ATLA Newsletter

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The Next Chapter: Realizing the Atla Vision

March 11, 2019

Submitted by Jennifer Bartholomew, ATLA President

The Atla Board is excited to share the new Atla brand and forthcoming digital experience with our community. You are an important part of helping us realize the vision of Atla as the hub of worldwide scholarly communication in religion and theology.

We first articulated this vision for Atla five years ago. Since then we've spent time crystallizing our Core Purpose and Values to ground us as we move forward. We have updated governance documents, such as the Bylaws and the Organizational Ends, and developed a Strategic Plan to guide the work that will help us attain our new vision.

Now we are launching a refreshed visual identity. This look aligns better with the work we do to promote worldwide scholarly communication in religion and theology by advancing the work of libraries and related information providers (sound familiar?).

We want our brand to reflect who we are and where we are going. It is vital that our association lives our values of inclusion and makes room for progress if we are to be recognized as a global strategic collaborator and diversify our membership. Our brand needs to demonstrate our creativity, innovation, and transformation. As a member community that values collegiality and collaboration, our brand should codify those sentiments visually.

Over a year ago, the Board engaged a design team, Forum One, to conduct a brand evaluation and make strategic recommendations that reflect our values and membership. Using surveys, interviews, and focus groups they collected feedback across multiple audiences and did extensive market analysis. Ultimately, they concluded that we had an exciting opportunity to expand our reach by positioning our brand as truly global and inclusive. They recommended that we rebrand the association.

With this new brand, we are embracing the familiar and inviting the future by moving forward with Atla as a word. This shift from an acronym to a word allows us to honor what Atla has been while setting the stage for all Atla has yet to become.

The new tagline "Collectors & Connectors in Religion & Theology" reflects the critical role that we play in the cycle of scholarly communication as a membership association of libraries and librarians and a producer of research tools. Our members are curators, disseminators, and aggregators. We provide access to and preserve scholarship in religion and theology.

The new logo design is based on a graphical grid system, an invisible web of lines graphic designers use to help align the letters and shapes in a logo-this invisible grid leads the eye in a comfortable and creative manner. Forum One calls this "the connection grid," and chose it to reflect the themes of community, collaboration, and interconnectedness of knowledge and place.

The launch of this logo is the culmination of a multi-year project and the full release of the brand will take place over the coming weeks and months. The updated website is slated to launch at the end of March; our booth at ACRL in early April will be brand new. Our other communications will be updated throughout the next several months. We'll provide additional insight and discussion about the new brand in webinars, blog posts, and visits to regional groups throughout the remainder of this year. An FAQ regarding the branding process is being developed and will be added to as questions surface.

We are excited to turn the page to the next chapter. Let's continue our journey together with a new look to reflect our vision.

Supporting Scholars with the Internet of Things and Digital Assistants

March 11, 2019

SUBMITTED BY JIM BUTLER, DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Siri, turn on the lights. Ok Google, tell me a joke. Alexa, read me a bedtime story. With new gadgets coming out at such a rapid pace, it's hard to keep track of it all. This new world of the Internet of Things (IoT) devices along with digital assistants are changing how people interact with computers and each other. These devices can play music, set the temperature, cook dinner, and even water the grass. With all the home and dorm uses is there a place for this technology in the library?

IoT

Let's first explore what the Internet of Things means? Merriam-Webster describes IoT as "a networking capability that allows information to be sent to and received from objects and devices using the Internet." In other words, these devices can communicate with people or other devices directly.

Some libraries have used these devices for environmental monitoring, which allows for the control of lights and temperature in their space. This alerts staff about issues while providing cost savings. In addition, libraries have used proximity beacons to track movement in the library to gather information on which areas are most utilized. IoT devices may not fit well in every situation because of their privacy concerns. However, these tools can be helpful as library staff is increasingly required to provide additional data on usage.

Digital Assistants

Similarly, there has been rapid growth in digital assistant usage. With Amazon, Google, and Apple leading the charge, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) have never been more top of mind. As device prices continue to fall, more people will begin to experiment with digital assistants increasing the opportunity for these tools to become woven into their lives.

How Libraries Can Use *Skills*

The question is how can libraries and librarians get more involved? A good place to start is to create a *skill*. A *skill* is an app that allows users to perform actions with voice-activated control through Alexa. Helping the digital assistant boom, skill creation has a very small barrier to entry. There are tools that allow individuals to create their own skills in just a few clicks. Let's walk through a simple example. I will focus on Amazon's digital assistant, Alexa.

First, you'll need to sign in or create an account at https://blueprints.amazon.com. Once in, you'll see ready to go templates or you can create your own. Does your institution record lectures? If so, you can create a skill using the university template that will pull in your latest lecture. Once set up, it's as easy as asking "Alexa open …"

Some schools have taken the digital assistant to another level. Creating skills that allow students to book appointments with a librarian, check hours of operation, and even search library databases.

Looking Forward

I agree with the sentiment that this technology is not for everyone. With that being said, it is critically important to understand how people are changing the way they interact with computers and devices. The more we understand about this new interaction, the better prepared we will be to support future scholars.

I hope this has provided you with something to think about during your next team meeting on patron engagement or cost-saving measures.

I think it is now time to say, "Alexa, end this post…"

Christine Fruin Elected to Library Publishing Coalition Board

March 8, 2019

Christine Fruin, ATLA's Scholarly Communication and Digital Projects Manager, has been elected to the Board of the Library Publishing Coalition (LPC) for a three-year term commencing July 1, 2019. Christine has been involved with LPC since its founding in 2013 and currently serves on the LPC Directory Task Force. She will also be speaking as part of three separate panel presentations at the upcoming Library Publishing Forum in Vancouver, BC, Canada.

ATLA joined the Library Publishing Coalition in 2018. LPC extends the impact and sustainability of library publishing and open scholarship by providing a professional forum for developing best practices and shared expertise. LPC members comprise a robust network of libraries committed to enhancing, promoting, and exploring the growing field of library publishing. Membership is open to academic and research libraries and library consortia that have or are considering library publishing programs.

Learn more about the LPC.

Christy Karpinski Promoted to ATLA Member Programs Digital Projects Coordinator

March 5, 2019

We are very pleased to announce that Christy Karpinski has been hired as the new Member Programs Digital Projects Coordinator. In this new full-time role, Christy will work on outreach efforts and with ATLA members to harvest and host their digital collections in the ATLA Digital Library, as well as have responsibility for ensuring all digital projects the member programs team works on are uniform in appearance, standards, and approach.

Christy previously was the part-time Digital Collections Metadata Librarian in the Member Programs Department beginning in September 2017. Before coming to ATLA, she worked at the Newberry Library, where she was a Metadata and Digital Librarian. She also teaches in the Design and Communication departments at Columbia College Chicago.

She received her BA in Women's Studies, MFA in Photography at Columbia College Chicago, and MLIS with an emphasis on Data Curation from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Join us in congratulating Christy on this new promotion.

ATLA Board of Directors Members Elected for 2019-2022

March 4, 2019

Susan Ebertz, Jérémie LeBlanc, Christina Torbert, and Stephen Sweeney have been elected to serve on the American Theological Library Association's (ATLA) Board of Directors. ATLA members elected the four candidates to serve a three-year term from 2019 to 2022, subject to the membership's confirmation of the Board Secretary's report at the 2019 Annual Conference. Approximately 45.77% of eligible members voted.

Susan Ebertz is the Associate Professor of Bibliography and Academic Research & Director for the Reu Memorial Library at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. She currently serves as Chair of the Small Libraries Interest Group and has organized Small Libraries sessions at ATLA Annual Conferences beginning in 2009.

Jérémie LeBlanc is the Chief Librarian at the Jean-Léon Allie Library and Archives at the Saint Paul University in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. He has previously served on the Scholarly Communications Committee (2018-present) and Scholarly Communications Task Force (2016-2018).

Christina Torbert is the Head of Continuing Resources and the Bibliographer for Philosophy and Religion at the University of Mississippi in Oxford, Mississipi. She currently serves on the ATLA Board of Directors (2016-present), and has also served on the Technical Services Interest Group, Professional Development Committee, and participated in the Creating Leaders of Tomorrow Program.

Stephen Sweeney is the Director of the Cardinal Stafford Library at the St. John Vianney Theological Seminary in Denver, Colorado. He currently serves on the ATLA Board of Directors (2016-present) and serves as the Vice President. He has previously served as Chair on Roman Catholic Denomination Group, World Religions Interest Group, and Diversity Committee,

The Nominating Committee and the Board of Directors express their appreciation to all the candidates who agreed to be on the slate and for their many efforts on behalf of the Association.

 Read the full press release.

Upcoming ATLA Events: March and April

March 11, 2019

ATLA is around the globe this season. Check out the new ATLA Calendar for a list of events, deadlines, and meetings.

If you would like your meeting or event added to the calendar, email memberep@atla.com.

Upcoming Events

CTLC Spring Meeting

March 14

Southern Evangelical Seminary, Charlotte, North Carolina

"The Art of Decluttering and Organizing Library Collections" Webinar

March 28 at 1 pm ET

Chicago, Illinois
Register

Submit to ATLA *Newsletter*

April 1
Submit

ATLA Systems Routine Maintenance

April 1

5:00 pm – 6:00 pm CDT

OTLA Spring Meeting

April 5

Hanby House, Westerville, Ohio

TTLA Spring Meeting

April 5

Harding School of Theology, Memphis, Tennessee

ICOLC

April 7-10

Vancouver, BC, Canada

ATLA Staff attending: Christine Fruin, Member Programs and Scholarly Communication Manager

ATLA and EBSCO Breakfast Reception

April 11 at 7 am

Hilton Cleveland Downtown, Cleveland, Ohio
RSVP

ATLA Hosted Reception at ACRL

April 11 at 5 pm

Lola Bistro, Cleveland, Ohio
RSVP

Book Your Hotel for the 2019 ATLA Annual Conference

March 8, 2019

Registration for the 2019 ATLA Annual Conference will open mid-April, so until then reserve your hotel room at a guaranteed rate. Conveniently located, the Sheraton Vancouver Wall Centre is the official conference hotel. Space in the conference block is limited, so book your room by May 10.

Why Stay at the Conference Hotel?

All main conference activities, including the exhibit hall, reception, sessions, and workshops will be held at the Sheraton Vancouver Wall Centre. Vancouver is a must-see destination in June, so finding lodging can be expensive and hard to find. Booking your room in the conference hotel block ensures the best rates and guarantees you a room.

If you are a recipient of a Travel Grant or participating in the Institute for International Theological Librarians you are required to stay at the conference hotel.

Room Rate is Guaranteed

Room rates were contracted in USD dollars ($205.00 USD + tax) but are quoted on the web site in Canadian Dollars. Attendees will be charged in Canadian dollars at check-out due to local laws. In order to safeguard against any potential fluctuations in the

US/Canadian Dollar exchange rate, the Hotel guarantees that the group rate charged will not exceed USD $205.00 + tax for a traditional room at the cutoff date of May 10. Conversion into US Dollars may fluctuate due to credit card exchange rates and fees.

Arriving Before or After the Conference?

The block is open from June 6 to June 19. Double Rooms are only available from Saturday, June 8 to Monday, June 17. King Rooms are available the entire length of the conference block.

Register for the Pacific Northwest Religious Studies and Theological Library Association Meeting

March 8, 2019

On May 13, 2019, the Pacific Northwest Religious Studies and Theological Library Association (PNWRSTLA) will meet at Mount Angel Abbey in Benedict, Oregon. The event is free; there is a $10 fee for lunch. To register, please email Steve Perisho, Theology and Philosophy Librarian, Seattle Pacific University, at sperisho[at]spu.edu.

Agenda

The agenda for the day is as follows:

8:00   Mass (optional)

9:00-9:30   Arrival, refreshments, mingling

9:30-10:15   Introductions and news

10:15-11:15   Presentation by Dr. David Hollenberg, Associate Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Department of Religious Studies, University of Oregon, on the Yemen Manuscripts Digitization Initiative

11:15-12:00   Presentation by Michael Paulus, University Librarian and Assistant Provost for Educational Technology, Seattle Pacific University (as well as yours truly), on the need for programs like the SPU Library's own brand new Information Studies Minor

(Autumn 2018-), which has been designed to explore with students "the dynamic relationships between information, technology, and people," as well as "the opportunities and challenges facing our [contemporary] information society."

12:00-12:30   Free time to visit the campus or participate in Noon prayer (optional)

12:30-1:30   Lunch and informal business meeting

1:30-3:00   Presentation by Christine Fruin, Scholarly Communication and Digital Projects Manager, ATLA, on "Authors' Rights and Responsibilities: Understanding Copyright & Open Access in Modern Scholarly Publishing."

3:00-3:30   Tour by Victoria Ertelt (Library, rare book vault, etc.)

5:15   Vespers (optional)

Accommodations

Overnight accommodations are available at the Mount Angel Abbey Guesthouse or area hotels.

Contact information for accommodations at Mount Angel:

Monica Bochsler

Guest Services Manager

St. Benedict Guesthouse & Retreat Center

Mount Angel Abbey

1 Abbey Drive, St. Benedict, OR 97373

Email: Retreat@MtAngel.edu

Office phone: 503.845.3025
www.mountangelabbey.org/guest-house/

Learn more.

Join ATLA at Our Evening Reception at ACRL

March 8, 2019

Attending ACRL 2019 this April? You and your colleagues are invited to attend our reception on Thursday, April 11, held at Lola Bistro from 5:00 pm – 6:30 pm. Enjoy an evening of networking with scholars, publishers, and ATLA staff at Cleveland's crown jewel. Lola is located at 2058 E. 4th Street a short distance from the convention center.

RSVP today.

Stop by the Booth

Find ATLA staff at exhibit booth #235 during Exhibit Hall Open hours. Come by to pick up some swag, get questions answered, and learn what's new with ATLA.

Exhibit Hall Hours

- Wednesday, April 10 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm Exhibit Hall Open, Opening Reception
- Thursday, April 11 9:00 am – 4:00 pm Exhibit Hall Open
- Friday, April 12 9:30 am – 4:00 pm Exhibit Hall Open

You are also invited to the ATLA and EBSCO Breakfast Reception. Learn more.

'Open Data' Online Mini-Conference

March 5, 2019

Library 2.0 will be hosting an online mini-conference titled *Open Data*. This free event will be held on Wednesday, June 5, from 2:00 – 5:00 pm CDT. Sponsored by The School of Information at San José State University, all library professionals, employers, LIS students, and educators are encouraged to attend. You are also encouraged to participate as the call for proposals opened on Friday, March 1.

This is a free event, being held live online and also recorded.

Register Here.

Mini-Conference Information

Local, state, and federal governments are releasing data–the public's data– in new ways. Property maps, 311 data, school quality information and census statistics–all of these are examples of open data that give people the tools they need to learn and advocate for their causes. This web conference will explore how librarians are using open data, teaching others about it, and even creating it. You'll learn about tools you can implement in your own library and hear stories from libraries that have partnered with their local and state governments. Armed with practical tools and experiences, you'll be ready to start diving into open data to help your library and community!

Anne Neville-Bonilla

Director of the California Research Bureau

Anne Neville-Bonilla is director of the California Research Bureau where she and her team develop non-partisan, independent research for the Governor and Legislature. As part of the California State Library's Executive team, she is co-director a Knight Foundation grant to support open data literacy in public libraries and communities and serves on the board of CENIC, California's research, and education broadband network. Previously, she directed the State Broadband Initiative at the National Telecommunications & Information Administration (NTIA) at the US Department of Commerce. At NTIA, she was responsible for the National Broadband Map, the largest open dataset of its kind, and $300M in grants to support the digital economy. Before this, she was a Global Leadership Fellow at the World Economic Forum in Geneva, Switzerland, and prior to this served as Assistant Secretary for Economic Development and Technology for the State of California. Anne served as a Senate Fellow and as an AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteer, founding a community technology training center in San Diego. Anne holds an MPA from the University of Southern California and a BA (Hons) from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Wilford ("Will") Saunders

Open Data Guy, State of Washington Office of Privacy & Data Protection

Will Saunders leads the State of Washington's Open Data program in the Office of Privacy and Data Protection. He has worked on communications and technology issues for the state since 2005, including telephone regulation, broadband, economic development, central services management, data governance, and technology assessment. He is a co-author of Data Equity for Main Street, an open data curriculum for public libraries, and co-sponsor of a variety of civic technology projects including BCAT – the Broadband Community Assessment Toolkit. A graduate of Bowdoin College and the University of Maine School of Law, he is admitted to the bar in Washington and Maine and serves on the board of O Bee Credit Union.

REGISTER HERE

'Shaping the Future of Libraries with Instructional Design' Mini-Conference

February 13, 2019

Library 2.0 will be hosting an online mini-conference on March 13, *Shaping the Future of Libraries with Instructional Design*. This free event will be held on Wednesday, March 13, from 2:00 – 5:00 pm CDT. Sponsored by The School of Information at San José State University, all library professionals, employers, LIS students, and educators are encouraged to attend.

Mini-Conference Information

Instructional Designers, technologists, and online learning specialists are in high demand across all levels of education as it shifts online. In 2004, the Blended Librarians Online Learning Community was established to promote the adoption of instructional design and technology as a vital skill set for librarians seeking to more deeply integrate their teaching and learning initiatives into the curriculum and community. Since then, instructional design and dedicated staff positions to support it, have become more commonplace in and critical to libraries, particularly at colleges and universities, but they are by no means ubiquitous.

This edition of Library 2.019 will bring together the community of librarians, instructional designers and other educators whose work happens at the intersection of instructional design, educational technology, learning, and libraries. This is also a conference for those wanting to learn more about how instructional designers are advancing the educational mission of their libraries and institutions, how the latest innovations in educational technology are being applied in libraries and classrooms, and what we can expect as instructional design and technology transitions from a peripheral to core function within libraries. While the future of libraries may be uncertain and unpredictable, this is an opportunity to explore how library professionals and their colleagues can shape it through the application of instructional design and technology.

[Learn more about the panelists and register here](#).

Learn about [Library 2.0](#).

Register for the Upcoming Webinar on Copyright and Publishing for Graduate Students

February 27, 2019

Advising Graduate Students on Copyright and Publishing: What to Expect and How to Respond

March 5th, 2019 at 1:00 CST

Speaker: Christine Fruin, Member Programs and Scholarly Communication Manager

While working on their thesis, dissertation or other terminal projects, graduate students often have questions about incorporating the copyrighted works of others in their papers or experience confusion about their own publication options and their rights as authors. In this workshop, participants will learn how to assist students navigate copyright issues that arise while they are engaged in preparation of their own writing, including when permission is needed and how to distinguish copyright infringement from plagiarism, as well as how to assist them in evaluating places of publication and understanding how deposit of their work in an open repository could impact their future publishing activities.

Christine Fruin

Register now.

SCOOP: Scholarly Communication Roadshow Recap

March 7, 2019

SUBMITTED BY CHRISTINE FRUIN, ATLA SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION AND DIGITAL PROJECTS MANAGER

On February 22, 2019, nearly forty librarians and library staff frlom ATLA member institutions gathered in Chicago for the ACRL Scholarly Communication Roadshow event, sponsored by ATLA. The workshop, taught by Carla Myers, Scholarly Communications Coordinator at Miami University, and Rachael Samberg, Scholarly Communications Officer at the University of California Berkeley, led attendees through a series of presentations and individual and group activities on various scholarly communication issues.

The workshop opened with a presentation on how scholarly communication is a series of interconnected systems: process, participants, and pressures.

The presenters then delved into the component parts of these three systems. For example, the components of participant system include not only individual stakeholders (e.g., authors, students, libraries) but also other systems (e.g., promotion and tenure requirements, funding agencies, social media). While the pressures impacting scholarly communication are technological, economic, social, and policy-driven. The presenters then set up the topics for the remainder of the day: copyright and author rights; text and data mining; and open access and affordable education.

Copyright and Author Rights

In the session about copyright, attendees learned about the basics of copyright law–what it protects, how long it lasts, and what exclusive rights the copyright holder possesses under the law. A lively discussion between attendees and participants flowed from the presentation of material, with attendees delving into areas such as course reserves, the copyright status of sermons, and digitizing and streaming video.

Text and Data Mining

After lunch, the presenters took a deeper dive into text and data mining in the humanities. To best support these scholarly activities, libraries should endeavor to familiarize themselves with five legal literacies that will help them advise researchers on issues that arise in text and data mining.

These five literacies are

- Copyright (e.g., fair use application to projects)
- Contracts (e.g., database license terms)
- Privacy (e.g., federal and state laws)
- Ethics and policy (e.g., cultural heritage materials
- concerns), and Other statutes and legal limitations (e.g., digital rights management)

ATLA Members learn about scholarly communications issues such as copyright and open access at the ACRL Roadshow event.

Presenter Carla Myers explains the interconnected systems of scholarly communications.

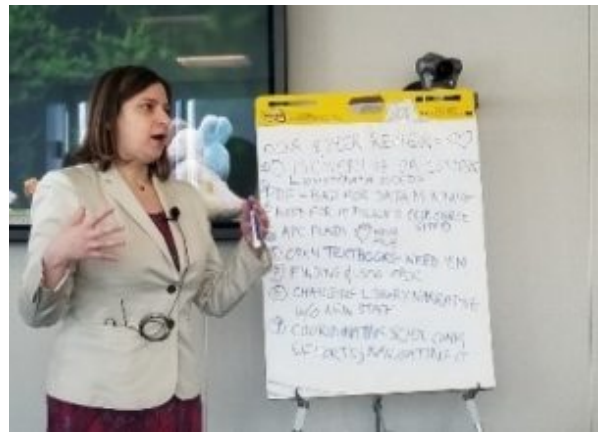## Open Access and Open Education Resources

The final workshop session looked at open access and open educational resources. Through the material presented, attendees learned about the landscape for open access publishing and existing funding strategies to support open access. They also learned about how investing and promoting open access strategies leads to more affordable educational materials as well as about the ways that they could support development or provision of affordable course materials at their home institutions.

The workshop concluded with a challenge to attendees to consider who they will reach out to when they return to their home institutions and what new programs or initiatives they can devise utilizing the new knowledge they obtained by attending the Roadshow event. Attendees left the event invigorated and full of information. The ATLA Scholarly Communication Committee, who helped plan the event, will be following up with

attendees in the weeks ahead and consider how it can best support ATLA member needs or interests that were identified as a result of this event.

Further Reading

The ACRL Scholarly Communication Toolkit, which was developed in its current format by ATLA Scholarly Communication and Digital Projects Manager Christine Fruin, is the best one-stop resource for information on a variety of scholarly communication topics. http://acrl.libguides.com/scholcomm/toolkit

Presenter Rachael Samberg collects participant responses on common scholarly communication issues at their institutions.

In addition to the Scholarly Communication Roadshow, ACRL offers additional Roadshow events on assessment, research data management, and information literacy. Interested in hosting your own Roadshow event? Check out this web site for more information: http://www.ala.org/acrl/conferences/roadshows.

Every month, the SCOOP column in the ATLA *Newsletter* offers updates on recent issues, events, and resources in scholarly communication. Check out the full archive at https://newsletter.atla.com/tag/the-scoop/.

*The SCOOP, **S**cholarly **CO**mmunication and **O**pen **P**ublishing, is a monthly column published by Christine Fruin, ATLA Scholarly Communication and Digital Projects Manager, to inform ATLA members of recent developments, new resources, or interesting stories from the realm of scholarly communication and open access publishing.*

As Seen on Twitter: Fair Use Week, New OA Publications, and New Members

March 7, 2019

The ATLA Twitter feed is filled with news on ATLA events and product updates as well as stories that have relevance to the work of libraries and librarians.

Here are some highlights from last month's @YourATLA Twitter feed:

> The ATLA Press Open Access Monograph program is honored to announce publication of a new book by @appstate Professor of Religious Studies Dr. Sandie Gravett entitled "Teaching Religion in a Changing Public University." https://t.co/l0K1mer2C3
>
> — ATLA (@YourATLA) February 13, 2019

> Enjoy #TechnicalServices? Read the latest issue of Theology Cataloging Bulletin (TCB): https://t.co/YKxvbcyi9G
>
> — ATLA (@YourATLA) February 18, 2019

> Submit to the 'Theological Librarianship' Student Essay Contest for your chance to win $500 cash prize, a travel stipend to attend ATLA 2020, and publication of your work in the Fall issue of #TheologicalLibrarianship
> Learn more: https://t.co/8u1ZKA04Ds
>
> — ATLA (@YourATLA) February 21, 2019

It's #FairUseWeek / #FairDealingsWeek and we have created a list of resources you can use to learn more about the essential limitations and exceptions to copyright law.

Check out the SCOOP: https://t.co/ZV8cUxly9R

— ATLA (@YourATLA) February 27, 2019

Join us in welcoming new @YourATLA Institutional Member Sia'atoutai Theological College located in Nuku'alofa, Tonga. The library holds significant collections of religious texts in Tonga and is also a member of the South Pacific Association of Theological Schools.

— ATLA (@YourATLA) February 20, 2019

Welcome new ATLA Institutional Member @ThomasMoreKY

Fun fact: One of their special collections includes the Mendel Collection, which contains 19th-century documents relating to the life and work of scientist and friar Gregor Mendel.

— ATLA (@YourATLA) February 21, 2019

Seth says the way to distinguish yourself in a non-dentist job "is to be extraordinarily good at it." We may not be dentists or engineers, but as librarians, we possess a unique skill set, and we're pretty good at what we do.https://t.co/GSHAQ0MYbQ

— ATLA (@YourATLA) February 7, 2019

A Dissertation Explained: 'An Early Christian Reaction to Islam'

February 27, 2019

Submitted by Iskandar Bcheiry, ATLA Metadata Analyst

On February 12, I defended my second PhD dissertation in a colloquy that took place at the Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago. The dissertation is titled: *An Early Christian Reaction to Islam: Isho'Yahb III and The Muslim Arabs* and was supervised by the renowned scholar in Muslim-Christian studies, Professor Mark Swanson. I will graduate on May 19, 2019, with my Doctorate in World Christianity & Global Missions / Christian-Muslim Studies at the Lutheran School of Theology Chicago.

The dissertation is to be a reference to those interested in the field of Muslim-Christian studies, as it sheds light on the importance of the legacy of many Syriac manuscripts that are published, or not yet, and have been preserved in the local churches, monasteries in the middle east, or in the famous libraries in Europe and North America.

Introduction

The year 652 marked a fundamental political change in the Middle East and the surrounding region. On this date, the Sassanid Empire collapsed and the major part of the Byzantine dominion in the East was lost to the hands of Muslim Arabs. The conquests of the Arabs were followed with deep cultural, social, and religious changes that affected

the lives of the populations in the seized territories. An important and contemporary source of the state of the Christian Church at this time is to be found in the correspondence of the patriarch of the Church of the East, Išūʻyahb III (648-659), which he wrote between 628 and 658 regarding the state of his church during his lifetime and early attitudes toward Muslim Arabs. Although his view of the Muslim Arabs has been a subject of discussion by many scholars, there are still questions about his approach to the Muslim Arabs that can be clarified, especially with regard to the chronological development of his opinion, the issue of dating his letters and their chronological arrangement, as well as the identification of literary sources that he relied upon in portraying the Muslim Arabs.

The Church of the East

The term "Church of East" refers to the Christian communities that in the early Christian centuries were found east of the Roman-Persian border and whose patriarch, known also as Catholicos, had his see at the Persian capital Seleucia-Ctesiphon. The Christian Church in the Persian territory is also known as "East Syriac Church," which is a term that refers to the Syriac Christian tradition in Persia that used the Syriac/Aramaic language to express its faith. Another name is the "Persian Church," since the Church of the East was located mostly within the territory of the Persian Empire. In addition, the same church was known for centuries as the "Nestorian Church." This name comes from the patriarch of Constantinople, Nestorius (d 451), who maintained the doctrine of two persons in Jesus Christ which was the Christological doctrine of the school of Antioch represented mainly by Diodoros of Tarsus (d. 390) and Theodor of Mopsuestia (d. 428).

The Church of the East adopted this Christology at the end of the fifth century and honored Nestorius as a teacher and saint; however, he is not the founder of the Christological doctrine of the Church of the East. During the sixteenth century, part of the Church of the East joined the Roman Catholic Church and came to be known as the "Chaldean Catholic Church."

Patriarch Išūʻyahb III (648-659)

The main source that this study is based on is one of the great fathers of the Church of the East, Patriarch Išūʻyahb III (648-659), who was the son of a Persian Christian nobleman called Bastomag and was born probably around 590. Bastomag entered his son Išūʻyahb as a novice in the monastery of Beth ʻAbē, a famous monastery that belonged to the Nestorian monastic circle, where each monk lived in a separate shelter but acknowledged the rule of an abbot and worshiped with his fellow-monks in a common chapel. Išūʻyahb progressed so rapidly that at quite an early age he was appointed bishop of Nineveh. In 628/629 Išūʻyahb was appointed bishop of Nineveh and took part in an important embassy to Emperor Heraclius in Syria, under his namesake, Patriarch Išūʻyahb II (628-645). Around the year 640, he was appointed metropolitan for Ḥidyāb. After the death of Patriarch Maremmeh (645-649), Išūʻyahb III was appointed Patriarch of the Church of the East. After ruling about ten years, he died in 659.

Išū'yahb's Letters

Among the survived writings that we have received, there is a collection of 106 of Išū'yahb's letters in a beautiful Syriac manuscript from the tenth century (Vat. Syr. 157) and preserved in the Vatican Library. These letters are valuable documents that inform us about the history of the Church of the East prior to the Islamic conquest and in the twenty years following this conquest 630-656. The letters are divided in *Vat. Syr*. 157 into three groups according to a chronological order that reflects three stages of Išū'yahb's career. The letters are a source that reflects the personality of Išū'yahb as a pastor and a man involved in building a platform of collaboration between the church and the political government of his time.

The letters of Išū'yahb III are one of the few Syriac sources datable to the mid-seventh century witnessing the Arab invasion of the Sasanian Empire. It is true that he did not write a specific work about Islam, because he was more concerned for most of his ecclesiastic career with the internal problems in the Church of the East, however, some of his letters do contain observations and statements relevant to the Muslim Arabs conquest of the Sasanian Empire

Iskandar Bcheiry defending his dissertation.

A New Approach of Examination

The thought of Išū'yahb emerged from a particular social, political, and religious situation over the course of many years, and therefore, a historical-critical method of exploring the writings of Išū'yahb was needed in order to trace the development and significance of the author's writings (his letters) within their specific historical contexts. Therefore the study reconstructs the development of Išū'yahb's view toward Islam by re-examining the chronological aspects of some letters written during his bishopric of Nineveh, which according to my opinion contain references to Muslim Arabs; these references were overlooked by Jean Maurice Fiey and the many scholars who followed Fiey's analysis. This issue was taken up in Chapter Two.

Then, the question of Išūʻyahb's efforts to build up a platform of collaboration, or rather, a loyal and stable friendship between the Arabs and the Church of the East is discussed according to Išūʻyahb's three approaches which correspond to three periods in Išūʻyahb's career: bishop, metropolitan, and patriarch. This was the topic of Chapter Three.

In Chapter Four, I returned not only return to the monastic and theological background of Išūʻyahb's view but, also pointing out specific texts that the patriarch relied on, and how intertextual correspondences and mirroring affected his portrayal of the Muslim Arabs as well as his understandings, his church, and his own role in it. In the final chapter, I gathered the dissertation's conclusions: its new interpretation of the letters of Išūʻyahb toward Islam and Muslim Arabs and his strategies of church consolidation and preservation.

Dr. Iskandar Bcheiry is a Metadata Analyst for ATLA. He is also a historical researcher in the field of Syriac Studies and Christian-Muslim relationship.

March 11, 2019

ATLA Job Board Postings, March 2019

Member and non-member institutions are invited to post and view job openings on the ATLA Job Board. Here is a list of the current job openings:

- ATLA Press, ATLA, is looking for a Summary of Proceedings Editor in Chief and Theological Librarianship Editor in Chief
- ATLA, Chicago, IL, is looking for a Systems Administrator
- Concordia University Irvine – Library, Concordia University, Irvine, CA, is looking for a Director of the Concordia University Irvine (CUI) Library
- Hekman Library, Calvin Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, Michigan, is looking for a Theological Librarian
- R. MacMillan Theological Library, Vancouver School of Theology, Vancouver, BC, Canada, is looking for a Library Coordinator and Head of Technical Services
- Oliver Buswell Jr. Library, Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis, MO, is looking for a Technical Services Librarian
- Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota is looking for a Director of Library Services
- Stitt Library, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Austin, TX, is looking for an Access and Instruction Librarian

  View upcoming listings: https://www.atla.com/Members/development/jobs/Pages/default.aspx

Want to post a job opening? Visit the Submissions Guidelines page for more information.

CONSER Serials Cataloging and You: Make Your Hidden Serials Collections Discoverable through the ATLA CONSER Funnel

March 6, 2019

Submitted by Michael Bradford

A CONSER-authenticated bibliographic record is a mark of quality cataloging for serials. It represents authoritative access points and subjects. A CONSER record is also eligible to receive an ISSN identifier. When the terms CONSER, authentication, LC, and authoritative are thrown out there, one usually thinks "that's not for me. That's for those high-level catalogers at big universities, not my little seminary." Wrong.

The Funnel Programs are developed by institutions based on regional, subject, or other shared interests. It provides opportunities for smaller institutions to participate in and benefit from membership in the Program for Cooperative Cataloging.

The ATLA CONSER Funnel

Libraries affiliated with ATLA often share common material, but we also have unique material that is not housed anywhere else. Cataloging brings that unique material out into the open for our faculty, students, and researchers to discover.

As the only subject-oriented CONSER Funnel in existence, the ATLA CONSER Funnel facilitates high-quality records for these unique resources. It is a benefit available to Individual and Student Members who wish to be able to contribute original and maintain existing CONSER-authenticated bibliographic records in the OCLC database.

There is no minimum number of contributions required of individual members per year, and contributions can be either maintenance of existing CONSER records or authentication of original cataloging.

How to Participate in the Funnel Project

Requirements for Funnel Project participation include:

- Individual and Student Membership in ATLA
- Experienced cataloger
- Access to RDA
- Permission of your institution
- Previous NACO training

CONSER Funnel participants, while required to have previous NACO experience, are not required to be NACO independent, nor required ever to become CONSER independent.

Additional requirements for the CONSER Program include:

- Use RDA and LC-PCC Policy Statements for new cataloging, and CONSER documentation as appropriate
- Have online access to OCLC
- Contribute cataloging through OCLC Connexion

Go to the ATLA website to learn how to participate.

Survey

Please consider filling out this brief survey, which is designed to find interested individual members of ATLA who catalog serials and invite them to consider joining the ATLA CONSER Funnel. The survey is available at:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/conser.

Conference Travel Grants Available for ATLA 2019

February 25, 2019

ATLA offers a travel grant program to support attendance at the 2019 ATLA Annual Conference in Vancouver, BC, June 12-15. We are pleased to be able to offer these grants and encourage participation in our annual conference through the generosity of ATLA members, friends, and other organizations.

In order to be eligible to apply for an ATLA Travel Grant, you must be an Individual or Student member in good standing as of January 1, 2019. The grant award amounts available are as follows:

Attendees from the US and Canada

- $750 USD will be awarded to any ATLA Student or Individual Member who receives NO financial assistance from their institution to attend the conference
- $500 USD will be awarded to any ATLA Student or Individual Member who receives up to $250 USD assistance from their institution to attend the conference
- $250 USD will be awarded to any ATLA Student or Individual Member who receives up to $500 USD assistance from their institution to attend the conference

Attendees from Other Countries

$1,000 USD will be awarded to any ATLA Student or Individual Member, regardless of if they receive financial assistance from their institution to attend the conference

The Developing Country Travel Grant offered in previous years has been replaced by the Institute for International Theological Librarians, a ten-day meeting that will provide a rich learning experience for international theological librarians. Applications for the Institute have closed, but attendees from outside the US and Canada are still welcome to apply for the Conference Travel Grant.

How to Apply

Log into My ATLA to apply. If you are a current Individual or Student member, the application will be available under the *Conference Travel Grants* tab.

Applications are open until Monday, April 29. Grants will be awarded on a first come, first served basis and there are limited funds available. Approved recipients will be notified on a rolling basis or before Friday, May 3.

Requirements

Travel grant recipients must register for the conference before Friday, May 10 and are required to stay at the conference hotel and complete all required paperwork. ATLA is undergoing various system changes and conference registration will open in early April 2019.

Please contact the ATLA Member Programs department at memberrep@atla.com with any questions.

Applications for Member Product Loyalty Funds Open

February 25, 2019

ATLA is proud to sponsor the Member Product Loyalty Program, a member benefit designed to recognize and reward our current Institutional Members who demonstrate their loyalty to ATLA by subscribing to *ATLA Religion Database®* (*ATLA RDB®*), *ATLASerials®* (*ATLAS®*), and *ATLASerials PLUS®* (*ATLAS PLUS®*).

ATLA reserves a portion of funds garnered from product sales for distribution to eligible member sites in order to offset the cost of attendance at the ATLA Annual Conference. The Member Loyalty benefit allows ATLA to re-invest in ATLA Member Programs.

2019 Member Loyalty Benefits

- $400 USD to apply toward ATLA Annual Conference registration (in $100 increments)
- May be applied to a maximum of four conference registrations
- Funds are non-transferrable
- Limited funds available on a first come, first serve basis

Eligibility Requirements

- Current Institutional Member
- Current subscriber to both *ATLA RDB* and *ATLAS* or *ATLA RDB and ATLAS PLUS*

How to Apply

Applications for member loyalty funds will be handled through the new **My ATLA web portal.** The online form will be open until **Wednesday, March 27** or until funds are depleted. In order to complete the form, the member representative will need to log into My ATLA and select the *Member Loyalty* tab. You will be asked to select up to four individuals at your library to receive member loyalty funds to be applied to conference registration. Approved recipients will be notified on or before Tuesday, April 2.

If the roster for your institution isn't up to date in My ATLA, you will need to update your roster **before** applying for member loyalty funds. To update your library's roster, log into My ATLA and visit the *My Affiliations* tab, select the ellipsis icon next to your primary affiliation, then select *Manage My Roster* to add or remove individuals. Only the member representative will be able to edit the library's roster.

How to Redeem

Any registrants redeeming Member Loyalty funds must receive their Member Loyalty confirmation email before registering for the ATLA Annual Conference. The member loyalty benefit funds will be automatically applied to the conference registration fee when registering online through My ATLA.

ATLA is undergoing various system changes and conference registration will open in early April 2019.

Contact memberrep@atla.com with any questions.

Explore the EBSCO eBook Collections

February 22, 2019

EBSCO collection development librarians curate hundreds of e-book collections covering a wide range of topics, including <u>10 Theology and Religion collections (scroll halfway down the page)</u>. These collections provide titles on a variety of aspects of Christian religious studies. These collections are highly focused on specific fields of Christian studies and Christian theology and are organized by subject for ease of use. Key publishers include Baker Publishing Group, Fortress Press, Westminster John Knox Press, Eerdmans Publishing Company, and United Methodist Publishing House.

2018 Theology and Religion Collections

The 2019 collections will be updated in April 2019. The 2019 collections are updated with no overlap of the titles included in the 2018 collections, therefore libraries who purchased the 2018 versions can be assured they are buying all new titles in 2019. These collections are available for perpetual purchase and the collections **cannot** be broken up.

The currently available collections are:

- Apologetics 2018
- Systematic Theology 2018
- Ecclesiology 2018
- Ethics 2018
- Christology 2018
- Eschatology 2018
- Soteriology 2018
- Comparative Religions 2018
- Theology 2018
- History of Doctrines 2018

ATLA Historical Monographs Collection

Also available are <u>12 collections curated by ATLA</u> (*ATLA Historical Monographs Collection)*where religion and theology scholars can focus their research on the era and topics that most closely fit their fields of study. <u>Eleven thematic series</u> provide specialized content spanning from the 13th century through 1922. Two comprehensive sets are also available. The ATLA Historical Monographs Collections are also available for perpetual purchase and EBSCO will provide custom quotes for any library interested in these collections.

The majority of content dates from the 19th and early 20th centuries, a time of great doctrinal, social and organizational turmoil and upheaval in American culture, making this collection an invaluable resource for scholars seeking to understand not only religious thought during this time period but the general social, political and economic transformation of the country as well. Researchers can view all of the typography, graphics, and drawings as they were originally presented, which provides context and perspective to religion in American and world history.

Contact your EBSCO Sales Rep to receive your quote for the EBSCO eBook Collection today!

2017 ATS Statistics Available

February 13, 2019

We collaborate with the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) to collect and provide library statistics from ATS member institutions.

ATS collects information from institutions in the fall of each year, reflecting the most recently completed fiscal year (usually the prior year). ATLA reorganizes the data from ATS member institutions to provide comprehensive statistics focused on the library portion of the ATS survey.

ATLA is pleased to provide the most recent three years of data in downloadable Excel documents. Data from prior years are available in the Members Only drive in the My ATLA Web Portal.

The ATS statistics from 2017 are now available on our site.