Consortia from past to future, from sharing to giving.

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In this essay I am going to talk about the past, because I'm a historian and that's what I do. I will also look towards the future, because I'm a librarian and that's what we do. We need to know our history because it tells us where we are. Knowing where you are is a good starting point for knowing where you are going. Let's start in the far distant past, with the great libraries of antiquity. Alexandrea did exchange copies with Athens but we do not have any evidence of consortia agreements between the libraries at Alexandra and Pergamum (Aman 1989 : 84). They were intense rivals in collecting manuscripts and when Egypt banned the sale of papyrus to Pergamum it may have been an attempt to stifle its rival. Pergamum responded by exploiting parchment, so perhaps a lack of cooperation can stimulate new developments. The Pinakes of Callimachus (310/305–240 BCE) , the 120 volume catalogue of the Alexandra library may not have been shared with Pergamum but they developed a catalogue that was similar enough for ancient writers to enable to search both for the works they wanted to consult (Witty 1958 :133 note 3, 135 note 21).

Medieval libraries were known for chaining their books but they also shared manuscripts for reading and copying, not always without rancour (Kelly 1980 : 73). The Cathach (Battle Book) of Saint Columba (Royal Irish Academy RIA MS 12 R 33) represents the first battle over copy rights. In sixth century Ireland, Saint Columba copied a book of psalms lent to him by St. Finnian. Finian objected to the copying and the case was brought before King Diarmait Mac Cerbhaill who gave the judgement 'To every cow belongs her calf, therefore to every book belongs its copy'. St Columba's argument before the King sounds familiar today:

> 'I hold,' says Colum Cille, [St. Columba] 'that Finnian's book has not decreased in value because of the transcript I have made from it, and that it is not right to extinguish the divine things it contained, or to prevent me or anybody else from copying it, or reading it, or from circulating it throughout the provinces. I further maintain that if I benefited by its transcription, which I desired to be for the general good, provided no injury accrues to

Finnian or his book thereby, it was quite permissible for me to copy it.' Then Diarmaid declared the famous judgement, to wit, 'to every cow her offspring' - that is, her calf - 'and to every book its transcript' (le gach lebhur a leabrdn). 'And therefore,' says Diarmaid, 'the transcript you have made, O Colum Cille, belongs to Finnian'. It is a wrong judgement,' says Colum Cille, 'and you shall be punished for it.' (Lawler 1916 : 293)

The resulting battle in 561 resulted in thousands of deaths. It was won by St. Columba but the contest over copyright continues and is an important issue for consortia today.

Seventeenth century Europe saw further developments in librarianship and library cooperation. Gabriel Naudé is known to us for his manual on librarianship, *Advis pour dresser une bibliothèque*, but some who were famous in other fields were also librarians. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, who is known as a mathematician and philosopher was also a librarian, first at Mainz and later at the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel from 1676 to his death in 1716. He saw these various court libraries as not simply a treasure house for their patrons but as a public trust (Palumbo 2013). He was followed there by the German writer Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, who was Librarian from 1770 to 1781. While there Lessing began an exchange programme with other libraries and proposed a consortial acquisition scheme with the University of Göttingen. Another German writer, Goethe, who, among his other government duties in Weimar, oversaw the libraries of Weimar and Jena and proposed a union catalogue and shared collection responsibilities (Wormann 1968 : 340-341).

One of the greatest developments in library cooperation came about with the when the American Library Association was formed in 1876. The first professional organisation for librarians it made cooperation central from the beginning. Melvil Dewey saw that individual libraries could not bring about co-operative cataloguing or 'any other plan' without the communication and organisation of the ALA and the *Library Journal* (*Library Journal* 1877 : 170). The overriding purpose of the ALA was sharing:

> It should be understood that such organization is not simply to create *esprit de corps* and the enjoy social intercourse with one another, but is a great labor-saving necessity; an economizer of time and money; a *desideratum* alike for library and librarian. Without such

organization experience has sufficiently proved that Poole's Index will remain uncompleted; that each cataloguer will work alone and unaided on his copy of each book without utilizing to any proper extent the like labors of his fellows … Individuals have neither authority nor ability to carry forward the needed work. It must be done by the co-operation of those most interested – the libraries' (*Library Journal* 1877: 178).

The March 1877 issue of the first volume of *The American Library Journal* (later just the *Library Journal*) recognised that 'Of the standing committees, that on Co-operation will probably prove the most important organ of the Association, as most of the practical work will fall to its share or that of its sub-committees. The Poole's Index, Size, and Co-operative Cataloging matters … are only a portion of the work to be done' (*Library Journal* 1877 : 251-2). One of the first issues the ALA addressed was the joint acquisition of library supplies. Catalogue cards, card cabinets, and other items were new and had to be custom made. The Co-operation Committee set up a supply house to resell library supplies that were standardised and purchased in bulk by the ALA for resale (*Library Journal* 1877 : 246-247).

This is all in the first year of the American Library Association. Much of the journal is taken up with devising standards in terms, in book sizes and in borrower cards, in ledgers and in cataloguing rules. This is the sort of work that libraries have done from then up to today's FRBR and RDA, working not co-ops or consortia as such but as committee work and panel meetings to bring libraries together on national and international levels.

The move toward modern consortia intensified. The concept of interlibrary loan in the United States was mooted in a modest letter in the first 1876 issue of *Library Journal* by Samuel Swett Green, Librarian of the Worcester Free Public Library (Green 1876). Interlibrary loans were initiated informally in 1886 by Joseph C. Rowell, Librarian at the University of California, Berkeley and officially sanctioned by the University in 1894 (**Joseph Cummings Rowell 1939** : 34-35). Rowel had started an exchange programme with other libraries a decade earlier. (**Peterson 1982**). In 1907 the Library of Congress began lending its books and by 1909 had lent over a thousand books to over 100 libraries. By 1919 the ALA adopted its first Interlibrary Loan

Code (Frederiksen 2012). Today there are over seven million requests annually shared among the 10,000 users of OCLC's WorldShare system (WorldShare 2017). The 1920s and 1030s saw further development in library cooperation with the founding of the International Federation of Library Associations in 1927.

Further development of cooperation continued though the 1930s as economic conditions made it imperative for libraries to share resources. Cooperative agreements were formed on a regional basis among libraries in the New York state in 1931, among libraries in the South in 1936, and, in 1931, the Claremont Colleges (Claremont Graduate School, Pomona College and Scripps College) joined their technical services departments together (Weber 1976 : 208). The post-war period saw further development to help research libraries acquire foreign library material. Initiated by Harvard, the Farmington Plan (1944) made joint purchases of mostly European materials. Public Law 480 (1961) or 'Food for Peace' supported libraries in acquiring books from India and Africa by supplying them food and wheat that were paid for with local currency or with books for distribution to American libraries. Shared storage has an early history, with a 1901 proposal by Charles William Eliot, Harvard's long serving president (1869-1909), culminating in the opening in 1942 of the New England Deposit Library (Weber 1976).

Successful library cooperation depends not on institutions but on the people who run them. What became the Center for Research Libraries (1951) was proposed before the Second World War by the president of the University of Chicago. Keyes D. Metcalf, Director of University Libraries at Harvard, was asked to study support for concept among the twelve libraries concerned. All but one of the twelve university presidents supported the project but it was opposed by all but one of the university librarians. After the war, with almost all of the previous presidents and librarians replaced, eleven of the twelve of both presidents and librarians approved (Weber 1976 : 215).

Libraries in China were either imperial or private, with no public libraries until something approximating one, the Jieshu yuan (lending library) of Zhou Yongnian (1730-1791) opened in the 18th century. Modern public libraries did not appear until early in the twentieth century. (Wilkinson 2013 : 932). As China began developing in the 1980s an emphasis was put on rebuilding education and impetus was given to expanding libraries and library cooperation. Consortia have formed based on region, type, or administrative division or some combination of the three. The Beijing Academic Library consortium with academic members is one example, as is one in Tianjin. The Shenzhen Acquisitions and Cataloguing Centre, 1993, serves the public libraries in that city. The Shanghai Information Resources Network, established in 1994, has members from each library sector. It shares cataloguing, interlibrary loans, and provides patrons with an library card for access to all of the members. Perhaps the best known cooperative is CALIS, the China Academic Library and Information System. Founded in 1998 and funded by the central government it has hosts a union catalogue for information and inter-lending. Other academic consortia are focused on social sciences and humanities, medicine, or science and technology (Dong 2009).

In Hong Kong, the Joint University Librarians Advisory Committee (JULAC) has been an outstanding example of cooperation among the eight government-funded universities and thirteen associates. Starting in 1967 as a committee to advise the heads of the universities, JULAC is celebrating fifty years of work, with the last decade being especially productive in part because of technology and in part because of closer cooperation encouraged by the University Grants Committee, the primary funding source for the universities. Among other activities JULAC sponsors a union catalogue, patron-initiated inter-lending between members, database licensing, monograph acquisitions, and common access to member libraries.

Today there are 200 library consortia worldwide who are members of the International Coalition of Library Consortia (ICOLC). The oldest is TRLN, the Triangle Research Libraries

Network in North Carolina (1933), many, like CAVAL in Australia (1978) were started in the 1970s, some, like **LYRASIS (2009),** are new and focus on digital projects, others, such as the Legal Information Preservation Alliance are specialist. Cooperation has brought us a work whose title shows the nature of cooperation behind it: *The National Union Catalog Pre-1956 Imprints: A Cumulative Author List Representing Library of Congress Printed Cards and Titles Reported by Other American Libraries, Compiled and Edited with the Cooperation of the Library of Congress and the National Union Subcommittee of the Resources Committee of the Resources and Technical Services Division, American Library Association.* OCLC, 'a global library cooperative', started as the Ohio College Library Center in 1967 and grew today to have seventeen thousand members and a database of 380 million records (OCLC 2016). In the 140 years since the ALA and the Library Association were founded libraries have developed strong consortia on both national and international levels. In the 1960s libraries developed digital tools that made global sharing of records and materials possible. What is common to all the above is the focus on shared cataloguing, the development of standards, union catalogues, shared acquisitions and exchange, and alliances to share in the development of new computer technologies. All of this, while aimed at providing better service to library patrons, was internal to the library community. Technology and improvements in communications has played an important part in building this foundation. The introduction of parcel post, first in Europe in the 1880s and in the United States in 1913 made inter library loan for books feasible. Photostats and photocopiers made document and journal article loans possible. In the 20th century libraries began the preservation and dissemination of our collections by filming and digitisation. A shared world-wide catalogue was envisioned by Henri Lafontaine and Paul Otlet at the end of the 19th century. The computer, machine readable catalogue records and OCLC made shared catalogues and patron involvement simpler.. While libraries have developed great ideas and initiated many important projects, in the end those projects were published to the world not by libraries but by UMI, WorldCat, and Google.

The twenty-first century has given libraries new tools and new challenges while the major challenges remain those of the past: financial and existential. Funding has always been important: libraries need money to pay their staff, to keep buildings open and operational, and to buy books and journals and other resources. For existential threats, many people in ages prior ours did not see the need for libraries, either public or academic. In nineteenth century England there was opposition to creating free public libraries: if we do not pay for the working man's pint, why should we pay for his penny newspaper (*The Publishers' Circular* 1874 : 902). Today's austerity budgets in England have seen over 500 council libraries closed or transferred to voluntary or commercial firms and library paid library staff cut by eight thousand, a loss of a quarter of total staff. Many public libraries are being kept open only by volunteers ('Libraries' 2016). Are academic libraries and librarians necessary in the age of remote databases and Google and self-checkout machines for the (allegedly) little print that remains?

In October 2017 the Hong Kong Library Association had a workshop as part of IFLA's global discussion on 'how a united library field can tackle the challenges of the future'. Two of the HKLA workshop statements, looking forward five years, seemed particularly appropriate to the topic of united libraries. The first was 'we have moved towards deeper integration of public, academic and other libraries in Hong Kong, with equitable service across society…' and the second was 'All … resources in Hong Kong libraries are accessible to all over the world…'. This would be promoted by the things workshops members thought libraries are good at and among those are collaboration, networking, innovation, and quality of metadata ('Global Vision Discussion' 2017). For Hong Kong, Open Access has long been important and some, such as HKU, require researchers to deposit their work in an Open Access repository (Chan 2017 : 490). Despite this, Open Access publication for HKU is still only 16 percent of total publication although this varies among fields, with social sciences far lower in contributions than medical or physical sciences (Chan 2017 : 495, 491).

At my home institution, UCL, we have a mandate to deposit our publications in UCL Discovery, the UCL repository. If I use the UCL Discovery interface it will find not only my articles but also the book chapters deposited as pre-publication manuscripts with Discovery. This is good. But where is the international discovery service that would do the same? Google Scholar goes some way towards this but could be much better. There are some steps towards something that would approach what Project Muse, JSTOR, and Science Direct do in providing access to their collections of publications. The Directory of Open Access Repositories and *Open*DOAR and DOAJ provide a skeleton framework for the future. In the case of *Open*DOAR, indexing 3,400 repositories, we have a thin skeleton indeed as it relies on Google Custom Search. Searching is for simple text strings and it does not provide for advanced searching by author or institution or filtering by date or language. And it's index in not complete: in Hong Kong it indexes 64,000 items from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Education University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Baptist University, and Lingnan University, but leaves the resources of two of the largest research universities, Hong Kong University and the University of Science and Technology, both ranked in the top fifty universities in the world by the Times Higher Education World Rankings (World University Rankings 2017) and in the top thirty in the QS World Rankings (QS World Rankings 2017). As in the creation of the *National Union Catalog* in the past, this in where the future of consortia needs to be considered. Are our repositories linked? Are the metadata in each repository sufficient for retrieval? Libraries took a lead in getting their institutions to move into Open Access. Can libraries now be the force that would link repositories together? Open Access, if articles remain as academic fodder in hidden silos, is no access. Building a repository is expensive in terms of time, staff, and digital resources. Cooperatively sharing the costs would both continue our cooperative/consortial tradition and keep libraries in the forefront of providing affordable access to information both locally and globally.

Libraries joined together in 1876 to acquire their catalogue cards and other tools more cheaply. Some consortia today have been criticised as being mere buyers clubs, only concerned with lowering their costs. This year has seen libraries in Germany and Taiwan join together in what could be a Not Buying Club. According to a study by the Max Planck Society, libraries worldwide spend '€7.6 billion in subscription fees for access to between 1.5 million and 2 million new papers annually, or between €3800 and €5000 per paper' (Vogel and Kupferschmid 2017), many of them from high-priced subscriptions from companies like Elsevier. Even at its high point in publishing, 31,000 papers in 2013, PLOS ONE accounted for only about two percent of that output, but at least it charges USD 1,500 to USD 2,900 (approximately €1300 to €2500) for Article Processing Charges (PLOS ONE n.d). With the support of the German Rectors' Conference, an association of over 200 German universities, almost two hundred German libraries and academic institutions cancelled their Elsevier subscriptions for 2017 and are currently in negotiations with Elsevier and with Springer Nature and Wiley. Formed into a group called 'Projekts DEAL' they are resisting the high subscriptions of Elsevier and other publishers by refusing to buy and by proposing to pay a reasonable fee to the publishers in return for Open Access worldwide for German authors. Should they succeed in bringing costs down to €1300 per article, a level they consider reasonable, libraries could collectively save five billion euros, money that could go back for books and other resources. Elsevier extended the German subscriptions in 2017 while negotiations continue and has experienced additional pressure from German academics who have resigned from as editors and members of Elsevier editorial and advisory boards ('Researchers Resign Editorship of Elsevier Journals' 2017). They are not alone. Almost 17,000 other academics, researchers, and librarians have also signed an online petition to boycott Elsevier ('16857 Researchers Taking a Stand'. [n.d.])

This could an 'Academic Spring', failing, like the Arab Spring, to survive the harsher and ruthless world outside of Academe but it could also be a template for the future of library cooperation, not only in securing better 'deals' but in moving away from traditional publishing.

Universities, funding agencies, and taxpayers have already paid for the research: they shouldn't have to pay unreasonable sums for it again. Academics, of course, publish to be read. They must also publish in top journals to score points on various government/funder assessment exercises. Publication must be in top-level, international journals, most of which are distributed by the major publishers. How can journals with such standing be created and maintained outside of the majors? And for those academics who do boycott Elsevier or other publishers and publish instead only in conference proceedings and on specialist sites there is the danger that it will make it difficult if not impossible for libraries to acquire, to make accessible, and most importantly, to preserve their works. Libraries and research institutions must work together to make this material available in one common database. Universities and libraries can provide the necessary peer review – it would be (or should be) expected that repositories run by UCL or LSE or HKU or UST would have a standard of excellence for deposit. However, deposit is only one part, and perhaps the least important part. What is most important is dissemination.

Einstein allegedly said 'We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them'. Some other genius once said 'You can't solve a problem by throwing more money at it'. Like our librarian forefathers we need to look at the world as it is and where our libraries are and move forward, united, to towards a new future. This should be a revolution with library characteristics. Or at least lead to publishing with the library characteristics of transparency, free access, adherence to standards, and communication.

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