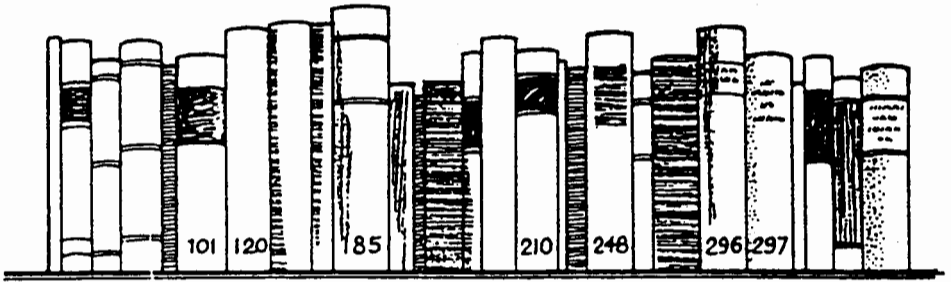


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# BULLETIN

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## BULLETIN 1992-93

The *Bulletin* is published by the Association of British Theological and Philosophical Libraries as a forum for professional exchange and development in the fields of theological and philosophical librarianship. ABTAPL was founded in 1956 to bring together librarians working with or interested in theological and philosophical literature in Great Britain. Twenty four issues of the *Bulletin* were issued between 1956 and 1966. After a period of abeyance, the *Bulletin* was revived in a New Series [Volume 1] by John Howard in 1974. It has been published in its present form, three times a year (March, June and November), since that time. Numbers 1-40 of the New Series (to November 1987) have been construed as Volume 1 of the New Series; Volume 2 began with March 1988. The *Bulletin* now has a circulation of about 300 copies, with about a third of that number going to libraries in Europe, North America, Japan and the Commonwealth.

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*The Bulletin of the Association of British Theological and  
Philosophical Libraries*

**Volume. 2 No. 18  
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## Editorial

Once again I have to apologise for the late arrival of a *Bulletin*. I hope, but alas cannot guarantee, that it will be the last time. However, production of the March, 1994 *Bulletin* will be well under way by the time you read this, and I hope that it will be with you no later than May. It is also possible that there will be a new editorial team by the time of the June *Bulletin*, and I hope that this will ensure we can publish to schedule in future.

I am delighted to be able to include in this edition a long article by Professor John Hull entitled *Curriculum and theology in English education*, since it is an important topic for librarians in our speciality to consider even if, at first thought, we do not see the relevance to 'me in my small corner'. The article is longer than usual for our journal, and I felt that it was important that I didn't split it over two issues. Because of this some other regular items have been held over to our next issue, and I apologise to our other contributors for the delay.

AFJ

### Laurie E. Gage

We regret to announce the death, on 3rd January, 1994, of Laurie Gage, theological bookseller and long-time ABTAPL committee member. Laurie was also active in liaison with ATLA, and was one of the organisers of the ATLA tour of this country in 1987. A full obituary will appear in our next issue.

### From the Chairman

I thought that I would take the opportunity to encourage anyone who has not attended an ABTAPL residential conference before to give serious consideration to coming to Bristol next spring. It can be rather daunting if you feel that you won't know anyone, and you might think that Mondays to Fridays are busy enough without having to work at the weekend as well! However, speaking from my own experience, I have found the residential conferences invaluable. Rest assured that if you didn't know anyone at the beginning you will know 30 or more new friends at the end. Because numbers are not overwhelming it is very easy to get to know the other delegates. I didn't

know a soul when I attended my first ABTAPL conference and was rather apprehensive about the whole thing. However, I need not have worried as everybody was so friendly.

As has been said before, one of the most valuable parts of the weekend is in the informal discussions with people who are in similar situations and with similar problems. Retired members have valuable expertise to share as well, and it is always good to welcome people who are not currently employed. The more formal side of the programme, consisting of a wide variety of talks and discussions, is always interesting and visits to local libraries, large and small, are a regular feature. It is good to see how someone copes with a similar problem! One of the major benefits of the weekend conference is that you can build up a valuable network of contacts. Many theological and philosophical libraries are 1-person operations where isolation can be a problem. Being able to contact by phone or letter someone you have met before can be a great help. As for the accommodation, it is always clean and comfortable, and is always very reasonably priced. The whole cost of the conference is never excessive and travel expenses need not be too great even for long distances if APEX seats are booked. When you receive the full details which will be sent out in the New Year, do think seriously about coming to Bristol. I look forward to seeing you there.

Judy Powles.

## **Curriculum and Theology in English Religious Education by John M. Hull**

### *Legal Considerations*

In England and Wales, responsibility for religious education lies with the Local Education Authorities of which there are 118. Each LEA must adopt an Agreed Syllabus of religious education for use in its schools. The Agreed Syllabus would arise from a conference especially appointed to create it, upon which the teachers, their employees and the various religious interests would be represented. The content of the Agreed Syllabuses is prescribed in Section 8(3) of the 1988 Education Reform Act. Each LEA must adopt an Agreed Syllabus of religious education for use in its schools. The Agreed Syllabus would arise from a conference especially appointed to create it, upon which the teachers, their employees and the various religious interests would be represented.

The content of the Agreed Syllabuses is prescribed in Section 8(3) of the 1988 Education Reform Act. Any new Agreed Syllabus must 'reflect the fact that the principal religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'<sup>1</sup>

Over the past three years there has been a debate about the exact interpretation of this expression. On the one hand, there are groups of enthusiastic Christians generally of a rather conservative outlook, who have emphasised the first part of the sentence and have insisted that Agreed Syllabuses should be based on Christianity or should be mainly Christian.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, religious education specialists have tended to emphasise the second part of the sentence, insisting that the 1988 Act far from creating Christian religious education has established a multi-faith approach.<sup>3</sup>

There has also been a debate about the methods to be used in the teaching of world religions. 'Multi-faith' religious education is regarded in this debate as consisting of themes or topics in world religions with illustrations taken from the various religions. This approach has been criticised as failing to represent to children the integrity and coherence of any religious tradition, and as comprising a colourless and undifferentiated mixture of bits and pieces, a mish-mash.<sup>4</sup> Some of these critics have argued that the wording quoted above from the Act supports this, since the Christian traditions are referred to in the first part of the sentence while the teaching and practices of the other principal religions are to be separate. There have been two unsuccessful attempts by conservative Christian members of the House of Commons to persuade the House of Commons to express an opinion on this. This might have led to some clarifying legislation which might have prohibited multi-faith teaching in the sense just described. This, however, failed to materialise.<sup>5</sup>

We are left with a situation in which the implication of the Act might be thought to be that religious education should be confined to a systematic treatment of religions, one by one, with no element of comparison or mutual criticism, let alone any thematic or topical treatment. This view is generally rejected by the religious education teachers and specialists, who point out that the syllabuses are required to reflect and to take account of. Nothing is said about the manner in which this shall be done, and it could be consistent with a variety of approaches to curriculum development and syllabus construction.

Since the passing of 1988 Act, there have been a dozen or so new Agreed Syllabuses and many more are in preparation. All of these adopt a world

religions approach in one way or another, so it is generally agreed that an Agreed Syllabus cannot be legitimate if it is confined to Christianity.<sup>6</sup> There has, however, been a complaint by a conservative Christian against one of these Agreed Syllabuses, that of the London Borough of Ealing. The complaint was that the Agreed Syllabus adopted by the Authority was insufficiently Christian. The complaint was overthrown at the local level but the complainant appealed to the Secretary of State for Education who delivered his ruling in March 1991.

The Secretary of State's letter to LEAs of March 18th 1991 in which advice was given regarding the Ealing Agreed Syllabus and the complaint against it is recognised as being the most significant official interpretation of the religious situation since the passing of the Act itself. The letter tries to break out of the controversy about whether the Agreed Syllabuses should be 'multi-faith' or 'mainly Christian' by emphasising its character as a balanced and reasonable approach to content in which sufficient detail would be given to guide the teacher. An indication should be provided of what aspects of the teaching, practices and festivals of Christianity were to be taught and at what ages. Similarly, enough must be said about the teaching and practice of the other principal religions to ensure that they are adequately taken account of. In other words, the Ealing Syllabus was of doubtful legality not because it did not say enough about Christianity but because of its general vagueness and brevity.<sup>7</sup>

In recent years many Agreed Syllabuses had been content with offering general guidance about various approaches which could be adopted, together with a framework of appropriate aims and objectives for religious education. The actual details of what was to be taught were generally provided in papers issued from teachers working groups.<sup>8</sup> The March 18th letter makes it clear that the period of these rather vague syllabuses is now over. We are entering a period of content-laden Agreed Syllabuses, and the content will be that of the world religions, with a balance being secured between content devoted to Christianity and content devoted to other principal religions.

The exact balance of the content is left to the Local Authority. It may swing a little this way or that in accordance with local needs but it must remain a balance. I take this to mean that a syllabus may contain 55% Christianity and 45% other world religions but that now and again it could go the other way. There is no requirement that in every case every Agreed Syllabus should include more on Christianity than on other world religions; the question is no longer 'less' or 'more' but rather an appropriate balance.

Other interpretations claim that the balance must be one in which Christianity always has the lion's share of the syllabus. It may be that some times a syllabus will have 60% of Christianity and some times only 55% but it will always be balanced in favour of Christianity because the first requirement of Section 8(3) is to reflect the fact that the principal religious traditions of Great Britain are in the main Christian.<sup>9</sup> It is also suggested by some that the balance may refer to the relative weight given to the other principal religions. That is, the 45% of the syllabus devoted to the other principal religions may some times comprise 40% Islam and 5% Sikhism but, in accordance with local conditions, this may some times be reversed.<sup>10</sup>

It seems to me that these interpretations are less plausible than my own; nevertheless, it may well be that further legal advice may be necessary to settle the matter. The Government is clearly anxious to avoid having to commit itself any more on this subject and is emphasising the importance of local responsibility as a way of avoiding a national declaration.<sup>11</sup>

At this point, a word must be said about collective worship. Just as the 1988 Act offered a heightened content definition of the classroom religious education, so also it offered a more specifically religious requirement for the content of the collective worship in which all pupils must participate every school day. On most of the days of a given school term, these acts of collective worship must be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'. Collective worship is reckoned to have this character when it 'reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief'.<sup>12</sup>

The question is whether the requirement that an act of collective worship should be of a broadly Christian character is consistent with it including materials derived from other religious traditions, and whether children from various religious backgrounds may be expected under these conditions to participate in collective worship together. As in the case of the Agreed Syllabuses, a conflict has developed between those who emphasise the purity and integrity of each religion, calling for separate acts of collective worship for children of each faith, and those who adopt a more liberal and community-based approach, emphasising that 'broad' means 'very broad' and that thus children from all religious traditions may continue to participate together. Those who hold this view emphasise the distinction between 'collective' worship and 'corporate' worship, the latter presupposing the unanimity of a voluntary religious association, whilst the former emphasises the bringing together of a group of individuals, a collectivity, under public and educational circumstances in which a variety of backgrounds and outlooks is recognised.<sup>13</sup>



As in the case of Agreed Syllabuses, there have been several complaints against schools which were conducting collective worship in this broad and community-based manner. These schools were criticised as offering 'multi-faith' worship. The complaining Christian parents insisted that their Christian children would not be able in good conscience to participate in these acts of collective worship and were thus being denied their spiritual rights.

In August an important letter from the Secretary of State conveyed the legal advice which had been received by the Government on this matter. The outcome was, as in the case of the Agreed Syllabuses, a satisfactory one from the educational and liberal point of view. It was within the meaning of the Act, so the Secretary of State thought, for pupils of various religious backgrounds to continue to partake in collective worship together; the material in these school assemblies does not have to be drawn exclusively from the Christian tradition and there would be nothing in these assemblies which would necessarily require Christian children to be withdrawn. Parents must not look to the state school to provide the kind of specifically Christian worship which only a church can offer.

It would thus appear that Government interpretation, guided by a liberal and educationally-minded legal profession and conscious of the social consequences of a more sectarian interpretation, is moving in the direction of inclusiveness. Whether in the classroom or in the collective worship, the spiritual life of the school is to build up community not to lead to its disintegration. This is reinforced by a comment in the March 18th 1991 letter which emphasises that religious education must not seek to persuade pupils of the truth of one religion over another nor to recommend any particular religious practice as being superior to another, but is always to be directed towards the increased understanding of the pupil.

### *Curriculum Issues-*

It is noteworthy that the debate about the appropriate balance between Christianity and the other principal religions in the Agreed Syllabuses assumes that religious education will always be taught in a systematic manner, *i.e.* religions taught in blocks one against the other. Most people, when talking about Christianity occupying 50% of the Agreed Syllabus, have in mind a course in Christianity of a more or less systematic kind which would occupy so much time. There is accordingly a lot of interest in how Christianity should be presented, what aspects of it are most appropriate at what ages and so on. Similarly, it is generally assumed that taking account of the teaching and practices of another principal religion will mean treating that religion in

a systematic manner as a self-enclosed religion. It has been customary in Britain to describe this as the systems approach.

I wish to challenge this assumption. To my mind, it is not at all obvious that the Christian traditions can only be reflected by the systems approach. There may be various ways of reflecting and various ways in which one can take account of something. Similarly, although the DES letter of March 18th demands reasonably detailed content both for Christianity and the other principal religions, nothing is said in the letter about the principles for the arrangement of this content, except that it must be appropriate for the age of the pupil. The letter insists that the syllabuses must indicate which Christian festivals are to be taught, and which festivals from the other principal religions, but it does not say that the Christian festivals must be taught *en bloc*, nor that there may not be a theme or topic on festivals with materials drawn from several religions. We must assume that this is regarded as part of the arrangements which are to be made at the local level. Indeed, the 1988 Act specifically gives to the Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education the responsibility for giving advice on teaching methods.<sup>14</sup>

It is also necessary to point out that Section 8(3) does not set a limit to the content of religious education. It prescribes what the syllabuses must contain, it does not indicate that they must contain nothing else. Nothing is said or implied one way or the other about whether religious education may contain courses on primal religions, or on the fundamental concepts of religion. Similarly, nothing is said as to whether there may be courses on religious poetry or religious art, which would be based upon a broadly spiritual or numinous understanding of religion, rather than a specifically systemic understanding.

Similarly, nothing is said either in the Act itself or in the interpretative letters which would confine the teaching of Christianity or the other principal religions to their British manifestations. We are to teach those principal religions which are represented in Great Britain, but not necessarily to confine our teaching to the forms these religions have taken in Great Britain. The syllabus is to reflect the fact that the principal religious traditions of Great Britain are Christian; we must not conclude that these Christian traditions are to be taught only within the British context. 'Great Britain' is the context which offers us the list of religions which are to be taught; this must not be construed, however, as offering a constraint upon the contents of those religions nor the manner in which they are to be taught. It would be perfectly acceptable, in my view, to present each religion represented in Great Britain in its global context. We are to teach those *world religions* which are represented in Great Britain,

and we are to continue to teach them precisely as world religions and not as British religions.

### *Theological Issues*

- (I) Integrity
- (II) Identity
- (III) Relativism
- (IV) Instrumentalism
- (V) Christianity, the religions of the world and the Kingdom of God

#### **(I) Integrity**

The systems approach is now defended on the grounds that it safeguards the integrity of each religion. The nature of this alleged integrity is, however, not defined. The integrity of the Christian faith, for example, is not of an organic kind, such that the loss or removal of one particular segment such as a doctrine or a festival would lead to disintegration. There was Christianity before there was Christmas. There was faith in Father, Son and Holy Spirit before there was a doctrine of the Trinity. There are four Gospels not one. There are said to be more than 25,000 branches of the Christian Church worldwide and a new Christian denomination is born every day in Africa alone. The Christian faith has not come down to us encapsulated within a pure membrane of divine protection but in a changing process, a flux of development and evolution. Some people think that the integrity of the Christian Church is lost when the apostolic succession is broken; others think that the integrity of Church is lost when the purity of the evangelical word is forsaken. In order to safeguard the integrity of the Christian religion, is it necessary to teach that *entire* religion? Does that mean that one cannot teach St. Mark without also teaching St. Luke, one cannot teach Roman Catholicism without teaching Eastern Orthodoxy, Methodism or the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints? Is the integrity of the Christian faith guaranteed by its ecumenicity, its sacramentalism, its canonicity, its episcopacy or its kerygma?

Of course, there can be a superficial teaching of religion in which elements from various religions are brought together without an adequate rationale. This kind of superficial teaching would certainly lead to a superficial understanding, just as the teaching of Christianity in a systematic but superficial way would have a similar result. Let us take a musical analogy. One might create a symphonic medley by taking a few bars from a dozen or so famous symphonies and running them together. The result would be a meaningless mish-mash in which symphonic integrity would be destroyed.

On the other hand, one might study symphonic form, illustrating it from a number of great symphonies in such a way as to enhance the listeners appreciation of the integrity of one of those symphonies by deepening an appreciation of its formal structure. Similarly, no-one who has studied them both could doubt that understanding the Christian doctrine of Incarnation as well as the Hindu doctrine of Avatar far from destroying coherence increases it by contrast and comparison.

Beneath the anxiety about integrity lies a deeper fear about contamination through contact with other faiths. I have argued that behind the metaphors of disgusting food which are used to attack thematic or topical teaching of world religions there lies a deep disgust towards otherness. Tracing the origin of disgusting mixtures of food back into early infancy and through the history of cuisine in Western society, I have been able to show that the fear of alien matter entering the body is related both to anxieties about racial purity as well as to a desire to protect social class privilege. To mix religions, to mix bodies, to mix blood and to mix property are equally horrifying since they lead to a community of free speech and equality which is the opposite of the hierarchical society based on tribalism and elitism.<sup>15</sup>

Behind this discussion is the question of what makes a religion holy. Those who fear that thematic teaching in a multi-faith context will destroy the integrity of their religion are equally emphatic that they respect and indeed reverence other religious traditions. What is feared is not the other religion as such. It is the contact which is regarded as dangerous. Religions are safe when they are impermeable. To go back to the food metaphor again, the different cheeses must be packaged separately in order to safeguard their distinctiveness.

I am holy and you are holy but the ground between us is unholy. This is the point of view of those who want separation for the sake of integrity. I am not holy without you, and you are not holy without me and the ground where we meet is holy. Holiness lies not in separation but in meeting, sacredness lies in communion, it is the covenant relationship itself which sanctifies, the Holy Spirit is made manifest in communion.<sup>16</sup>

## (II) Identity

A cuisine is an arbitrary (*i.e.* an historical or contingent) association of flavours, contents and style of cooking which has no basis in the human taste buds or digestive organs as such. Studies of the emergence of food preference in early infancy have shown quite clearly that the young child will quite

happily eat items which are not regarded as being compatible in the adult cuisine. One is socialised into the conventions of a cuisine, and one acquires identity through the regional, domestic and social class aspects of the cuisine.<sup>17</sup> Thus we have cultural Christianity as an identity-forming synthesis. It is not sufficient that one has a Christian identity; it must be a British Christian identity, and a middle class British Christian identity, and an Anglican or Methodist middle class British Christian identity and so on. So we see that identity becomes a reification of tribalistic ideology serving social and economic interests. In this reification religion occupies a central place and that need cause us no surprise. The integrity which is being protected here is not after all, the integrity of the Christian faith, but the integrity of bourgeois social and economic project for dominance. Christianity is essential in order to maintain the ideological coherence of this enterprise. Thus we see that methods of teaching religion in schools must be understood against the background of the European enterprise in world history.

### **(III) Relativism**

The absolute is that which is unrelated, and sexual purity, racial purity and economic purity similarly demand a separation, a lack of connection, a freedom from contamination. The fear that Christianity will become relativised is the reified projection of this life-interest. The absolute Christianity which has no relations is the reified form of the abyss between the rich and the poor, where there is a great gulf affixed now, as in the world beyond.<sup>18</sup>

If this is so, then the claim that Christianity is relativised when it is taught in the multi-faith context must be treated with a degree of scepticism. A relativised Christianity threatens an absolute distinction between the rich and the poor. This is why the rich fear it.

The most effective way to free Christianity altogether of the taint of relativism would be to remove it entirely from association with other religious traditions. This is the ideal of those who would like to see each child educated in his or her own faith, with contact denied not only between the religions as taught but between the children as learners. Although the absolutists have made valiant efforts to separate children into faith groups during collective worship, the case for doing this in classroom religious education is clearly weaker. It seems unlikely that this particular policy will make much progress, since the obvious social divisiveness would bring the policy into public criticism. Since it is impossible to separate the children, the absolutists would at least like to separate the religions, and here the systems approach once again comes into prominence.

The paradoxical thing about the relationship between the systems approach and relativity is that in a way the systems approach does as much to encourage the relativity of Christianity as the much maligned multi-faith or thematic approaches. After all, if pupils are studying Christianity this term and Islam next term, Christianity is clearly one of a series, a member of a class, and obviously related to the other members of the class. One could hardly emphasise more strongly that Christianity is one of the religions of the world. If, on the other hand, one draws materials from a number of religions including Christianity in so far as these bear upon a fundamental human problem such as love, freedom or death, the evident relatedness of the religions is not so prominent, simply because the religions are themselves not so prominent as autonomous systems.

#### **(IV) Instrumentality**

If integrity raises the question about what makes a religion holy, instrumentality raises the question of what a religion is for. The systems approach does tend to suggest that a religion is self-contained within its tradition and thus exists for itself. The thematic or topical approach, where materials from several religions are brought to bear upon a common theme, suggests that the religions are valuable in so far as they illuminate this theme. In this context, the religions present themselves as gifts to humanity. They offer a bonus to human development.<sup>19</sup> It is difficult to see how the religions can enter into the educational process without accepting some kind of instrumental status, and it is true that a multi-faith approach to teaching religion tends to emphasise that instrumentality. If several religions are being presented, the purpose is obviously not to nurture faith into one religion. Thus the question arises rather vividly: what is the point? The point is then no longer the self-perpetuation of a religion, but the contribution of a religious studies as such to human development.

#### **(V) Christianity, the Religions of the World and the Kingdom of God**

At the end of the day, reflections such as these drive us back into the New Testament conception of the purpose of Christianity. It is surprising, however, how little the New Testament says about this. It is often pointed out that Jesus expected the Kingdom; what came was the Church. What came later still was Christianity which discovered itself as a religion of the world in the context of modernity. In order to remove Christianity from the stranglehold of the ideology of European culture it is necessary to return to the original sources and to ask about the mission from which Christianity flowed.<sup>20</sup> That mission was not only the source but must continue to be the norm and the goal

of the Christian faith.<sup>21</sup> The mission is described very clearly in the famous vision by Peter of the mish-mash of food in the sheet which was let down from Heaven. Peter was shocked at this jumbling together of that which should be held sacred in its separateness. He was, however, commanded not to call unclean that which God had cleansed. The greatest contribution which the theology of mission can offer to the religious educator today is that insight that there are more important things at stake in Christianity than its own cognitive purity.<sup>22</sup>

If Evangelism is understood in the light of a theology of replacement, in which its goal is the cognitive replacement of one ideology by another, then Christianity and Christian education will remain in the tribalistic phase induced by negative reactions towards modernity. If, however, Evangelism is understood in the evangelical sense, the Gospel sense, the sense it had in the original mission of Jesus as described in Luke Chapters 9 and 10, then education and Evangelism are part of the same mission of the Kingdom of God, to heal the sick, to drive out the demons which afflict the minds and bodies of men and women, to set the prisoners free and proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.<sup>23</sup> Religious education will be significant in the cultural and spiritual history of Europe today and tomorrow in so far as it can embrace this conception, and can contribute to the formation of the new humanity and the coming of God's kingdom.

## Notes

- 1 Edwin Cox and Josephine M. Cairns: *Reforming Religious Education: the religious clauses of the 1988 Education Reform Act*. Kogan Page Ltd. 1989; John M. Hull: *The Act unpacked - the meaning of the 1988 Education Reform Act for religious education*. Derby, CEM 1989.
- 2 J.D.C. Harte: 'The Religious Dimension of the Education Reform Act 1988'. *Ecclesiastical Law Journal*, 5 July 1989, pp. 32-52.
- 3 'Religious Education after the 1988 Education Reform Act', in: *British Journal of Religious Education* (Special Issue) Vol. 13, No.3, Summer 1991.
- 4 John M. Hull: *Mishmash, religious education in multi-cultural Britain: a study in metaphor*. Derby, CEM 1991.
- 5 'Religious Education after the 1988 Education Reform Act' (Editorial), *BJRE* Vol. 13, No. 3, Summer 1991, pp. 133-135.
- 6 Roger Howarth: 'The Impact of the Education Reform Act on New Agreed Syllabuses of Religious Education', in *Religious Education after the 1988 Education Reform Act*, *op. cit.*, pp. 162-167.

7 'Should Agreed Syllabuses be Mainly Christian?' (Editorial), *BJRE* Vol. 14, No. 1, Autumn 1991, pp. 1-3, 65

8 Religious Education Council of England Wales: *Handbook for Agreed Syllabus Conferences, SACREs and Schools (The Report of a Working Party)*. S. Martin's College, Lancaster 1989.

9 Colin Hart: *Religious Education. from acts to action*. Newcastle upon Tyne, CATS Trust 1991.

10 Letter from George Humphrey in: *BJRE* Vol. 15, No. 3, Summer 1993.

11 Speech by the Minister of State for Education Mr. Timothy Eggar to the Association of Religious Education Advisers and Inspectors Annual Conference in Malvern on 11th September 1991.

12 Terence Copley: *Worship, worries and winners - worship in the secondary school after the 1988 Act*. London, National Society/Church House Publishing 1989; Bill Gent: *School worship, perspectives, principles and practice*. Derby, CEM 1989.

13 'Religious worship and School worship' (Editorial), *BJRE* Vol. 12, Spring 1990, pp. 63-67.

14 The official interpretation of the religious clauses of the 1988 Education Reform Act is provided in DES Circular 3/89 *The Education Reform Act 1988: Religious Education and Collective Worship*. The point about teaching methods occurs in paragraph 12.

15 Mishmash, *op. cit.*

16 Martin Buber: *Between man and man*. London, Collins/Fontana 1961.

17 Paul Rozin, 'Cultural approaches to Human Food Preferences', in: John E. Morley *et al. (eds.): Nutritional Modulation of Neural Function* (UCLA Forum on Medical Sciences). Academic Press, 1988, pp. 137-153.

18 Luke 16<sup>19-31</sup>

19 Michael Grimmitt: *Religious Education and human development: the relationship between studying religions and personal, social and moral education*. Great Wakering, McCrimmons 1987.

20 J.B. Metz: *The Emergent church: the future of Christianity in a post-bourgeois world*. London, SCM Press 1981. 9

21 Jon Sobrino: *The True church and the poor*. London, SCM Press 1985, especially Chapter 9 'Evangelisation as Mission of the Church', pp. 253<sup>ff</sup>.



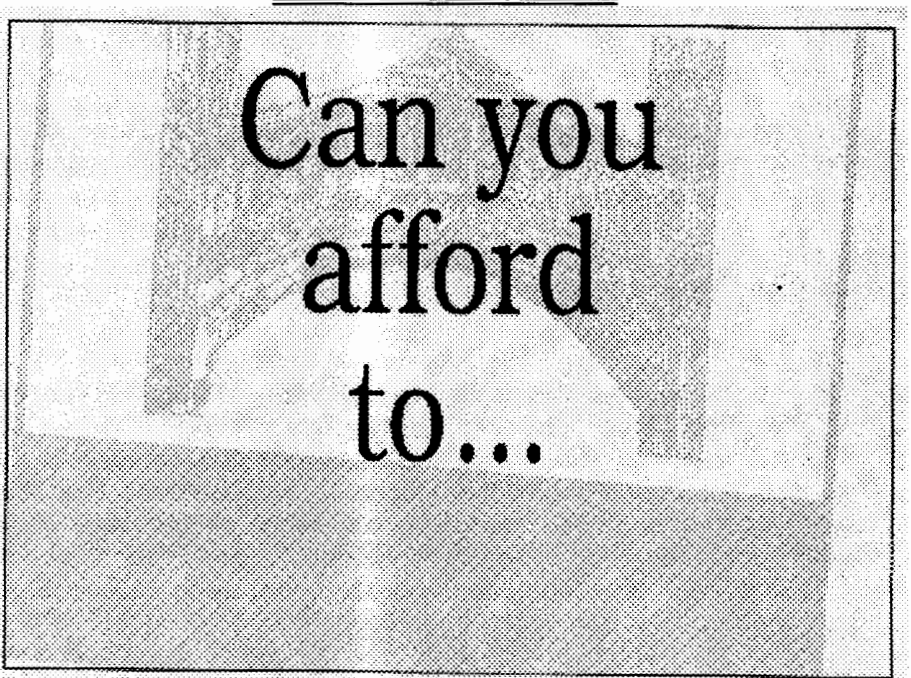
22 I am grateful to Professor Werner Ustorf for helping me to formulate this observation.

23 Jon Sobrino: *Spirituality of liberation: toward political holiness*. Maryknoll, Orbis Books 1988. (Especially Chapter 7 'Jesus' proclamation of the reign of God: importance for today', pp. 117<sup>th</sup> and chapter 8 'Evangelisation and discipleship', pp. 132<sup>th</sup>).

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Professor Hull is the Dean of the Faculty of Education and Continuing Studies and is editor of the *British Journal of Religious Education*. He recently received the William Rainey Harper Award from the Religious Education Association of the United States and Canada which was last awarded in 1983 and is made to "outstanding leaders whose work has had a profound impact on religious education"

This article is slightly edited from a contribution by Professor Hull to a *festschrift* edited by J. Lähnemann: *Das Wiederwachen der Religionen als pädagogische Herausforderung*. Hamburg, E.B.-Verlag Rissen, 1992, and we are very grateful for permission to reprint it.



## **Managing Special Collections in the Field of Religion in University Libraries** by Tricia Garvey

In 1992 I undertook research into special collections of religion in university libraries, as part of my MSc. My aim was to compile a directory of special collections in the field of religion in university libraries, and to look at the way in which they were managed.

My study resulted in a questionnaire being sent to all major universities in Britain who hold special collections in the field of religion. The questionnaire concentrates on the management of such collections; to ascertain the archival material in religion held; conditions of access; facilities offered; and preservation and conservation. I also touched on whether the decline of religious studies within universities has any affect on the collecting of religious materials within university archives.

I also looked in more detail at three university archive religious collections:-

- (i) Brynmor Jones Library - University of Hull
- (ii) Brotherton Library - University of Leeds
- (iii) Borthwick Institute of Historical Research - York University.

This in-depth research involved talking to the archivist and researching the collections in more detail. These three universities were chosen purely because of their geographical location, being only one hour apart from each other.

### **Religion and Theology**

Up until the 1970's the study of religion in British universities was almost exclusively the study of theology. Theological departments in universities usually focussed on Christianity, studying the Bible, Christian doctrine and church history from a committed standpoint.

Religious studies, as a discipline, became popular in universities in the late 1960s, early 70s, and many new Religious Studies Departments were founded in universities.

The term 'religious studies' is usually understood to refer to such

subjects as philosophy of religion, the study of world religions or comparative religion and sociology of religion.

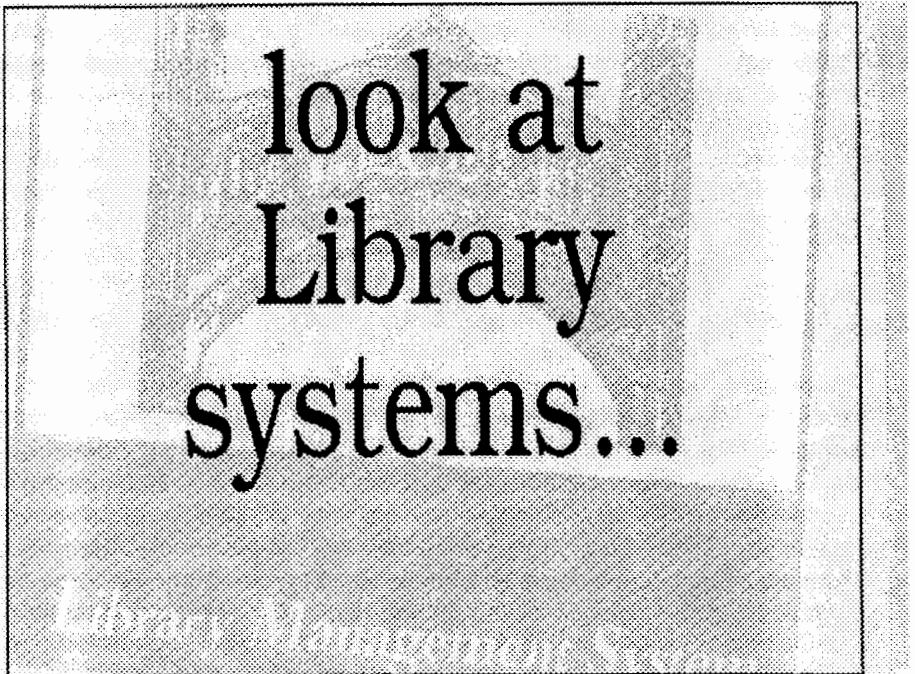
In *Turning Points of Religious Studies*, the term 'religious studies' is used to include the multi-disciplinary study of the world's major religions which arose in British universities during the nineteen sixties, but had its roots in the older tradition of the comparative study of religions. In fact, the first ever Religious Studies Department in Britain was not set up until 1967 at Lancaster University.

For the purpose of my study, I use the term 'religion' to include theology and world religions.

### Questionnaire

I sent a questionnaire to all major universities in Britain holding special collections of religion. Seventeen universities replied:-

Aberdeen	Belfast	Bristol	Dundee	Durham	Exeter
Glasgow	Keele	Lancaster	Leicester	London	Manchester
Nottingham	Southampton		St. Andrews	Stirling	Warwick



All seventeen universities hold special collections in the field of religion. Some hold extensive collections, whilst others hold small collections which do not attract much interest.

The questionnaire attempts to do a number of things. Mainly it is an attempt to gather information on special collections of religion held by universities in Great Britain so that a Directory could be made. It shows how the collections are managed, and the facilities available to the user of such collections. Although the questionnaire is fairly basic, it serves a purpose and succeeds in its objectives.

The problem of the term religion and theology came to the fore when asking university archivists if their university held such collections. Some gave details of religious collections, but wrote a separate letter to say that they were unsure that this is what was wanted. For example, Nottingham University wrote saying that they do not hold special collections specifically relating to the field of religion and then go on to mention Oakham Parish Library and Elston Parish library.

Most of the collections were named and were acquired in a variety of ways, by gift, purchase, or on permanent loan.

## **Usage**

The collections vary as to their amount of usage, some are used very little if at all, and are not widely publicised, also the amount of description given is small. Some collections are used extensively by a wide range of people, students, priests, researchers, anyone in fact who have an interest in the collections. Eleven of the universities do not have their collections used in conjunction with a course held at the university, and those who do, do not use them in conjunction with a religious course. In fact, when I asked the question, I assumed that if the collections were used in conjunction with a course that it would be a religious course, but the universities who did mention a course spoke mainly of history and publishing studies.

## **Staffing**

Most of the university archives in this survey have very few staff looking after archives. For example, the University of Dundee do not have any archival staff looking after the archives, but whoever is free on the library staff will deal with retrieval and repair of items whenever it may be required.

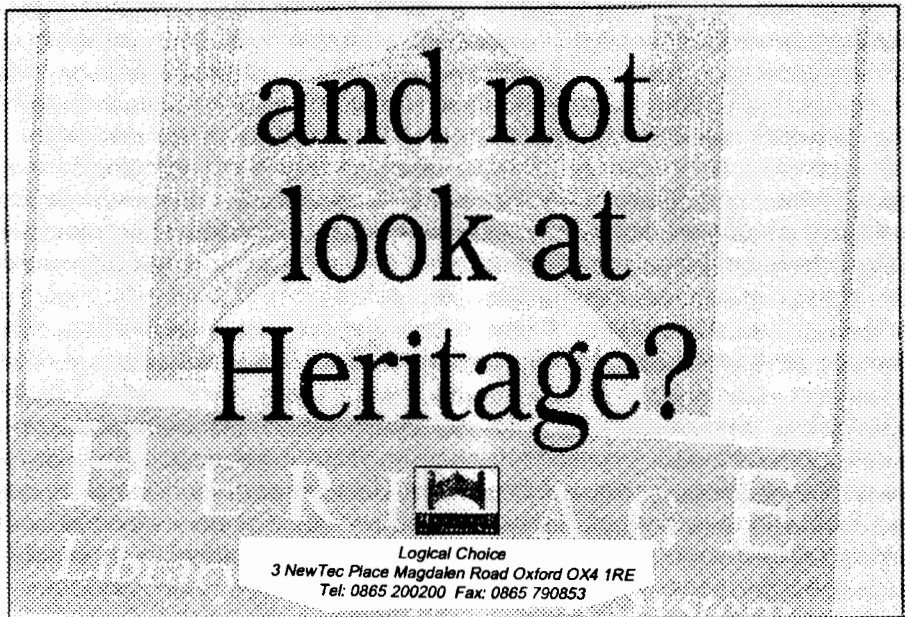
Also Keele University Library shelves the special collections in theology alongside the main library theology, and is dealt with by library staff as necessary.

The findings on low staffing corresponds with the report and discussion document on *The Role and Resources of University Repositories* by the Society of Archivists Standing Conference of National and University Libraries, November, 1989. It reports that almost a quarter of university repositories reported lack of staffing resulting in such things as growing cataloguing backlogs, deterioration in reader services, and reduction in opening hours.

### Opening Hours and Conditions of Access

Most of the universities taking part in this survey have reduced archival opening hours as compared to their main library, mostly because of the few staff available to run the archives successfully. Many close over the lunch period also.

Archival special collections are usually for reference purposes only, but a few universities will loan its collection if they are non-rare items, and usually for a fee. The conditions of access vary, but all usually ask for some form of identification when someone makes a request to see the special collections.



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Most universities prefer an applicant to write or telephone in advance so that the items may be retrieved in advance to ensure that a member of staff is available.

Again when it comes to the loan of items to other libraries or outside readers, the special collections are usually for reference only apart from exceptional circumstances, for instance, when someone asks for a collection for an exhibition, and this will be considered at the librarian's discretion. Most universities will loan special collections to other libraries via the British Library, or direct, with restrictions, i.e. using the special collections in the library only, perhaps under supervision, no photocopying of material, depending on age and condition of the items.

### **Cataloguing and Classification**

In this particular area again, the universities taking part in the survey have varied classification and cataloguing procedures. Classification varies depending on the order in which the archivist wants to arrange the collection, for example, if he uses original order, this could be different from any other scheme. For example, St. Andrews, G.H. Forbes collection follows a previously classified shelf list. Some universities use their own classification with a prefix and perhaps a running number sequence, as in the cases of Exeter, Keele, London, Manchester and Southampton University libraries. Some use adaptations of already existing schemes, such as Bliss, Dewey or Library of Congress, such as Lancaster University. In the case of Stirling University library, the Drummond Collection is arranged by date of publication.

The cataloguing of special collections vary according to the amount of detail given, and they can be accessed in a number of ways ranging from author, alphabetical subject, classified index or handlists. Most university archives have a card index and are in the process of adding the special collections index to the OPAC system, a few have computer access only, as in the case of Exeter, Glasgow and Stirling.

### **Finance for Additions and Preservation of Special Collections**

Many of the universities in this survey answered in the negative when asked if they add to their special collections in the religious field. Those who answered 'yes' did not give any further details. Few purchased any further additions and many are added to by donation. The Society of Archivists findings show that repositories in universities tend to be part of larger units, and are not on the whole treated as cost centres by their parent body. As a

result, few archivists, librarians and administrators in charge of archives and manuscripts have control of their own budgets, or are in a position to give precise figures of the income generated and expenditure incurred by their units.'(p.13).

When questioned about the amount of money spent on repair, maintenance and preservation, most universities could not give me an answer because it was difficult to quantify, mainly because the budget was for the library as a whole.

## Directories of Special Collections

*A Guide to the Theological Libraries of Great Britain and Ireland* was first published in 1985 and recently updated in 1992.

The introduction to the guide is very informative, discussing the range of the guide and comparing the guide with other directories. The main body of the guide examines over 400 theological collections. This guide has actually paved the way for my study, because many university libraries I wrote to sent me a copy of the answers they had provided for the guide, with a few alterations as appropriate.

Alan F. Jesson, editor of the guide, talks about the problems of undertaking such a commitment as compiling directories. The problems arise with changes of personnel, deaths, translations, amalgamations, retirements. By the time Alan Jesson had edited the text, 40 completely new entries had been added, 150 or more were rewritten or amended, and each one was checked against its original question. But Alan Jesson believes that the guide is worthwhile as there is at last a guide to collections and libraries specializing in theology.

'The guide is, of course, imperfect; some librarians did not return the questionnaire. A very few declined to provide any but the barest of information, it was "too difficult". One refused point blank to allow his library to be even named because "it only encourages people who do not read the restrictions to bother us". Some who did co-operate did not return their questionnaire until printing was complete. But at last we have a guide, and I believe, a very usable one.' (*Bulletin of the Association of British Theological and Philosophical Libraries*, p.12, 1986).

*British Archives: a Guide to Archive Resources in the United Kingdom 1982*, is a guide to the specialist repositories which have proliferated over the past two decades, and embraces all types of repository. Thus, it consolidates information for the historian and the archivist and provides a starting point for the first-time user of archives. The guide is not comprehensive and covers as many places as the writers know of where archives were held and made relatively accessible. Again the writers conclude that:-

‘The main problem with a reference work of this kind is that its contents are frequently out of date by the time of publication... but if the Guide could be produced quickly, the advantages would outweigh the disadvantages. (Foster, J. & J. Sheppard, . *British Archives*, p.v.iii)

The Guide includes; enquiries; open times; access; historical background; acquisitions policy, major collections; non-manuscript material; finding aids; facilities and publications.

The arrangement of the guide is alphabetically by town. A list of key words and a general index can be found at the end of the book.

The *Directory of Rare Book and Special Collections* is a comprehensive directory covering public and national libraries, university libraries, colleges and schools, cathedrals and churches, societies and institutes, and a limited number of private houses.

The libraries and institutions are arranged in alphabetical order by region. Each library is given its address, telephone number, hours of opening, conditions of admission, research facilities, and a brief history (where provided) with published references. There is a description of each collection, giving its origin and history, its size, a chronological summary of its contents and subject fields. Details of catalogues and published references have been included whenever available.

The *Aslib Directory* is a directory of over five and a half thousand full entries. The Directory consists of two guides, a subject guide and a corresponding guide in fuller detail. The subject is numbered and there is also an abbreviated form of title to identify the organization. The *Directory* includes organisations which are large, small, commercial, scientific and research, learned and academic, governmental, negotiating, standardizing, qualifying, professional and amateur; producers of data, statistics and abstracts; experts in specialized areas; repositories of vast collections of books and holders of single special collections.



Another guide which is worth a mention is *A Guide to Historical Datafiles Held in Machine-Readable Form*, which provides an inventory of historical datafiles which include religion. A questionnaire was sent to three hundred individuals and two hundred University and Polytechnic departments. The guide covers pre-14th century to the 20th century and covers Britain, Europe, Americas, Asia, Australia and Africa.

## Conclusions

In compiling a directory from a questionnaire, I came across similar frustrations to other compilers of directories; such as, universities not replying and incomplete answers. In order to create as comprehensive a directory as possible, all universities need to take part in the survey and many did not. Much of the information I collated for the *Directory of Special Collections in the Field of Religion in University Libraries* was not taken from the questionnaire, but from guides which the universities sent to me on their special collections. Although I had not asked for detailed information regarding religious collections in the questionnaire, I had asked for guides or leaflets relating to their special collections in a separate letter attached to the questionnaire. Most universities taking part in this survey did send very good guides relating to their special collections. For those who did not provide a guide I used data from other directories to gain information on special collections.

The range of detail for each religious collection varies enormously from university to university depending on cataloguing policies and age and usage of the special collections. Depending on the importance of the collections the description may be a small or large amount. I found that the level of description in the guides varied from two or three lines, whilst others were written in great detail.

The archives and special collections in university libraries are separate entities from other sections of the university, that is, in this study, the religious collections built up in university archives are not dependant upon religious courses within the university.

University archives have an important function in society, acting as trustees and custodians of the past and present for the benefit of the future. This may be all important for religious collections if cutbacks in religious studies continues in university departments, archives may be the only place we can research our religious past.

The questionnaire sent to universities in this survey is limited in that it does not ask for detailed information on the special collections in religion, however, it does glean an overview of the management of such collections and shows varying degrees of collection management, policy, conservation, cataloguing and classification and facilities available.

One of the main problems I had in looking at special collections at Leeds and York was the amount of time travelling and the limited amount of time I had to study the collections. It was easier to see the Brynmor Jones Library collection as I work on the premises. Even then, none of the repositories felt that I needed to look at the actual collections themselves as it would serve no purpose, but I was shown how I could find such collections in the catalogues.

The descriptions of the collections of Hull, Leeds and York Universities does show the differences of levels of description for each collection, as some are seen to be more important than others, but it could be argued that better promotion and a fuller description may encourage greater usage.

Another problem I came across whilst looking at special collections in religion is that of 'hidden collections', for example, at the Brynmor Jones Library, the Southeast Asian Collection contains the Harry Parkin religious collection, and I would not have known this had I not stumbled across it. There could be many such hidden collections which are only come across by accident. If a user applied to a university to see if they have any religious collections there could be a problem with the term religion.

In the Society of Archivists report it noted that the most significant product of the seminar *University Repositories; what role do they fulfill and what role should they seek in the future?* held in 1988 at the University of Liverpool, was 'a heightened awareness of the breadth of work being undertaken by staff in university repositories and the sense of the extreme ignorance that existed both among university professionals and the information professions at large, of precisely that work, its functions and its achievements.' (p.5).

It seems that archives, along with religion have been misunderstood in the past, but the National Council on Archives, in collaboration with its constituent bodies (including the Society of Archivists) is spearheading a major exercise in raising the profile of archives and archives services of every type throughout the UK. It will be under the heading 'Voices from the Past', and will consist of a period of three or four months during the summer of 1994, during which events, exhibitions, talks and broadcasts will be held up and

down the country. This will be an excellent opportunity to give archives and their contents, such as religious collections, a high profile in the future.

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Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts *A Standard for Record Repositories on Constitution and finance, staff, acquisition and access.*

We arrived in this metropolis of the Pacific coast of Canada, after a nine-hour flight from Amsterdam, to be greeted by the mother and father of thunderstorms. But our stay was warm and sunny after that, and the Canadians and of course the Americans were warm and sunny too.

About 245 members and guests attended the 47th American Theological Library Association Conference at Vancouver School of Theology. It was the sort of conference that had three and sometimes four parallel sessions, so it is impossible to sample all the offerings until the Proceedings are published, which they should be about now.

I attended the principal address by Roy Stokes (described as Professor Emeritus of the University of British Columbia - but known to some of us as emeritus of other places, and still in good form in his retirement); the College and University Section; the Anglican/Episcopal group; the Rare Books and Special Collections Group; how to run a Friends of the Library organisation; a Workshop on Archives & Manuscript Collections and a lecture on "Globalisation through a Native Ministries program".

There was a splendid conference dinner and lots of opportunities to catch up with friends from previous meetings (on both sides of the Atlantic), and a service each morning according to different traditions, including a memorial for Elizabeth Hart, Librarian of V.S.T., the principal organiser, who died suddenly just before the conference. (She had given a paper on the Wesleys at the Toronto Conference two years ago.)

The talk on native ministries was far more interesting than the title suggested. Professor Terry Anderson described the courses at V.S.T. for training priests for the native tribal people (the "First Nations" in today's politically correct jargon) of the Pacific Northwest. He sympathetically explained that their culture is still an oral culture. The students (3 at first, and now 18) had to learn to read English to a high level, but communication with their own people was not with the written word, and their evaluations had to be oral. We subsequently saw much of the symbolism of their totem poles and other ancient and modern artefacts, and read many of the stories which make up their oral tradition.

The most useful sessions to me were those on the Friends of the Library and on Archives & Manuscripts (especially for small libraries). I can pass on some notes and bibliographies to any of our members who would like them.

*John V. Howard,  
Special Collections, Edinburgh University Library  
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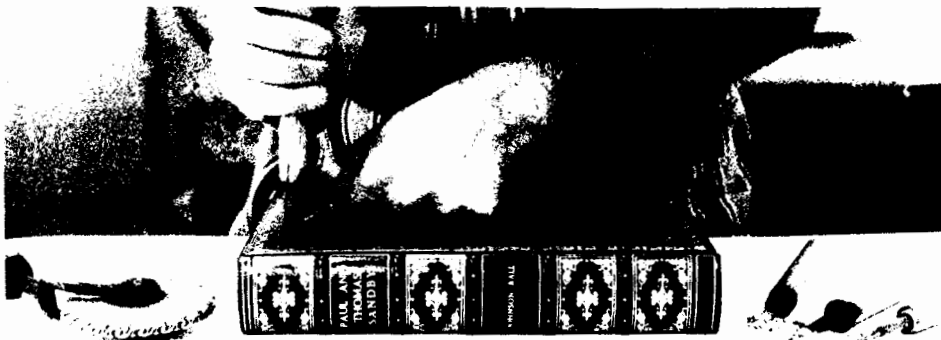
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