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Missionary Research Library questionnaire collection4492672

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Description is written in: English.

appm

Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary

3041 Broadway

New York, NY 10027

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URL: <https://library.columbia.edu/locations/burke.html>

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Summary Information

Repository:	Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary
Creator:	Missionary Research Library (New York, N.Y.)
Title:	Missionary Research Library questionnaire collection
ID:	4492672
Date:	1955
Physical Description:	2.5 linear feet 2.5 linear feet; 5 boxes
Language of the Material:	English .
Abstract:	This collection contains completed questionnaires from foreign missionaries, churches, and mission boards compiled by the Missionary Research Library in 1955 to research factors related to selection, training, placement, and withdrawal of missionary personnel.

Preferred Citation

Item description, MRL12: Missionary Research Library questionnaire collection. 1955, box #, folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

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Biographical / Historical

The Missionary Research Library was created by John R. Mott in 1914 after the World Missionary Conference, held in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1910. It was created in order to be both a resource for missionaries, and a means to document the missionary movement. With funding from John D. Rockefeller, Mott stated, "We are now ready to...secure the most complete and serviceable missionary library and archives in the world. I desire it to be thoroughly interdenominational, ecumenical and international. It should be made preeminently rich in source material." It was located at the Madison Avenue headquarters of the Foreign Missionary Conference of North America. By the 1920s, funding was becoming scarce; therefore it was moved to the Brown Tower of the Union Theological Seminary, New York City in 1929. The Library was an important center of information and research. Active missionaries would

consult the material of the Missionary Research Library while on furlough. Much of the Library's success was due to the director and librarian, Charles H. Fahs. Upon his retirement in 1948, the MRL's financial difficulties continued until it was integrated with the Burke Library's collections in 1976. In 2004, the Burke Library was fully integrated with the Columbia University Library system.

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Biographical / Historical

In 1953, the MRL Committee on Research in Foreign Missions of the Division of Foreign Missions issued a statement entitled, "A Proposed Study of the Rate and Causes of Missionary Turnover." Under the direction of R. Pierce Beaver, this committee of missionaries, personnel secretaries, teachers of missions, and others defined the scope of a two-part research project entitled, "A Study of the Turnover of Missionary Personnel." Part one of the study was a statistical analysis of board records, gathered by three tabulation sheets completed by participating boards. Part two gathered demographics, experiences, and opinions related to missionary turnover through questionnaires that were sent to mission board administrators overseas, national church leaders, and former missionaries. Constant H. Jacquet, Jr., chief researcher for the National Council of Churches and one of the nation's top religious statisticians was placed in charge of the study. A detailed analysis of the results of this research study were compiled by Kenyon E. Moyer and published by the MRL in 1957 under the title A Study of Missionary Motivation, Training, and Withdrawal (1932-1952).

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Scope and Contents

This collection contains completed questionnaires from foreign missionaries, churches, and mission boards compiled by the Missionary Research Library in 1955 to research factors related to selection, training, placement, and withdrawal of missionary personnel. Included are completed questionnaires from 24 foreign churches (pink forms), 15 foreign missions boards (green forms), and 902 missionaries (yellow and blue forms). They are organized in order of their code number, found in the bottom left-hand corner of each record. The majority of the questionnaires were filled out anonymously. A copy of the original letter enclosed with the missionary questionnaire is attached to record #1158, and states that "the code number on your questionnaire has meaning to one member of our staff only, and it is necessary to us in our accounting and analysis of returns." This code meaning is not known. The board questionnaires collect data concerning factors related to withdrawals, including the use of psychological testing and/or training, and its perceived impact on missionary success. The church questionnaires collect data from national church leaders about their

responsibilities relative to the boards, the future need for various types of missionaries, the differences in missionary attitudes and policies before and after World War II, factors related to withdrawal, and the relationship of prior training to missionary success. The missionary questionnaires collect personal data on respondents including age, gender, field location, years of service, missionary task, and current occupation. Other information collected includes the factors leading to the decision to enter missionary service, what training was received before and after entering the field, whether provisions, salaries, and living arrangements were sufficient, the effect of the experience on their Christian faith and their belief in missionary work, reasons for leaving, and whether the support they received from their administrative board was adequate. Some of the major concerns expressed by missionaries on their questionnaires were denominational factionalism, the misuse of money, imperialism and the need to separate Western culture from the Christian message, lack of Christian values among missionary communities, bigotry, lack of missionary experience among board members, and the unwillingness of missionaries to learn from and appreciate other cultures and religions. Nevertheless, the majority of respondents indicated that they found missionary work to be spiritually edifying.

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Arrangement

This collection is organized in one series arranged alphabetically and then numerically.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Revision Description

PDF converted to EAD and description, including collection title, updated by Leah Edelman. 2022-03-01

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Onsite storage.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

This collection was assembled from records in the Missionary Research Library before its 1976 closure. These records were accessioned by the Burke Library at the time of the MRL's closure in 1976.

Processing Information

Material was cataloged by Lynn A. Grove on 1988-08-03. Metal clips, staples, and tape were removed from materials and folded items were flattened. Materials were placed in new acid-free folders and boxes. Acidic items were separated from one another by interleaving with acid-free paper as needed. The finding aid was created by Kristen Leigh Southworth in 2012 with the support of the Henry Luce Foundation, and edited by Leah Edelman in 2022.

Conditions Governing Use

Some material in this collection may be protected by copyright and other rights. Information concerning copyright, fair use, and reproduction requests can be consulted at Columbia's Copyright Advisory Office.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Missions -- Personnel management

Burke Library record group:

Missionary Research Library Archives: MRL12, Ecumenical/World Missions

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Collection Inventory

Missionary Research Library questionnaire collection, 1955

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Title/Description	Instances	
Letter to Missionaries, Tabulation Sheets and Instructions, Blank Surveys, 1955	box 1	folder 1
Board Questionnaires: M0003-M0009, United Christian Missionary Society (UCMS), 1955	box 1	folder 2
Board Questionnaires: M0011-M0023, Board of Foreign Missions of the United Presbyterian Church, 1955	box 1	folder 3

Board Questionnaires: M0024-M0029, Board of Foreign Missions of the Lutheran Church, 1955	box 1	folder 4
Board Questionnaires: M0031, Board of Foreign Missions of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, 1955	box 1	folder 5
Board Questionnaires: M0033-M0040, National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 1955	box 1	folder 6
Board Questionnaires:M0043-M0052, Interboard: Board of Missions of the Evangelical UnitedBrethren Church, Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Churchin the USA, American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, 1955	box 1	folder 7
Board Questionnaires: M0056-M0059, General Missionary Board of the Free Methodist Church , 1955	box 1	folder 8
Board Questionnaires: M0064-M0066, Board of Foreign Missions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1955	box 1	folder 9
Board Questionnaires: M0069-M0078, General Brotherhood Board, Church of the Brethren, 1955	box 1	folder 10
Board Questionnaires: M0079-M0083, Board of Foreign Missions of the United Lutheran Church, 1955	box 1	folder 11
Board Questionnaires: M0086-M0115, Board of Missions of the Methodist Church, 1955	box 1	folder 12
Board Questionnaires: M0117-M0122, Board of Foreign Missions of the Reformed Church in America, 1955	box 1	folder 13
Board Questionnaires: M0123-M0130, Board of World Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the US, 1955	box 1	folder 14
Church Questionnaires: 0003-0121 , 1955	box 1	folder 15
Missionary Questionnaires: 0001-0197, 1955	box 1	folder 16-20
Missionary Questionnaires: 0198-0532, 1955	box 2	folder 1-10
Missionary Questionnaires: 0533-0927, 1955	box 3	folder 1-10
Missionary Questionnaires: 0928-1304, 1955	box 4	folder 1-10
Missionary Questionnaires: 1305-1775, 1955	box 5	folder 1-10

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