
NEWSFLASH !

Issue 18

A URANTIAN® NEWS BULLETIN

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*From Urantia Foundation to IUA Officers,
Foundation Office Managers, Foundation Representatives,
Translators, and Other Supporters for the Purpose of Disseminating
This Information to Readers in Local Areas*

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Discounted Books and Bookselling Facts

When *The Urantia Book* was first published, Forum members were given an opportunity to pre-order books. Many of those members remember the day in October 1955 when they were able to hold in their hands the realization of a dream some had awaited for decades. Cases of books were carried from 533 Diversey Parkway that day for distribution to friends and family. In the early days, this was the primary way people discovered *The Urantia*

Book. For many years, Urantia Foundation and the former Urantia Brotherhood distributed books in this way. Individuals and Urantia Brotherhood Societies would purchase case lots at deep discounts.

Although this practice was necessary for the early seeding of *The Urantia Book*, it also had its disadvantages insofar as it slowed the development of normal trade channels. If the

practice of discounting books to individuals and reader groups continued, the book was in danger of becoming a cult classic – that is, you would have to know someone in order to find the book. The only people who knew about the book were buying at a discount from Urantia Brotherhood or Urantia Foundation and, therefore, no market was created.

Commercial Channels

As a result, many commercial channels would not carry the book because there was no demand for them. This prevented people from being able to discover the book on bookstore shelves. Shelf space is limited and is precious to retailers, and managers look for books that will have frequent turnover. They will not stock a book if it does not prove to have a market. Nor will they stock it if they are undercut by organizations selling directly to the consumer at a discount. The Foundation eventually became aware that every book sold at a discount from someone's living room stock actually retards the development of commercial channels and impedes worldwide availability. The decision was made to limit the availability of discounted books while promoting normal channels of retail sale.

This is why sales to individuals from Urantia Foundation (website or phone orders) are at suggested retail price and we do not offer quantity discounts to individuals or reader groups. We include links from our website to online retailers like Amazon and Barnes & Noble where discounted copies are available through commercial channels. Today we find that the availability of the book worldwide has been tremendously improved by following this plan. New readers can find the book in bookstores and libraries worldwide, free of the interpretations of any one group or individual.

Other Publishers

Other publishers may offer readers and study groups attractive deals for discounted copies of the Urantia Book. We realize how attractive,

altruistic, and convenient these kinds of offers may seem at first glance, but we believe it is important for readers to understand how the bookselling industry works and to resist participation in these offers if they occur. We encourage readers and study groups to purchase books directly from bookstores so that these stores will continue to stock *The Urantia Book* for the next truth seeker browsing the shelves.

A Challenge for Urantia Associations, Fellowship Societies and Study Groups

Through the years many readers and study groups have assisted in our efforts to establish *The Urantia Book* in the book market. Some readers have "adopted" one or more bookstores in their community. One reader told us she would regularly order *The Urantia Book* from her local bookstore. Once the book came in, she would ask that it be put on the shelf for one month and indicated she would come in and purchase it if it had not already been sold. She never had to purchase a book! Simply purchasing the book from a local bookstore helps to ensure the availability on bookstore shelves for the next potential *Urantia Book* reader.

Here's a challenge for Urantia Associations and study groups: The book is so inexpensive at this point that almost anyone can afford to order the book through a bookstore. If you adopt a set of bookstores and order the authentic *Urantia Book* regularly through those stores, availability of *The Urantia Book* will be greatly enhanced. If you cannot afford the book, every time you go into a bookstore at least ask if they have it.

Urantia Foundation can supply you with postcards that have *The Urantia Book's* ISBN number and ordering information printed on the back. You can leave these cards with bookstore managers to remind them to order the Book. If enough books are purchased through your local bookstores, or if inquiries are regularly made about it, store managers

will be encouraged to order it regularly, and you will be directly helping to increase the availability of *The Urantia Book* in retail stores where most people are likely to find it.

Urantia Foundation has established a worldwide distribution network that continues to

grow. *The Urantia Book* notes that "[c]ommerces has been the great civilizer through promoting the cross-fertilization of culture." (p. 775) Through the effective use of ordinary channels of trade, this book can reach the hearts of men. You can help by ordering your books through bookstores.

***The Urantia Book* Takes Root in Greece**

In 1999 four readers in Greece were listed on the Foundation's mailing list. In 1997 an article in a Greek esoteric magazine presented *The Urantia Book* in a cloud of mystery. Very little was known about it.

In 1998 a Greek citizen found the book in London and, after several readings, and having experienced the profound impact the book has on one's spiritual life, decided to attempt to find ways to bring the book to the notice of his fellow Greeks. While the Greek Orthodox religion is strong in Greece, there are many individuals searching for truth outside of that religion. The first task was to prepare information about *The Urantia Book* in Greek and the second, to generate local interest by bringing the book to the notice of groups of truth seekers who were already connected to certain book distribution channels dealing with alternate religious material.

A strategic alliance was created with the editor of an esoteric magazine who also owned a bookstore and was a book distributor. In January 2000 a two-hour presentation of *The Urantia Book* was arranged in one of the bookstores in Athens belonging to this distributor. It was attended by 80 individuals who responded to the magazine's promotion of the event. The book was also on display and for sale.

A synopsis of *The Urantia Book* highlighting its prominent messages was later enclosed in one of the magazines and sent to over 7,000 subscribers. At the end of the synopsis, an e-mail contact address was given for people

interested in receiving further information. Also a call was made for volunteers who may wish to assist with a translation effort. Before long, the Greek translation had begun and was progressing well.

In May 2000 a Foundation Trustee and the Foundation's Translation Manager visited Athens to meet with translators and readers. In August 2000 the leader of this group signed agreements with the Foundation and became the Chief translator for the Greek translation, as well as the Foundation's Representative for Greece. By that time around 100 English books had been sold by one of the booksellers.

At the IUA New York conference in 2000, having been inspired by the gathering of kindred spirits and the power and effectiveness of workshops, our new Representative for Greece decided to organize a weekend seminar/workshop in Athens to introduce *The Urantia Book*. He invited an experienced longtime reader from the United States to help him lead and direct the program. The magazine publisher sponsored the workshop which was held in February 2001 and attended by 35 individuals. The theme was "The Art of Living in Today's World – Personal and Planetary Transformation." An article on the Art of Living, as well as excerpts from *The Urantia Book*, were published in the magazine to promote the workshop.

Shortly afterwards two study groups of readers studying the translated Greek papers emerged – one in Athens and another in Thessaloniki. These groups now assist the

translation effort by providing feedback to the translators. In May 2001 the first draft of the Greek translation of the book was completed and editing has commenced. The team hopes to have the Greek translation available in the bookstores by the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens.

The Greek distributor has added a page to its company's website about *The Urantia Book*. This site receives around 1,000,000 hits per month, obviously reaching many Greeks from all over the world. Another seminar/workshop is scheduled for March 9-10, 2002. It is hoped that brothers and sisters from other European

and Balkan countries will attend. To date approximately 200 copies of *The Urantia Book* have been sold in Greece.

It is interesting to note that during this time the Pope visited Greece in an effort to heal the rift between the Greek Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church. In addition, Greek politicians are attempting to heal the rift between the Christian Greeks and the Muslim Turks via the future entry of Cyprus into the European Union, which is likely to take place around 2004. These are indeed interesting times for Greece.

Spanish Readers Join to Assist in Editing of *El Libro de Urantia*

Talks were held at the Foundation in June of this year with a number of Latin-American readers on the subject of the re-translation of *El Libro de Urantia* by readers in Spain and whether there might be a need to publish separate translations of *The Urantia Book* for readers in Spain and Latin America. At the conclusion of these talks it was envisaged that an effort would be made to establish a working relationship between the Spanish translators in Seville, Spain and Latin American readers from South America.

Soon after the Chicago meeting the Seville group was asked if they would like to receive a delegation consisting of Foundation representatives and a small number of Latin-American participants in the Chicago meeting. The Seville group replied that they would welcome such a delegation "with arms wide open" and in September both groups met in Seville.

Despite the many differences of opinion and the widely divergent views of the two groups, the atmosphere at the meeting was constructive; spiritual unity prevailed from the first moment, and the outcome surpassed even the best of expectations.

Based on recommendations from these readers, and in the interests of unity, the Trustees decided that the Foundation should continue to publish a single Spanish translation of *The Urantia Book* and that the text should be acceptable to readers both in Spain and Latin America.

All agreed to form a Retranslation Committee consisting of two teams - one from Latin America and one from Spain -- and a group of advisors. The objective of this committee is to produce a Spanish translation that is acceptable to both Latin-American and Spanish readers. The two teams will work together and make their best efforts to produce a text acceptable to Spanish readers throughout the world.

First Colombian IUA National Conference

Cathy Jones, IUA Administrator

The first conference of the Colombian International Urantia Association, Primer Congreso Colombiano De Lectores Del *Libro De Urantia* was held August 18, 19, and 20 at the beautiful, sun-filled conference center, Aguadora Club, located up a winding road, high atop a green mountain overlooking the bustling city of Bogotá, population 6 million.

Richard Keeler, Robert Solone, and myself from Urantia Foundation attended and we found the Colombian people warm, friendly, intelligent and deeply rooted in Christian values and precepts.

This being the first country-wide reader event, what, in the beginning seemed to be an impossibility, turned out to be a spiritual and mental feast for 130 responsive readers. Miriam Rivera, a fairly new reader, experienced in producing large meetings in Bogotá, was the highly skilled conference co-ordinator. The 3-day program flowed without a hitch. Great job Miriam, and all the tireless planners and workers.

The conference theme was "Travesia hacia el Paraiso" (Journey Towards the Paradise). And what a journey it was! President Patricia Ramírez opened the first day with an inspiring, enthusiastic greeting which set the conference mood.

Tamila Ragimova, physicist, from the former Soviet Union, now professor at Medellin (Colombia) University, was the opening speaker, with an outstanding presentation, *Cosmologia del Universo de Universos*. From there, the remaining 14 speakers continued the highest caliber, researched, *Urantia Book* related material comparable, if not to exceed, many reader gatherings. Many slides and prepared

charts were used. (You will soon find all the speeches on our Latin American website and we are translating them into English for the IUA website.)

Two outstanding musical interludes were presented. Everyone, especially we Americans, enjoyed hearing Frank Sinatra songs in English, in addition to many Colombian favorites. Another very talented musician rendered a musical performance from a collection of handmade instruments of modern and pre-Colombian origin.

Licensing of San Jose Local Association

A final highlight was the licensing of Asociación Urantia San Jose Eje Cafetero, Colombia's newest local association. San Jose is nestled just outside Bogata and is primarily a farming community. The town is almost 100% crime-free. The Catholic Church is in the center of town and many of the leading citizens are *Urantia Book* readers. This new group of San Jose professionals have been reading *The Urantia Book* since 1996 and meet for study daily. Their dedication and joy in living these advanced principles is indeed an inspiration.

The officers are: President: Dr. Jairo Franco Londono, Vice President: Dr. Mauricio Castano Ramirez, Treasurer: Alexander Tamayo Minas, Secretary: Dario Franco Londono.

We are honored to have this group join our IUA family and look forward to getting to know each of you. To Colombia, congratulations on a successful, inspiring conference and many thanks for your love and hospitality.

Histories of *The Urantia Book*

Urantia Foundation has received inquiries asking whether certain books dealing with the history of *The Urantia Book* are published and/or approved by the Foundation. Urantia Foundation is not affiliated with and does not endorse any of the histories currently in print.

At an event marking Urantia Foundation's 50th Anniversary in March 2000, a publication entitled "The Golden Years: 100 Years of Revelation" was provided as a memento for participants. Additional work has continued in order to produce a well-documented, book-length publication to be published by Urantia

Foundation and distributed through general retail channels.

There is also a *History of the Urantia Movement* published on Urantia Foundation's website that was authored by Dr. William Sadler, the man who served as head of the contact commission, the original group that served as custodians of the Urantia manuscript and was charged with full responsibility for supervising all the details connected with the publication of *The Urantia Book*, securing the international copyrights, etc. It is available at <http://www.urantia.org/pub/ahotum.html>.

Our Thanks to You!

We have had an encouraging response to our call for monthly contributions in the recent fall fundraising letter. These regular contributions are especially helpful because they provide a dependable income stream for Urantia Foundation's ongoing activities. Thank you to all who have contributed.

Many have pledged to contribute regular amounts each month or each quarter, and others have sent the equivalent of \$10 a month in one \$120 contribution. Imagine if everyone on the Foundation's mailing list could find this amount to contribute each year! We would raise enough to cover all of our operating expenses and to pay for all the projects proposed in our strategic plan.

Open Letter to the Fellowship

The following is a letter that was sent from the Trustees to the Urantia Book Fellowship on November 20, 2001

An Open Letter to
The Urantia Book Fellowship
529 Wrightwood
Chicago, IL 60614

Dear Fellow Readers of *The Urantia Book*,

Recent events have given us all an opportunity to reflect on our lives, our mission, and the future of the Urantia Revelation. We believe that members of the Fellowship share Urantia Foundation's desire to effect the dissemination of the revelation to our spiritually thirsty brothers and sisters throughout the world.

We believe that this desire, among others, is a fundamental cause of the Fellowship's having decided to publish competing editions of *The Urantia Book* and its translations. However, we ask for a reconsideration of that decision in the spirit of cooperation toward our common goal and in the spirit of patience.

Because the validity of the U.S. renewal copyright in the English text of *The Urantia Book* is currently in the hands of the legal system, we entreat the Urantia Book Fellowship to put publication plans on hold at least until the process is concluded. We expect the United States Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals to issue its ruling in the coming year.

In 1996, while the Maaherra appeal was pending, the Fellowship printed and marketed its own editions of *The Urantia Book*, which led to litigation between the Foundation and the Fellowship. Less than a year later, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals issued its ruling upholding the validity of the copyright.

Subsequently, the Fellowship and Urantia Foundation reached an agreement, which most people viewed as positive and as a step toward stabilization and unification. In the times that followed, readers have made clear their desire for harmony among those interested in the spread of this revelation. For the Fellowship to publish the book at this time, before a final determination as to the validity of the copyright is made, may only lead to further, unnecessary divisiveness among our already fragmented community of *Urantia Book* readers, many of whom have worked for decades to effect cooperation based on spiritual unity amidst diverse personalities and viewpoints.

There are many opportunities for service. We respectfully request that you engage patience and resist the impulse to duplicate efforts and use money that could more effectively be spent in outreach programs.

The copyright issue will be resolved in the fullness of time, and at that point, appropriate plans can be formulated according to our respective understandings of the Father's will. Until that time, we hope that precious resources will be maximized for the benefit of those who still dwell in spiritual darkness.

Sincerely,

The Trustees of Urantia Foundation

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