



Acquisitions For Area Programs

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AREA STUDIES MAY BE DEFINED as an integrated, cross-disciplinary, total approach to a particular geographic area of the world coupled with the intensive study of the major languages of the area. The U.S. Office of Education in its support of language and area programs under the National Defense Education Act has emphasized a contemporary focus as an additional element in the definition.¹ The areas subjected to this kind of study have varied from time to time and have on occasion been characterized as the non-Western world or the underdeveloped countries. The former qualification scarcely applies to Latin America, nor the latter to Japan. A glance at some of the definitions of "areas" indicates that these are the areas of the world outside the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. To put it another way, the areas studied are those that have been outside the mainstream of American academic interest. Or to speak from the viewpoint of a librarian, the areas consist of those parts of the world from which acquisitions are most difficult.

American academic concern with the non-Western world goes back more than a hundred years. Yale, for example, appointed a professor of Arabic and Sanskrit prior to the Civil War, and Sanskrit studies were established at Harvard, Columbia, and Johns Hopkins well before the end of the nineteenth century.² The early programs tended to be confined to a single discipline in the humanities and showed more concern with the past than with contemporary affairs. In the 1930's W. Norman Brown and others began to adopt an interdisciplinary approach, to include the social sciences as well as the humanities, and to look more to the present. The process was hastened by World War II and its aftermath. The Army Specialist Training Program, aimed at producing specialists in Asian and African languages, included interdisciplinary survey courses along with the intensive lan-

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guage training. An increasing number of area studies programs were initiated in the 1950's and early 1960's. Such programs now extend from the high school level to the Ph.D. and beyond in the case of research institutes.

Much of the recent impetus for area studies programs has come from the National Defense Education Act of 1958 under which the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare has provided funding for 106 centers at sixty-three colleges and universities. These centers, originally established at the graduate level, have accommodated increasing numbers of undergraduates and by the mid-1960's the ratio of undergraduates to graduates in center courses was reported as 3 to 1.³

The late unpleasantness on the campus to the contrary, or as witness, depending on one's point of view, academia is inherently conservative and has not adjusted readily or completely to the notion of interdisciplinary studies. The traditional subject disciplines have retained for themselves the approval and awarding of higher degrees and the right to hold departmental status within a college or university. This unwillingness to break completely with traditional patterns of academic organization has made it necessary to establish coordinating bodies within the universities to establish interdisciplinary programs and, more important, to receive and administer federal or foundation grants. This pattern means, among other things, that a masterate in area studies has become a terminal degree simply because faculty status in a college or university, the *raison d'être* of most Ph.D.'s, is attached to the discipline-oriented departments. As one cynic has said of his own area, "In practice, a Latin-American 'area studies program' embraces whatever regionally oriented courses a university has on the books at the moment of fund raising. They can range from developmental economics to basic English for foreigners, from pre-Columbian archaeology to tropical agriculture."⁴

Fortunately librarians have always been interdisciplinary in their approach to knowledge. But any smugness we may have about our abilities to organize to meet the demands of area studies programs is soon dispelled by a look at the fragmentation of our efforts within and without ALA to establish committees or groups to focus attention on the problems of non-Western materials. McNiff has noted that our indexes to library literature have been slow to adopt the very term "area studies."⁵ Donn V. Hart indicated that a basic reference tool, the *Education Index*, did not as of 1964, "*index any educational jour-*

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nals published in Latin America, Africa, or Asia!"⁶ A review of current issues of the *Index* indicates that the gap persists. The fault here rests with librarians since the journals indexed are chosen by the subscribing libraries under voting procedures determined by ALA's committee on Wilson indexes.

What has been said above is indicative of some, but not all, of the domestic problems involved in acquisitions for area programs. The McNiff article cited above and a study by Rolland Stevens⁷ discuss the problems of finding or training staff with capability in librarianship and languages, and the problems of restructuring the internal organization of libraries to accommodate area studies collections and the technical library staff to handle them. The place of area studies acquisitions personnel within the administrative framework of research libraries varies. Generally speaking, those who are responsible for non-Roman or Cyrillic alphabet materials tend to be established as a separate staff with custodial, reference, cataloging, and acquisitions functions. This has the advantage of allowing acquisitions personnel to develop language and area specialization and to build close rapport with specialized faculty.

The problems on the domestic side are compounded by the weak or non-existent infra-structure of book distribution and bibliographic control in many areas of the world. Often this weak infra-structure is coupled with a rigid system of governmental controls and taxes that seriously cripple acquisitions efforts. The pattern varies from country to country. In a particular country the difficulties may include all or a combination of the following:

1. Limited editions are published due to shortages of paper, printing supplies, and binding materials.
2. The book trade is unorganized or poorly organized.
3. The book trade lacks the capacity to deal with correspondence in foreign languages.
4. The book trade does not regularly announce new publications except in the local press.
5. The book trade is underfinanced and unable to handle credit in substantial amounts.
6. Current national bibliographies are lacking or so slow in appearing as to be useless for acquisitions purposes.
7. Important works, as for example Thai cremation volumes and Philippine fiesta volumes, are published and distributed outside the normal book trade.

8. Postal systems are inefficient or untrustworthy.
9. Complex export licensing arrangements must be made. Blanket licenses to permit continuing export are not always available, and when they are they may cover shipments of only a limited monetary value thus requiring inefficient multiple shipments and special licenses for shipment of a single expensive work.
10. Export of older works may require special clearance or may be prohibited entirely.
11. Export taxes must be paid.
12. The dealer is not permitted to retain or utilize foreign currencies to finance advertising in, or trouble-shooting trips to, this country.
13. Censorship prohibits export of all or selected books.
14. Export is prohibited or restricted because national needs for limited editions take priority over foreign needs.

The permutations are varied and the list could be extended. A notion of the difficulties and gaps in book distribution practices in South Asia as compared with the status of the trade in advanced countries can be gained from a UNESCO sponsored volume issued in 1965.⁸ A more detailed report on Indonesia was made by the Wolf Management Service under contract to the U.S. Agency for International Development.⁹ The same firm has made similar studies of Korea, the Philippines, and other countries. The status of the book trade in Latin America is summarized by M. J. Savary.¹⁰ We are reluctant to apply the pejorative word "underdeveloped" to the non-Western world generally, but no other single term better characterizes the book trade in non-Western countries. The problems are serious for their own countries and for those of us who would understand them and buy their books.

The efforts of research librarians to establish policies and procedures to surmount effectively these difficulties represent some of the finest achievements and some of the most resounding failures of American librarianship. A common failure appears to be the lack of a clearly stated acquisitions policy. The underlying philosophies range from Suzuki's primary emphasis on "building a sound collection of basic bibliographies and reference tools"¹¹ for Japanese studies to Musgrave's notion that an area studies collection for Southeast Asia should collect and retain everything.¹² It is to be noted that the two philosophies relate directly to the amount and availability of material from

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the areas in question and that in most institutions these philosophies or minor variants thereof constitute the sole guide to area studies acquisitions. Two other assumptions stemming from the nature of current area studies programs are implicit in most acquisitions programs but not always made explicit. One is the assumption that area studies are concerned with contemporary affairs; the other, that only the social sciences and the humanities are of interest. If one adopts the former notion and incorporates it into an acquisitions policy as the East-West Center Library has done with its emphasis on 1945 and later publications, he may find that faculty and research personnel need materials going back to the beginning of the Meiji period or earlier to understand and interpret current Japanese affairs. The exclusion of materials relating to science from area studies collections and the assumption that these will be acquired by the appropriate departmental library, as for example chemistry or architecture, is not so much a problem for area studies collections as for the university library as a whole. Such material often falls between two stools with the result that the individual universities and the nation as a whole suffer weak library resources in foreign science.

Within the individual institutions acquisitions for area studies differ from routine or "Western" acquisitions in several basic respects. The most important differences relate to efforts to compensate for the weak infra-structure mentioned earlier. There is more hand-tailoring of orders and exchange requests. Explanatory correspondence in the vernacular languages accompanies formal orders. Exchange correspondence is in the vernacular. There may be a whole network of individuals who have been persuaded to identify and purchase materials for payment in cash or in kind. Priced exchanges are frequently used and are justified on the grounds that such exchanges are the only means of acquiring materials. When adequate or even acceptable dealers can be found, blanket orders are heavily used and these tend to be more inclusive and have fewer restrictions than those for Western areas. Mistakes on the part of dealers in sending duplicates or materials out of the scope of the blanket order are frequently excused on the grounds that an under-financed dealer can ill afford even a few returns, and needs to be encouraged to send more rather than less.

Purchasing trips by acquisitions staff or by faculty are used as a device in the more difficult areas. Some libraries, as for example the Library of Congress, send area experts on regularly scheduled acqui-

tions trips every second or third year. Cecil Hobbs' reports on his acquisitions trips to Southeast Asia give a good account of the difficulties and accomplishments of such a mission.¹³ Occasionally a traveling acquisitioner buys for more than one library. Peripatetic faculty members are used as bookbuying agents with varying degrees of success depending on the faculty member's book sense and business acumen. Unfortunately faculty members tend to have narrow interests, often think that they know the existing library resources better than they do, and naturally plan their travel to fit their own needs rather than in terms of acquisitions problems. Travel by library staff is expensive and the intervals between trips so long that desirable items are missed. Travel by faculty being sporadic and erratic is not a firm base for area acquisitions but only an occasional fill-in.

A sense of the kinds of problems encountered and the approaches used in acquiring materials from a number of areas can be gained from the excellent articles by Stanley West, Felix Reichmann, Philip J. McNiff, Warren Tsuneishi, Dorothy B. Keller, and Hans B. Panofsky in the Winter 1963 issue of *Library Resources and Technical Services*.¹⁴ The novice in area studies acquisitions should also be aware of such helpful general lists as those in the *UNESCO Handbook on the International Exchange of Publications*, 3d ed., UNESCO, Paris, 1964, and in Philip J. McNiff's *List of Bookdealers in Underdeveloped Countries*, published by the American Library Association in 1963. Such specialized lists as *Asian Resources in American Libraries; Essays and Bibliographies*, published by the Foreign Area Materials Center, New York, in 1968, and the preceding eight items in the Center's Occasional Paper series are also useful.

The difficulties in area studies acquisitions are such that no library can afford to go it alone and a number of cooperative efforts have arisen from this fact. Some of the major efforts such as Latin American Cooperative Acquisition Project (LACAP), P.L. 480, and the Farmington Plan, which changed its approach radically when faced with the problems of covering underdeveloped areas, are discussed in detail elsewhere in this issue of *Library Trends*. Some less comprehensive cooperative ventures are discussed below.

One of the lessons of LACAP and of the exploratory missions to Latin America by William H. Kurth and Nettie Lee Benson was that in difficult areas some more permanent arrangement is required than occasional acquisitions trips by librarians or scholars. The idea of a jointly financed permanent acquisitions representative acting on be-

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half of a consortium of universities has been mooted in various specialized groups of area studies personnel for many years. A cooperatively financed effort of this nature, the Chinese Materials and Research Aids Service Center in Taipei, has operated successfully since fall 1964 and is apparently reaching the point of being self-sustaining. The Center, financed initially with modest grants from the Association for Asian Studies, the American Council of Learned Societies and the Council on Library Resources, Inc., is managed by an American, Robert L. Irick. The Center purchases recent Chinese books on behalf of American libraries and has made imaginative use of facilities available on Taiwan to reprint scarce older works needed by Far Eastern collections in the U.S. and elsewhere. Africanists envisioned a similar arrangement for the Sub-Saharan area prior to the partial solution found through the National Program for Acquisition and Cataloging (NPAC) Nairobi office, and Southeast Asia specialists continue to discuss hopefully a jointly sponsored acquisitions agent in their area.

Cooperative microfilming projects have solved the problems of sharing resources and of piecing together existing serials files, as exemplified by the long-standing New York Public Library Official Gazettes Project and the Association of Research Libraries Foreign Newspaper Project carried out by the Center for Research Libraries. Gordon Williams, Director of the Center, fills an essential coordinating role in bringing together the interests of groups of scholars and librarians and in making possible a variety of cooperative projects. Recent examples of such projects are SAMP, the South Asia Microform Project and CAMP, the Cooperative Africana Microform Project. A similar microform project for Southeast Asia to be called SEAM and jointly sponsored by the Center for Research Libraries and the Committee on Research Materials on Southeast Asia (CORMOSEA), is now in the advanced planning stage. The *Newsletter* of The Center for Research Libraries is a basic source of acquisitions information for those concerned with area studies. *The Farmington Plan Newsletter* issued by the Association of Research Libraries also carries regular reports of area studies projects and materials. The two newsletters mentioned above are essential reading for area studies acquisitions personnel because the more substantial library press does not report items of area study interest in a unified fashion and does not supply complete coverage.

The problems of securing information and achieving coordinated

action are exacerbated by the failure of ALA and its subdivisions to provide a mechanism to deal with area studies. The task has been left to the Association of Research Libraries which has established seven area subcommittees to the Farmington Plan Committee. The area subcommittees combine the interests of the scholarly groups, as for example the Association for Asian Studies and the research libraries, and as working groups have been instrumental in achieving a great number of useful projects. These ARL activities, however, fall outside the mainstream of ALA and up to the present, with the exception of the Slavic and East European Subsection of the Subject Specialists Section, Association of College and Research Libraries, no formal groups within ALA provide a common meeting ground for those interested in area studies. This lack has tempted the area specialist librarians away from ALA and into the scholarly organizations, particularly the Association for Asian Studies where various subcommittees such as the Committee on American Library Resources on the Far East provide the opportunity for discussion of common problems and cooperative efforts. In the view of Warren Tsuneishi this separation has resulted in inadequate representation of area studies needs in the initial planning of national bibliographic or acquisitions projects such as NPAC.¹⁵ Fortunately, efforts are now being made to remedy the situation within ALA and a new Asian and North African Subsection of the Subject Specialists Section held its organizing meeting under the leadership of Louis P. Jacob, of the Asian Reference Department, University of Pennsylvania Library, at Atlantic City on June 26, 1969. This leaves Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa unrepresented within ALA, but the day may soon come when these areas too are included and the activities of groups like the Seminars on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials can be carried out in conjunction with ALA annual conferences.

The U.S. Government provides both indirect and direct support of acquisitions for area studies. The former is more difficult to measure in dollar terms or in terms of effect. Some of the indirect support takes the form of bibliographic underpinning essential to the success of area acquisitions; some takes the form of interlibrary lending or microfilming; some takes the form of leadership and use of federal personnel to assist in planning, or directly, in acquisitions activities.

The catalogs and bibliographies of the three great national libraries are important examples of indirect support, and to cite one specific example the *Monthly Index of Russian Accessions* currently costs some

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\$500,000 per year to produce.¹⁶ Other continuing bibliographies of interest to area studies acquisitions include the *PL-480 Accessions Lists* covering seven countries, the *Handbook of Latin American Studies*, and the *Microfilming Clearinghouse Bulletin* issued as an irregular supplement to the *Library of Congress Information Bulletin*. The April 10, 1969, issue of the *Microfilming Clearinghouse Bulletin*, for example, lists a proposal for filming a major Russian serial and the availability of some dozen items of Russian interest and three relating to Africa. The March 1969 issue of *Library of Congress Publications in Print* lists more than a hundred specialized bibliographies including bibliographies of official publications dealing with countries of interest to area specialists. The largest number of entries are for works dealing with Latin America; Eastern Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa are represented by more than twenty entries each; East Asia is represented by slightly fewer entries; and the Middle East and South and Southeast Asia are represented by smaller numbers of entries. The Slavic Bibliographic and Research Center of ARL and the Center for Chinese Research Materials established in Washington in the recent past function as intermediaries for making available to other libraries the bibliothecal resources of the federal government. Personnel of LC's Orientalia Division have played major roles in cooperative planning for area programs: Edwin Beal and Warren Tsuneishi in the Committee on American Library Resources for the Far East; the late Horace Poleman and Cecil Hobbs in the Committee on American Library Resources for South Asia; Conrad Reining and Julian Withereil in respect to African materials; Sergius Yakobson for East Europe and Howard Kline for Latin America.

The Office of Science Information Service of the National Science Foundation has supported bibliographies including the *Union List of Serials*, the separate union catalog on cards of Japanese, Chinese and Korean serials, and the *World List of Future International Meetings*. NSF has supported the SLA Translations Center and the Federal translations program using P.L. 480 funds as well as a number of indexing, abstracting and cover-to-cover translation projects. The Foundation's direct support of research libraries is not generally in the field of area studies acquisitions, but rather concerned with systems development.

Direct federal support of area studies resources includes grants to libraries under the provisions of the National Defense Education Act and the Higher Education Act, the facilitation of exchanges by the

International Exchange Service of the Smithsonian Institution, the provision of books to research libraries through the Public Law 480 Program, and, as a future possibility, the service of foreign centers operated under the National Program for Acquisitions and Cataloging as acquisitions agents for the general library community. The budget for direct support of area studies acquisitions exceeded \$3,000,000 in the fiscal year ending June 30, 1969.

The Language and Area Centers Program operated by the U.S. Office of Education under provisions of Title VI of the National Defense Education Act (PL 85-864 as amended, Section 601a) funded 106 language and area centers at sixty-three colleges and universities. Of the total allocation of \$5,872,000 an estimated 13.3 percent is earmarked for library purposes. "Data from technical reports received from the 106 NDEA centers for academic year 1967-68 reveal that a typical center received \$3,285 or 6.1 percent of the total center allocation for library personnel and \$3,850 or 7.2 percent of the total center allocation for general support of the library including the purchase of books."¹⁷

A small number of special purpose grants made under the provisions of Title II-A of the Higher Education Act of 1965 have been specifically for the purpose of area studies acquisitions. The Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace received a grant of \$100,000 "to acquire materials in the areas of 20th century political, social, and economic affairs in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, Western Europe, China, Japan, and on all phases of international communism, and a grant of \$40,000 was made to the University of Florida to purchase Latin American official publication of all types, but emphasizing statistical publications of the various governments."¹⁸ A portion of a \$50,000 grant to the Music Library of the University of California at Berkeley will undoubtedly go in part towards specialized area acquisitions. It is probable also that some of the \$5,000 general grants for acquisitions have gone towards area studies materials or freed equivalent funds for the purpose.

The legal authority for funding area studies acquisitions has been clearly established, and these two programs of the Office of Education have provided significant but scarcely massive support. The problem is clearly one of more adequate funding by Congress especially for Title II-A of the Higher Education Act.

Direct support by the International Exchange Service of the Smithsonian Institution is measured more readily in pounds and packages

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transmitted and received on behalf of American research libraries than in dollars. The savings to a research library using this service are the difference between international and domestic postage for books sent or received from abroad. The price of the service is paid in the lack of speed due to consolidation of ocean freight shipments both in Washington and at the exchange centers abroad. In 1967, a representative fiscal year, the International Exchange Service shipped abroad on behalf of American libraries 157,315 packages of literary and scientific publications weighing 218,720 pounds, and received for re-transmittal to libraries 51,102 packages weighing 90,507 pounds. Shipments abroad were directed to more than 100 countries.¹⁹

The kinds and dollar amount of support mentioned above are overshadowed by the Public Law 480 program which now spends about two and a quarter million dollars annually in acquisitions and processing of area studies materials for American research libraries.²⁰ For Ceylon, India, Indonesia, Israel, Nepal, Pakistan, United Arab Republic, and Yugoslavia, where PL-480 provides almost comprehensive coverage of current publications area studies, faculties and research personnel are provided with such depth of coverage and quantity of material that they can have no substantial complaint. From the scholar's viewpoint the worst that can be said of current coverage is that in vast countries like Indonesia or India the acquisition of publications issued in the provinces has sometimes been weak or that more effort should be made to collect political party ephemera and the like.²¹ Some librarians have complained not only of the quantity but the quality of publications received, failing to grasp the notion that to an area studies specialist good coverage of second-rate novels, and of motion picture fan magazines, or of provincial newspapers, can be as useful as primary research materials as are first-rate novels or scholarly journals.

As with the making of books, area studies acquisition has no end. The subject deserves a whole book. All that this paper has done is to summarize some common policies and practices and point to some recent trends. It would be well to remember that area studies acquisitions, as Fred Wagman pointed out long since,²² are concerned with 59 percent of the book production of the world and constitute a significant part of the book budget requirements and work load of contemporary research libraries.

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