There are two good reasons why Unesco's part in the development of international interest in special libraries should find a place in this number of Library Trends. First, the subject coverage of Unesco—education, science, and culture—implies, by definition, an interest in the specialized functions of contemporary society which special libraries are created to serve; and, second, the purpose of Unesco, or one of its main purposes—to increase international understanding—has been recognized from the start to imply an interest in the methods of international communication including those of libraries.

All libraries in some way or other are concerned with international communication but none so clearly as special libraries, created to meet the needs of men of science and learning, industry and commerce. Always, but never more than today, they have been the means of widening the experience of specialists on whom so much of the welfare of the world depends beyond the limited boundaries of nations. It is significant that most of the outstanding developments in documentation and bibliography, in documentary reproduction and selection techniques, and in the techniques of interlibrary communication have been fostered by special librarians and have found their fullest use in special library service. These developments have in their turn been among the most active stimulants of special libraries, in so far as the purpose of a bibliography or a microfilm service is to increase the availability of books and periodicals to specialists which can only be achieved if there are libraries to provide the service.

Unesco is concerned with special libraries not only because Unesco is interested in the specialities of education, science, and culture, but because of the nature of special libraries themselves. This is revealed

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[224]
International Interest in Special Libraries: Unesco

if only the preposition in the title of this article is changed, and we speak for a moment of the international interest of special libraries. Unesco is interested not because it possesses any special proselytizing zeal to turn special libraries toward recognition of their international role or because they are a contemporary phenomenon for observation, but because fundamentally almost every special library serving any field of education, science, or culture, from the nature of its work, must be concerned with international communication and must look beyond national frontiers both for its material and for its public as the user and the creator of its material. Even the most highly localized subjects are enlightened by comparative studies; few subjects, least of all that huge range which falls within the scope of Unesco action, can be confined within national boundaries.

Furthermore, interest in special library development is considerably increased today for reasons which are partly political in origin. We are all aware that running hand-in-hand with a growing awareness of “world community” is a growing national consciousness. In some respects the latter is logically an effect of, and a condition of, the former. On the analogy of the strength of a chain being found in its weakest link, the capacity of mankind to create a world community of education, science, and culture—which can be one definition of Unesco’s tasks—is undoubtedly limited while many parts of the world are unable to realize their full individual national potentialities. This is even more evident in matters of “culture” than in those of science and technology. It is undoubtedly true that the most active and efficient focal points for international library communication today are in those countries which are sharply aware of their home job and their local responsibilities. This must be the base on which every effective international service stands.

During the past century and more, during the mercantile and imperialist phases of history, most fundamental scientific and cultural studies have been concentrated in “the West,” where great libraries have been created, most naturally, in the main centers of research. Thus the world famous libraries of natural science and technology are still to be found in western Europe or the U.S.A.

The wealth of the West, its colonizing energies, and the stimulus provided by the far-reaching travels of westerners have enabled the creation in the West of humanistic and scientific libraries treating of subjects internationally, even though the subjects may often by definition be localized. The reasons for this creative energy in library
building are many; sometimes undoubtedly because a good library is an essential part of the apparatus of political authority, but there are many other gentle, less paternal, even filial reasons. The only fact of importance is that the West has had both the incentives and the means to do what now is a world wide responsibility. The old process continues even now, as Europeans notice, sometimes with friendly jealousy, the brilliant development in the U.S.A. of special libraries largely concerned with European studies. The great Boswell and Walpole collections at Yale are outstanding examples. In the natural sciences and technology, the same western concentration exists in an even more emphatic way, but in both natural and humanistic sciences changes are on the way which profoundly affect special library development. All countries are waking to their responsibilities to develop their resources and are seeking means to create the necessary scientific and cultural organizations to this end.

Unesco is not concerned with the simple reversal of a well justified and deeply rooted system; that, in any case, would be impossible and is largely undesirable. It is, however, directly interested in stimulating awareness among all its Member States of the value of special libraries as a means of enhancing every side of national education, science, and culture, so that every country can realize its own potentialities in the world community. In fact Unesco, with its limited means, cannot keep pace with the continually growing demand for help in building up adequate libraries. Generally the demand for help arises not because in the first place there is any direct activity by Unesco in its library programs, but because its more extensive programs in the Unesco subject fields are continually pressing into the foreground the need for improved library and documentation services.

Today, largely as a result of Unesco's work, or, more modestly, as the result of tendencies of which Unesco's work is an expression, there is considerable decentralization of research and studies. Countries far from the old western center are starting energetically to enlarge and activate their educational, scientific, and cultural life on the strength of their own resources, which of course, as librarians know without being told, means the creation of libraries to marshal systematically their national documentation and to provide through library service all the means of drawing into local use the intellectual resources of the rest of the world.

In this sense, special libraries, as well as national and university libraries, are part of the apparatus of the contemporary chain of inter-
International Interest in Special Libraries: Unesco

national communication which we cannot allow to be weakened by weak links in the national contributions. There is no idea as yet of a systematically organized scheme such as the United States has attempted in the Farmington Plan. The scale of Unesco work is not yet large enough, Unesco has not been working long enough, and doubtless the world is not politically ready for the development of a universally applicable scheme of international library service to be propounded. In theory, with the use of microfilm services, centrally produced abstracts, and so on, regional organization of special library and documentation services can be envisaged; but it must not be too readily assumed, even in the field of science and technology, that even limited regional schemes involving inevitably the designation of major and senior services against the current of national opinion are possible. And it is doubtful whether, until the logistics of international library communication have been much more fully studied, such a degree of efficiency could be attained that attention can yet be diverted from efforts to build up purely national and autonomous libraries.

It is perhaps because of this that Unesco’s most effective work has not been in the direct creation of, or even in attempts to create, special libraries but in the stimulation and organization of bibliographical and documentation services for specialists which can operate on an international scale with the least possible excitement of nationalist feeling. In each of three main areas of Unesco work—the natural, social, and humanistic sciences—international bibliography or documentation committees have been created which, by attacking the question of bibliography or documentation (to a large extent the words are used synonymously) get at the problem of special library service indirectly. Apart from the fact that many if not all documentation services are centered in libraries, so that their development represents a corresponding growth in the libraries of their origin, all such services are aimed primarily at making the printed records of human communication available, which, despite the largely unrealized potentialities of documentary reproduction service, still means for most of us service from libraries.

Many of the most interesting Unesco projects, leading to special library development, come within the United Nations program for economic development which, as far as Unesco is concerned, is mainly concentrated on natural science and technology, and fundamental and technical education.

The immediate objective of every project is to improve national or,
in certain instances, regional competence to meet urgent current needs by the provision of equipment, the supply of highly qualified foreign experts, and the training of local specialists through fellowships. Thus, to take one example, Turkey has applied for and received help in establishing two institutes for the study of new problems in hydrogeology and seismology. Until these are solved, vast arid and earthquake areas of the countries cannot be settled or developed. The Turkish authorities recognized at the start that this work would involve a sharp improvement in the scientific library services available. Concurrently, therefore, with the development of the institutes, they have been enabled to add a consultant to their National Library to organize a national bibliographical center which, while it covers the full needs of such a center on a national and comprehensive scale, is immediately directing its energies to providing the special library and documentation services which the scientific institutes need. In practice this is not likely to result in the creation of new special libraries in the two subjects concerned, but in the development of the existing faculty libraries in the universities and of the specialist departments of the National Library itself, and in the provision, through the National Library for a modern documentary reproduction service, so that material can be transmitted to field and laboratory workers from national and foreign sources.

Another technical assistance project which is just about to start will provide the Higher Teacher’s College in Baghdad with a modern library, involving extension services to a number of institutes for technical education.

In Iran and Syria, librarians from Europe have been working in the university libraries. Pierre Bourgeois, National Librarian of Switzerland, was consultant for the Syrian Library project for three months and is now succeeded by Jean Baby of France. In Iran, Josef Stummvoll, National Librarian of Austria, is head of the Unesco mission. These men are reorganizing the university libraries with, as is inevitable under the terms of the technical assistance program, special emphasis on the development of the libraries in those faculties which have special reference to the scientific, technical, and economic welfare of the countries. Although, as university library projects, these might seem to fall outside a strict definition of special library, they are concerned none the less with all the problems of special library service because it is clearly beyond the means of these and most other countries in similar stages of development to consider the establishment of numberless special libraries to serve each subject. Concentra-
International Interest in Special Libraries: Unesco

...tion of special library services under the aegis of the National University is both logical and economical.

In Hashemite Jordan a project is just starting which, also by definition, as a project for a national library, might not seem to be the subject of reference in an article on special libraries, but the scale of the project and its necessary concentration on a limited number of currently important fields bring it within this service. Jordan certainly lacks modern libraries to enable its current business to be carried on with the intellectual background which only libraries can provide. Here, clearly, it would be absurd to divide the library organization into numberless special units, but it will be the first duty of the expert sent by Unesco to isolate the areas of first priority importance and to create their library services within the framework of a national library. Jordan illustrates one particular but not unique problem of considerable interest. During past decades there was considerable research in the economic, geographic, and political life of the country by various agencies. It will be one of the first objectives of the project to establish as much as possible of this documentation in Jordan itself as a first step in the development of a fully constituted national library service.

The Middle East, the scene of all the projects mentioned above, is one of the regions in which Unesco maintains a Field Science Cooperation Office with two bureaus, in Cairo and Istanbul. All of Unesco’s Regional Sciences Offices in the Middle East—Delhi, Djakarta, Manila, and Montevideo—have largely concentrated their efforts in stimulating science library services and on developing interlibrary cooperation. The bibliographies which they publish of science publications in their regions are in themselves highly successful in drawing attention to the importance of special libraries since, characteristically in these regions, men of science are, if anything, poorer than their colleagues in the West and entirely unable to build up large private libraries or to subscribe personally to the periodicals they need.

One more libraries project in Unesco’s Middle East program can be mentioned which was aimed directly at the promotion of special libraries. Publication of a guide to the libraries of the Near and Middle East, Répertoire des Bibliothèques du Proche et du Moyen Orient compiled by Joseph Dagher,1 of the National Library, Beirut, was intended not only to serve the normal purpose of a guide—to give information—but to increase awareness in the countries recorded and elsewhere in the world of the vast wealth of Middle East special libraries, of the opportunities for their development, and of the possibilities and need for interlibrary cooperation in the region. This work
was largely experimental but, despite the limitations of a pioneering effort, has proved its worth and will, as soon as means are found, be given a second, revised and enlarged edition.

Similar work to that in the Middle East is being done in Latin America where there are several technical assistance projects already working or being developed, notably the Mexican Scientific Bibliographical Center, which is planned to serve as a regional center for Latin America, the Unesco Field Science Cooperation Office in Montevideo, and projects for the development of national bibliographical centers in Uruguay and Brazil. All of these are being planned to assure efficient inter-relation although a completely unified regional plan has not yet been thought out. In India, at Delhi, a scientific Bibliographical Center has been set up similar in function to the Mexican Center and also intended to serve all the countries of the region.

When Unesco was first established, one of the biggest and most urgent problems was to assist in the reconstruction of war-damaged libraries and for three years a small fund existed which was used to buy books for "reconstruction" countries. This was the time of the American Book Center and the Interallied Book Center in London, both of which had collected many thousands of gifts which largely found their way to special libraries in Europe, China, and the Philippines. Out of this reconstruction work has grown one of the most permanently useful of all Unesco library projects and one which is almost entirely directed to special libraries—the exchange and gift services of the Unesco Clearing House for publications.

The problem was an old one—the disposal of library surplus material so that it reaches libraries where it is really wanted, so that "dumping" and wasteful channeling of gifts or exchange material through devious routes is avoided. The system is simple and efficient. Unesco receives lists of surplus books or periodicals from all over the world; these are duplicated and sent precisely to those libraries which have indicated their interest in exchanging publications or receiving gifts in the subject of the list. Each recipient library marks fifty first priority choices in order and as many additional choices as it wishes. The Clearing House then decides on the final allocation and helps the donor library to negotiate the actual transmission of the books to the recipient library. Many hundreds of international library exchanges are being effected in this way. At present about 2,600 libraries are cooperating in this scheme which is one of the most completely international activities of the Organization.
International Interest in Special Libraries: Unesco

Two examples can be given of recent distributions:

List 149 (science and education). One hundred thirty-four books offered by a U.S.A. library were distributed at the recipients' request to forty-six libraries in the following countries: England, India, Yugoslavia, Turkey, Poland, Sweden, Belgium, France, Norway, South Africa, Argentina, China (Canton), Chile, Canada, Denmark, Israel, Indonesia, Burma, Italy, Viet-Nam, the Netherlands, and Japan.

List 158 (education and social science). Three hundred thirty-seven books offered by the British National Book Center were distributed at the recipients' request to forty-five libraries in the following countries: Switzerland, Iran, Czechoslovakia, India, Belgium, Norway, Germany, Italy, the U.S.A., Austria, the Netherlands, France, Canada, Israel, Egypt, Yugoslavia, Lebanon, Hong-Kong, South Africa, Turkey, Indonesia, and Syria.

Lists have come this year from special libraries in, among other countries, Austria, Denmark, Germany, France, Argentina, Czechoslovakia, Spain, Hawaii, Sweden, Brazil, Switzerland, Algeria, Portugal, Italy, Chile, Belgium, the United Kingdom, and the U.S.A. The greatest part of U.S. exchange activity is through the United States Book Exchange, which was set up with the declared aim of fulfilling a program resolution of Unesco urging creation of national exchange centers.

Long before Unesco was created, the International Federation for Documentation and the International Federation of Library Associations had existed and had been doing much work which it has been Unesco's duty to support. The F.I.D., more perhaps than I.F.L.A., has been concerned with special library functions, largely in its development of the Universal Decimal Classification. Unesco has recently contracted with the F.I.D. for the publication of a new edition of Index Bibliographicus, in two volumes, covering the natural and applied sciences and all other subject fields, and a Guide to Documentary Reproduction and Photocopying Services. Recently a new International Association of Music Libraries has been established with Unesco support. The I.A.M.L. has a heavy and expensive program, including the preparation of a new edition of the Eitner Lexicon, which it is tackling with energy and enthusiasm in cooperation with the International Council of Musicologists.

A brief survey of international interest in special libraries from the Unesco viewpoint cannot hope to go both deeply and widely into the
question of the importance of special libraries in the world today or to
describe any of the Unesco projects sufficiently fully for a complete
picture to be given of their scope and limitations. It is, perhaps, be-
cause the potential scope of Unesco work is so enormous that its limi-
tations are so painfully evident. Yet as we see Unesco as the responsible
agent for a world-wide program of library development, we can
glimpse possibilities which have never previously existed for a rising in
the whole tide of activity; and without doubt big things are happen-
ing, bigger far than the item by item recital of individual projects can
reveal. Governments which never before have had questions of li-
brary service brought to their attention see that libraries have a large
place in the work of an international agency which they pay for and
support. The hard financial fact, for that is what it comes down to,
that Unesco is positively interested in library service as one way of
fulfilling its charter, is in itself an education to anyone who still doubts
the need for libraries as an essential service of a modern state. They
are led to observe the value given to libraries in the countries where
economic, social, educational, and cultural developments have flowered
most and become ready to give a similar value to their growth at home.

Everyone knows the hackneyed complaint that the modern specialist
is a person who knows more and more about less and less. The exist-
ence in all subject fields and in all countries of first-class special li-
braries will certainly help the scientist and the scholar to know more
and more, and if that is his role he cannot achieve it without the help
of his own special libraries. From the international point of view, how-
ever, a good library assures that science and learning are preserved
from parochialism, narrow and nationalistic theories, and are widened
and enlightened by the flow into every small center of creative energy
of the accumulated intelligence of the past plus the present from all
the world.

References