National and International Library Regulations and Standards

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PERSONAL LIBRARIES MAY BE ORGANIZED AND MADE AVAILABLE IN ALMOST any way that facilitates storage, discovery, and retrieval by the user. Books might be ordered by size in order to fit into fixed shelving, by subject to enable browsing, or by author/title to allow easy retrieval. Electronic journal articles could be stored in one folder or organized by a citation management system. Organizational schemes can easily be revised, adapted, or abandoned in ways idiosyncratic to the particular user. Library resources need not be arranged at all, allowing for spontaneous discovery and delight.

However, the usefulness of a shared library becomes quickly constrained without some degree of regulation that would be commonly understood among multiple users. With physical books, such regulation could involve a full catalog and classifica-

tion system, or it could be as simple as arranging books by rough subject, format, or title so that multiple users can find, and potentially add to, the library. With digital items, having some kind of organizational scheme is equally essential—including the metadata to allow for proper discovery and citation.

Regulations and standards become essential when designing cooperative efforts between multiple libraries. The sharing of information and services between libraries requires a common set of definitions and standards. For instance, one cannot create a union catalog between libraries unless there is a standard way of sharing information between libraries and collecting standardized information into the larger effort.

Library regulations and standards run the gamut: technical standards deployed for interlibrary loan software, classification systems that attempt to make sense of the whole of human knowledge, and metadata schema for structuring descriptive records. Library standards also may be created for various library services such as library instruction and collection development. An individual library could engage with almost any number of library regulations and standards propagated by any number of organizations. Some library regulations and standards can be nested so that there may be a broad international standard with more specialized standards that meet specific regional, national, or subject area needs.

International Standards

The broadest international standards are established by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). Many are irrelevant to libraries (such as sludge recovery), but there are standards regarding languages, bibliographic description, library statistics, publishing statistics, the ISBN, paper quality, and image quality. Most librarians and end users would rarely directly consult these standards—rather they are often built into the products and services regularly used by libraries and librarians. The ISO business model also requires a non-trivial payment for direct access to these standards.

ISO standards and protocols often depend on further standards and protocols in a complex, yet necessary, web of standards.

For example, a protocol such as ISO 18626 for Interlibrary Loan Transactions makes use of at least a dozen additional standards that, in turn, make use of further standards—here are some noted in the ISO 18626 standard (International Organization for Standardization 2017):

- ISO 2108, Information and documentation — International standard book number (ISBN)

- ISO 3166-1, Codes for the representation of names of countries and their subdivisions — Part 1: Country codes

- ISO 3166-2, Codes for the representation of names of countries and their subdivisions — Part 2: Country subdivision code

- ISO 3297, Information and documentation – International standard serial number (ISSN)

- ISO 4217, Codes for the representation of currencies

- ISO 8601, Data elements and interchange formats — Information interchange — Representation of dates and times

- ISO 10957, Information and documentation — International standard music number (ISMN)

- ISO 15511, Information and documentation — International standard identifier for libraries and related organizations (ISIL)

- ISO 8459, Information and documentation — Bibliographic data element directory for use in data exchange and enquiry

- ISO 10160, Information and documentation — Open Systems Interconnection — Interlibrary Loan Application Service Definition

- ISO 10161-1, Information and documentation — Open Systems Interconnection — Interlibrary Loan Application Protocol Specification — Part 1: Protocol specification

- ISO 10161-2, Information and documentation — Open Systems Interconnection — Interlibrary Loan Application Protocol Specification — Part 2: Protocol implementation conformance statement (PICS) proforma

- ISO 20775, Information and documentation — Schema for holdings information

- ISO 23950, Information and documentation — Information retrieval (Z39.50) — Application service definition and protocol specification

Beyond the ISO, a number of other global bodies contribute to the development of international standards of agreements that may be relevant to theological libraries. Intellectual content is regulated by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and other organizations establishing standard intellectual property agreements between publishers, authors, and funders. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) develops standards for education and the protection of cultural heritage. The International Council on Archives (ICA) has developed significant archival standards. Particular formats, languages, and cultures may have corresponding bodies or units within larger international bodies that may produce standards with greater granularity.

Among international associations dedicated to libraries, the international body that coordinates library standards is the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA). While behind a number of more technical standards (UNIMARC and FRBR), they also have a number of helpful guidelines for library services, interlibrary loan, authority records, reference service, cataloging, and disaster preparedness (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions 2021a). Unlike those from the ISO, these regulations and standards are freely available and typically translated in multiple languages. Also within IFLA is a special interest group called Relindial that is specific to religion (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions 2021b).

Any number of global cooperative projects that are simultaneously standards and tools. A certain degree of standardization is needed to create the tool and, as the tool becomes more widely

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used, the standards built into the tool become de facto standards. For example, authority records of unique notable name files and numbers are new to international standardization efforts. There is a long history of such authority files being maintained nationally and for obvious reasons of language and national interest. Three related projects have emerged that approach the problem from various vantage points. The International Standard Name Identifier (ISNI) is an ISO effort for uniquely identifying the public identities of contributions to media content. This was developed largely for publishers. A subset of ISNI has been the Open Research and Contributor ID (ORCID) that is focused on scholarly researchers. Finally, the Virtual International Authority File (VIAF) is maintained by OCLC but a joint project of a number of national libraries. Each of these tries to tie standard numbers to individual persons so as to overcome issues with changing names (commonly with marriage), differences in representing the same name/person across cultures/languages, and inconsistencies in presenting the format of names (middle initials, first name abbreviations, etc.).

Regional and National Standards

Regional and national standards typically emerge from a strong national library (or de facto national library), strong national/regional library associations, or national/regional standards organizations. They often attend to peculiarities of language, culture, and geography while promoting cooperation and exchange. Not all nations, national libraries, or organizations promulgate official standards relevant to libraries, and those that do often develop them in concert with international standards.

In the United States, for instance, we have the National Information Standards Organization (NISO) that develops standards related to publishing and libraries. NISO is designated by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) to contribute to the ISO's work broadly related to publishing and libraries. Countries with larger publishing footprints will typically have at least sub-committees if not separate organizations that develop standards and regulations around publishing.

The Library of Congress, while not officially a national library, often takes a leadership role in creating and promulgating library standards such as a classification system (Library of Congress 2021a), subject headings (Library of Congress 2021b), authority records (Library of Congress 2021c), and more (Library of Congress 2021d). A complex network of various library associations in the United States have developed further standards and regulations. The American Library Association (ALA) has a set of standards (American Library Association 2021) that address many aspects of libraries and have been created by various library divisions, such as the Association of College and Research Libraries. Some standards produced by ALA and its divisions are directly relevant to theological libraries and many are not.

Further, other national organizations may be relevant depending on the type or origin of library materials. The Society of American Archivists looks at archives. Music literature is the topic of the Music Library Association just as art is the topic of the Art Libraries Society of North America. Particularly relevant to theological libraries are the Association of Jewish Libraries, the Catholic Library Association, and Atla. Not all of these organizations produce official standards and regulations. While many are headquartered in, and devote considerable attention to, the United States and the North American context, many seek to engage internationally and have a global impact.

Theological libraries may also be regulated by accreditors and others that regulate educational offerings. The vast majority of active theological libraries are connected to educational institutions and so it is not unusual for "sufficient" library collection and services to be a required part of an accredited educational institution. Within North America, the Association of Theological Schools produces a set of standards of accreditation (Association of Theological Schools 2021) that devotes an entire standard to libraries, with many of the other standards containing items with library implications. Some seminaries may be accredited by a different agency or by more than one accreditor. Seminaries, as educational institutions, may also be subject to state and national regulations. An example of a government regulation that often impacts libraries concerns the privacy of student records and, more broadly, the borrowing history of patrons. While not all countries or regions have accrediting bodies in the same way, there are usually governmental and/or inter-governmental bod-

ies that apply a degree of regulation to educational institutions and, by extension, their libraries.

Finally, theological libraries can be subject to broad sets of regulation and standards related to their facilities (accessibility and fire safety), employees (wage and benefit regulations), finances (reporting of income and expenses), and other aspects of an organization that may be regulated. These regulations can be established at all levels, including local.

Individual Library Adoption of Regulations and Standards

Most standards are not researched and implemented by individual libraries or librarians. Rather, they are researched and implemented by vendors and corporations serving libraries, and there is often a close partnership between library vendors (and their related associations) and the appropriate standards organizations. Library vendors often work on an international basis and make use of international standards promulgated by the ISO and others. Library content contained within databases, books, and journals are also subject to regulations and standards such the International Standard Book Number (ISBN), International Standard Serial Number (ISSN), and the Digital Object Identifier (DOI). Physically published items would be subject to standards for paper, binding, and typography. Digitally published items would be subject to standards for metadata, language encoding, etc.

Similarly, standards related to facilities, employees, finances, and the educational enterprise are more closely attended to by the related educational institution. Individual libraries and librarians have a role in compliance but not primary responsibility. For these kinds of standards, librarians should work carefully with others in the broader organization with responsibilities in these areas. For example, the accounting of financial transactions and signing of contracts should be done in cooperation with the financial office of the institution.

Individual libraries have some choices in the implementation of standards. The classification system, subject headings (or other controlled vocabulary), and, indeed, the primary language of the

catalog, is up to each library. Standards on providing reference service are generally voluntary (unless part of accreditation) and so can be implemented wholly, in part, or not at all. Upon investigating standards in any given area, a library may find some are contradictory with one another, inconsistent with other library practices, irrelevant to one's own library, or inappropriate to one's cultural context.

Finally, not every standard is formalized. Atla (formerly the American Theological Library Association) has codified no official standards for theological libraries. Rather, the association promotes research on theological librarianship through Books@ Atla Open Press (the home for this volume), *Theological Librarianship*, annual conference presentations, professional development opportunities, and discussion groups. A very common way of developing standards and best practices in libraries is through research, presentation, conversation, and exchange with other librarians. While not always codified into an official standard, the "idea" of one library is often spread to other libraries through these professional and informal networks.

Conclusion

In conclusion, library regulations and standards promote cooperation and best practices. Theological libraries automatically and unknowingly use a great number of standards through library vendors and cooperative projects. Libraries are also partners in meeting the required regulations and standards of their broader or related organizations. In some areas, libraries and librarians may have autonomy to implement or choose among standards developed at international, regional, national, and local levels. Finally, many "best practices" emerge not as formal standards but from sustained exchange with colleagues.

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