

then the university library had become, in Harvard President Charles William Eliot's felicitous phrase, "the heart of the university."

Budgets for books and periodicals in academic libraries rose rapidly. Library staffs, headed by professionals, grew equally rapidly, and there was a shift in values from conservation and protection of materials to access and use, from the library being an afterthought to the curriculum to a central component in the curriculum, from fixed shelf locations for books to classifying and shelving by subject, and from rudimentary cataloging information to fuller bibliographical description in the card catalog. Under the leadership of late-19th-century library pioneers, such as Justin Winsor at Harvard and Melvil Dewey at Columbia, hours were dramatically expanded, literary society libraries were absorbed by the university library, stacks were opened to readers, interlibrary loan and reserve collections were implemented, and reference service was initiated. In short, the modern and recognizable research library had begun its ascendancy.

This process of library specialization produced conditions in which the concepts of "rare books" and "special collections" find their true origins. For it is in the research library serving an academic constituency that the concept of "rarity" emerges, though the concept also owes its origin to the expansion of the antiquarian book trade. Conversely, the phrase "special collections" was generally used through much of the 19th century to designate a concentration of books (not rare) on any given subject.

The concept of "rare books," with its origins in the antiquarian book trade and book collecting, was substantially shaped by the professionalization of scholarship. The rise of the research university and the founding of scholarly organizations created, through peer review and criticism, scholarly standards and professional expertise that extended knowledge in a variety of disciplines. This process of professionalization in the academic disciplines resulted in the identification and creation of a scholarly canon of significant texts in many fields, particularly in history and literature.

Book collecting, which had a long and honorable past, flourished especially in the late

19th century. Indeed, the decade of the 1880s inaugurated what has been described as the golden age of American book collecting. The sale of the library of George Brinley in 1879, the ascendancy of the American Art Association auction house in the 1880s, and the founding of the Grolier Club (its object was the "literary study and promotion of the arts entering into the production of books") in 1884—all point to the rapidly growing vitality and prestige of book collecting in that period.

This expansion of collecting, and the consequent interest of research libraries in acquiring the collection formed by bibliophiles, also led those institutions to safeguard rare items already among their holdings, particularly the oldest imprints such as incunabula (that is, books printed in the period of the "cradle of printing" or before 1501). This impulse to safeguard rarities led to their segregation at Yale in the 1890s, interest in their exhibition at Princeton in the same decade, and growing interest at Harvard, Columbia, and elsewhere in the notion of acquiring "rare books." This first phase in the emergence and development of rare books and special collections at the end of the 19th century entailed little more than identifying and segregating rare books.

The formation of the reserve collection at the Bibliothèque nationale and the creation of separate collections (of maps and charts in 1867 at the British Museum, for example) of nonbook format materials reflects an awareness among European librarians of the importance of identifying and sequestering rarities for security purposes, though arrangements outside the United States have been less formal and slower to develop. The North Library at the British Museum and the Anderson Room of the Cambridge University Libraries were not constructed until the 1930s, while the concept of "special collections" itself did not find expression at the British Library until the 1980s. The term is still not widely used outside the realm of U.S. research libraries.

The next phase in the evolution of rare books in academic libraries occurs in the first third of the 20th century when "treasure rooms" and "rare book reading rooms" began to appear. The Treasure Room in the new (1915)

Widener Library at Harvard reflected a new attitude toward rare books, neatly conveyed in the ambiguous word "treasure." While the artifacts collected might be "treasured" as source material for scholarly research, their financial value—not to say prestige value—was also duly recognized. The principal focus remained on rare books and not on special collections, to which no particular association with primary sources was yet attached.

The Rare Book Division of the New York Public Library was founded in 1914, while rare book rooms were opened at Princeton, the Library of Congress, Michigan, Wellesley, and Yale. Modest levels of staffing for separate rare book departments began to appear in this period, and endowed book funds often, though certainly not always, accompanied gifts of libraries. Library friends organizations explicitly dedicated to helping support these departments also date from the decade of the 1920s.

The years after 1930 inaugurated the third phase in the evolution of rare books and special collections in academic libraries. The phrase "special collections" began to acquire a connotation of rarity and value, not merely a concentration of books and other materials bearing on a single subject, and was sufficiently ambiguous not only to include items or collections with research value, but also came to confer a value or standing much in the manner of rare books.

In response to the rise of social history and the need for different kinds of documentation, the phrase "special collections" reflected a growing interest in collecting manuscripts and archives, though it also suggested materials in a variety of nonbook formats, such as broadsides, newspapers, maps, prints, and sheet music. The Southern Historical Collection was founded by de Roulhac Hamilton at the University of North Carolina in 1930, while the Michigan Historical Collections were founded at the University of Michigan in 1935. After the Houghton Library opened in 1942, W.A. Jackson began collecting manuscripts at Harvard. The Sophia Smith Collection at Smith College was founded in 1942, and the Schlesinger Library at Radcliffe in 1943.

The dramatic expansion of American higher education in the 1960s stimulated the fourth

phase in the development of "rare books" and "special collections." The changing nature of contemporary scholarship altered the literary "canon" to include materials needed for emerging disciplines, such as women's studies and area studies but in literary scholarship generally.

The institutionalization of private libraries such as the Lilly Library at Indiana and the Beinecke Library at Yale, together with the growing presence of publicly funded repositories such as the Humanities Research Center at Texas and of subject repositories such as the Popular Culture History Center at Bowling Green State University in Ohio, all strengthened further the commitment of academic institutions to developing research collections. The current revival of social history, beginning in the 1960s, also seems to have stimulated interest in ephemera, newspapers, and other sources, including chapbooks and popular music, that had generated little if any interest among collectors and scholars until that time.

The concept of "special collections" can be traced from initial steps at the end of the 19th century to identify and segregate rare books (while special collections were in fact subject collections) through the opening of treasure rooms and the organization of rare book departments in the first third of the 20th century to the interest in collecting unpublished source materials since the 1930s. With the increased collecting of a wide diversity of source materials in a multiplicity of formats, the concept of "special collections" has steadily broadened—very much like the scholarship it supports.

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#### SPECIAL LIBRARIES

Having roots in the ancient and medieval periods, these libraries tend to be wholly centered on the total information needs of their users; that is, they are "mission oriented." Proliferating during the 19th and 20th centuries, the modern era of scientific research and communication, they have historically differed from

more easily categorized, conventional libraries in their commitment to bring all available resources to bear on the current and future information needs of their users, who are most often engaged in highly specialized projects that require unique sources and services.

The earliest special libraries cannot be differentiated from archival repositories and other collections devoted to servicing specific government or trade activities. From antiquity, users with especially focused needs—for example, those concerned with legal texts, religious writings, tax and commercial data, and engineering and architectural drawings—gathered recorded information in various forms to aid them. In fact, a number of the specialized libraries represented in the 20th century trace their roots to ancient times and the medieval period.

At least one such English library was founded about A.D. 550; several date from before the year 1000; and eight Dutch libraries were founded before 1699. Some historic examples of modern special libraries include those of the Royal Society (London, 1660), the Russian Academy of Sciences (St. Petersburg, 1714), L'École nationale des ponts et chaussées (Paris, 1747), and the Royal Geographical Society (London, 1830). By the mid-19th century about 1,000 special libraries were known in Europe with about one-tenth being located in Great Britain. Older libraries were best represented in Austria, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, and Switzerland. Of these, just under three-quarters dealt with the humanities and the rest with science and technology. As evidence of growth, Britain could account for nearly 450 special libraries by the outbreak of World War I.

With respect to North America, in 1850 about 185 special libraries existed, of which about 25 were Canadian. Not counting collections dealing specifically with the social sciences, of the total only about one-sixth dealt with science and technology. Examples of early general libraries that catered to special clientele were the Boston Mercantile Library and the New York Mercantile Library (both 1820) and the Mechanics' Institute of Montreal (1840). Other examples include libraries of the New York Academy of Sciences (1818) and the Massachusetts Horticultural Society (Boston, 1829).

During the next century and a half the growth of special libraries in industrialized nations occurred with increasing rapidity. The proportionate emphasis on business, science, and technology tended to change as well. The coupling of the Industrial Revolution and the economic objectives of the emerging nation states produced institutions that required more systematic information sources and repositories. These companies, industries, research facilities, museums, and government agencies began to take advantage of the advances in organization and technology that occurred in the library profession in the late 19th century, and they established libraries. This rapidly growing group joined the existing libraries of professional schools, historical societies, and scientific organizations in new alliances. During the years between the world wars Germany excelled as a center for special libraries.

Not long into the new century, as associations with the needs of scientific and technical information users were developing, the Special Libraries Association was founded in 1909 by John Cotton Dana of the Newark Public Library. Typifying a pattern that would recur in other countries and regions, Dana felt that the particular needs of libraries serving specialized clientele were not being appropriately met by the existing general and national library associations. Beginning with 56 charter members, by 1990 the association claimed about 13,000 members, the vast majority of whom were individuals. ASLIB (Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux) was established in 1924 in Britain and in 1990 consisted of about 2,500 members, most of whom were institutions.

Together these two associations, with their counterparts in other nations and units of international organizations, have done much to facilitate the responsibilities of special libraries in the areas of subject headings, union lists of periodicals, applications of communications technology, and management strategies. Most important, however, were the personal and institutional networks that special librarians developed through their associations. This function was made manifest by the valuable directories that members of the profession grew to depend on and that came to provide an abun-

dance of useful data. Included among these are the editions of *Directory of Special Libraries and Information Centers* (1963-) and *Subject Directory of Special Libraries and Information Centers* (1975-) for the United States and Canada and *World Guide to Special Libraries* (1983-). The latter work indicated that in the late 1980s there were about 56,000 special libraries worldwide, of which approximately 14,000 were outside of the United Kingdom and North America. These ranged in size from several hundred to several million volumes. While British and American special libraries tended to be led by professionally trained library specialists, in other countries these institutions are less closely tied to the library profession.

As a branch of the information professions that has generally been more concerned with the practicalities of the profession than with study of its past, special libraries appear to lack the kind of historical treatment that other types of libraries have attracted.

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#### SRI LANKA

The origin of library institutions in Sri Lanka dates back to the middle of the 1st century B.C. Temple libraries were formed and religious books were written, preserved, and maintained by Buddhist monks. Although most of the ancient books were destroyed during foreign invasions or taken away by foreigners, a considerable number were preserved in temple libraries.

A modern library system emerged only after the British colonization in the 19th century with the development of Western-based education. Subscription libraries were established in the principal towns. In 1870 the Government Oriental Library was established. This library was continued by the National Museum Library in Colombo, established in 1875. The collection of the Government Oriental Library and the books of the Royal Asiatic Society Ceylon Branch, together with other donations, constituted the nucleus of the National Museum Library. It has served as a legal deposit library since 1885.

The main objective of the Sri Lanka National Services Board, established under an act of 1970, was to set up a national library and to promote and assist in the development of various libraries funded by the state. The library became responsible for producing the *Sri Lanka National Bibliography* and since 1974 was given legal deposit privileges, which it shares with the Department of National Archives.

Academic libraries were established when the Ceylon Medical College started in 1870 and the Ceylon University College in 1921. Nine other universities have opened in the past few decades, and university libraries have also increased. These libraries influenced the development of organized and scientific librarianship in the country. The oldest and the largest is at the University of Peradeniya. It has a bookstock of 400,000 volumes apart from the legal deposit material it has received since 1952. Colombo University Library has about 140,000 volumes. The collection in the university libraries total nearly 1 million volumes covering all disciplines. Presently, the university libraries constitute the most developed sector of the library arena in Sri Lanka. The libraries in technical colleges and institutes are much smaller and recent in origin.

Public librarianship began in the 19th century. The United Services Library was established in 1813 and the Colombo Library in 1824. The Pettah library was established in 1829. The United Services Library and the Colombo Public Library were amalgamated in 1925 to form the Colombo Public Library, which became the most important public library on the island.

In spite of the increased activities in public education since independence in 1948, the provisions for school libraries were inadequate. This has now been remedied by the Ministry of Education, and most schools have some type of library. Literature is provided in the country's three languages—Sinhalese, Tamil, and English.

The socioeconomic development of the recent past had a big impact in the development of special libraries, mainly associated with different trades and industries, and scientific research. The Agrarian Research and Training Institute was started in 1972. The Center for Development Information was established in

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