

ATLA



ANNUAL REPORT  
2017

# President's Message

Dear ATLA colleagues and friends,

The work of our association is carried out by members, committees, staff, and, in a distinctive way, by the Board of Directors. The Board seeks to do something that goes against much of our training as librarians: keep the focus on the future, our values, and our stated ends. Here's the hard part: we seek to lead the Association while keeping our hands *off* of the myriad details required to give ideas traction. After serving two terms on the Board, I have come to think of Board work as a kind of spiritual discipline. Spiritual disciplines 'make sense,' but they make the most sense to those who engage in them.

Nevertheless, I think that members can see the fruits of the Board's discipline this year in two areas: prudence and vision. Regarding prudence, this report documents the finances of the Association are sound. The Board has received evidence from the Executive Director that members, staff, and volunteers are treated with dignity and respect. The Board continued to think about how it can continue to take seriously the needs of members, who are the moral owners of ATLA. The Board also approved the recommendations of a task force to consider how the Association can best honor the contributions made by long-time members. In January 2018 members will be asked to approve bylaw changes to implement those recommendations.

Regarding vision, the Board began conversations with the executive director to reach a consensus about the interpretation of our revised organizational ends, which articulate the positive changes in the world that ATLA wants to make. For instance, when we assert: "Students, scholars, and religious leaders skillfully use information resources to create knowledge, grow in wisdom, and share the results of their research [organizational end 3]," what kind of evidence is needed to demonstrate progress?

As you will read in this report, the Association is pursuing initiatives (such as the ATLA Digital Library Program) that promote open access publishing and collaboration between religious studies and theological librarians and scholars. These actions implement ATLA's values of excellence, access to scholarly information, inclusion, collaboration, and innovation.

In a Zeitgeist that often seems distrustful of difference and suspicious of sharing, our Association is proudly counter-cultural. We want scholars everywhere to be able to study marriage practices in eighth century Wessex and how feminism and Islam interact in Turkey in the twenty-first century. We want religious leaders to write better sermons and lead wisely.

ATLA is all about making connections. Thank you for your part in making them.



Sincerely,

**Timothy D. Lincoln**

ATLA Board President

# Executive Director's Message

Dear ATLA colleagues and friends,

Two years ago, the ATLA Board of Directors reaffirmed the core purpose of the Association: To promote worldwide scholarly communication in religion and theology by advancing the work of libraries and related information providers. The task of furthering this work falls largely to the staff and member volunteers, guided by the organization's core values. While every core value is important, that of collegiality and collaboration was the primary theme for the year.

ATLA members benefited from collaborative efforts that resulted in an increase in reciprocal borrowing program participants, cost savings through group licensing agreements, a new publishing program infrastructure, the publication of open access monographs in the field, and an investigation into how religious studies scholars conduct their work which culminated in a major research publication. Professional development opportunities were expanded through the joint work of several association committees.

Subscribers to ATLA products saw significant growth in the breadth and depth of coverage, which was the result of staff working together with publishers around the globe. A shared digital repository was launched through the combined efforts of staff and members, a project which was in turn based on the findings of a past collaborative grant conducted with peer associations. A new task force on scholarly communication grappled with articulating the scope of its charge and how to empower members to take an active role in scholarly communication on their campus.

After a full year under the revised bylaws with its new, more inclusive membership requirements, ATLA's organizational membership grew. Many libraries moved up to Institutional Membership with full voting privileges from their previous designation as International or Affiliate, and four-year college newcomers were welcomed into the fold.

Forward movement on a strategic plan requires adequate financial resources to support on-going initiatives, conduct market research, assess user needs, and develop new products and services. ATLA enjoys continued strong financial health. Earned income for the year came in 3.92% better than budget and expenses were under budget by 7.58%. Ensuring long term financial sustainability of the Association's work means investing in the ATLA Endowment Fund. At the end of fiscal year, the Fund had a balance of \$560,426, up from \$479,121 the previous year.

Even as the ATLA Board, members, and staff celebrate the accomplishments of fiscal year 2017, we already have our eyes on the horizon. We anticipate even more momentum on our strategic initiatives as ATLA continues to advance the work of libraries and related information providers in a global environment.

Thank you to all those who together throughout this past year, have helped ATLA to thrive.



Sincerely,

**Brenda Bailey-Hainer**

ATLA Executive Director

American Theological Library Association  
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Chicago, IL 60606-6701 USA  
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ATLA is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3), professional association, headquartered in Chicago, Illinois.

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# Meet the Leadership

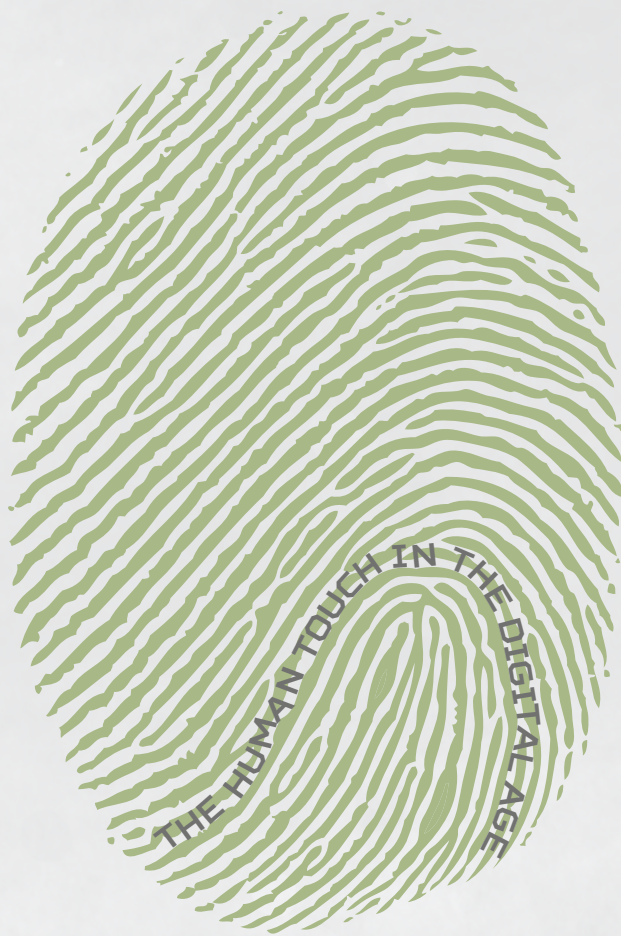
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**More than a search engine.  
More than a source.  
More than a building.**





We bring the human touch to the digital age.

This past year, a theme permeated our programs, events, and publications, culminating at the 2017 ATLA Annual Conference — **Southern Harmony: The Human Touch in the Digital Age.**

Woven throughout this report are stories from the ATLA Newsletter that are the reflections of this theme. From a Metadata/Cataloging Librarian sharing her passion for the Turkish art of paper marbling, to a Metadata Analyst uncovering historical letters in the Vatican Secret Archives, to a Scholarly Communications Librarian sharing the stress of personal collection development, or a Library Director facing the obligation of life-long learning in librarianship, they're all people of ATLA finding harmony between technology and the human experience.



For more than 40 years, ATLA maintained separate boards to oversee its indexing and preservation microform programs. In 1991, the boards overseeing those programs were merged with the Association board to form one Board of Directors to oversee all of the Association's activities. The Board of Directors developed policies by which the Association was to be guided and hired an Executive Director to manage the Association's financial and organizational affairs.

**The Board and Membership of the Association adopted a mission statement and Organizational Ends to guide the Association's activities and programs:**

*The mission of the American Theological Library Association is to foster the study of theology and religion by enhancing the development of theological and religious studies libraries and librarianship.*

**ATLA exists so that:**

All those involved in the practice, study and teaching of and scholarly communication in theology and religion worldwide are connected to others in the field and have the tools, skills, and primary sources needed to advance their work.

1. Professionals engaged in librarianship and scholarly communication are advocating and collaborating in order to advance scholarship in theological and religious disciplines.
  - a. Librarians and scholarly communication professionals are developing and strengthening connections that lead to innovative solutions for shared challenges.
  - b. Librarians and scholarly communication professionals are developing increased capacities to work in diverse and changing environments.
2. Students, scholars, and information professionals have the tools they need for robust scholarly communication in the fields of theology and religion.
3. Students, scholars, and religious leaders skillfully use information resources to create knowledge, grow in wisdom, and share the results of their research.



## ➤ Core Purpose

To promote worldwide scholarly communication in religion and theology by advancing the work of libraries and related information providers.

## ➤ Core Values

- Excellence in library collections and services
- Widest possible access to relevant information and ideas
- Hospitality, inclusion, and diversity
- Collegiality and collaboration
- Creativity, innovation, and transformation

## ➤ Strategic Goals

- ATLA is recognized globally as a strategic collaborator.
- ATLA has a solid reputation as a facilitator of open access publishing in the study of religion and theology.
- ATLA membership is more diverse and inclusive.
- ATLA has a shared understanding of what it means to be a hub.

# My Journey into the Unknown: From Endpapers to Ebru, the Turkish Art of Paper Marbling

Submitted by Ann Heinrichs, Metadata/Cataloging Librarian, The Paul Bechtold Library, Catholic Theological Union

## Introduction

Since childhood, I have been fascinated by the decorative endpapers in old books. As I lazed away my summer days in my grandparents' library, exploring the books' physicality as well as their content, I marveled at the colorful endpaper patterns: some were graceful swirls, some like bunches of feathers or rows of seashells, others like the stony creek bed I waded through in the woods.

Not until a few years ago, when I attended an exhibit of marbled paper at the Newberry Library, did I realize that the creation of these endpapers was a complex craft, requiring an array of special equipment and materials.

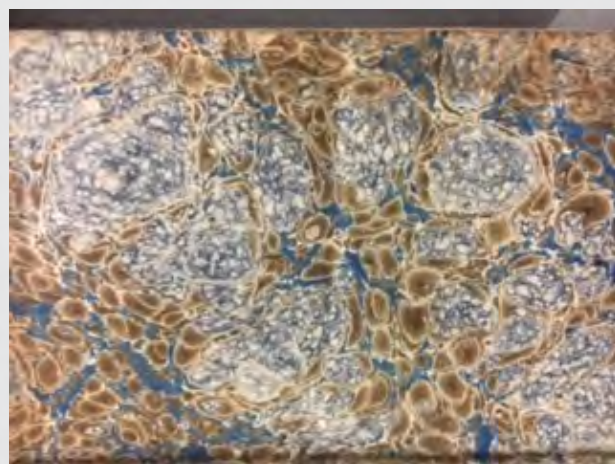
An astonishing revelation came when I attended an open house at the American Islamic College, near my Chicago neighborhood. At one station a Turkish artist was demonstrating ebru (pronounced EH-broo), the traditional Turkish art of paper marbling. She explained that European paper marbling had originated in Turkey, and she showed us how it was done. What I observed was enchanting — such a beautiful use of materials. I had to do it myself. Two long years later, when the college offered an ebru course, I and an artist friend signed up at once. Then began my immersion into the secrets of this amazing art.

## How Is Ebru Done?

I was delighted that our instructor was Sevim Surucu, the same lady whose demonstration had captivated me two years earlier. In the first class we learned that ebru is indeed a type of painting, but the "canvas" we would work upon was not the paper. Instead, we did all our work in a shallow rectangular tray of water to which carrageenan, a seaweed extract, was added for thickening. This would enable the paints to float. We donned our aprons and, using a horsehair brush, we sprinkled drops of mineral-based pigments onto the water's surface.

A crucial element is that a few drops of ox gall (bile) are added to each jar of paint. This makes the circles of paint spread out when they are sprinkled onto the water. The ox gall also keeps the colors separate, not blending with each other. No matter how many colors you drop, no matter how close to one another they are — even if they are dropped right on top of each other — they will not mix. Red plus yellow will never become orange; blue plus red will never become purple. This separation between the paints is what creates the marble effect, with veins meandering through the image as they do in marble stone.

Once we deposited colors onto the water, we manipulated the paints with combs or rakes, or we pushed and pulled and swirled the paints around with long pins, which come in a variety of thicknesses. In one class, after depositing the paints, we blew on them to move the colors around. Learning how the substances behave is the hardest part of learning ebru. A good-faith attempt at creating something beautiful can bring a person to tears (believe me!). After the colorful, floating picture was finished, we carefully laid a sheet of paper on the tray, patting



An endpaper from one of the books in Catholic Theological Union's Special Collections.



it here and there to prevent bubbles, then slid it off along the edge of the tray. Voilà! The entire image is perfectly transferred to the paper.

### Making Brushes and Paints

Our teacher put us through the paces of ebru apprenticeship — well, a watered-down version — so we might better understand what we were working with. In one class we learned to make the horsehair paintbrushes used in ebru. Sevim provided us with lengths of horse's tail, which we sliced into 1.5-inch segments. These we attached to a stick, winding nylon thread round and round and tying it with mind-bogglingly tricky knots that held the horsehair securely. We fumbled mightily; it was a humbling affair.

In another class we made paints. We began with a mineral oxide mud, slung it onto a marble slab, and ground it with a marble pestle. Up and down, back and forth we ground until the paste was perfectly smooth, with no apparent grains. Into a jar it went; water along with a few drops of ox gall was added.

About that ox gall — feeling a bit uncomfortable about the wholesale use of this animal product, and picturing the ghastly removal of rhino horns and elephant tusks — I asked Sevim how her suppliers obtained it. "Slaughterhouses," she replied. They strike up a relationship with a slaughterhouse worker and arrange to have the gallbladders set aside — parts that were normally discarded. This came as a bit of a relief.

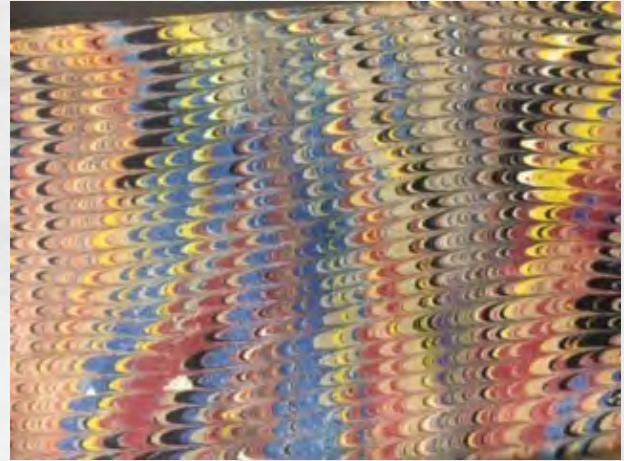
### The Ottoman Empire: Ebru's Heyday

Ebru began its life in the Ottoman Empire in the 15th century. Some form of paper marbling was practiced in China and Japan before that, but the art reached its height in Ottoman Turkey. At first, Ottoman officials wrote administrative documents on marbled paper to prevent forgeries.

Eventually ebru became a decorative art, pursued as an end in itself. Ottoman ebru artists developed several formal styles, some abstract and some representational.

To admirers of marbled endpapers, the abstract styles are the most familiar. Each style has a descriptive name; for example, tarakli (combed) style produces rows and rows of tiny scallops, gelgit (come and go) looks like colors dragged back and forth, bülbül yuvası (nightingale's nest) features successive pockets of swirls, and so on. Hatip ebru, named for a Muslim cleric, looks like a scattering of different-sized pebbles. We learned to produce a different one of these styles in each ebru class.

Traditionally, representational ebru subjects are flowers. Turkish ebru master Necmeddin Okyay (1883-1976) perfected çiçekli ebru, the floral marbling style, which came to be called Necmeddin marbling. The tulip is a holy symbol in Islam, and it became one of Necmeddin's best-loved specialties. He developed other flower designs such as carnations, violets, daisies, poppies, hyacinths, and roses. Sevim explained that ebru flowers are stylized, rather than realistic, to differentiate them from perfectly realistic-looking flowers — flowers that only Allah can create. Again, in each ebru class we labored over the design of that week's flower.



An endpaper from one of the books in Catholic Theological Union's Special Collections.



One of my ebru roses. The Illinois Board of Higher Education chose four of my paintings to hang in their offices throughout 2017.

## The Battle of the Guilds

In the 1600s, Turkey's marbled papers caught the eye of European merchants, and they began importing the papers for sale to printing houses and bookbinders. With the explosion of book publishing after the invention of the printing press, these decorative papers were in high demand. They became popular as both endpapers and outer book covers. Europeans hoped to make their own marbled papers, as that would be much cheaper than buying them. But how was marbling done?

Apparently, some enterprising craftspeople teased the technique away from Ottoman ebru artists and brought it home, carefully keeping the details under wraps. In the 1700s the British marblers' guild was a clandestine society, lurking in secret in the night so as not to reveal its mysteries. As Mark Kuransky describes in *Paper: A World History*: *Rooms were even examined for peepholes. It was nearly impossible to learn marbling at that time unless you were born into a marbling family. Even apprentices, who were always relatives, were not entrusted with complete formulas until they were older and deemed trustworthy. Marblers . . . kept themselves absolutely separate from the bookbinders' guild. Meanwhile the bookbinders' guild frequently sent spies into the marblers' guild, attempting to discover their secrets.*

Inevitably, though, the secrets were outed, and marblers began publishing books describing the technique. Today commercial marblers flourish throughout Europe, the United States, and elsewhere. Meanwhile, ebru remains a thriving national art form in Turkey, and Turkish artists such as Garip Ay are international celebrities among ebru connoisseurs. In 2014 UNESCO added Turkey's ebru art to its Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

YouTube abounds with video demonstrations by ebru artists, some venturing as far afield as painting landscapes and human portraits. Few commercial bookbinders use marbled paper today, although marbling thrives in the book arts arena. Now marbled paper has such diverse uses as drawer liners, gift wrappings, placemats, and note cards. I have even seen the peacock's-tail ebru pattern on Kleenex boxes!

### Cross-cultural Camaraderie

Back to my own ebru experience, my friend and I were the only non-Muslims in our class. It was a pleasure to spend those three hours a week working among people of another culture, all united by our common love of the art. We were a great group — helping one another, sharing tips, making suggestions, admiring one another's work. The soundtrack during a typical class session went something like this:

*"Where's the ox gall?"*

*"Who's got the purple?"*

*"Anybody got a #3 pin?"*

*"I'd like to try that Lahore blue."*

*"The water in this tray is worn out."*

*"Why does my hyacinth look like cotton candy?"*

*"My flowers look like jellyfish, so let's just say I'm painting jellyfish."*

*"That black is no good; here, use this one."*

*"Abstracts are OK, but I want to work on orthodox tulips."*

*"Why are my colors running?"*

*"Use the skinny brush first, then the fat one."*

*"Your rose is perfect now; don't mess with it anymore."*

*"Whose poppy is that? Wow!"*

Our idle chatter was open, collegial, friendly, and often educational. Our classmates shared their beliefs, taught us Arabic phrases, explained common expressions such as *Inshallah* (God willing), and talked about what they were studying in philosophy or ethics class. My friend shared tips about biking paraphernalia, and I told about visiting Morocco and Ethiopia. A flavor of good-natured camaraderie prevailed.

I came away from my class having learned how to produce ebru myself and how those long-mysterious marbled endpapers came to be. But beyond that, I gained a deeper appreciation for the common bonds that unite us all.



# ATLA is recognized globally as a strategic collaborator.

This year we made it our goal to meet, collaborate, and learn from our members, users, and partners.

## Strengthening Partnerships Around the Globe

- AAR and SBL Annual Meetings – San Antonio, TX
- ACRL - Baltimore, MD
- ALA Annual Conference – Chicago, IL
- ALA Midwinter Conference - Atlanta, GA
- ASAE Great Ideas – Orlando, FL
- Asociación para La Educación Teológica Hispana (AETH) Conference – Princeton, NJ
- Association of Asian Studies (AAS) Annual Conference - Toronto, Canada
- Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association (ANZTLA) 2017 - Perth, Australia
- Catholic Biblical Association Annual Meeting - Washington, DC
- CNI Fall Meeting – Washington, D.C.
- CNI Spring Meeting – Albuquerque, NM
- Code4Lib – Los Angeles, CA
- Committee on South Asian Libraries and Documentation (CONSALD) Meeting at the Association of Asian Studies - Madison, WI
- Connect Marketplace - New Orleans, LA
- Digital Initiatives Symposium at the University of San Diego – San Diego, CA
- Digital Library Federation (DLF) – Milwaukee, WI
- DLF Forum - Milwaukee, WI
- DPLAfest – Chicago, IL
- DrupalCon 2017 - Baltimore, MD
- European Academy of Religion (EuARE) - Bologna, Italy
- European Theological Libraries (BETH) – Helsinki, Finland
- Frankfurt Book Fair – Frankfurt, Germany
- Hydra Connect – Boston, MA
- ITHAKA Next Wave 2017 – New York, New York
- Library Publishing Forum - Baltimore, MD
- Lilly Websites Consultation – Indianapolis, IN
- London Book Fair – London, UK
- NFAIS Annual Conference - Alexandria, VA
- NFAIS Humanities Roundtable – Atlanta, GA
- North American Patristics Society (NAPS) – Chicago, IL
- PKP Scholarly Publishing Conference - Montreal, Canada
- QB, Canada
- RCMA Emerge Conference – Chicago, IL
- SBL International Meeting - Berlin, Germany
- SCELCapalooza – Los Angeles, CA
- Society of American Archivists – Atlanta, GA
- Society of Christian Ethics Annual Meeting - New Orleans, LA
- The International Coalition of Library Consortia (ICOLC) - Jacksonville, FL
- UKSG 2017 – Harrogate, UK



## Meeting Members and Groups Where They Are

- Aquinas College – Nashville, TN
- Barry University – Miami, FL
- Biblical Theological Seminary – Hatfield, PA
- Christian Theological Seminary – Indianapolis, IN
- Colorado Christian University – Lakewood, CO
- Concordia Theological Seminary – Fort Wayne, IN
- Concordia University – Irvine, CA
- Emmanuel College – Toronto, Canada
- Florida Theological Library Association (FTLA) – Oviedo, FL
- Fuller Theological Seminary – Pasadena, CA
- Gateway Seminary – Los Angeles Campus – Ontario, CA
- Gateway Seminary – Rocky Mountain Campus – Centennial, CO
- Hope International University – Fullerton, CA
- Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology, Seton Hall University – South Orange, NJ
- Indiana Wesleyan University – Marion, IN
- International Theological Seminary – El Monte, CA
- Life Pacific College – San Dimas, CA
- Lipscomb University – Nashville, TN
- Logos Evangelical Seminary – El Monte, CA
- Methodist Theological School in Ohio – Delaware, OH
- Minnesota Theological Library Association (MTLA) – St. Paul, MN
- Naropa University – Boulder, CO
- Nashota House Theological Seminary – Milwaukee, WI
- New Brunswick Theological Seminary – New Brunswick, NJ
- Oblate School of Theology – San Antonio, TX
- Pontifical College Josephinum – Columbus, OH
- Reformed Episcopal Seminary – Blue Bell, PA
- Sacred Heart Major Seminary – Detroit, MI
- Sacred Heart School of Theology – Hales Corners, WI
- Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary – Wynnewood, PA
- Southeast Pastoral Institute (SEPI) – Miami, FL
- Southeastern Pennsylvania Theological Library Association (SEPTLA) – New Brunswick, NJ
- Southern California Theological Library Association (SCATLA) – La Mirada, CA
- Southwest Area Theological Library Association (SWATLA) Regional Group Meeting – Fort Worth, TX
- SS. Cyril & Methodius Seminary – Detroit, MI
- St. John Vianney Theological Seminary – Denver, CO
- St. Thomas University – Miami, FL
- Tennessee Theological Library Association (TTLA) – Cleveland, TN
- The Franciscan School of Theology – Oceanside, CA
- Theological Library Cooperative of Arizona (TLCA) Regional Group Meeting – Phoenix, AZ
- Trinity Lutheran Seminary – Columbus, OH
- University of the South – Sewanee, TN
- University of the West – Rosemead, CA
- University of Toronto – Toronto, Canada
- World Mission University – Los Angeles, CA

# ATLA Membership is more diverse and inclusive.

## Developing Country Conference Program

We understand the importance of supporting theological librarianship throughout the world, so we established the Developing Country Program to make attending the ATLA Annual Conference affordable for members in eligible developing countries.

# 10

International attendees paid \$0 to attend the conference

# 27

Received conference Travel Grants (Non U.S. and Canada) totaling \$18,500

# 7

Received Developing Country Conference Grants totaling \$7,000

## The Developing Countries Initiative

We also believe that our databases should be more affordable in developing countries

# 286

Subscriptions to ATLA databases at institutions in developing countries

# 32

total developing countries served



Increased global coverage in ATLA's databases was made possible through the addition of new staff with specific subject expertise and language skills.

New Metadata Analysts



Shawn Goodwin



May May Latt



Antonio Terrone

Collectively staff now cover **39** languages



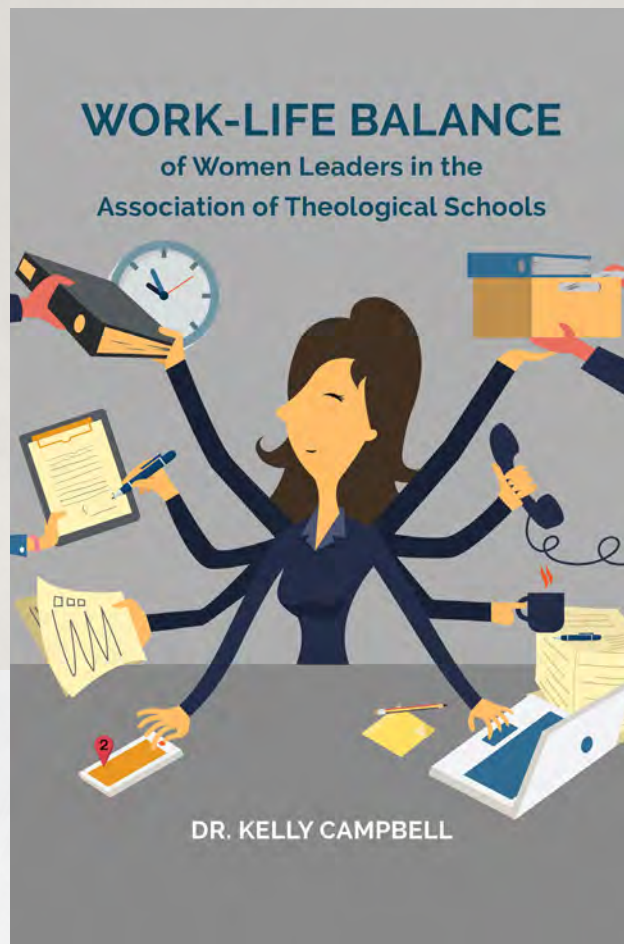
# ATLA has a solid reputation as a facilitator of open access publishing in the study of religion and theology.

We published two open access monographs

- *Fostering Global Communication Among Religions and Libraries: IFLA RELINDIAL SIG Satellite Meeting 2016*
- *Work-Life Balance of Women Leaders in the Association of Theological Schools* by Dr. Kelly Campbell

## Fostering Global Communication Among Religions and Libraries

IFLA RELINDIAL SIG Satellite Meeting 2016  
Columbus, Ohio



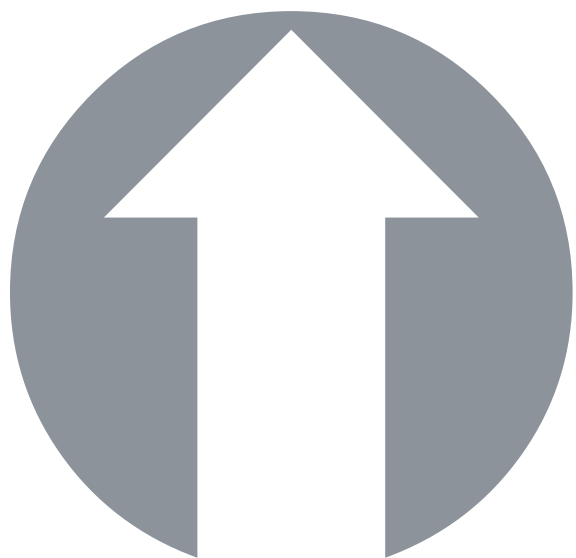


# THEOLOGICAL LIBRARIANSHIP

An Online Journal of the American Theological Library Association

## We published two open access issues of *Theological Librarianship*

*Theological Librarianship* is an open access journal publishing essays, columns, critical reviews, bibliographic essays, and peer-reviewed articles on various aspects of theological librarianship and its contribution to theological education.



**448 Libraries list  
*Theological  
Librarianship*  
in their holdings**  
Compared to 425 in 2016

# ATLA has a shared understanding of what it means to be a hub.

We connected ATLA member libraries through programs and projects

**We supported** a digital repository that contains metadata from ATLA member libraries and archives and collections of other libraries and institutions

The ATLA Digital Library was released initially in beta with its first collection, the Cooperative Digital Resources Initiative (CDRI). Migrated from its original home (since 2003) on the ATLA website, CDRI was a project of ATLA and the Association of Theological Schools (ATS).



# 13,928 ITEMS



**We hired** new staff to help us with this program

*Digital Collections Metadata Librarian*  
Christy Karpinski



**We connected** people physically to the right resources through our member institutions' collections via the ATLA Reciprocal Borrowing Program

**91** Participating libraries in the U.S. and Canada

**We provided** resources like the *ATLA RDB* and *ATLAS* that students and scholars used to identify relevant resources online

Over **2.1 MILLION** records of scholarship in *ATLA RDB*

**324** full text journals in religion and theology in *ATLAS*

**We created** a venue for the exchange of ideas through in-person conferences, symposia, and webinars

### **ATLA 2017 Annual Conference**

Over **300** attendees

**99** speakers from 4 countries

We sponsored

# 10 WEBINARS

to foster the exchange of ideas within the theological librarianship profession and share information about important resources.

120

*attended*

147

*viewed*

These webinars were sponsored by the Professional Development Committee (PDC), Committee for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), and our business partners.

**We published** original scholarship from theological librarians, scholars, and others

1

*Summary of Proceedings*

2

*Issues of Theological Librarianship*

2

*Open Access Monographs*

4

*Issues of Theology Cataloging Bulletin*

**We connected** people to jobs and helped institutions find the right employees by posting

**50+** job openings



# A Historical Letter from the Patriarch of the Church of East Mar Yahb Alahā III (1281-1317) to Pope Boniface VIII (1294-1303) in the Vatican Secret Archives

Submitted by Dr. Iskandar Bcheiry, ATLA Metadata Analyst

During my last trip to Rome and thanks to the kindness of Dr. Luca Carboni, I had the opportunity to examine a few historical documents found in the Vatican Secret Archives. Among these documents was a letter to Pope Boniface VIII (1294-1303) from Mar Yahb Alahā III (1281-1317), the Patriarch of the Church of the East.

The Church of the East, commonly known as the Nestorian Church, is the Christian church that flourished in the Persian territory during the early period of Christianity and quickly spread through Asia. The establishment of the Christian church in the Persian Empire occurred when Christian missionaries, who came directly from Palestine, took advantage of the already existing Jewish communities in Mesopotamia, and evangelized several places in and around Erbil. The Jewish community became the channel through which the first seed of the Christian faith was transplanted from Palestine to the Persian territory. However, the effective development of the Christian Church in the Persian Empire took place under the Sassanid dynasty who overthrew the Parthian dynasty in 224. At the beginning of the fourth century the bishop of the capital city of the Persian Empire, Seleucia-Ctesiphon, organized the bishops and their local centers in the Persian empire according to the ecclesiastic model developed in the Roman empire. After the excommunication of Nestorius, the Patriarch of Constantinople in 431, many of his followers escaped to the nearby Persian territory. The teaching of Nestorius was welcomed by most of the Christian church hierarchy in Persia and as a result of that, the Church of the East came to be known as the Nestorian Church. The Church of the East is well known for its missionary efforts and Nestorian missionaries arrived in China and Central Asia during the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries. When the Mongols rose as an empire and invaded a large part of Asia and east Europe, some of the tribes who joined them were Christian Nestorians. Thus, the Mongols were kind to Christians and there were many influential Nestorian Christians in the Mongol court. The Nestorian church played an important part in the plan of the Mongol rulers in forming an alliance with Christian Europe against the Muslims Mamelukes to capture Jerusalem, however such efforts did not bear fruits.

The author of the letter, Patriarch Mar Yahb Alahā, an ethnic Uighur and a monk of the Church of the East, was born in the vicinity of Beijing. As a young monk, he took the name of Markus and became devoted to his spiritual master, Şawmā. Sometime around 1275 Mar Yahb Alahā (Markus) and Şawmā set out on a pilgrimage with the intention of visiting Jerusalem. In spite of travel permits from the Kublai Khan, the kings of the Mongols, who was ruling at that time most of the Near East, Markus and Şawmā encountered numerous difficulties before reaching Baghdad and meeting with the Catholicos of the Church of East, Mar Danka. When the Catholicos Mar Danka died (1281), Markus was chosen as his successor and took the name Mar Yahb Alahā III. His election as a patriarch was on the account of his Uighur origins and his familiarity with the language and customs of the Mongol leaders. Following his election as patriarch he sent Şawmā on a diplomatic mission to seek alliance between Christian Europe and Mongols.

The record of the journey of Şawmā provides a rich, eye-witness account of places, people, and events in the last half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Mar Yahb Alahā III is remembered for his efforts to establish diplomatic contacts with the Mongols and for his defense of the Church of East against harassment and massacres by local Muslim rulers. Events of his life were recorded by Şawmā who also kept a record of his diplomatic mission to Christian Europe. The story of Mar Yahb Alahā III first became known in the English-speaking world in 1928. In that year the British Orientalist E. A. Wallis Budge published his monks of Kuplai khan, Emperor of China.<sup>[1]</sup>

Returning back to the letter of Mar Yahb Alahā III to Pope Boniface VIII, we notice that apart from the short introduction and the final greetings which are in Syriac, the letter is written in Arabic. It is basically a letter of courtesy to the Pope, who is respectfully addressed as "keeper of the keys of the kingdom [of heaven], sun of the Christian nation, fifth evangelist." The author presents himself as "Catholicos, patriarch of the East" and he does not discuss theological subjects or submit a profession of faith.<sup>[2]</sup> The letter reflects the efforts of the Nestorians in



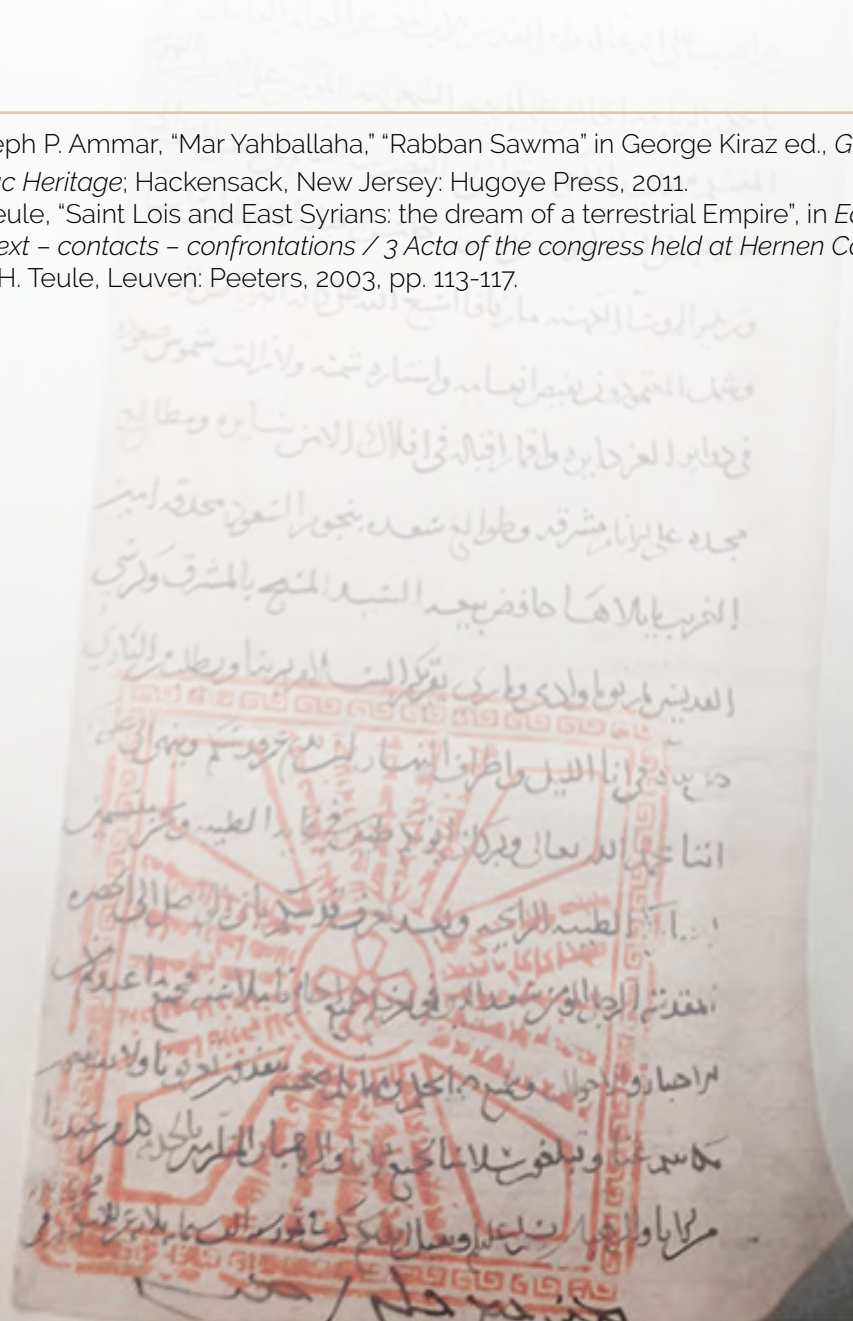


the East to build good relations with the Christians of the West in the context of a hope of a Christian-Mongolian alliance against the Muslims Mamelukes and others. The following is an English translation of the Syriac and Arabic texts of the letter:

*"In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The stranger Yahb Alahā, through the mercies of Christ, the Catholicos Patriarch of the East asks your prayers and glory to Christ. He regularly prays to the Holy Father, the knowledgeable and active man, chosen by divine wisdom, who is seated on the throne of Simon Peter, entrusted to the Divine Secrets, keeper of the keys of the kingdom [of heaven], sun of the Christian nation, fifth evangelist, father of the fathers, the head of the bishops Mar Papa, may God bestow upon all of creation the shadow of his sanctity and He includes all the baptized people by his graces (...) the stranger Yahb Alahā the keeper of the Church of the Lord Christ in the East and the Seat of saint Thomas, Saint Adai and Saint Mari he presents to You his greetings through our Lord (...) we inform Your holiness that the man who arrived to Your holy presence named Sad al-Dīn will inform You all our news and condition. Our greetings to all the fathers, monks who are vowed to the service (of God) and all who are by You (...) It was written in July 1613 for the Greeks (=1302 A.D). May our Lord be with all of Us, Amen."*

<sup>[1]</sup> Joseph P. Ammar, "Mar Yahballaha," "Rabban Sawma" in George Kiraz ed., *Gorgias Encyclopedic Dictionary of Syriac Heritage*; Hackensack, New Jersey: Hugoye Press, 2011.

<sup>[2]</sup> H. Teule, "Saint Lois and East Syrians: the dream of a terrestrial Empire", in *East and West in the crusader states: context – contacts – confrontations / 3 Acta of the congress held at Hernen Castle in September 2000*, ed. K. Ciggaar and H. Teule, Leuven: Peeters, 2003, pp. 113-117.



# The Work of the Association



(L to R) Donna Wells, Nicholas Weiss, Roger Morales (staff liaison), Ondrea Murphy

- Bonggun Baek\*
- Drew Baker\*\*
- Ondrea Murphy
- Lee Staman\*\*
- Nicholas Weiss\*
- Donna Wells (Chair)\*

*\*In February 2017 Donna Wells assumed the position of Chair for the remainder of the year as Nicholas Weiss stepped down from the committee for personal reasons. Both Drew Baker and Lee Staman joined the committee in early 2017 to replace Bonggun Baek and Nicholas who stepped down from the committee.*

*\*\* Not pictured*

## Committee for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

In order to realize and live the core value of hospitality, inclusion, and diversity as outlined in the ATLA Strategic Plan, the Committee for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is committed to advancing ATLA's culture that affirms the intrinsic value of all members regardless of racial, cultural, age, career stage/professional experience, sexual orientation, gender expression, expression of religious tradition, disabilities, or socioeconomic differences by:

- identifying, acknowledging, and deconstructing barriers to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- welcoming, valuing, and celebrating multiple perspectives and cultural vantage points
- increasing awareness and sensitivity toward issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion
- modeling meaningful exchange and full community participation
- creating and maintaining a welcoming and respectful environment
- embedding diversity, equity, and inclusion into the work and outcomes of the Association
- providing members with resources, tools, and best practices they can use at their own institutions as appropriate
- transforming ATLA's composition to reflect the diversity of members' institutions and communities

## DEI Webinars

DEI sponsored a three-part webinar series, hosted by Myka Kennedy Stephens and Dr. Nicole Amy Cooke, covering ways libraries can be more inclusive, culturally competent, and welcoming.

### Making Your Library a Place for Meaningful Conversation

by Myka Kennedy Stephens, Seminary Librarian, Lancaster Theological Seminary

13

Registered

11

Viewed on demand\*

### Librarians as Active Bystanders: Centering Social Justice in LIS Practice

by Dr. Nicole Cooke, Assistant Professor, School of Information Sciences, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

14

Registered

24

Viewed on demand\*

### Let's Talk about Power: Why Diversity and Cultural Competence are Important to LIS

by Dr. Nicole Cooke, Assistant Professor, School of Information Sciences, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

17

Registered

37

Viewed on demand\*

\*At time of the end of the fiscal year

The committee also awarded the DEI scholarship to Dr. Ann Hildago of the Claremont School of Theology. (See page 39)

## DEI at the ATLA Annual Conference

DEI Members Donna Wells and Ondrea Murphy presented a poster to raise awareness of the existence of the DEI scholarship, and several past recipients graciously stopped by to share their experiences.



The committee sponsored, The Human Rights of Muslims in the United States: How Is The Question Irrelevant?, a session presented by Dr. Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im of the Emory Law School. The session was very well attended with 27 attendees and received positive feedback.

# 2017 ATLA Annual Conference: Southern Harmony: The Human Touch in the Digital Age

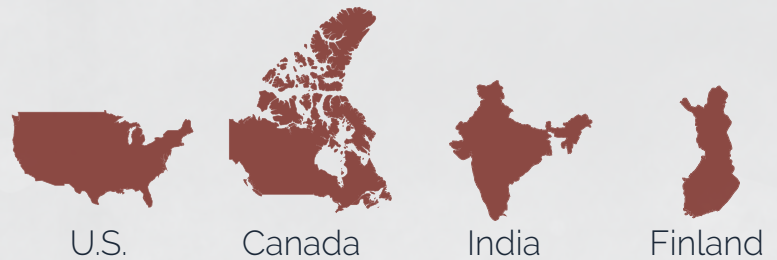
**300+** members,  
exhibitors, and international  
guests in attendance

**101** sessions

**64** proposals submitted

**10** international attendees

**99** speakers from **4** countries



## The Conference Committee

The Conference Committee is the strategic and long-range planning agent for the Association's Annual Conferences. This committee also identifies and responds to needs for continuing education of ATLA members at the Annual Conference.

(Back, L to R) Shanee' Yvette Murrain, Paul Tippey, Pat Graham, Robert Burgess, Rebecca Yowler, Miranda Bennett (chair); (Front, L to R) Matthew Thiesen, Erica Durham

## Memorable highlights of the conference included:

The Research Practices of Religious Studies Scholars Luncheon, an all-conference event led by ATLA Executive Director Brenda Bailey-Hainer with presentations from ITHAKA S+R Director, Libraries and Scholarly Communication Program Roger Schonfeld, ITHAKA S+R Senior Researcher, Library and Scholarly Communication Danielle Cooper, and Executive Director of Society of Biblical Literature, John F. Kutsko. This project examined the changing research methods and practices of academic religious studies scholars in the United States with the goal of identifying services to better support them. Research teams at 18 academic libraries, including several ATLA Institutional Members, collaboratively worked on this project.



One of the Local Host institutions, Columbia Theological Seminary, partnered with re:loom, a not-for-profit that employs and empowers homeless and low-income individuals through weaving beautifully-designed products out of upcycled materials, were used to create the official conference tote bag.



The Thursday all-conference event was spent at Emory University, with a warm welcome from local Sacred Harp singers, tours of the beautiful Pitts Theology Library, and a tribute to retiring Pitts Theology Library Director Pat Graham.



### Endowment Committee at the conference

The committee attended the 2017 ATLA Annual Conference and participated in hosting the Endowment Table. Marti Alt assembled a book of letters from retirees for members to read. Sharon Taylor gave a presentation on the work of the committee as part of the ATLA Association update session. During that session, Marti Alt was thanked for her years of exemplary work, particularly as chief liaison with retired members, as she rotates off the committee.

# Endowment Committee

The Endowment Committee informs the membership of the purpose of the Endowment Fund, the cultivation of donor relationships, and the solicitation of major gifts through planned (estate) gifts and other funding sources



(L to R): Dennis Swanson, Sharon Taylor (Chair), Marti Alt, and Eric Benoy

## Endowment Fund

The committee reaffirmed its short-term goal of a \$1 million fund within the next five years and a long-term goal of \$13.5 million. Although fund raising fell short of the \$10,000 goal set for the year, we are encouraged by the continued support of our members and institutions.

**60** donations totaling **\$7,151.50**  
(an increase of **\$600.25** over last fiscal year)

ATLA matched the contributions and contributed an additional **\$12,848.50** for a total contribution of **\$20,000**

The Endowment Fund balance **\$576,406**  
an increase of **\$97,285** over last year's total\*

*\*As of August 31, 2017*



# The Professional Development Committee

(Back, L to R) Wesley Custer, Michael Bradford, Gillian Harrison Cain (Staff Liaison), James Estes; Yasmine Abou-El-Kheir, Megan Welsh (Chair), Martha Adkins (not pictured)

## The Professional Development Committee

The Professional Development Committee (PDC) fosters development of librarians and related information professionals who serve theological and religious studies scholarship and study. We define the infrastructure needed to deliver professional development opportunities to members throughout the year by:

- determining member needs
- identifying expert resources
- utilizing a variety of methods and delivery mechanisms

In doing so, we facilitate the exchange of ideas and support members at every point in their careers.

## Professional Development Webinars

The PDC hosted a total of four webinars with 76 participants at the time of broadcast and 75 on-demand views once the webinars were posted to the ATLA website. The most popular of these, "The Role of the Theological Librarian in Formational Theological Education," was facilitated by Wesley Custer and Susan Ebertz in November 2016.

The majority of work over the past year has consisted of awarding funds for professional development and sponsoring webinars. PDC members reviewed several Regional Grant applications and funded three grants to support professional development opportunities hosted by SEPTLA, FTLA, and MTLA. These funds allowed members to learn about universal design, participate in FTLA's annual regional conference, and gain experience learning about distance education.

## PDC Writers

Inspired by an article in *The Economist*, James Estes contributed an article, viewed over 300 times to date, on his thoughts regarding the intersection of lifelong learning and professional development. He considers our role in promoting lifelong learning among our students while also fostering this within ourselves and through ATLA. Megan Welsh, Chair, summarized the results of the Professional Development Needs survey. The survey gathered information from 181 respondents, the majority of whom were from seminaries or divinity schools. Many respondents indicated that they have administrative, reference and instruction, and collection development duties and that their preferred platform for professional development is webinars.

- The Role of the Theological Librarian in Formational Theological Education
- Librarian/Faculty Collaboration: Using LibGuides to Facilitate Greater Student Learning
- Onboarding New Librarians: Building Culture and Connections through an Experienced-Based Training Manual
- ATLA PCC Funnels – With an Emphasis on SACO

## Task Force on Scholarly Communication in Religion and Theology



To advance scholarly communication in theology and religious studies by providing librarians, archivists, and other information professionals with a disciplinary framework and by implementing strategic initiatives.

- Andy Keck, Chair
- Clifford Anderson
- Chris Anderson\*
- Debbie Creamer
- Jérémie LeBlanc
- Brenda Bailey-Hainer (ex-officio)

(L to R) Clifford Anderson, Andy Keck (Chair), Brenda Bailey-Hainer (ex-officio), Jérémie LeBlanc, Chris Anderson, Debbie Creamer (not pictured)

*\*Stepped down from the task force in May 2017 to join the Editorial Board of Theological Librarianship*



## A New Task Force Defined

The task force developed a working definition of scholarly communication, identified stakeholders and partners, and articulated the scope of our work. Our work includes the following:

- Develop and advocate for open digital resources throughout the scholarly communication workflow.
- Map and promote relationships within the scholarly communication landscape in religion and theology.
- Share tools and best practices to advance scholarly communication in religion and theology.
- Empower ATLA members to take an active role in scholarly communication, including their own scholarship.

## “Scholarly Communication: A Guide for the Perplexed”

Task Force members presented a pre-conference workshop to share tools and best practices.

What is scholarly communication? How does it apply to the field of theology and religious studies? If you are wondering how to become more involved in this transformative movement within librarianship, this half-day workshop is for you! Led by members of the ATLA Taskforce on Scholarly Communication in Religion and Theology, we'll provide a basic framework for advancing scholarly communication within our discipline. We'll review the fundamentals of copyright law, talk about key initiatives toward fostering open access, open education resources, and open data. After we get the basics under our belts, we'll go hands-on and begin exploring these concepts practically. You'll come away with key tools and resources you need to develop your expertise in this quickly-evolving area.

# Product Titles

# 5

new licensed titles in  
ATLAS

# 53

newly appearing titles  
in ATLA RDB

# 8

newly appearing titles  
in ATLA CPLI

## FY17 Newly Appearing Titles in ATLA CPLI

- *International Studies in Catholic Education*
- *Jesuit Higher Education*
- *Humanitas*
- *Diálogo ecuménico*
- *Ecclesia Orans*
- *Ius Communionis*
- *Münchener Theologische Zeitschrift*
- *Teología y catequesis*

## FY17 Newly Appearing Titles for ATLAS

- *Auburn Studies*
- *Auburn Center Background Report* [ceased]
- *Trinity Studies* [ceased]
- *Neue Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie* [ceased]
- *Saint Luke's Journal of Theology* [ceased]

## FY17 Newly Appearing Titles in ATLA RDB

- *Journal of Muslims in Europe*
- *Annual Review of Islam in Africa*
- *Quaker Studies*
- *Review of Religion and Chinese Society*
- *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai. Theologia orthodoxă*
- **한국기독교신학논총** [Korea Journal of Christian Studies]
- *Diálogo*
- *Ecclesial Practices*
- *Estudos de religião*
- *Revue biblique*
- *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai. Theologia Catholica*
- *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai. Theologia Catholica Latina*
- *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai. Theologia reformata Transylvaniensis*
- *Auburn Center Background Report*
- *Auburn Studies*
- *Biblical and Ancient Greek Linguistics*
- *Canadian Theological Review*
- *Familia*
- *Hikma*
- *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*
- *Nazariyat İslâm Felsefe ve Bilim Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi*
- *Estudios bíblicos*
- *Nagoya studies in Indian culture and Buddhism : Sabhāsā*
- *Questions liturgiques*
- *Revue de Qumran*
- *Orthodoxes Forum*
- **신약논단** [Korean New Testament Studies]
- **신약연구** [Korean Evangelical New Testament Studies]
- *Journal of Jewish Ethics*
- *Journal of Religion in Europe*
- *Journal of Religion in Japan*
- *Journal of Sufi Studies*
- *Prabuddha Bharata*
- *Revista española de teología*
- *Yale Journal of Religion and Music*
- *McMaster Journal of Theology and Ministry*
- **복음과 선교** [Evangelical Missiology]
- *Religion in the Roman Empire*
- *Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte*
- *Practical Theology (Baptist College of Theology, Lagos)*
- *Sojourn*
- *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* [a few articles previously existed in RDB from past selective indexing]
- *Health and Social Care Chaplaincy*
- *Journal of Biblical Counseling* [previously indexed to 2001]
- *Kagoro Journal of Theology*
- *Annales Theologici*
- *Teologia Polityczna*
- *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy*
- *Journal of Jewish Languages*
- *Shaker Quarterly* [ceased]
- *Cuadernos salmantinos de filosofía*
- *Páginas*
- *Oriens*



Newly Appearing  
Index Titles



Are Open Access



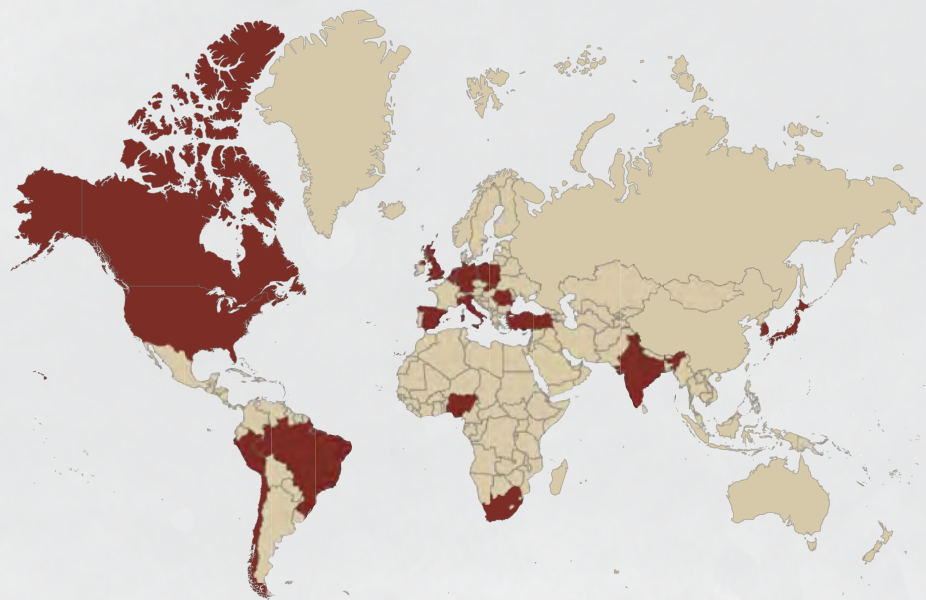
Are Peer Reviewed

**STRATEGIC GOAL**

ATLA has a solid reputation as a facilitator of open access publishing in the study of religion and theology.

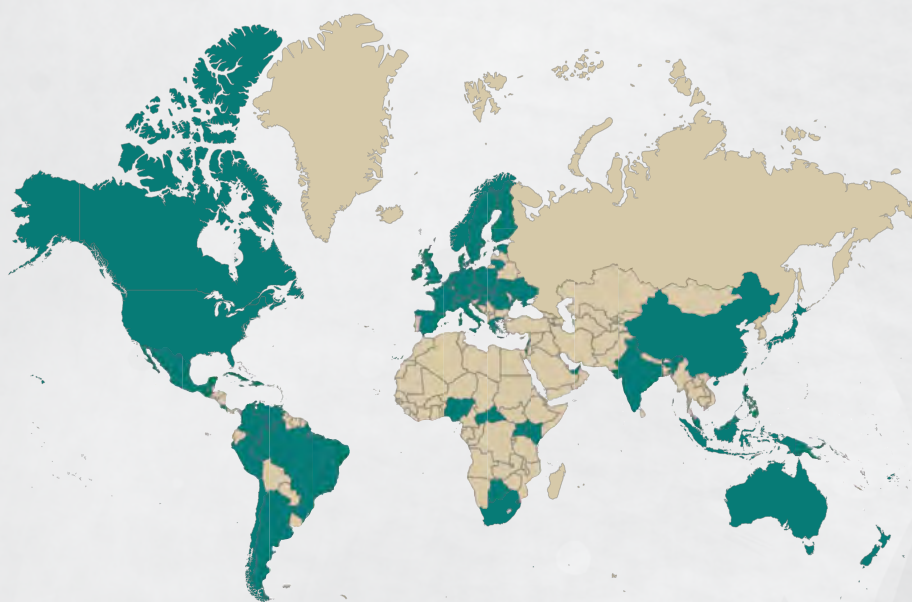
Our 61 newly appearing index titles in *ATLA RDB* and *ATLA CPLI* expanded our global reach to 21 countries:

- Belgium
- Brazil
- Canada
- Chile
- Germany
- India
- Italy
- Japan
- Netherlands
- Nigeria
- Peru
- Poland
- Romania
- Singapore
- Slovak Republic
- South Africa
- South Korea
- Spain
- Turkey
- United Kingdom
- United States



Currently there are ATLA product subscriptions via EBSCO at 1500+ sites in more than 67 Countries:

- Antigua and Barbuda
- Argentina
- Australia
- Austria
- Belgium
- Botswana
- Brazil
- Canada
- Central African Republic
- Chile
- China - SAR
- China, People's Rep. of
- Colombia
- Costa Rica
- Croatia
- Cuba
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Dominican Republic
- Estonia
- Fiji
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Guatemala
- Haiti
- Hungary
- India
- Indonesia



- Ireland
- Israel
- Italy
- Jamaica
- Japan
- Kenya
- Lebanon
- Lithuania
- Malaysia
- Mexico
- Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Nigeria
- Norway
- Papua New Guinea
- Peru
- Philippines
- Poland
- Romania
- Samoa
- Singapore
- Slovak Republic
- South Africa
- South Korea
- Spain
- Swaziland
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Taiwan
- Trinidad and Tobago
- UAE
- Uganda
- UK
- Ukraine
- US
- Vatican City
- Venezuela



# Testimony: Personal Collection Development

Submitted by Arthur (AJ) Boston, Scholarly Communications Librarian, Waterfield Library, Murray State University

*This article was previously featured in Vol. 24, No. 4 of Theology Cataloging Bulletin. Testimony is a feature in TCB that gives a place for members of the technical services community to share their stories. We felt this testimony was applicable to the wider ATLA community and have since published it for our members below.*



This column serves as a debriefing of the events that led me to the borderline-traumatic deselection of three library collections. Within five years, my dad passed away, my son was born, and I was hired in my first professional university library position. My father's passing forced my family to consider the fate of the stamp collection he had amassed over fifty years. A few years later, the coin flipped, and new fatherhood compelled me to question the content of my personal book and media collection. These two deeply personal auras of thought were lent a professional perspective as the university library I was newly hired into began its first ever comprehensive weeding. What follows are the brief histories behind these three collections.

The university I now work for was founded in 1922 as a normal school (a teachers' college) in the middle of farmland. Its library began on the stage of the local high school with a dictionary and a Bible. The university remains surrounded by farmland, but now as a fully-accredited multidisciplinary college with several advanced degree programs. The library has modernized and the collection has grown well beyond a handful of monographs. However, with no systematic weeding in 90 years, the collection was, in farmer parlance, going to seed.

As luck would have it, when the library finally did embark on a weeding project, it was just as I was hired. The process walked a well-trod path likely familiar to readers of this column. Librarians like myself made use of reports to scour our, hrm, mature collection. We asked boilerplate questions like: Is this information out of date? Does this support the current curriculum? Has this ever been used?

*I would have a hand in the regeneration of a nearly century-old collection, created by librarians with years of experience well beyond my own.*

But all the practical doing of this, to me, the newly-hired interim Research and Instruction Librarian, was daunting. I would have a hand in the regeneration of a nearly century-old collection, created by librarians with years of experience well beyond my own. While I had spent many hours as an undergrad here, I was a philosophy and English major who seldom charted the rest of the call number ranges. While I was attempting to learn what resources students and faculty might use, I was simultaneously making educated guesses about what I prayed they wouldn't miss.

It helped that the departments I represent were no longer looking as closely at this print collection. It also helped that I already had experience letting a well-considered, well-loved collection go.

My father was "struck down" (in his good-natured telling of it) with the polio virus in first grade. In the years leading up to this, philately had been popularized by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, a fellow American



similarly struck down. My father's Aunt Adele gifted my father his first stamp album during his year of hospital bed confinement. Where Aunt Adele and FDR gave him a lifelong hobby, my dad gave me a childhood home that resembled a special collections museum.

*Where Aunt Adele and FDR gave him a lifelong hobby, my dad gave me a childhood home that resembled a special collections museum.*

Although my immediate family enjoyed suggesting he was an insatiable hoarder, my dad was, in fact, quite selective. He assembled complete stamp sets from most countries with a postal system, and he had a penchant for Civil War and Depression-era Kentucky memorabilia. I distinctly recall him showing me a beautifully-penned letter from a Civil War soldier to President Lincoln, which was one in a series of choice pieces deployed in his failed bid to shepherd me into the (dusty) fold.

There is a shadow box in my mom's kitchen framing a humorously large blue ribbon from one of the occasions my dad proudly took home the "big" antiques prize at the Kentucky State Fair. At his funeral in 2010, I was given a book on Louisville's historic Brownsboro Road by its author with my father's name highlighted in the acknowledgements. I can't recall if this was before or after a very classy antiques dealer slipped me his business card. All this to say, my own appreciation withstanding, my dad was not a junk collector.

Visiting home and walking past the 'stamp room' had been a comfort since his death. All those green, red, and blue buckram album spines with gold-lettered names of continents staring back at me as they had my entire life, as they had stared at my father for decades. But without my father, those albums weren't receiving their deserved attention. He conscientiously made it clear throughout his life these items should be with real collectors. He did not collect like a hoarder, and neither would we. So, sometime after my father's passing, my family made the difficult decision to entrust a professional dealer to take nearly the entire collection to auction.

For my home library, my wife bought me a set of bookcases in 2011 which covered every wall of my office that was not a door or window. I filled every inch of these 27 shelves with books, movies, and records. Even more spilled into the living room, random boxes, and into my mom's garage two hundred miles away. Call this seeming excess the product of a childhood spent indoors and of working in video retail places. But at the end of 2014, a year after my son's birth, something in me changed. My approach toward collecting went from completist to essentialist. Here in 2016, the living room, my mom's garage, and nearly half the shelves in my home office are empty.

Some of my non-canonical reading bolstered my position to discard and to even view deselection as creative selection. For instance, the new world of bills heralded in with the birth of my son, inspired a reluctant Google search for Dave Ramsey, the money guru who champions debt simplicity. By selling the apparently non-essential portion of my collection, I was financing new purchases relatively guilt-free. I joyfully held the Kool-Aid cup served with Marie Kondo's *The Life Changing Magic of Tidying Up*. And I was very taken with Kanye West's paraphrasing of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry in *Rolling Stone* (2013): "a design is the point where you can't take anything else away."

*Besides, if a complete reading history is ever sought, I have a Goodreads account.*

But what really inspired this farewell to armfuls of paper and plastic was a little boy. Collecting had been for myself, but now there was an impressionable mind in the house, spending time in my office, observing the interests his father cultivated. Keeping copies of every book I read was not achieving this picture. Besides, if a complete reading history is ever sought, I have a Goodreads account.

Cutting away the fat, so to speak, reveals a more robust set of priorities, not only of taste, but of practical living. What one chooses to devote time, space, and money toward is a meaningful showing. A university library transforming untouched manuscripts into student space ably demonstrates a shift of values. As much as my son appreciates his toys, he easily parts with them as he outgrows them. The bulk of what I have is not rare, not like my father's archive. There should be little remorse when I shed a box of DVDs and reclaim that space with a set of *Curious George* books and a sippy cup. What I've learned from my dad, my son, and my work is that part of growing is letting things go.

*Abridged and edited with permission by Leslie Engelson. Full article available from: Biblio-Notes 67 (Spring 2016).*

# Programs and Initiatives

## STRATEGIC GOAL

ATLA has a solid reputation as a facilitator of open access publishing in the study of religion and theology.

## Digital Library Released in Beta

The ATLA Digital Library brings together into one portal digital collections held by theological and religious studies libraries and organizations. It provides a single point of entry to these digital primary source materials, regardless of the location of the resources.

The ATLA Digital Library was released initially in beta with its first collection, the Cooperative Digital Resources Initiative (CDRI). Migrated from its original home (since 2003) on the ATLA website, CDRI was a project of ATLA and the Association of Theological Schools (ATS). CDRI is a repository of digital resources contributed by member libraries and its creation was made possible by a generous grant from the Henry Luce Foundation.

The CDRI collection contains digital images of woodcuts, photographs, slides, papyri, coins, maps, postcards, manuscripts, lithographs, sermons, shape-note tune books, and various forms of Christian art, architecture, and iconography. Its coverage focus includes ancient Near East, missions, world religions, and more. We are thrilled to give this collection a new home with improved appearance, stability, and usability.



**13,928**  
items

## ATLA Funnel Projects

We support **2** funnel projects. These are component parts of the Program for Cooperative Cataloging (PCC). The Funnel Projects are sponsored by the Professional Development Committee.

### CONSER (Cooperative Online Serials Program)

**1**

Member

**172**

New name records

**138**

Modified existing records

### NACO (Name Authority Cooperative Program)

**22**

Members

**1,154**

New name records

**723**

Modified existing records

**6**

New series

**2**

Changed series



## ATLA Serials Exchange

The ATLA Serials Exchange (ASE) allows ATLA's Institutional Members to freely exchange duplicate serials by listing materials offered in a shared database where others can view and claim materials.

**177** Institutional Members use this program

## ATLA Reciprocal Borrowing Program

**91** Participating libraries in the U.S. and Canada

The ATLA Reciprocal Borrowing Program creates an arrangement between participating North American ATLA Institutional Members to grant check-out privileges to each other's patrons and students.

## Consortial Purchasing Programs

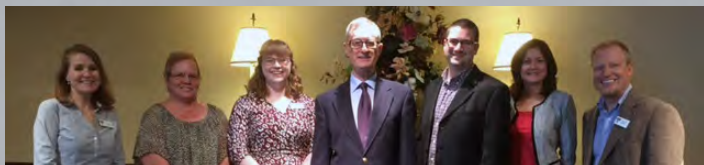
The ATLA Consortial Purchasing Program enables members to obtain reduced pricing for various products. Participation in the three primary programs included:

- ATLA/EBSCO Consortium – **78** libraries
- ATLA/OCLC Consortium – **39** libraries
- OCLC WMS Group – **27** libraries
- OCLC SCS – **10** libraries
- Through SCELG – **42** institutions licensing **121** products from **14** vendors

## Grants

### Regional Grants

- The Florida Theological Library Association (FTLA) Meeting was awarded \$500 to support their annual conference.



- The Minnesota Theological Library Association (MTLA) was awarded \$1,300 to fund their workshop "Building an Inclusive Library Through Universal Design."
- The Southeastern Pennsylvania Theological Library Association (SEPTLA) was awarded \$800 to fund "Library Support for Online and Distance Education: Tips and Best Practices," their biannual meeting.



### Consultation Grant

- Columbia Theological Seminary was awarded \$800 to fund a two-day visit by an outside consultant who evaluated the library's rare book and special collections and made recommendations.

## Scholarship

Dr. Ann Hildago of Claremont School of Theology was awarded the Diversity Scholarship in the amount of \$2,400. The funds will be used toward her master's program in library and information studies at San Jose State.



# ATLA Publishing Program

ATLA continues to expand its open access publishing program by recognizing three distinct areas of ATLA publishing:

1. Association's work and activities, which includes the *ATLA Newsletter*, *ATLA Annual Report*, *ATLA Annual Yearbook*, and reports, white papers, and research studies.
2. ATLA Press, which allows our members and the larger community to publish open access works through the open access journal *Theological Librarianship*, the *Theology Cataloging Bulletin (TCB)*, the *ATLA Summary of Proceedings*, and an Open Access Monographs imprint (to be named).
3. Publishing services, which includes hosting open access journals and offering professional development opportunities for members and others in the areas of open access publishing.

We established the ATLA Press Coordinating Council (APCC) that facilitates communication between Editorial Boards of the imprints and ATLA staff.

- Gillian Harrison Cain, Chair
- Miranda Bennett, *Proceedings* Editor in Chief
- Gary F. Daught, At Large
- Leslie Engelson, *Theology Cataloging Bulletin* Editor in Chief
- David Kohl, Interim Monographs Editor in Chief
- Melody Layton McMahon, At Large
- Jennifer Woodruff-Tait, *Theological Librarianship* Editor in Chief



## Press Council

(Back, L to R) David Kohl, Miranda Bennett, Leslie Engelson; (Front, L to R) Jennifer Woodruff-Tait, Gary F. Daught, Melody Layton McMahon (not pictured)

# What You're Reading

## > Top Reads of *Theological Librarianship*

*Supporting Digital Humanities  
for Knowledge Acquisition in Modern Libraries*  
by Sharon A. Taylor

*Online Resources for the Study of  
Chinese Religion and Philosophy*  
by Martha A. Adkins

*Greater Than the Sum of Its Parts:  
The Shared Wealth of Scholarly  
Resources in the Catholic Portal*  
by Diane Maher

*Featured Web Resource: Theological Commons*  
by Gregory P. Murray

*A New Era for Theological Librarianship*  
by Miranda H. Bennett, Gary F. Daught,  
Suzanne Estelle-Holmer

## > Top Reads of the ATLA Newsletter

*A Relational Database of Syriac  
and Arabic Historical Registers and Archives*  
by Dr. Iskandar Bcheiry

*My Journey into the Unknown:  
From Endpapers to Ebru,  
the Turkish Art of Paper Marbling*  
by Ann Heinrichs

*Open Access Mandates  
and Policies in the United States*  
by Andrew Keck

*ATLA Launches Beta Release  
of the ATLA Digital Library*  
by ATLA Staff

*The Theological Librarianship  
Editorial Board Welcomes Three New Editors*  
by ATLA Staff



# The Merits and Mandate of Professional Development — or, What Happens When a Theology Librarian Reads The Economist

Submitted by James Estes, PhD, Library Director & Associate Professor of Theological Bibliography, Wesley Theological Seminary

In January 2017, The Economist published a special report on lifelong learning (vol. 422, no. 9023). "Lifelong learning" is an idea most librarians are no strangers to; the Association for College and Research Libraries considers information literacy a core element of lifelong learning, and many religious educators argue that lifelong learning is integral to theological education. As educators and as theology librarians, we do not merely support students in pursuit of a degree or formal credential: we are engaged in the instruction and shaping of people whose formation we often metaphorically call a journey. Lifelong learning is a key dimension of this work. The Economist's focus was qualified, of course, by the publication's focus on trade and global industry. This was clear in the issue's subheading, "How to survive in the age of automation," and reinforced through its attention to the transformation of truckers into programmers and their growth as high-skilled workers.

The reading was informative. My thoughts turned to different aspects of lifelong learning in our industry, yet these thoughts were directed less toward the students we serve, and more toward my colleagues and our profession itself. At the heart of The Economist's special report lies the very real awareness that without continuous career-oriented learning, jobs will outpace people, and industry suffers. I believe that this has numerous implications for ATLA members.

## Professional Obligation, or Survival Strategy?

Is professional development an obligation we have as professionals? We have the graduate credential, but what use do we have for continued learning in our jobs? The Economist discusses the growing demand, even mandate, for companies to hire better learners, or as Google calls them, "learning animals" (Special Report, p. 8). Those individuals who continue to learn on the job are the reality of the workforce: "training someone early to do one thing all their lives is not the answer to lifelong learning" (Special Report, p. 4). Certainly, many of my colleagues in ATLA continue to grow and develop new skills and competencies throughout their careers, acquiring and then replacing knowledge I have not yet even considered. Further, as a specialized librarianship, our career carries the burden of knowledge of both librarianship and theology or religious studies. We continue to learn in one or both fields, sometimes one to the detriment of the other. This continuous learning should be the norm, not merely the lauded behavior of a virtuous few. The Economist addresses the reality that lifelong learning is not simply a matter of professional virtue: it is fundamental to our career success, and even survival, in a dynamic industry.

## Our Institutions' Obligations

However, this is more than just a matter of what we as librarians should do. It raises concern for how our institutions support us. Within trade and industry, The Economist notes that "training budgets are particularly vulnerable to cuts when the pressure is on" (Special Report, p. 6). One might think that institutions of higher education would be protective of professional development budgets, but we all know that this is not the case. Professional development budgets are often anemic to start, demonstrate glacial rates of increase, and are the first items to be trimmed in times of scarcity. Where does this leave us? Staff librarians may have limited voice with which to parlay for robust professional development opportunities in the face of institutional duress. Library directors theoretically have more leverage to advocate for professional development budgets, although whether there is an administrative ear to hear these voices is another matter entirely. At the very least, library directors who are responsible for establishing staff professional development budgets can strive to protect and grow these budgets. Those librarians and directors who do have a voice at their institutions may do well to offer the counsel that skilled trade has learned: "to remain competitive, and to give low- and high-skilled workers alike the best chance of success, economies need to offer training and career-focused education throughout people's working lives" (Special Report, p. 6). If professional development is a survival strategy for librarians, it is just as necessary for the institutions we serve.



### ATLA's Role in Professional Development

With this, I turn to our Association itself. What is ATLA's role in providing professional development opportunities for its members? I do not ask this merely to plug the Professional Development Committee (PDC), although I will not hide the fact that I have served on this committee since 2015, and I believe we have done good work. (I realize that there is more yet to do.) Annual meetings, regional conferences, webinars, special initiatives — these all provide opportunities for us to grow as library professionals. And yet (to return to my first observation), I am aware that too often professional development is done at the initiative of the librarian, and it is too easy for us to become complacent in our skills and knowledge. Is this in part because there is little formal structure which rewards professional development, beyond how various schools might articulate promotion opportunities? The Economist notes that individuals "are much more likely to invest in training if it confers a qualification that others will recognize" (Special Report, p. 12). Beyond the graduate library degree, what are the library professional qualifications that would be of value to us? ATLA does not require continuing education, although some parallel associations have more formal structures that mandate or recognize professional development. I am not recommending such a move here, but I am nonetheless forced to wonder whether a similar movement of requirement or reward would be of value for our profession's health and vitality.

My questions and reflections about the needs for professional development within ATLA should not be considered prescriptive; while I would not want to dismiss them as idle musings either, I do offer them as conversation points for us to discuss the future of our profession. I am not new to librarianship, but I am among the newer generation of library directors within our association, and I will be the first to acknowledge that there is still much for me to learn about our industry. We, too, are lifelong learners, and we are subject to the same economic and social forces that shape industries everywhere. How will we respond to these challenges? While I talk of survival strategies and mandates, I also believe that we are a professional body whose shared commitment to our mission can respond productively to these challenges as we grow "from strength to strength" (Ps. 84.7).

# Meet the Leadership

## Board of Directors

(front, L to R) Jaeyeon Lucy Chung, Jennifer Ulrich, Jennifer Bartholomew, Kelly Campbell, Beth Bidlack, Ellen Frost, Tracy Powell Iwaskow; (back, L to R) Timothy D. Lincoln, Stephen Sweeney, Brad Ost, Christina Torbert, Matthew Ostercamp



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**Director of Production**  
Maria Stanton

## Staff Leadership

(front, L to R) Gillian Harrison Cain, Brenda Bailey-Hainer, Margot Lyon; (back, L to R) Jim Butler, Marie Jacobsen, Maria Stanton





## Independent Auditor's Report

RSM US LLP

To the Board of Directors  
American Theological Library Association

### Report on the Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of American Theological Library Association which comprise the statements of financial position as of August 31, 2017 and 2016, and the related statements of activities and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

### Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audits to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

### Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of American Theological Library Association as of August 31, 2017 and 2016, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

*RSM US LLP*

Chicago, Illinois  
January 25, 2018

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## American Theological Library Association

Statements of Financial Position  
August 31, 2017 and 2016

	2017	2016
<b>Assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 611,040	\$ 400,473
Accounts receivable	389,524	488,164
Prepaid expenses and deposits	325,156	292,581
Investments	6,881,081	6,535,557
Property and equipment, net	732,583	912,210
Intangible assets, net	6,840,212	6,639,639
	<u>\$ 15,779,596</u>	<u>\$ 15,268,624</u>
<b>Liabilities and Net Assets</b>		
Liabilities:		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 732,808	\$ 685,692
Deferred revenue	4,589,338	4,210,532
Deferred rent	205,876	247,666
	<u>5,528,022</u>	<u>5,143,890</u>
Net assets:		
Unrestricted	9,879,828	9,779,553
Temporarily restricted	236,057	216,644
Permanently restricted	135,689	128,537
	<u>10,251,574</u>	<u>10,124,734</u>
	<u>\$ 15,779,596</u>	<u>\$ 15,268,624</u>

See notes to financial statements.

American Theological Library Association

Statements of Activities  
Years Ended August 31, 2017 and 2016

	2017			2016				
	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
<b>Revenue:</b>								
Functional revenue:								
Association's subscription databases	\$ 6,218,642	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,218,642	\$ 6,100,422	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,100,422
Partner subscription databases	352,294	-	-	352,294	340,222	-	-	340,222
Other	13,860	-	-	13,860	915	-	-	915
Memberships (conference and dues)	252,760	-	-	252,760	258,573	-	-	258,573
Contributions and grants	20,000	21,820	7,162	48,972	20,000	22,151	6,551	48,702
Net investment return	47,361	23,093	-	70,454	82,108	26,238	-	108,346
Other	28,032	-	-	28,032	20,274	-	-	20,274
Net assets released from restrictions	25,500	(25,500)	-	16,920	-	(16,920)	-	-
Total revenue	6,958,449	19,413	7,162	6,985,014	6,839,434	31,469	6,551	6,877,454
<b>Expenses:</b>								
Program expenses:								
Production costs	3,123,925	-	-	3,123,925	2,427,706	-	-	2,427,706
Salary and benefits	1,482,407	-	-	1,482,407	1,699,194	-	-	1,699,194
Occupancy	676,408	-	-	676,408	556,547	-	-	556,547
Insurance	38,066	-	-	38,066	29,763	-	-	29,763
Board and advisory expense	190,043	-	-	190,043	177,585	-	-	177,585
Marketing expense	85,069	-	-	85,069	119,870	-	-	119,870
Telecommunication	49,616	-	-	49,616	51,893	-	-	51,893
Office supplies and expense	73,790	-	-	73,790	59,946	-	-	59,946
Staff travel	146,877	-	-	146,877	157,244	-	-	157,244
Postage	7,506	-	-	7,506	7,021	-	-	7,021
Professional development	29,712	-	-	29,712	25,749	-	-	25,749
Legal, accounting and consulting	385,475	-	-	385,475	178,450	-	-	178,450
Interest groups/committees	47,167	-	-	47,167	37,143	-	-	37,143
Annual conference	135,028	-	-	135,028	146,871	-	-	146,871
Awards and scholarships	34,250	-	-	34,250	27,390	-	-	27,390
Member programs	47,582	-	-	47,582	42,600	-	-	42,600
Miscellaneous	3,956	-	-	3,956	10,556	-	-	10,556
Supporting services:	6,456,866	-	-	6,456,866	5,755,528	-	-	5,755,528
Administrative and general	401,308	-	-	401,308	384,955	-	-	384,955
Total expenses	6,858,174	-	-	6,858,174	6,140,483	-	-	6,140,483
Increase in net assets	100,275	18,413	7,152	125,840	698,951	31,469	6,551	736,971
Net assets:								
Beginning of year	9,779,553	216,644	128,537	10,124,734	9,080,602	185,175	121,986	9,387,763
End of year	\$ 9,879,828	\$ 236,057	\$ 135,689	\$ 10,251,574	\$ 9,779,553	\$ 216,644	\$ 128,537	\$ 10,124,734

See notes to financial statements.

## American Theological Library Association

Statements of Cash Flows  
Years Ended August 31, 2017 and 2016

	2017	2016
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Increase in net assets	\$ 126,840	\$ 736,971
Adjustments to reconcile increase in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation and amortization	1,335,465	1,241,173
Unrealized gains on investments	(30,397)	(79,570)
Changes in assets and liabilities:		
Accounts receivable	98,640	(147,023)
Prepaid expenses and deposits	(32,575)	(6,170)
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	47,116	(497,711)
Deferred revenue	378,806	410,660
Deferred rent	(41,790)	(34,099)
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>	<b>1,882,105</b>	<b>1,624,231</b>
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Purchase of property and equipment	(25,831)	(102,236)
Additions to intangible assets	(1,330,580)	(1,222,047)
Purchase of investments	(9,814,300)	(5,243,031)
Proceeds from sales of investments	9,499,173	4,607,330
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>	<b>(1,671,538)</b>	<b>(1,959,984)</b>
<b>Increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>210,567</b>	<b>(335,753)</b>
Cash and cash equivalents:		
Beginning of year	400,473	736,226
End of year	<b>\$ 611,040</b>	<b>\$ 400,473</b>

See notes to financial statements.

# Endowment Fund

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