

# BULLETIN

*of the*

*Association of British Theological*

*and Philosophical Libraries*



**Volume 8, Number 1**  
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## BULLETIN 2001

The *Bulletin* is published by the Association of British Theological and Philosophical Libraries as a forum for professional exchange and development in the fields of theological and philosophical librarianship. ABTAPL was founded in 1956 to bring together librarians working with or interested in theological and philosophical literature in Great Britain. It is a member of BETH (European Theological Libraries). The *Bulletin* is published three times a year (March, June and November) and now has a circulation of approximately 250 copies, with about one third of that number going to libraries in Europe, North America, and the Commonwealth. The *Bulletin* is indexed in LISA (Library & Information Science Abstracts). ISSN 0305-781X

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- Mailing List: [abtapl@jiscmail.ac.uk](mailto:abtapl@jiscmail.ac.uk)  
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***Bulletin of the Association of British Theological and  
Philosophical Libraries***

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The front cover shows a photograph of Her Majesty the Queen meeting Dr. Andrew Lacey during her visit to Trinity Hall Cambridge.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

### **GUIDE TO THEOLOGICAL & RELIGIOUS STUDIES COLLECTIONS OF GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND**

Compiled and edited by David A. Kerry & Evelyn Cornell  
ABTAPL Publishing, April 1999, ISBN 094894501X

£15/\$25 for ABTAPL members; £17.50/\$30 for non-members (inc. p+p)

Copies available from  
Dr. A. Lacey, Hon. Sec. ABTAPL, Trinity Hall, Trinity Lane, Cambridge CB2 1TJ

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### **ABTAPL UNION LIST OF PERIODICALS**

The Union List now includes the philosophy, theology and religious studies journal holdings of 41 different institutions in the UK and should prove a useful tool in tracing the locations of titles. Publisher details are given for some titles and it is hoped that the coverage of bibliographical details will increase with future editions.

£14.50 for non-contributors and £12 for contributors.

Copies of the edition for 2000 are available from  
Mrs Judith Powles, Librarian, Spurgeon's College, 189 South Norwood Hill, London  
SE25 6DJ

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Cheques for both publications should be made payable to **ABTAPL**

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### **AMENDMENT**

**WESLEY COLLEGE, BRISTOL**

The Librarian's email address is now [library@wesley-college-bristol.ac.uk](mailto:library@wesley-college-bristol.ac.uk)

## **NOTICE OF MEETING**

### **2001 Spring Residential Conference and Annual General Meeting**

will be held at

**University of Exeter**

from

**Thursday 5th April to Saturday 7th April**

The Theme is

**“Cataloguing the Specialist Collections in Today’s Theological Libraries  
- Theory and Practice”**

Please send items for inclusion in the agenda to the Honorary Secretary

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### **ROYAL VISIT TO CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY**

by Andrew Lacey

On 23rd November last year, Trinity Hall library was honoured by a visit of Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh. The royal couple arrived in Cambridge in the morning to open a new Divinity Faculty and then proceeded to Trinity Hall for lunch. After lunch the Queen moved on to the new Jerwood Library, whilst the Duke of Edinburgh visited the Old Library. They then met up in the former Undergraduate Library which has been refurbished as an attractive public room designed for meetings, dinners, etc.

In the Jerwood Library we had on display some of the treasures from the various special collections, including a fine illuminated 17th-century Persian manuscript from the Strangman Collection and a number of 16th- and 17th-century items relating to the

reign of Elizabeth I. These were from the collection of George Larman, an undergraduate at Trinity Hall in the 1920s who left his extensive library to the College in the 1960s. The collection contains primary and secondary material relating to Tudor and Stuart history, recusant history, genealogy and heraldry. Also on display were items from the "Trinity Hall Collection", books by or about past and present members of the College. The photograph on the front cover shows Andrew Lacey (on the right) explaining this to Her Majesty. In the background is Mr James Crowden, Lord Lieutenant for Cambridgeshire. The Queen then moved on to see more of the new Library and spoke with the architect. We had hoped to show her our famous views across the River Cam to the gardens of Clare College, but with the torrential rain which bucketed down throughout the visit and the fact that the river was swollen, brown and not at all attractive, Her Majesty did not see it at its best!

From the new Library the Queen walked back to rejoin the Duke of Edinburgh in the former Undergraduate Library where, after a brief address by Peter Clarke, the new Master at Trinity Hall, the Queen unveiled a plaque commemorating her visit. The displays of library and archive materials in this room continued the Elizabethan theme with a letter concerning the College signed by the first Elizabeth in 1570, as well as the charter she granted to Trinity Hall in 1559. Items from the Old Library included the Dymok manuscript of ca. 1380, written to refute the Lollards and presented to Richard II, an 11th-century life of St. Martin of Tours and the manuscript of John Cowell's controversial treatise on the law from the reign of James I. Cowell was Master of Trinity Hall and got into trouble with Parliament over this book in which he takes a very high view of the royal prerogative. He was only saved from impeachment by the intervention of the King.

Fortunately, no such controversies marred the visit of this monarch and it was a great honour to be presented to Her Majesty and the Duke of Edinburgh, giving us the opportunity to show her something of our new Library and what we are trying to achieve in it.

*Andrew Lacey  
Trinity Hall  
Cambridge*

## **THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES LIBRARY: AN INTERNATIONAL LIBRARY?**

by Pierre Beffa

In May 1946, two years before the official founding of the WCC, an ecumenical library was created, the first of its kind, by Dr Visser 't Hooft. However, he had some difficulties in defining an ecumenical library. It seems he wanted to give precedence to 'Kirchenkunde', that is, to the description of the doctrine, discipline and organization of the separate churches. Over the years, the characteristics of an ecumenical library would be clarified as the movement itself evolved, but from the beginning, it was an international library obliged to follow certain specifications.

- a) An international staff, coming from different parts of the world and mastering several languages.
- b) A mandate to build a collection coming from all over the world, in many languages, many more than the ones known by the library staff, but of course covering only the field of ecumenism. The World Council of Churches could provide some help.
- c) Awareness to serve a world constituency: the member churches, their clergy and laity and all genuinely interested persons.
- d) To adopt clearly recognized international procedures. For instance, the decimal classification was chosen in the beginning, later abandoned in favour of Dewey. It seems that Visser 't Hooft found the Decimal classification "too catholic". But daily contact with the work of Melvil Dewey has convinced me that he was not a theological genius!
- e) To be located in Geneva, an international city having more than 50 very important international libraries, with contacts between these institutions that are both necessary and profitable.

If in the beginning the WCC library was the only ecumenical library, the situation changed rapidly. In 1970, a consultation of libraries specializing in ecumenism, brought together 51 ecumenical libraries, mainly from Europe and North America, but also from Africa and Asia. These libraries were able to establish an exemplary collaboration which has subsequently been characterized by a spirit of service, exchange and giving.

As anyone knows, the problems of classification can become excruciating. My predecessor set out to solve this problem. He proposed a classification for the whole field of ecumenism. He published his work in the 1976 yearbook of the American Theological Library Association. I have revised this classification several times to take into account the frequent structural variations of the WCC which have mystified more than one librarian. It will soon be available on-line on the WCC web site. Many institutions adopted or took inspiration from this classification, which constitutes a simple but important link between them.

We were able to collaborate with other libraries on several projects. For instance the *International Ecumenical Bibliography*, between the years 1967 to 1992. We worked closely with the team producing *RIC*, between 1968 and 1992. Together with the Institute in Jerusalem, we produced a thesaurus in French and in English covering the ecumenical field in theology. We also benefited greatly from the work of sister libraries, especially from the library of the Centro Pro Unione in Rome which each year issues the international bibliography on bilateral and multilateral dialogues between the churches and the confessions.

In 1986, the time came for us to become computerized. In the first phase, we made an inquiry among the international libraries in Geneva and, like the World Health Organisation and the United Nations, we chose a system called URICA. It worked for more than 10 years to our total satisfaction. On this system, we did attempt to build a thesaurus of keywords in 6 or 7 languages. It was technically possible, and offered real possibilities, but unfortunately the task was too big for our small staff. It shows how important it could be to undertake such big projects in a milieu where international collaboration can be established. Subsequently, the computer firm maintaining URICA chose to change its management policies, and the URICA product was almost abandoned. In any case, with URICA no new developments were in sight, and internet technology was arriving. We had to change our system and this time we adopted the VTLS system which is used by the Swiss National Library and all university libraries of the French-speaking part of Switzerland. The WHO and UN also changed to a different system. The main reason for having VTLS is that, being so strong in the Geneva area, the VTLS company will perhaps be a more reliable partner in the future. An international library must be anchored locally all the same.

The people who come to work in our library are from all over the world. Normally, they stay for one or two weeks only, because the cost of living in Geneva is quite high but they bring their experience and knowledge and, when several such researchers are present at the same time in the library, the exchange can be very enriching.

During all the years of its existence, the WCC library has maintained very close contacts with many partners. The Director is secretary of BETH, member of ATLA, faithful participant of the Swiss group of theological librarians, member of the Swiss association of libraries and librarians, and member of the association of international librarians in Geneva. All these links are precious to us because, since our constituency is international, it helps enormously to know people in the various sister institutions by name.

Today, the WCC library has a presence on the internet. People everywhere have access to our catalogue on-line. Deliberately, we have taken the risk to invite researchers to borrow books or documents almost without restriction from our library. It was the only thing to do to convince our authorities to continue to support the library. For them, the library must serve the world constituency or disappear. But they underestimate the present difficulties with the mail systems, and do not see realistically enough the conditions of an impoverished world. It is possible that items are stolen on the way. In contrast, we will try to put on-line full text documents which are needed in institutions of theological training and which we are the only ones in a position to offer.

*Pierre Beffa*  
*Librarian,*  
*World Council of Churches/Conseil Oecumenique des Eglises*  
*BP 2100,*  
*CH-1211 Geneve 2,*  
*Switzerland*  
Website [www.wcc-coe.org](http://www.wcc-coe.org)

# **THE RSLP REVELATION PROJECT: UNLOCKING RESEARCH RESOURCES FOR 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY CHURCH HISTORY AND CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY**

by Marie-Pierre Détraz

Revelation is one of the three institutional projects led by the University of Birmingham under the aegis of the Research Support Libraries Programme (RSLP). It is a two-year project (August 2000 – July 2002), for which the University of Birmingham has been awarded a £469,460 grant, as a result of the second round of competitive bidding organised by RSLP during the first half of the year 2000.

Revelation will have two main outcomes:

- The creation of machine-readable bibliographic records for 145,950 monographs in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century church history and Christian theology, which will be produced by a consortium of ten academic libraries, including eight members of the Consortium of University Research Libraries (CURL).
- The development and implementation of a web-based guide mapping the most important print and archive collections in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century church history and Christian theology, held in more than 30 public, academic or specialised libraries across the United Kingdom.

The aim of this article is to give a brief account of the nature and activities of the project as well as some background information on RSLP, the UK-wide initiative that has made the project possible in the first place.

## **The Research Support Libraries Programme**

Since the inception of automation in the 1960s academic libraries have developed electronic catalogues for their latest acquisitions and occasionally converted some sections of their old manual catalogues to electronic format, when their finances allowed. Yet a lack of adequate recurrent funding has made it impossible for these institutions to implement systematic and comprehensive retrospective conversion programmes, with the result that large parts of their collections, for which there exist only manual records, have remained partially or totally hidden from potential remote users, who are unable to access the catalogues electronically. This is an issue that has been widely debated amongst the academic and library communities since the mid-1990s. It has also been the subject of a number of reports that have set out to quantify the retrospective conversion work that needs to be done nationally, as well as to examine the best way to go about it.

Published in 1993, the Follett Report<sup>1</sup> forcefully promoted the now widely shared view that academic libraries would need to be provided with substantial financial assistance if they were to exploit fully the potential of information technology and the World Wide Web for the benefit of their own user groups and the research community at large. Following the Follett Report, grants were made available to individual university libraries for a number of projects involving the retrospective conversion of manual records relating to specialised research collections in the humanities. What is now commonly referred to as the NFF (Non-Formula Funding) projects was certainly the beginning of a more systematic approach to retrospective conversion, as this initiative made it possible for the institutions selected by the programme to computerise the catalogues of entire collections within a relatively short period of time. However it was being increasingly felt that researchers would draw greater benefits from a nation-wide initiative based on the needs of their discipline as a whole rather than those of a particular institution. No library these days is capable of meeting all the present or future needs of its users and the interests of users are therefore best served by enhanced access to collections nationally and even, if possible, cross-sectorally – as indeed for users it is irrelevant whether the item requested should be located, say, in their local university library, their local public library or any other library in any other part of the country.

Published three years after the Follett Report, the Anderson Report<sup>2</sup> reflected this new way of thinking by highlighting the need for a national strategy aimed at establishing what collections in a particular group of disciplines or type of material should be described electronically to ensure that users all over the country and abroad are aware of all relevant collections regardless of where they are held. It was argued that not only would the users benefit from such a collaborative approach, but also prioritisation of where efforts should be targeted nationally would reduce expenditure and effort for all the individual libraries involved. A very convincing case was being made for a more comprehensive and collaborative approach, based on the concept of library holdings as a 'distributed national resource' to be managed within the framework of cross-institutional programmes of activities that would reduce duplication of effort and optimise the use of resources in each individual library.

It is precisely this notion of a distributed national resource, as promoted in the 1996 Anderson Report, which is at the heart of the Research Support Libraries Programme (RSLP). Set up in 1998 as a UK-wide initiative funded by the four higher education funding councils to enhance access to research collections, RSLP is currently funding more than 50 cross-institutional projects, including Revelation, that concentrate on particular groups of disciplines or types of material, all to be completed by July 2002. Based at the University of Edinburgh, the RSLP Office comprises the Programme

Director, Ronald Milne, and a small administrative team headed by the Programme Administrator, Gill Davenport. (More information about RSLP and the other RSLP projects can be found on the RSLP web site at <http://www.rslp.ac.uk>.) The day-to-day management of the projects, however, is the responsibility of the project managers who have been appointed by the lead institutions. In the case of Revelation, the project manager works in close co-operation with the project director, Dr Clive D Field, Librarian and Director of Information Services at the University of Birmingham.

### **The Revelation Project: Purpose and Deliverables**

Evidence gathered at the University of Birmingham in preparation for the Revelation bid showed that some 60% of theology books borrowed were not yet on the online catalogue and had therefore to be traced through the card catalogue, with the result that Birmingham's holdings were all but invisible for external researchers unaware of the University's strengths in theology or without ready access to its card catalogue. Similar situations obtained with the other universities who expressed an interest in participating in the bid. It also became apparent during the preparation of the bid that somewhere around four-fifths of all UK research on church history and Christian theology is believed to focus on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, or, if relating to earlier eras, to draw upon works published in these two centuries.

The need to computerise the catalogues of these collections was all the more urgent as research in theology and religious studies is showing no sign of decline. At the 1996 Research Assessment Exercise no fewer than 50 higher education institutions (HEIs) in England, Scotland and Wales entered under the theology, divinity and religious studies panel. Much of the research submitted represented a partnership between academics and ecclesiastical practitioners from a range of Churches in the vicinity of the HEIs. There is also a substantial amount of religion-related research taking place through scholars whose primary base is in other academic disciplines. While there are naturally especially close synergies with those working in philosophy (including ethics) and history, many subjects draw to some extent or another upon religious concepts or data, as shown, for example, by the fact that the British Sociological Association has a Sociology of Religion Study Group with a membership of some 150.

The project will enhance access to research collections in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century church history and Christian theology in two complementary ways:

- By implementing a programme of targeted retrospective conversion of 145,950 monographs held in ten academic libraries across England, Scotland and Wales,

namely: the Universities of Aberdeen, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester, Nottingham, St Andrews, Sheffield, Wales (Lampeter) and King's College London.

The collections cover all aspects of Christian theology, including devotional, pastoral, ecclesiastical, moral and social theology. While some collections include material on a wide range of Christian denominations and religious orders across Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America, there is an overall emphasis on the Anglican and Protestant traditions, in particular the Scottish Church. More details about the collections included can be found in the Proposal document, which is available on the project web site at <http://www.is.bham.ac.uk/rspl/revelation.htm>.

All cataloguing will be undertaken in accordance with the predetermined rules of AACR2, MARC (UK MARC or MARC 21) and LCSH, and will conform to the bibliographic standards set out in Annexe E of the RSLP 1999/1 circular (available on the RSLP web site).

All of these 145,950 bibliographic records will be accessible from the partner institutions' OPACs and most of them from COPAC (CURL's web-OPAC, which is available to all, free of charge, at <http://www.copac.ac.uk>).

- By developing and implementing a web-based guide mapping the most important print and archive research collections in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century church history and Christian theology, held in more than 30 university, public or specialised libraries across the United Kingdom. This guide will consist of collection-level descriptions which will conform to the standards required by the RSLP/UKOLN template for printed collections and the HE Archive Hub template based on ISAD(g) for archive collections.

## **Progress So Far**

Formally set up in August 2000, Revelation has greatly benefited from the integrated approach to project management that has been successfully implemented by Information Services at the University of Birmingham since the beginning of RSLP in August 1999. Revelation is managed by the same project team as the first two Birmingham-led RSLP projects, 19<sup>th</sup> Century Pamphlets and Ensemble, which were both established in August 1999 as a result of the first RSLP round of bidding. The project management expertise gained during the first year of RSLP as well as the well-honed infrastructural arrangements that were already in place when Revelation started in August 2000 have indeed considerably reduced the ramp-up time that most new projects encounter. The project web site has been operational since August 2000 and the first Management Board and Partners' meetings took place at the beginning of October 2000. (The lists of the partner libraries' key contacts and members of the

October 2000. (The lists of the partner libraries' key contacts and members of the Management Board are available on the project web site - Judith Powles, Chairman of ABTAPL is a member of the Management Board.)

- The Retrospective Conversion Programme

The cataloguing work began as soon as October 2000, only two months after the project was officially established. Most of the cataloguing is taking place in the libraries where the collections are held (only Glasgow have decided to have approximately a quarter of their material catalogued by the Saztec agency). All the partner libraries, including St Andrews and Wales (Lampeter), which are not CURL members, can download CURL records free of charge and RLIN records at the preferential rate negotiated by CURL.

By the beginning of February 2001, eight out the ten primary partners involved with the retrospective conversion programme were already cataloguing for the project, the last two partners, Sheffield and Aberdeen, being scheduled to join in later this year, respectively in March and August 2001. By the end of January 2001, the project had already produced 17,359 records, ie 13% of the in-house cataloguing.

The partner institutions have agreed to adopt a strategy aimed at driving the cataloguing costs to a maximum. As a rule, records are searched, to begin with, on the freely available CURL database and other databases where records are available to the libraries at zero costs (eg Talis for the Talis libraries) or at low cost (eg RLIN). Only when these possibilities have been exhausted will the libraries turn to other commercial databases (eg OCLC) or will create records from scratch. This method has already produced some excellent results. By the end of January 2001, the overall hit rate, calculated on the basis of the total number of records downloaded from all the external databases used by the partners, was 74.4%. So far CURL has been the database that has provided the partner libraries with the highest number of records to download, as shown by the breakdown of hit rates for each one of the external databases used: 58.6% from CURL, 21.4% from RLIN, 13.4% from OCLC and 6.6% from Talis (only three partner libraries are Talis-users and only two were cataloguing at the time when these statistics were gathered).

- The Web-based Guide to Collections

The web-based guide will be developed and implemented by a full-time project officer, Linda Needham, over a period of 18 months until July 2002. Linda is in the process of contacting a number of academic, public and specialised libraries selected by the Management Board, which hold relevant print and/or archive collections, to invite them to join the project as secondary partners. Based at the University of

Birmingham, Linda will be creating collection-level descriptions on the basis of the information provided to her by the secondary partners.

To find out more information about the project and its progress, please visit the project web site at <http://www.is.bham.ac.uk/rslp/revelation.htm>

## **References**

1. FOLLETT, Brian (Chairman) Joint Funding Council's Libraries Review Group: Report. Bristol: HEFCE, 1993.
2. ANDERSON, Michael (Chairman) Report of the Joint Funding Council's Libraries Review Group on a National/Regional Strategy for Library Provision for Researchers, commissioned by the Follett Implementation Group as part of the Joint Funding Council's Library Review. 1995

*Dr Marie-Pierre Détraz,  
RSLP Project Manager,  
The University of Birmingham.*

## **AN EYE-OPENING EXPERIENCE IN JOHANNESBURG CENTRAL LIBRARY**

by Rachel Stephens

I don't know how many people have had a blinding flash of revelation, a Damascus road experience, in the lift of Johannesburg Central Library, but this is how it happened for me.

I was going to observe the Children's Librarian training volunteers for an after-school reading enrichment project and, as the meeting was on the third floor, I took the lift. The lift itself was a step back in time and reminded me of the cage lifts in big department stores of the middle of last century. Another library user got in with me and we almost filled the small cabin. At such close quarters one cannot be silent and anyway this was Africa, so as we made our stately progress to the third floor, we began to talk.

He was a student from Tanzania and when I said "that is a long way from Johannesburg" he replied that, in his estimation, this was the most comprehensive library on the continent of Africa. I am in no position to assess the correctness of his judgement but I am aware that the reference section is in very full use every day that it is open. I had never imagined that students from Anglophone sub-Saharan Africa would see it as a "Mecca" but my eyes were opened at that moment. Of course there will be other factors in the matter but I became aware, in that short upward journey, of the importance of this library for southern and central Africa.

The facilities for study, the resources and the availability of staff advice are valued by students in Johannesburg and its informal settlements. Of the population of around four million, 60% are under the age of 35 and over half live in the former townships and so-called "informal settlements", where few students have many books at home or quiet space for study. This puts all kinds of pressure of expectation on the library service. So I was absolutely astonished when talking to the Chief Librarian to find that for the year 1999/2000 there was no provision in the City Budget for the purchase of new books either for lending or reference departments. In 2000/2001 very little provision was made. How do you run a library without new acquisitions?

Johannesburg is changing rapidly and one major development is that the entire four million inhabitants are now administered as one "Unicity". The local elections of December 2000 were the start of the new single administration and during the transition it has been clear that, for the present, libraries come lower on the budget

priority list than clean drinking water, adequate housing and power supplies. The library service must tighten its belt.

For the library service there are some positive aspects of the unicity. The whole system will be run as one unit instead of five local regions and thus citywide policies can be in place. The computer systems can therefore be integrated and there is less likelihood of élite provision for a few areas and a second-class provision for the rest.

Changes in staff roles and the administrative structure are intended to provide a service relevant to the differing needs of specific communities, for, of necessity, a library in Dobsonville will look very different and meet different expectations from one in Kensington. The bookstocks and the facilities are two of the most obvious differences. Libraries will be just one of the many Community Services under the supervision of Regional Directors whose role will be to balance the competing claims for resources and to ensure good community provision.

At the same time there is a move away from citywide co-ordination posts, such as reference services, bookstock management and children's services. There have been no new staff appointments since 1997 and the reduction in staff numbers has been the result of natural wastage rather than appropriate to the needs of the service.

So how does all this relate to theological and philosophical libraries? Johannesburg's Chief Librarian, Miss Joan Bevan, writes that it is in the Central Lending Library that books on religion and philosophy are very popular. It is here that they notice the lack of new acquisitions and the fresh thinking that such new books inject into the work of the students and the life of the city. Of course the lending section tends to be used by interested individuals as well as by serious students so they are keen to have injections of popular books in this category rather than simply learned treatises. As a multi-ethnic city Johannesburg has many faith groups worshipping and studying here; Joan Bevan comments that she does not know if your library association covers faiths other than Christianity.

I understand that the European Association [BETH], of which ABTAPL is a member, is interested in making contact with libraries in the southern hemisphere with a view to expanding the networking facility. Such links would be much appreciated by the Johannesburg Central Library and the whole city library service, which, having emerged from the global isolation of apartheid sanctions, faces tough internal policies on budgets and priorities. The sheer encouragement of contact with other librarians is of inestimable value and importance. The city has two universities and separate

theological training facilities but, as my opening anecdote revealed, the students come from far and wide.

*Rachel Stephens  
Birmingham*

If anyone wishes to donate material to the Johannesburg Library or has any suggestions for organisations or publishers who might be able to assist please contact Joan Bevan. She would welcome material on philosophy, Christianity and other religions.

Joan Bevan can be contacted by e-mail at [jbevan@mj.org.za](mailto:jbevan@mj.org.za)  
or as Metropolitan Librarian, Greater Johannesburg Library Services,  
tel: 0027-11-836-3787; fax: 0027-11-836-6607

*Rachel Stephens chairs the Birmingham International Council and is the Birmingham Non-Governmental Organisation link for the Sister-City linkage between Birmingham and Johannesburg. Joan Bevan came to Birmingham in 1999 to attend an international librarians' conference organised by the British Council and held at the University of Birmingham. She visited the Central Library and some of the community libraries of the public library service. In February 2000 Sue McMurray, Children's Librarian for Greater Johannesburg, also spent some time with the Birmingham children's library service team.*

## **ST. THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE, MOSCOW**

This College has been run by the Jesuits since 1999, lessons and seminars to university students and post-graduates being given in collaboration with Russian professors.

As well as a large conference hall, classrooms, offices and accommodation for lecturers coming from abroad, the College has a large library with space for 70,000 books. However they have only 6,000 at present and the Director of the College, Dr Stanislas Opiels, SJ, would like to develop the English section. As the College's budget is so small they are seeking donations of books on the history of the British Church and of the British nation, British Christian spirituality, ancient and modern, Anthropology, Fathers of the Church, Philosophy, and Theology. Emilio Benedetti, SJ, has been asked to look for duplicates of suitable material during his visit to the UK and Ireland in the second fortnight of April this year.

### **Contacts:**

**Dr. Stanislas Opiela, SJ**

**Director,**

**St. Thomas Aquinas College**

**ul Friedricha Engelsa 46/4**

**PO Box 27**

**107005 Moscowa**

**Russia**

**tel: 7 095/265 16 41; fax: 7 095/279 41 76; email: [sjmoscow@online.ru](mailto:sjmoscow@online.ru)**

**Emilio Benedetti, S.J**

**Residencia de Nuestra Señora de la Victoria**

**Calle Palau No. 3**

**08003 Barcelona**

**Spain**

**tel: 34/933 174 524; fax: 34/933 174 686; email: [kalitow@teleline.es](mailto:kalitow@teleline.es)**

## REVIEW

**HARVEY, Peter.** *An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics: Foundations, Values and Issues.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. ISBN 0-521-55640-6.

Peter Harvey is Professor of Buddhist Studies at the University of Sunderland; he is the first professor in the United Kingdom appointed specifically to such a chair and published a useful textbook on Buddhism in 1990 entitled *Introduction to Buddhism*. This present book is a welcome companion to this and covers most of the major concerns of contemporary ethics in a manner suited both to the general reader and the student.

The book is effectively divided into two parts; in the first, Harvey discusses the foundations of Buddhist ethics, such as karma and rebirth, the Four Noble Truths, and the various criteria for action. He then goes on to consider the concepts of charity, precepts, the monastic discipline, compassion and social ethics. Much of these sections are based upon the Theravada tradition of south east Asia and the next section considers how the Mahayana traditions of Tibet, China and Japan adapted and developed these earlier traditions.

The second part of the book applies the general ethical foundations to specific ethical issues such as attitudes to the natural world, conservation and ecology; economics; war and peace; suicide; gender and homosexuality. The issues chosen for consideration perhaps reflect a preoccupation with areas of potential concern to western students, but, on the other hand, it is precisely these issues which the readers of this book will wish to know about in terms of the Buddhist tradition.

In that regard one of the disappointments of the book is that it focuses almost exclusively on ethics in the traditional Asian homelands of Buddhism and there are only passing references to the changes and adaptations traditional Buddhist ethics have undergone as it has taken root in the west.

This is, in my opinion, a missed opportunity as the almost unconscious absorption of Buddhism into a post-modern liberal-individualist ethic is often a radical departure from the ethical context of traditional Buddhism. Examples of this which Harvey does mention are attitudes to homosexuality in organisations such as the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order and the controversy in the US over certain remarks of the Dalai Lama, which reveal a difference between western assumptions and traditional Buddhist ethics and practice. Whilst it is inevitable that a 'living' tradition will adapt

to different cultural contexts, it would have been instructive to have Professor Harvey's views on this process — perhaps that can be the theme of his next book!

But having said that, I do not wish to detract from what is a highly competent, useful and timely overview of Buddhist ethical values and their sources in the scriptures and tradition. It is particularly well-presented as a textbook — although a 'Conclusion' drawing together the various strands of the book would have been nice —and I would strongly recommend it to any of you who have a section in your libraries on comparative religion and ethics.

*Andrew Lacey  
Trinity Hall,  
Cambridge*

Peter Harvey is also on the editorial board of the on-line *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* which can be found at <http://jbe.gold.ac.uk> (UK address) and <http://jbe.la.psu.edu> (US address).

Discussion groups mentioned in the book include:

'Buddha-L' or 'Buddhist Academic Discussion Forum' - to subscribe send e-mail message to: [listserv@listserv.louisville.edu](mailto:listserv@listserv.louisville.edu) with the message: subscribe buddha-l [your name].

'Buddhist' or 'Forum on Indian and Buddhist Studies' - to subscribe send e-mail message to: [listserv@lists.mcgill.ca](mailto:listserv@lists.mcgill.ca) with the message: subscribe buddhist [your name].

## NEWS AND NOTES

### **Associations of Theological Education**

A list of associations, mostly in fellowship with WCC or WEF, have been posted by Alec Gilmore on his website at <http://www.Gilco.org.uk>

### **Digitisation**

The British Library website now includes a digitised copy of the *Gutenberg Bible*, following a joint project with Keio University in Japan.

An agreement on digitising library collections has been reached by 20 national and research university libraries in Korea, Japan, China, Taiwan, Italy, USA and UK. It covers joint work on interoperable standards for metadata; copyright issues for digitised materials; lobbying for government support for projects; agreement that priority be given to digitising unique treasures which would then be freely available through the internet.

Thousands of items from the **Russian State Library** are to be made available on the internet. They are all out of copyright and can be downloaded for a small fee. The digital library can be accessed at [www.elibron.com](http://www.elibron.com) or [www.elibron.ru](http://www.elibron.ru)

### **Electronic Book**

*City Sites* is an electronic book which can be read and used in a "traditional" way, providing electronic links and pathways leading to a range of multimedia resources such as films, maps, other publications, links to websites and a live annotated bibliography of online and printed material. It has been developed by the 3Cities research project, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Board, and based at Birmingham and Nottingham Universities. It can be accessed at [www.citysites.org.uk](http://www.citysites.org.uk)

### **John Rylands University Library, Manchester**

The Library has received a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund towards the restoration of the building and its collections; the University is seeking matching funds.

### **Librarians' Christian Fellowship**

The LCF 25th Anniversary Conference will be held on Saturday 28th April 2001 at Carrs Lane Church Centre, Birmingham. The theme is "Information and the Church". Details from Graham Hedges, 34 Thurlstone Avenue, Ilford, IG3 9DU, tel: 020 8599 1310, email: [secretary@librarianscf.org.uk](mailto:secretary@librarianscf.org.uk)

## **Library and Information Show**

This year's show will be held at the NEC Birmingham from 5th to 7th June.

## **Missionary Collections Project**

This project aims to create a web-based guide to collections of missionary materials, across all sectors, giving details of location, content and access arrangements. A survey of collections will be carried out later this year. A form to notify the project of relevant collections is included in the web pages at <http://www.soas.ac.uk/mundus>

## **Online Resources**

The **Collaborative Digital Reference Service** is being set up by an international group of academic libraries as a free 24-hour global electronic reference service, expected to be fully operational by next June at [lcweb.loc.gov/rr/digiref/cdrshome.html](http://lcweb.loc.gov/rr/digiref/cdrshome.html)

The **Missionary Periodicals Database** is a detailed database, extensively cross-indexed by region, field of activity, denomination, etc. and including location information for the UK. It is available at <http://namp.divinity.yale.edu/NAMP.taf>

## **People**

**Margaret Ecclestone**, Librarian of the Alpine Club, has been awarded a Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Travelling Fellowship for 2001 to enable her to visit the libraries of the principal mountaineering clubs in Europe. The purpose is to assess these collections, their staffing, resources, services to users, future projects and discuss potential co-operation in the light of the UN International Year of Mountains in 2002. Eleven librarians and archivists were awarded Fellowships; information is available on the Trust's website ([www.wcmt.org.uk](http://www.wcmt.org.uk)). Margaret was Chairman of ABTAPL from 1989 to 1991 and, more recently, Conference Secretary.

## **Publications**

The **Ages Collection *Ultimate Christian Library*** is a collection of seven library collection CDs each containing a huge collection of works relevant to its title. *Spurgeon* (£32) has 62 years of his sermons, writings and teachings; *Calvin* (£30) has his vast works and more; the *Digital Library Version 8* (£35) has over 500 Christian classics, many rare and out of print. Other collections are Reformation History, John Gill, John Owen and Arthur Pink.. Also available on DVD from R.C. Bolton, Hon. Sec. Timperley Evangelical Trust, 183 Wythenshawe Road, Manchester M23 0AD, tel: 0161 374 1089, email: [olb@tetsystems.co.uk](mailto:olb@tetsystems.co.uk)



## **THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTERS & OTHER PERIODICALS RECEIVED**

Copies of the following have been sent to Marion Smith, Editor of the *Bulletin*.

**American Theological Library Association** *Annual Report 1999/2000 and Newsletters* November 2000 and February 2001. The latter contains an article "Building Digital Collections for Theological Libraries".

**Association des Bibliothèques Chrétiennes de France** *Bulletin de Liaison*, no. 116, December 2000. Includes articles on several member libraries as well as the transfer of the Jesuit Library from Chantilly to Lyons. (French text)

**Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association** *Newsletter* No. 42, December 2000. Includes articles on management of archives and a seminar on issues relating to serials in electronic and paper format.

**Centre Informatique et Bible** (Maredsous, Belgium) *Interface* December 2000. Contains an obituary and appreciation of Georges Lurquin, language scholar and member of the Council of Administration of ASBL Promotion Biblique et Informatique from 1983 and its President from 1985 to 1999. (French text)

**Librarians' Christian Fellowship** *Newsletter* Spring 2001. Includes a piece about ABTAPL written by John Howard.