The special problems and prospects of the selection and acquisition of foreign publications deal with no trivial portion of world publication. UNESCO's book production figures for 1960 assign less than five per cent of the titles to U.S. publishers, leaving a whopping 95 per cent to be acquired across our customs, copyright, and censorship barriers. According to the Bureau of the Census, the United States imported over $22,000,000 worth of books and closely related materials in 1960, an increase of nearly 10 per cent over 1959 imports; and I have heard of no one who thinks this amount approached adequacy.

Reviewing library acquisition of foreign publications today, one gradually becomes aware of a sense of opening out, an expanding view. Not only in the library world, but outside as well, there is interest and strong support—not to say push—for the building of library resources in all areas of interest in all parts of the world. Forces and ferment such as these are pushing us: UNESCO's leadership in exchanges and in the production of bibliographies, the concern of the powerful Association of Research Libraries with the cooperative building of library resources, the Organization of American States pushing library development in Latin America, progress in our own bibliographic apparatus, international agreement upon cataloging principles, the focusing of national attention upon these and related problems by the Bryant-Library of Congress interchange, and over it all the strong awareness that the building of adequate library resources is in the national interest.

If, as I do, you believe that the building up of library resources is a worthwhile contribution to the well-being of humanity, that the collections we build will survive in spite of insects and climate, and that the leaders of the powerful nations of the world are too sensible to call for the shot which will mean suicide for our civilization, then it's a wonderful time to be concerned with foreign book procurement.

Selection

The problem of acquiring foreign publications can be reduced to its elements of what to get, how to get it, and, in some cases, how to accomplish its delivery. What to get involves the day-by-day

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translation of an institution's acquisition policy. In the setting up of policies, the need for cooperation and specialization among libraries becomes evident. The pressure of today's increasing world production of books and periodicals is matched only by the urgency for our scholars, scientists, and public servants to see and assimilate the content of that production. In the past the problems of foreign book procurement have belonged in the main to the large research libraries. It takes no crystal ball to predict that foreign book purchasing will increase in smaller libraries. More foreign language training, more foreign travel and commerce, more foreign visitors to all parts of the United States, and most of all, more concern with what is happening in other countries increase the needs and curiosity about foreign publications among library patrons.

A single library in this country can cover pretty adequately the current production in this country, and indeed some libraries do. But to cover world production, which brings in the complications of non-Roman alphabets, political barriers, the lack of bibliographical aids, and sheer magnitude, is indeed impossible.

In his introduction to The Intimate Henry Miller, Lawrence Clark Powell, the librarian about whom nobody is neutral, tells of supplying Henry Miller with books from the UCLA library. He says, "Either we had them or we got them for him, which is what a librarian is supposed to do." If by "got" Mr. Powell means having the book on the shelf, obtaining a microfilm of it, or borrowing it, we can agree with him. Selection policy, then, is a statement of what each library shall try to obtain and what it shall rely upon others to have. In the area of foreign acquisitions the Farmington Plan is of immense value to policy makers. Its early years established the assumption of cooperative responsibility to procure and record the publications of most of the non-English, Roman-alphabet world. After the Vosper-Talmadge stock-taking at the end of its first decade, it sturdily took on most of the rest of the world. Since this is a plan involving the good will of more than half a hundred independent organizations, each with its complex of autocratic-democratic administrative controls, the Plan's qualified success is both astonishing and heartening.

Bibliographic Aids in Selection

The librarian seeking bibliographic help in any area of the world will begin with Winchell and her 37-page, annotated list of national and trade bibliographies, continued by the three supplements to the seventh edition and the semiannual lists in the January and July issues of College and Research Libraries. Another compact and useful handbook is Robert L. Collison's Bibliographical Services Throughout the World, 1950-59. This is number nine of UNESCO's Bibliographical Handbooks, published in 1961, and a tribute to the growing success of UNESCO's preoccupation with the development of national biblio-
Collison includes a listing of the bibliographic activities of interna-
tional organizations and a table which shows at a glance the present
state of bibliographic activity in each country. You may find rather
interesting, as I did, the five pages devoted to the state of bibliography
in our own country, where he mentions our “frequent conferences and
working parties.”

Keeping up with current developments in publishing and the book
trade of foreign countries can be accomplished only by following the
various journals associated with the local antiquarian and current
book trade, catalogs and lists put out by foreign booksellers, the oc-
casional articles on foreign trade in the Publishers’ Weekly, Stechert-
Hafner Book News, the Antiquarian Bookman, library journals, and the

Procurement

Conditions for the procurement of foreign publications are bet-
ter than they have been since the beginning of World War II, perhaps
the best they have ever been. If UNESCO has its way, they will con-
tinue to improve.

American vs. Foreign Agents

The first decision to be made in ordering foreign publications is
whether to employ an American importer or a foreign bookseller.
Smaller libraries, with a minimum of orders, will find it advantageous
to use an American firm and thus to obtain the advantages of placing a
single order for books published in several countries and to employ
simpler procedures in the handling of invoices, payments, returns,
and claims. Libraries ordering a substantial number of foreign publi-
cations will probably want to employ agents in the country of publica-
tion, in order to secure the advantages of faster delivery and cheaper
prices.

I have no formula for fixing the point at which a library turns
from an importer to a foreign agent. Small libraries may want to
employ one or two foreign agents for the experience. However, this
aspect coincides somewhat with Mr. Weller’s views on matrimony,
to wit, “Wen you’re a married man, Samiwel, you’ll understand a
good many things as you don’t understand now; but vether it’s worth
while goin’ through so much to learn so little . . . is a matter o’ taste.”
And the first time a librarian has a shipment held up in customs and
must employ a customs broker at some expense, he may well decide
that it’s not to his taste.

There are many able American dealers in foreign books. They
know the foreign book trade well, are familiar with the appropriate
languages, are accustomed to handling importation requirements, and
can often be seen at library meetings for consultations; some of them
have foreign offices on the spot ready to solve special problems.
The selection of such an agent is relatively simple. There are a number of good general importers and a number of importers who specialize in certain languages or countries. The librarian can first try an agent recommended by other librarians and can then judge whether or not the particular agent suits his particular needs. As you know, no single agent is the best agent for all libraries.

The same procedure can be followed in the selection of a foreign agent. A number of large libraries have issued lists of dealers whom they have found serviceable, e.g., the New York Public Library’s Technical Order 57-14 of February 1, 1957, “Major Dealers for Current Materials”; the “List of Book Dealers Outside the United States,” offered in 1950 by the Acquisition Unit of the United Nations Library; and the Library of Congress Order Division’s “List of Book Dealer Sources for Currently Issued Foreign Publications,” 1958. (There may be later editions of any or all of these.) Useful printed lists include the Publishers’ International Yearbook, London, and the International Directory of Antiquarian Booksellers, published in 1958 by the International League of Antiquarian Booksellers. Lists of publishers and booksellers are published in countries with well established book trades, and more foreign bookdealers than American bookdealers supply both current and antiquarian books. For areas with really difficult procurement problems the most practical approach is to seek advice from librarians who have going programs in the areas or the chairman of the Farmington Plan subcommittee which deals with the area in question.

Mechanics of Procurement

The procurement of publications from abroad, whether by purchase, exchange, or gift, can be complicated by customs regulations, censorship, and currency problems. The latter problem is least annoying for libraries in this country since we buy with hard currency. American libraries find little use for UNESCO international book coupons which were introduced in 1948 to help institutions and individuals in soft currency countries. Libraries wishing to pass on an occasional UNESCO coupon which may have been received in payment for a microfilm or similar service may do so quite easily by sending it to one of their agents who carries on export activities.

Censorship barriers to the acquisition of foreign publications may be erected in the country of publication or in this country. Censorship by this government may be for moral or political reasons. The most recent instance of the latter is the Cunningham Amendment to the Postage Revision Act of 1962 (HR 7927). C. B. Grannis, in the February 19, 1962, Publishers’ Weekly characterized the situation succinctly in the title of his editorial, “How to Impose Ignorance by Law.” The Cunningham Amendment was designed to prohibit the carriage under both domestic and international rates of material deemed
by the Attorney General to be Communist propaganda, and thus pre-
vented the receipt of important research and informational materials
by libraries. As finally passed, the Act exempts from the provisions
of the amendment "mail matter addressed to any United States Govern-
ment agency, or any public library, or to any college, university, grad-
uate school, or scientific or professional institution for advanced
studies, or any official thereof."\(^1\)

The Customs Simplification Act of 1953 permits informal entry
of library materials without regard to the value of the shipment or the
way in which shipment is made, that is, by mail or otherwise. In spite
of these favorable regulations, libraries still have to submit to ex-
pensive formalities to clear express and freight shipments. The so-
called Florence Agreement, more properly designated the Agreement
on the Importation of Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Materials,
was drawn up by a UNESCO Conference in Florence in 1950. It became
effective when ratified by 10 countries, the tenth being Sweden in 1952.
Ratification by the United States was delayed in order to observe first
the effects of adherence to the Universal Copyright Convention. Ac-
cording to Dana Pratt of the American Book Publishers' Council,
American publishers were not demanding such protection: "American
publishers do not regard our present low tariff on books as being of
any real economic significance and would like to see the whole world
thrown open to free and unrestricted trade in books."\(^2\) The United
States signed the Florence Agreement in 1959, and the Senate ratified
it in 1960. However, the separate bill making the required tariff
changes has not yet been passed by Congress. Such a bill was intro-
duced into the House in August of 1962, but I can find no evidence that
it was passed before adjournment on October 13. Once the enabling
bills are passed, libraries will pay no additional costs for tariffs
levied on domestic importers of foreign books, and library patrons
will themselves be freed of impediments to the purchase of foreign
publications.

UNESCO's Trade Barriers to Knowledge, revised in 1955, is a
useful manual presenting the tariff and trade regulations affecting the
movement of library materials from one country to another. The
regulations are listed by country, and a tabulated summary is given.
Current developments in this field can be watched through the UNESCO
Bulletin for Libraries and, for actions of our own government, through
the ALA Washington Newsletter. Government restrictions on imports
from Red China and from Cuba make it necessary for libraries which
want to acquire publications directly from these two countries to ob-
tain an import license from the Foreign Assets Control Division of
the U. S. Treasury Department. This license must be renewed each
year, and the assigned license number should appear on the address
label of all Chinese and Cuban materials, even those posted from
other foreign countries such as Hong Kong or Japan.
Out-of-print Publications

The acquiring of out-of-print foreign publications presents problems different from those of acquiring current imprints. Xerox and inexpensive reprinting have made our quest for out-of-print material more rational. If an item is needed immediately, we can get a tailor-made copy printed on both sides of the page and suitable for binding for about ten cents a page. Of course, no budget can absorb an unlimited amount of this sort of acquisition, but it does eliminate the necessity for expensive and emergency searching by dealers or expensive, cumbersome photostat or print copies.

In general, needed items in Western languages will be searched for efficiently and adequately by the well organized book trade of Western Europe. Several years ago the Acquisitions Section of ALA sponsored an attempt to set up a TAAB-like service for out-of-print books in French, Italian, and Spanish. Frank Schick had suggested that searching for titles in these languages was not too well organized, and the Foreign Desiderata Project was the result. Mr. Melcher of R. R. Bowker Company undertook to experiment with a listing of items desired by libraries, the list to be paid for by subscribing foreign book dealers. The free service was good from the library point of view, but Bowker withdrew after losing a considerable amount on its two trial lists. Sam Hitt and the University of Missouri cooperated in that project, but only to be cooperative. Both Missouri and California at Berkeley find their IBM systems quite efficient in following through on out-of-print orders.

Budgeting

Budgeting for foreign acquisitions tends to be based on past experience and patron demand. So far there is little information on cost increases such as is available for U. S. books and periodicals. The ALA Cost of Library Materials Index Committee plans to collect information on foreign book prices and make it available through library periodicals. Already LRTS is offering an article on "Trends in Book Prices in West Germany, 1954-60" by Marietta Chicorel. Bill Kurth has promised to bring his index figures on Mexican books up to date and publish them, and indexes for the Danish book trade are expected. In the meantime, if your budgeting officer or committee isn't too persnickety, you can apply the index figures for American publications to your total budget and come out with a fair estimate.

Photoreproductions

Photoreproductions continue to be an important part of a foreign acquisitions program. Contrary to a rumor Dean Downs has been spreading, microfilm is not just for those allergic to book dust. It can supply the text of unavailable items urgently needed; and microprint
projects, cooperatively financed, have made available important segments of both current and retrospective foreign literature.

When librarians wish to secure a title which is not needed on an emergency basis, they should consider reprinting possibilities. A full-size reprint is usually more acceptable to library patrons, and present-day techniques make reprinting less expensive and more prevalent. If the library can wait for a title, it should be recommended to the Reprint Expediting Service maintained by the Reprinting Committee of the ALA Resources and Technical Services Division Acquisitions Section, or to one of a number of commercial reprinters, some of whom have special areas of interest. RES will investigate possibilities, and the chances that a reasonably-priced volume will eventually be available are good. Bringing needed titles to the attention of reprinting firms is a service to librarians and scholars as well as to the firm.

Exchanges

Acquisition through exchange is particularly important in the procurement of foreign publications. Purchasing exactly what a library wants is still the most direct and satisfactory method of acquisition. However, some books do not appear in trade at all, and others are difficult for book stores to obtain. Consider, for example, publications of the Soviet Union. UNESCO reports that 76,064 monographic titles were published in the USSR in 1960, of which 43,367 were placed on the market. An official of Mezhdounarodnaia Kniga told one of our staff members recently that his firm receives only 15 to 20,000 titles annually for export purposes. How are the important titles of the remaining body of publications to be acquired?

In general, institutions have three types of material for exchange: their own publications, surplus duplicates, and commercially published American books which can be used for priced exchange programs. The latter group is used only when publications can be obtained in no other way, since it involves two procedures to obtain one publication. Its widest use has been in exchanges with Eastern European countries, where many books are difficult to acquire and where there seems to be a great desire for American publications.

The most reasonable and economically defensible exchanges are those set up through the use of an institution's own serial publications. The economy of duplicates exchange is open to serious question. Experience at Illinois has convinced me that, considering the high cost of personnel and the difficulty of obtaining an adequate number of staff positions to handle basic library functions, duplicates can best be disposed of by offering them to dealers for whatever credit can be obtained. Occasionally a group of duplicates in a single subject field can be placed with mutual advantage in some other library, but a miscellaneous collection can be given to the Asian Foundation—
which will pay transportation costs—or to the United States Book Ex-
change with no twinge of conscience.

There is a psychological hazard in setting up exchanges. If the
same rigorous standards for selection which apply to purchased items
are not followed, libraries may find that they are paying for the hand-
ling and maintenance of serial sets which would not otherwise be on
their shelves. Materials on exchange are so available and seemingly
inexpensive that there is a temptation to take too much of what is
offered.

UNESCO offers excellent aid in setting up exchanges with foreign
institutions. The second edition of its Handbook on the International
Exchange of Publications is now somewhat out of date (it was published
in 1956), but a third edition is promised soon. The Handbook offers
much general information about exchanges, such as the advantages and
disadvantages of exchanging directly with institutions as opposed to
working through national exchange centers (speed versus economy),
gives the text of exchange conventions, lists information on transport
and customs, and most usefully, gives a geographical list of agencies
interested in exchanges and the titles which they offer. Both the gen-
eral information and the lists of institutions are kept up to date by the

The exchange program of the Library of Congress is truly a
magnificent one. In 1867 Congress approved an arrangement whereby
the Smithsonian Institution sends out sets of U. S. official documents
to foreign depositories and by which the Library of Congress receives
the official documents of foreign nations in return. Today the Li-

trary’s objective is to secure all the official publications of all the
countries of the world. In view of this, it is not surprising that a sur-
vey by Donald Wisdom, sponsored by the Farmington Plan Committee,
showed that “current holdings of foreign government publications in
American research libraries are inadequate, and that there is a uni-
versal dependence on the Library of Congress for the comprehensive
collecting of foreign government publications.”

Newly Developing Areas

So far I have been dealing for the most part with the acquisition
of foreign publications in the bibliographically accessible parts of the
world. Acquisitions from the newly developing and politically re-
stricted areas present special problems. Each area is worth a sepa-
rate Allerton Park Institute, and I can only nod at each of them in this
paper.

The large and varying body of publications from these areas is
discouraging to libraries with their staff and budget restrictions. The
size of the acquisition problem which they present and the importance
of their availability in the world situation are unanswerable arguments
for cooperation in the building of library resources and teach us the
necessity of depending upon each other. In the huge task of building foreign publications resources, librarians can be grateful for the expanded Farmington Plan, which gives at least a framework for exploring cooperation with interested nonlibrary groups in the areas represented by the Farmington Plan subcommittees.

In these language-problem areas of the world, it is more important than ever that acquisitions be thought of broadly, so that consideration is given to the total cost of acquiring a publication and preparing it for the public shelves. There are decided advantages to a close relationship between those who acquire and those who catalog such items. When such a program is getting under way and the library technical service staff is small, one person may handle all aspects of the program. As the operation increases and the staff increases, a close liaison between acquisitions and cataloging, purchase and exchange, monographs and serials can effect operational savings. Since it is easy to recognize and isolate non-Western language publications, these portions of the total technical services can return to the small library staff situation, in which the administrative paraphernalia of large operations can be eliminated with consequent savings.

Cooperation throughout the full technical process is excitingly present under the Public Law 480 program. Libraries taking advantage of this arrangement, by which current publications of India, Pakistan, and the United Arab Republic can be acquired, are also paying for cooperative cataloging of the materials. Publications are thus delivered to the member libraries very nearly ready to be placed on the shelves.

I shall not try to sketch even briefly the particular problems of the various critical areas around the world. Instead, I shall refer you to the Winter 1963 issue of Library Resources and Technical Services, which features acquisitions and includes the six talks presented by the Acquisitions Section of ALA in Miami. The topic of the meeting was "Acquisitions from Newly Developing Areas," and the speakers and their areas were as follows: Latin America, by Stanley West; the Middle East, by Philip McNiff; Southeast Asia, by Felix Reichmann; East Europe, by Dorothy Keller; Africa, by Hans Panofsky; and East Asia, by Warren Tsuneshi. Except for Eastern Europe and Japan, all of these areas have little bibliographic control and lack booksellers who operate according to Western practices. All, except Latin America, publish mostly in languages in non-Roman alphabets for which there are far too few experts among U. S. librarians.

Procurement Agents

Buying trips abroad by both librarians and patrons have always been a rich source of acquisitions. A recent development is the employment by libraries of professional procurement agents. When the
Library of Congress found that it could not meet government needs through purchase and exchange, a plan was established during World War II for full-time publications procurement officers to be attached to diplomatic posts in bibliographically difficult areas. Long before this plan went into effect it had been urged that the exchange of government documents between our nation and others be enlarged to place at least one more set of public documents in this country, perhaps assigned to research libraries on a subject basis. With the new procurement program for nongovernment publications came suggestions that the same agents might be used to obtain publications for research libraries, since the growth of such libraries is in the national interest. The PL 480 program has been hailed as an opening wedge in this direction, since federal funds are being used to purchase current publications for research libraries, and the Library of Congress has assumed leadership in carrying out the project. Under a program begun earlier LC assumed responsibility for the selection, purchasing, and shipping of three identical sets of Indian documents to three research libraries in this country with funds provided under PL 48. The Bryant Memorandum states that the federal government should participate in the programs of research libraries, and the Librarian of Congress has agreed in principle. A beginning has been made to broaden the scope of the original Library Services Act in order to extend government aid to college and university libraries. Taken together, these activities suggest that the federal government is ready to accept a broader share of responsibility for providing adequate library resources in this country.

An independent venture in the procurement agent approach, a venture of which LC and a book firm are members, is LACAP, the Latin American Cooperative Acquisitions Project. LACAP sent its first procurement agent to South America in 1960. So far, all concerned speak highly of it, and indeed Stanley West reports that discussion at last summer’s Seventh Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials established the fact that LACAP had been able to send more publications to the United States than had been supplied by South American dealers under the Farmington Plan. LACAP has now opened a permanent office in Bogotá, Colombia, and will try to supply books from all countries of South America except Brazil.

An attempt to make LC Latin American duplicates available on a first priority basis to those libraries responsible for various countries under the Farmington Plan has been set up by the Farmington Plan Subcommittee on Latin America. The United States Book Exchange has agreed to list the duplicates and offer them first to the library having responsibility for each country.

As more and more libraries join the few pioneers in each of the bibliographically backward areas of the world, there would seem to
be three activities which should be attacked cooperatively: the employment of procurement agents in strategic places, arrangements for easy circulation of duplicates, and cooperative cataloging. Each of these has been tried on a limited scale in at least one of the projects described above. Each has had an encouraging degree of success. The view ahead is a widening one.

REFERENCES

1. ALA Washington Newsletter, 14, No. 16:2, October 19, 1962.


