perhaps the participants will now settle down to sorting out implications on the local, and often impoverished level. One hopes so. In the end, it is a question of relevance and usefulness that prevails. On these criteria, Anuar's book will take precedence in my judgement, and the Malaysia-Singapore conference has yet to prove itself. The point was well made at the conference itself by Lim Huck Tee, Librarian of the Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang: "The developing world must constantly be aware of its dependence on the developed world for information access. While information technology can facilitate information access, it can also be used to restrict access by the person or organisation who controls its use. In a sense, a new form of imperialism has descended on the developing countries. We will never be able to shake off the

shackles of this new information imperialism unless we constantly strive to improve our own human and intellectual resources." (p.233).

*Academic publishing in ASEAN. Problems and prospects. Proceedings of the Seminar on Academic Publishing in the ASEAN Region held in Singapore from 9-11 September 1985.* Edited by Dr. S. Gopinathan. (Singapore: Festival of Books Singapore, 1986). ii, 213pp., tables. ISBN 9971-84-561-x. Sing.\$45.00.

Theological libraries in Southeast Asia import most of their theological books from Britain and the United States — many of them tied to the cultural contexts in which they were written and wholly inappropriate to the training of a local ministry. Development of a local publishing industry is therefore imperative if theological education is to be rooted in local soil. This excellently edited volume of conference proceedings places into sharp focus the principal concerns of regional academic publishing — with which a certain spectrum of theological publishing has broad affinities.

By far the most interesting part of the book is the first section, reporting on academic publishing from the participating countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. The contexts differ widely, from the Philippines, which has a history of scholarly publishing from the beginning of the 17th century, to Singapore, whose 19th century inauguration was a Mission Press set up in 1822, to the relatively new university presses being developed within an integrated governmental plan in Indonesia, to the domination of academic publishing by private commercial publishers in Thailand.

However, despite these differences, certain common problems leap to the fore. The first is the pressure on such presses to produce grist to the mill text books at first degree level; much harder to promote and sustain is the publication of good, original research in monograph form. Certainly in the area of theology, it is noticeable that almost all published scholarship is in the form of journal articles — but as Edwin Thumboo stated in his keynote address, "While articles in learned journals get new ideas and perceptions into circulation more rapidly, it is the monograph and the extended study that contribute the major reorientations and developments." (p.15).

Extremely important in sustaining such research at the level of world scholarship is the ability to market one's books overseas. This was a central concern of the Singapore Conference, with four major papers in the second section devoted to it. There are several handicaps to be overcome by ASEAN publishers: one of them is language. Not only do languages differ between nations, but there is often a plurality of languages within each country. This creates problems enough for the home market; but in order to make an impact on the world market, there is almost irresistible pressure to publish in English. For some nations which have pursued a policy of a non-English first language

— Malaysia is a good example — the language skills in the younger generations are simply not sufficient to support a home market in English or a reasonable pool of skilled translators.

Another major problem for marketing is inexperience and the 'closed door' policy of western publishers who are accustomed to seeing ASEAN countries as tame importers rather than aggressive exporters. In many ways, this conference addressed this question more effectively than any other, pointing up some avenues for future development. Here, Philip Altbach's practical proposals for improved access to the North American market are especially illuminating.

Two major problems which this conference did not address, although they surfaced periodically, were those of copyright (and piracy), and the lack of trained and skilled editors. It's quite clear that many of the problems faced by indigenous publishers in Southeast Asia are caused by piracy; many Australian and North American publishers will simply not consider co-publishing with Asian publishers for that very reason. And yet, the other side of this is that many of the most enterprising and successful academic presses in the region today are being run by former 'pirates', who began their publishing careers by mimeographing and copying improvised textbooks in what the Indonesian delegate, Sri-Edi Swasono called an "emergency situation". The outrage of western publishers is therefore treated here with deferential embarrassment, rather than enthusiastic witch-hunting, and this perhaps explains why the question is not treated at depth, even though the regional university presses themselves suffer badly from piracy.

A theme whose omission is less easy to understand is that of the shortage of editorial skills. The quality of output, translation, and editorial work, are difficult to sustain where training and experience are in short supply. There are schemes whereby staff can be seconded to major North American, Australian or British publishers for in-house training, and this might have been a profitable topic for examination.

The final section of the book is devoted to case studies from the region, a sober, authoritative essay on success in academic publishing from Tejeshwar Singh, Managing Director of Sage Publications, New Delhi, and two papers on electronic publishing — one, from Britain, enthusiastic, the other, from the Philippines, more critical. Here, in fact, was the closing thought which moderated all the enthusiasm about marketing and technology: "This is the heart of publishing: the creative decision of what the list shall be. It is the sustained quality of the list — not the presence of running heads or lavish expense on advertising — that brings international prestige and, coincidentally, international sales. We have been beguiled once again, I fear, by the word processor and the computer and, of course, the market and the dollar." (p.209). Without forgetting that these are important things, the point stands firm.

## NEWS AND NOTES

---

### **Burford Priory**

The Priory of Our Lady, Burford, the home of an Anglican Benedictine community of nuns since 1941, has established a trial community of men alongside the sisters. They are now in the process of reorganising and developing the Priory Library with very meagre resources. Any donations or books relating to Anglicanism, monastic spirituality, scripture and doctrine, may be offered to: The Revd Michael Atwell, Priory of Our Lady, Burford, Oxon.

### **Conferences I**

The University of Warwick Centre for Research in Philosophy and Literature is holding a conference on 'The Bible as Rhetoric' March 21st-23rd 1988, with a distinguished list of speakers. It's too late to book, but further information may be obtained from the University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL.

### **Conferences II**

The Librarians' Christian Fellowship will hold its annual conference on Saturday 23 April 1988 at the YWCA Central Club, Great Russell Street, London.

### **Exhibition**

The fourth national Christian Resources Exhibition will be held at the Sandown Exhibition Centre, Esher, Surrey 18-21 May 1988. Contact Christian Resources Exhibitions Ltd., P.O. Box 242, Speen, Aylesbury, Bucks., HP17 0SX.

### **Journal Articles I**

'The shroud of Turin: a bibliography, 1978-1984' by Celia Wall, *Bulletin of Bibliography* Vol. 44 no.3 Sept. 1987 pp.147-155. There are four sections, covering: (i) pamphlets, books and book reviews; (ii) Newspaper and periodical articles; (iii) audio-visual materials; (iv) miscellaneous.

### **Journal Articles II**

'More parish library, Salop' by Conal Condren, *Library History* Vol. 7 no.5 1987 pp.141-162. The library was established in 1680, and was intended for use by both laity and clergy. It contains books for a general rounded education as well as theology, and presupposes a high degree of literacy in the century before Bray's systematic parish library scheme. Appendices contain a catalogue

of the surviving 238 (out of 350) titles, an index of owners, donors and readers, and an analysis of dates and places of publication of the books.

### **Journal Articles III**

'The role of the library in the life of an African Church' by Sushma Gupta, *Librarians' Christian Fellowship Newsletter No. 37* Winter 1987 pp.38-40. Writing from a Nigerian context, Mrs. Gupta argues that libraries should cater for the (non-literary) needs of African society, not western library models.

### **Journal Articles IV**

'Visit to the Bibliotheca Bollandiana' by D.M. Lang, *India Office Library and Records Oriental Collections Newsletter No. 39* September 1987 p. 18. This is not, as might be expected, a description of the library of the Bollandist Fathers in Brussels, but a short account of their history and activities.

### **Lambeth Palace Library**

The microform publishers Chadwyck-Healey are proposing to publish the newly completed card catalogue of the Lambeth Palace Library on microfiche late in 1988, if they receive sufficient expression of interest. Pre-publication price is £1,000 until April 30th (post-publication £1,500). Further details from Alastair Everitt, Chadwyck-Healey Ltd., Cambridge Place, Cambridge CB2 1NR.

### **Librarians Wanted I**

Murree Christian School, Pakistan, requires a librarian from August 1988. Students are 6-18 years old, many the children of missionaries, and the school works with both British and American curriculum. Contact the Principal, Stewart W. Georgia, Murree Christian School, P.O. Box Jhika Gali, Murree Hills, Pakistan.

### **Librarians Wanted II**

The International Fellowship of Evangelical Students in Harrow would like a local librarian to offer advice on the development of their small library. Contact Graham Hedges, 34 Thurlestone Avenue, Seven Kings, Ilford, Essex, IG3 9DU.

### **Oxford University Library Automation Project**

Further to a pilot automation project in several faculty libraries the University of Oxford has now purchased the DOBIS/LIBIS computer system. The Bodleian began online cataloguing at the end of February, and faculty and departmental libraries will be brought into the system over succeeding months.

College libraries will have the option to buy into the system.

**St. Augustine's College Library Canterbury**

Is expected to be transferred to the Dr. Pusey Memorial Library, Oxford, in the autumn of 1989. At the same time the Theology Faculty Library in Oxford, presently housed with the Pusey collection, will move to a new site in a Theology Faculty Centre which is currently in preparation.

**VAT on Books**

The European Commission is reported to want all European Community countries to put VAT on books and other publications. Several book-related organizations are conducting a campaign against this — there is good evidence from countries that have taxed books that VAT has a disastrous effect on the book industry and drives costs beyond acceptable levels. Both Ireland and Italy have recently placed books on a zero level of taxation for that very reason. You can write to your MP and your MEP, and you can sign petitions — in bookshops, public libraries, or by writing to: European Committee Against Taxing Books, c/o 19 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3HJ.

\*\*\*\*\*

# **HYPATIA**

***A Journal of Feminist Philosophy***

Edited by Margaret A. Simons

**"The scholarly papers in *Hypatia* will undoubtedly be core references in debates on feminism, and will have application in many social science disciplines as well." *Choice***

- ***Hypatia* provides authors and readers with a context for understanding feminist philosophy unavailable in other women's studies or mainstream philosophy journals**
- **Keeps readers apprised of the latest research in feminist philosophy**
- **Includes reference sections for all articles**

**Now published by Indiana University Press**

Subscriptions are \$20 per volume (3 issues) to individuals, \$40 for institutions. Foreign subscribers add \$5 for surface post or \$10 for air mail. Further information, including bulk order discounts, is available from:

Journals Division  
Indiana University Press  
10th & Morton Streets  
Bloomington, Indiana 47405

A GUIDE TO THE THEOLOGICAL LIBRARIES  
OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

oOo

Now available from ABTAPL - the Association of British Theological and Philosophical Libraries - this Guide has been hailed as an important research tool in a hitherto largely unexplored field. It is the first guide of its type, covering the whole spectrum of libraries, university, public, national and special, which have collections of major theological significance.

The guide contains nearly 400 entries arranged in alphabetical order of post town. Where the library has responded to the questionnaire sent out by ABTAPL, the entry includes full postal address, telephone number, name of librarian or officer in charge, history, organisation and function, details of any special collections, size of stock, classification system, catalogues, indexes and publications. For libraries which have not replied such information as is known from other sources is given.

A long introduction details likely sources for religious literature, including that of denominational concern, and surveys the present state of theological librarianship in this country.

This is a book which no reference section can be without!

The guide is available only from ABTAPL PUBLISHING by post to this address:

ABTAPL PUBLISHING  
PO Box 105  
WESTCLIFFE ON SEA  
Essex  
SS0 8EQ

The UK retail price is £10, post free  
Please include your remittance when ordering