

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION IN THEOLOGICAL LIBRARIES IN ASIA AND THE ROLE OF FORATL



A Report
to the

ATLA 2011 Conference, June 8-11, 2011, Chicago

By
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ForATL Convener, and
PTLA President

THEOLOGY AND RESOURCES IN ASIA

GOOD POINTS:

- ☞ Growing awareness of the significance of Asian Resources
- ☞ More emphasis in Asian seminaries on the Asian context
- ☞ Increased documentation of Asian Christianity and resources



RESEARCH IN ASIAN THEOLOGY

BUT ...

☞ The task is an enormous one!

- ☞ Documentation limited due to low literacy levels and Christian minority
- ☞ Finding tools not so accessible : language barriers
- ☞ Limited finance and technology for distribution



THE FORUM OF ASIAN THEOLOGICAL LIBRIARIAN



OUR HISTORY : In the beginning ...

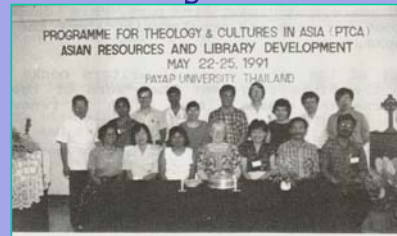
- ☞ First Consultation of Asian Theological Librarians held at the McGilvary Faculty of Theology, Chiang Mai, Thailand from 22-25 May 1991
- ☞ Initiated and organized by Mrs. Rita England, Librarian of the Program for Theology and Cultures in Asia (PTCA)
- ☞ Sponsored by PTCA, and emphasis on developing Asian resources adopted
- ☞ Core group appointed



Fourteen Founding Members from Nine countries participated in the Consultation:

Member	Country	Member	Country
Rita M. England	New Zealand	Arisa Lertpruk	Thailand
Huang Po Ho	Taiwan	Suntree Rattayanant	Thailand
Lukas Mark	Taiwan	Jitra Samsa	Thailand
Lilibeth N. Puyot	Philippines	P.C. Laltlani	India
Generoso A. Rosales	Philippines	Joseph Patmury	India
Patrick Lambe	Singapore	Karmito	Indonesia
Lau Jen Sin	Singapore	Rose Sinnathamby	Sri Lanka

Founding Members



Core Group

The Core Group had two meetings and discussed Issues and Initiatives....

- Ⓢ the possibility of a Master's degree in Theological Librarianship under SEAGST
- Ⓢ to form a network of the theological librarians in Asia
- Ⓢ to publish a directory of Asian theological libraries
- Ⓢ to compile guidelines for Asian theological librarians
- Ⓢ that ForATL should implement its own programs and activities independently
- Ⓢ to emphasize the development of Asian resources

Second Consultation

Duta Wacana Christian University
Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 8-13 October 1997

Several key decisions were made...

- ✎ formally recognized as the Forum of Asian Theological Librarians
- ✎ first ForATL Office-bearers elected
- ✎ draft Constitution drawn up (finalized and adopted at 3rd Consultation in Bangkok, 2002)
- ✎ ForATL objectives finalized



ForATL OBJECTIVES

- ☞ Facilitate development and exchange of theological resources in the Asian context
- ☞ Encourage and support networking, formation of library associations and Christian literature depositories
- ☞ Encourage and support publication of union listings, directories, indexes, bibliographies, etc.
- ☞ Promote and provide librarianship training
- ☞ Arrange short-term courses and workshops; and to develop an Asia-wide network of theological libraries



OUR MEMBERS

- ☞ To-date, we have a total of almost a hundred registered members in ForATL, coming from 23 countries in Asia and Oceania.
- ☞ ForATL membership is open to libraries, practicing librarians, and any other organization or individual interested in the development of Asian theological resources and archives.
- ☞ Membership free (for a limited time only!)

ForATL NEEDS YOU!



Areas

CAMBODIA, LAOS, MALAYSIA, SINGAPORE, THAILAND & VIETNAM



Malaysia Theological Library Association

Areas

HONG KONG

ECUMENICAL INFORMATION NETWORK:

- Alliance Bible Seminary
- China Graduate School of Theology
- Evangel Seminary
- Holy Sprit Seminary College
- Lutheran Theological Seminary



Areas

INDIA, MYANMAR, PAKISTAN &
SRI LANKA



LIBRARY NETWORKING AND
COOPERATION IN INDIA



INDIAN THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY
ASSOCIATION
(A professional association of theological
libraries and librarians in India)



JOINT LIBRARY COMMITTEE IN INDIA

Areas

INDONESIA



Taman Mini



Seminar Dan Lokakarya Perpustakaan Teologi
Forum Pustakawan dan Perpustakaan Teologi di Indonesia
Seminar BETUL, Jakarta, 23-24 Juli 2009

Forum Pustakawan dan Perpustakaan Teologi di
Indonesia –

Forum of Theological Librarians in Indonesia

Areas

TAIWAN



Members of Taiwan Theological Library Association

Areas

PHILIPPINES



Philippine Theological Library Association

Activities, Plans and Projects

CURRENT ForATL PROJECTS

(1) Publications



DIRECTORY OF ASIAN THEOLOGICAL LIBRARIES (DATL)
1st and 2nd editions published in 1997 and 2002 respectively

OBJECTIVES

- Aid networking and resource sharing
- Identify location of special collections and collections of Asian resources

(1) Publications ...



ForATL News

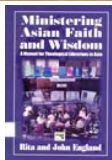
Official newsletter of ForATL

Published twice a year in June and Dec.
First issue was in June 2003

OBJECTIVES

- to disseminate useful information and articles
- to introduce theological libraries and promote networking

(1) Publications ...



Ministering Asian Faith and Wisdom :
A manual for theological librarians in Asia. Quezon City : New Day Publishers ; Delhi : ISPCK, 2001.

• Fulfilled need for handbook on theological librarianship in the Asian context

Religio-Cultural Traditions and Heritages: Collection, Preservation and Interpretation.



CURRENT FORATL PROJECTS

(2) Networking and resource sharing



INTERNET DATABASE OF ASIAN THEOLOGICAL JOURNALS

- **Objective:** Provide indexes for Asian theological journals (non-indexed, non-English)
- **Status:** Theological libraries assigned to index selected key theological journals

(2) Networking and resource sharing...



UNION LIST OF POSTGRADUATE THESES

OBJECTIVES

- ☞ Identify location of resources and aid research
- ☞ Prevent duplication of research

(2) Networking and resource sharing...



WEBSITE, MAILING LIST, BLOG

- Website: www.foratl.org
- Blog: <http://forum-theolibrarian.blogspot.com/>
- Mailing list: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/foratl>
Subscribe: foratl-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
Post message: foratl@yahoogroups.com

CURRENT ForATL PROJECTS (3) Training programmes



RATIONALE

- ☞ a large number of librarians in Asia do not have formal librarianship training

OBJECTIVE

- to provide librarianship training with an emphasis on the theological library setting in the Asian context

(3) Training programmes...

TRAINING

- ☞ Theological librarianship
- ☞ Archives management
- ☞ Short term courses



(3) Training programmes...

WORKSHOP & CONSULTATION

- **1st: Chiang Mai, Thailand, 1991.**
Theme: Asian Resources and Theological Library Development.

- **2nd: Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 1998.**
Theme: Creativity and Partnership: Resourcing Asian Theological Libraries

- **3rd: Bangkok, Thailand, 2003.**

- **4th: Seremban, Malaysia, 2006.**
Theme: Strengthening The Collaboration Between Theological Librarians And Scholars Toward Growth in Asia



(3) Training programmes...



5TH ForATL WORKSHOP & CONSULTATION

Trinity Theological College,
Singapore

10-14 March 2009

Theme: *Asian theological librarians moving on and reaching out : professional development and collaboration in the light of emerging technologies*



Participants and Resource Persons of the 5th consultation, TTC, Singapore

CHALLENGES FACED

ForATL

- ☞ Distance and workload

Librarianship

- ☞ Isolation and lack of collegial support
- ☞ Recognition of the status of the librarian still a debated issue
- ☞ Lack of funds
- ☞ More staff required

CHALLENGES FACED...



- Ⓜ Slow response, cooperation and follow-through
- Ⓜ Shortage of personnel and time
- Ⓜ Needs lots of energy, effort and powers of persuasion
- Ⓜ Difficulties in translation
- Ⓜ Reluctance to publicize sensitive materials

CONCLUSION

Explore ways to have a collaborative projects:

- Professional development – Theological Librarianship Program
- Indexing of Asian Journals
- Database of Theses and dissertations
- Resource procurement



Left: Mrs. Beth Pulance, Miss Hilda Putong, and Mr. Tong Sui-Tung

Right: Mr. Yeean, Mr. David, and Miss. Jifra Gamoa



LOCAL TRAININGS:

- ❖ In consultation with WCC-EET for possible short-term librarianship training courses in Cambodia and Vietnam
- ❖ Provided subsidies for short librarianship training courses
- ❖ Basic librarianship training for theological librarians, held at Jakarta, Indonesia, 7-8 August 2003.
- ❖ Library automation training course for theological librarians from member schools of the Association of Theological Schools in Indonesia, held at Surabaya, Indonesia, 8-19 September 2003.
- ❖ Philippines Theological Librarians Association Seminar-Workshop, held at Cebu City, Philippines, 12-14 September 2007.
- ❖ Basic librarianship training course for theological librarians, held at Petaling Jaya, Malaysia, 22-27 September 2008.