Beyond the Library of Congress

Collecting Practices of South Asia Area Specialist Librarians

Mara Thacker

South Asian Studies librarians have historically relied upon the Library of Congress' (LC) South Asia Cooperative Acquisitions Program to build collections of materials from South Asia for their institutions. This study examines the extent to which South Asian Studies librarians continue to rely on the LC programs and examines the range of other acquisitions techniques used by South Asia specialists. It is possible to identify themes and larger trends and develop a set of best practices for collecting materials from overseas by comparing the methods used by South Asia specialists to those used by other specialist librarians.

Acquiring materials from overseas can be challenging and area specialist librarians must use multi-faceted strategies to build area studies collections. Each geographic region presents its own specific challenges based on publishing histories, geo-political climates, and availability and quality of vendors supplying materials to libraries in North America. Area specialists who collect for a particular region often develop common collecting practices that become implicit knowledge amongst the group. In the case of South Asia, which includes India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Bhutan and the Maldives, subject specialists often rely on the Library of Congress (LC) Cooperative Acquisitions Programs (CAP).

The impetus for creating the LC CAP was a desire in the 1950s to address a lack of non-European research materials in North American libraries. The process began with a group of scholars who proposed using funds accrued from Public Law 83-480 (P.L. 480) to purchase library materials.[1] The first three field offices in Cairo, Karachi and New Delhi opened in 1962.[2] Today, there are field offices in Cairo, Islamabad, Jakarta, Nairobi, New Delhi, and Rio de Janeiro that include more than seventy-one countries in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and South America. The field offices supply materials in English and vernacular languages. The South Asian Cooperative Acquisitions Program based out of New Delhi, India (SACAP) covers Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, and Tibetan materials published in several South Asian countries (www.loc.gov/acq/ovop/delhi/delhi-coop.html). There is also a field office in Islamabad, Pakistan that manages CAP that covers Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan (www.loc.gov/acq/ovop).

The LC cooperative programs operate similarly to approval plans. As with approval plans, member libraries create subject profiles and automatically

Mara Thacker (mthacker@illinois.edu) is the South Asian Studies Librarian at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

receive monographs within subject areas that are selected by acquisitions specialists stationed in the region of coverage. Libraries can also subscribe to periodicals, including journals and newspapers through the LC programs. The SACAP and CAP programs do not currently provide electronic resources to member libraries. The LC plans differ from approval plans in that libraries do not have the option of returning books they do not want. They also periodically offer new serials, reprints, expensive titles ($70.00 and higher), documentaries and feature films in DVD format, and materials of limited interest for individual order via listserv messages to SACAP program participants. The LC programs offer many advantages, including efficiency and cost-saving benefits from a directive to purchase and sell materials using the local currency and price. Benefits notwithstanding, exclusive reliance on the LC programs could lead to homogenous collections and underrepresentation of certain publishers and topics.

This paper describes the range of collecting practices used by South Asia subject specialist librarians to obtain materials from South Asia. It is possible to identify themes and larger trends and develop a set of best practices for collecting materials from overseas by comparing the methods used by South Asia specialists to those used by other specialist librarians. The central questions for this study are as follows:

- To what extent do North American libraries rely on the LC CAP for their selection and acquisition of South Asian books?
- What collection development methods do South Asia area specialist librarians use in addition to or in lieu of the LC programs?
- Given the benefits of the LC cooperative programs, is it worthwhile to select and acquire books using other methods of selection?
- What types of materials are impossible to collect despite the method of selection and acquisition used?

Literature Review

There is a rich literature on building area studies collections, and much of it is centered on cooperative collection development, foreign language collections, and challenges associated with working with overseas vendors.[3] These topics are ancillary to a larger question: what methods do other area specialists use to build collections? Given the idiosyncrasies between different geographic areas, what methods work across areas and what is unique to a particular region?

A handful of articles focus on collection development for area studies collections through the lens of a particular area. Two recent examples include Kistler's case study on

building an Africana collection at a university library, and Dali and Dilevko's study on Slavic and Eastern European collection practices.[4] These papers present a wide range of acquisitions techniques employed by area specialists. Methods include book fairs, buying trips, exchanges, gifts, independent book agents, blanket orders, approval plans, North American bookstores, overseas bookstores, and online bookstores. Of these methods, both Africana selectors and Slavic, East European, and Eurasian selectors place a high value on overseas buying trips, even if used sparingly. Selectors in both of these areas also rely heavily on bookstores and book agents located in North America, perhaps because of challenges Kistler raises relating to language issues and cultural differences that arise when working with foreign vendors.

Studies that look more broadly at foreign language acquisitions highlight several challenges that are applicable across areas. In 2000, the Association of American Universities' Task Force on Acquisition and Distribution of Foreign Language and Area Studies Materials comprising librarians, area studies center directors and scholars, and government relations officers highlighted three main considerations: the fluctuation of the dollar in the world currency markets, the rising costs of materials that necessarily mean a reduction in expenditures on foreign books and materials, and political developments abroad. It is also important to note that the task force operated with an assumption of a common emphasis on electronic resources and digitization and a deliberate de-emphasis on print materials.[5] This presupposes that the publishing models in other areas of the world also produce and emphasize digital materials, which is not the case for South Asia, though there are recent small steps in that direction. Ward's 2009 paper explains that selectors may have to rely on traditional sources for selection methods, such as paper slips, publishers and book jobbers' print catalogs, prepublication announcements, special offers or informal channels for regions outside North America and Western Europe.[6] Furthermore, while Ward agrees that political changes are among the most important considerations for foreign language selectors, she also emphasizes "the global marketplace's growing need for personnel well trained in foreign languages and cultures, and the subsequently expanding boundaries of research, including a remarkable increase in collaboration between researchers in science and technology."[7]

The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) moves beyond challenges in foreign language acquisitions to area studies collection assessment in their 2006 report, "Changing Global Book Collection Patterns in ARL Libraries," which used a snapshot from OCLC to try to understand the nature of area studies collections in ARL libraries. ARL was concerned about overlap between the holdings in member libraries, but found that duplication between member

libraries' holdings was lower than expected, especially low for East Asian materials. In the case of South Asia, ARL member libraries had an average of 5.76 copies of titles from South Asia in 2006, indicating a low level of duplication between institutions. Holistically, this is a low number, but of the ten regions (Caribbean, Oceania, Southeast Asia, Africa, South Asia, Middle East, Latin America, Eastern Europe, East Asia, and Western Europe), this is the third highest average, and Western Europe and Latin American have the greatest amount of overlap between holdings. In terms of overall holdings, only one South Asian country, India, makes the top ten list of countries represented in ARL holdings, with China, Japan and Western European countries filling the other nine spots. Western European countries were particularly well represented in the list of countries with a large volume of publications held by ARL libraries. India is likely on the list because of ARL member libraries' participation in the P.L.480 program. P.L.480 was a law enacted by Congress in 1958 that allowed LC to acquire materials on the behalf of other libraries and research centers in the United States. Institutions were motivated to participate in the interest of building a strong national collection of nonwestern language materials, and the low cost of participation along with the value of having cataloging records supplied by LC provided further incentive.[8] Further evidence of the impact of the P.L. 480 program can be inferred from the steep drop in duplication between titles from India post-1984. Looking at area collections as a whole, the study concludes by suggesting that the low average number of holdings for most countries reflects institutions' tendency to tailor their collections to local academic needs and faculty interests and may also reflect the success of collaborative collection development efforts. Finally, the study argues that the low number of holdings indicates a need for effective interlibrary loan (ILL) and document delivery services to make unique items available nationally.[9]

Concern over the homogeneity of collections was the impetus for Rader's 2007 survey of South Asia bibliographers, which was the basis of a paper by Wright that addressed collecting practices with a focus on the types of materials and subjects collected.[10] Her data indicated that in 2007, 92 percent of South Asia bibliographers used LC's programs to build their collections. Furthermore, her study revealed significant overlap in the subject profiles and serials to which libraries were subscribing, and led to the creation of a cooperative collection development initiative. Committee on South Asian Libraries and Documentation (CONSALD) members can voluntarily participate in an annual South Asian Cooperation workshop held in conjunction with the annual CONSALD meeting in Madison, Wisconsin. Over the last four years, participants have adjusted their LC subject profile subscriptions, coordinated serial subscriptions, and declared local areas of specialization.[11]

Wright's paper updates and expands upon Rader's survey by examining the extent to which South Asia bibliographers in North America continue to rely on the SACAP and CAP programs, and how they supplement these programs with other collecting methods (e.g., ordering books from online or physical book stores, perusing award lists, and/or going on buying trips). The intention is to portray the current collecting practices of South Asia specialists, and to juxtapose the practices of South Asia specialists with the collecting practices for other areas as revealed in prior studies, to capture the range of commonalities and differences between the collecting practices of area studies librarians covering different regions of the world.

The literature highlights the complexities and idiosyncrasies of building area studies collections. Each area presents its own challenges based on the region's political, social, cultural, and economic context, and these challenges can be mitigated or exacerbated by local institutional policies. The literature demonstrates an ongoing administrative emphasis on cooperative collection development, particularly in the area of e-resources, despite the fact that print continues to be the dominant publishing output in the many parts of the world due to the increased expense and complexity associated with e-resources. This study attempts to situate South Asian collecting practices within the broader context of area studies collecting and identify methods that are particularly suited to building a strong national collection given the current economic and political climate in academia.

Survey Instrument

To facilitate cross-comparisons between areas, a survey aimed at South Asia specialists was developed modeled on an instrument created by Dali and Dilevko for their 2005 study of the collecting practices of Slavic and East European selectors. After Institutional Research Board approval, data were collected using a web-based survey implemented through the University of Illinois' "WebTools" platform. An invitation to participate in the survey was sent to the CONSALD discussion list. The invitation and the consent information on the first page of the survey indicated that a participant's job responsibilities must include collection development for South Asia to be eligible to complete the survey. CONSALD is the professional organization for South Asia bibliographers, and the CONSALD membership directory lists approximately thirty-two South Asia bibliographers who might have been eligible to participate in the study, representing twenty-eight North American institutions.[12] The survey was live for approximately one month. Although the survey was pre-tested by an area specialist librarian prior to implementation, there was confusion regarding some of the questions, which will be addressed later in this paper.

Table 1. Size of Institutional South Asia Collections

Institution	Total South Asia Publications	Annual Additions to South Asian Collection
University of Pennsylvania	300,000	6,000
University of Minnesota	250,000	3,500
Columbia University	500,000	6,961
University of Washington	600,000	1,000–2,000
Cornell University	150,000	3,000
University of Chicago	703,500	8,000
Yale University	(unknown)	4,000
University of Virginia	100,000	7,000
University of Iowa	75,000	2,000
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign	220,000	2,500

The survey consisted of forty-seven questions, including a consent question, though all of the questions were not applicable to all the respondents. The survey addressed four themes: (1) basic information about the responding institutions' and their South Asia collections, including items on the size of the institution, number of volumes in the collection, and the South Asian collections budget; (2) the extent to which the bibliographer used LC's cooperative programs; (3) the extent to which the bibliographer used other selection methods; and (4) the kinds of materials librarians would like to add to their collections that are difficult or impossible to collect regardless of the collection method. The survey explicitly focused on monograph acquisitions (see appendix A).

Nine completed surveys were returned. While this may seem like a relatively small number, given the pool of eligible participants, it indicates a nearly 33 percent response rate. Two additional institutions indicated a willingness to respond, but were unable to complete the survey. Though the selector for South Asia at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) did not complete the survey, UIUC is nevertheless included in the objective, fact-based questions for comparative purposes since the South Asia selector is the author of this article and has the requisite knowledge of the collection. UIUC is not reflected in the more subjective questions to limit the possibility for biases. Responses were transferred to Microsoft Excel for analysis.

Respondents

Responding institutions included several large public research universities and top-tier private institutions. The private institutions included the University of Pennsylvania, Columbia University, the University of Chicago, Cornell University, and Yale University. Public institutions included the University of Minnesota, the University of Washington, the University of Virginia, and the University of Iowa.

There was significant variation in the size of South Asia collections. This may partly depend on how an institution defines its South Asia collection, as some libraries may define it by language, others by region of imprint, and still others by topical area. On the lower end, the University of Iowa's collection consists of 75,000 monographs. The University of Chicago has the largest collection, reporting that their collection consists of approximately 703,500 monographs. Only one institution, Yale University, was unable to answer the question and answered "unknown."

Notably, the number of monographs added annually did not correspond with the size of the existing South Asia collection. The University of Chicago reported the highest number, adding approximately 8,000 monographs per year. However, one of the institutions that reported adding the least also reported the second largest existing collection; the University of Washington's collection consists of approximately 600,000 monographs, but they report adding only 1,000–2,000 monographs per year. In contrast, the University of Iowa, which reported the smallest existing collection, adds approximately 2,000 monographs per year.

Survey Results

Library of Congress Cooperative Plans

South Asia bibliographers rely heavily on LC's cooperative plans, SACAP and CAP. All nine institutions reported using LC's plans to acquire monographs for their South Asia collections, though to varying degrees. More than half of the institutions reported that they use LC for more than 90 percent of their acquisitions, with the University of Iowa reporting the largest percentage at 98 percent. These numbers indicate that there has been little change since Rader's 2007 survey.

Opinions on the value of LC's programs were mixed. This was due to some initial confusion about the survey's wording, but the majority of the respondents provided relevant feedback. Participants were asked whether, given the advantage of LC's programs, there were benefits to using other selection methods. Nearly all participants praised the efficiency of using LC's cooperative plans, and to a lesser extent approval plans more generally, both for selecting items and the convenience of receiving catalog records.

The programs' shortcomings included homogeneity between South Asia collections and a lack of flexibility in choosing individual titles. Institutions also reported categories of materials that they are unable to acquire via LC's plans. These included out-of-print materials, micro-histories, publications from small publishers, pamphlets, comics, self-published poetry, antiquarian materials, popular culture items, non-print media, and archival materials.

Other Selection Methods

Participants were asked about other methods of materials acquisition and given an opportunity to provide any methods not listed. They were also asked to indicate with how many individual vendors they work that supply South Asian books. Most libraries worked with two to four vendors, while the University of Pennsylvania reported working with twenty-five different vendors, and Columbia University reported working with thirteen. Nearly all institutions indicated that they work with D.K. Agencies, a vendor based in New Delhi, India, to acquire materials.

Of the fifteen other methods of materials acquisitions, the next most popular methods were "Other methods not previously listed" and "Monetary donations directed towards the purchase of specific materials." The latter method refers to when a donor gives funds that are explicitly directed towards the purchase of a specific title or titles to be added to a library collection. These two methods were each used by eight of the nine institutions that completed the survey. The "Other methods" category was interesting because no two institutions reported using the same other method. The "Other methods" reported included the following unique responses:

- "Using graduate students to buy two copies of all important publications that they use, one for themselves and one for the library."
- "Information from faculty, students, guest speakers, etc."
- "Interested locals who have contacts with publishers."
- "I will regularly screen certain publishers lists (such as Mary Martin lists), to check titles on cheaper distributors such as D.K. Agencies."
- "Through [the] Harrassowitz database."

- "'Following the trail' of authors, subjects, and/or publishers via OCLC searches."
- "Google alerts."
- "Websites like Words without Borders, Scholars without Borders, H-Asia Network, Journal TOCs, World Literature Today."
- "Faculty syllabi for new courses."
- "Patron requests."

While eight institutions reported using "Monetary donations directed towards the purchase of specific materials," only three reported receiving titles using that method in the last five years. The University of Chicago reported receiving 500 titles using that method in the last five years. The University of Pennsylvania and the University of Washington reported receiving 200 titles and 50 titles respectively, using this method.

After "Other methods" and "Monetary donations," the next two most popular methods were "Lists of current books recorded by journals in the field and/or book reviews" and "Online Bookstores." These methods were each used by six institutions in the past five years, or two-thirds of the respondents. For the "Lists of current books recorded by journals in the field and/or book reviews" category, two institutions named *The Journal of Asian Studies* as one journal they use. Other journals included *American Anthropologist, Asian Studies Review, Contemporary South Asia, ISIS, Journal of the Association of Nepal and Himalayan Studies, Modern Asian Studies, Popular Cinema*, and *World Literature Today*. Examples of online bookstores included D.K. Agencies, Himal, L.C. Offices, Mary Martin, South Asia Books, and Vajra Books.[13]

Five additional methods were used by over half of the responding institutions. They are: (1) award winner lists; (2) lists of books available for purchase or lists of free duplications from other institutions; (3) independent book agents in South Asian countries; (4) physical bookstores in South Asian countries; and (5) printed and online catalogs of foreign-language publishers. As with the other methods, a variety of examples were provided for each category. D.K. Agencies received mention in three of these five categories, reinforcing their popularity as a vendor among South Asian Studies bibliographers. Other examples of vendors or service providers that received mention in multiple categories include LC, South Asia Books, and K.K. Agencies. See appendix B for a complete list of bookstores, institutions, and vendors named by survey respondents.

The only other method used by more than a third of respondents in the last five years was buying trips. Four librarians reported that they had gone on buying trips to South Asia. While most reported taking one or two trips in the last five years, one librarian reported taking annual trips for a total of five trips over the last five years. Out of the

Table 2. Acquisition Methods

	University of Pennsylvania	University of Minnesota	Columbia University	University of Washington	Cornell University	University of Chicago	Yale University	University of Virginia	University of Iowa	University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign	Total
Lists of new acquisitions from other institutions with significant South Asia collections											0
Physical bookstores in North America that sell books from South Asia	✓										1
National bibliographies compiled by specific individuals or institutions			✓		✓						2
Book fairs	✓			✓	✓					✓	4
Buying trips	✓			✓	✓	✓				✓	5
Gifts (books donated to your library by individuals or organizations)	✓			✓	✓	✓				✓	5
Printed and online catalogs of foreign-language publishers	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	6
Physical bookstores in South Asian countries	✓			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	6
Independent Book Agents in South Asian countries			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	6
Lists of books available for purchase or lists of free duplications from other institutions		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	6
Award winner lists			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	6
Online bookstores		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	7
Lists of current books recorded by journals in the field and/or book reviews	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	7
Monetary donations directed towards the purchase of specific materials	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9
Other methods	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
LC cooperative acquisitions programs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10

six countries included in South Asia, only three countries were named as a location for buying trips: India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.

Of the four remaining methods of acquisitions, "National bibliographies compiled by specific individuals or institutions," "Physical bookstores in North America that sell books from South Asia," "Lists of new acquisitions from other institutions with significant South Asia collections," and "Book fairs," only one was not used in the last five years—"Book fairs." A complete list of the methods of acquisition and the number of institutions using them are provided in table 2.

Difficult to Collect Materials

Participants provided examples of the types of materials they would like to acquire for their libraries that are difficult or impossible to get using any method. The examples illustrate the variety among institutions' collecting priorities. A few participants indicated the reasons why the materials they would like to obtain are difficult to acquire. For example, the librarian at Columbia University would like to acquire ephemera such as religious posters, but this is difficult because these materials may only be available at a specific time of the year in a specific place and may not ever be replicated. The librarian at Yale University reported an interest in any materials about Buddhism from Bangladesh, which have become difficult to acquire due to security concerns in the south of the country. Other types of materials that are difficult to acquire include books sold at temples and tourist destinations, artwork from galleries, art catalogs, and usable datasets. Another interesting example was provided by the librarian at Cornell who wrote, "Items on publishers' lists in small elderly books from the KTM [Kathmandu] Valley. Tantalizingly, known to have existed, now impossible to find." The one outlier was a librarian who reported that due to the advantages of ILL and cooperative acquisitions programs, that no materials that were inaccessible.

Discussion

Concern over the possible homogeneity of South Asia collections was the motivation behind Rader's 2007 survey, which was the impetus for beginning an annual cooperative collection development workshop for South Asian studies librarians. The group initially focused on coordinating subject profile and serial subscriptions through SACAP and CAP, and subsequent workshops asked participants to move beyond coordinating SACAP and CAP participation and declare local areas of specialization. The current study reveals significant overlap among non-LC acquisitions methods used by participants. It is possible that despite our efforts at coordination thus far that a certain level of homogeneity remains inevitable if we are all also using the same sources outside of LC. For example, D.K. Agencies was mentioned as a vendor and resource for selection by multiple institutions and under multiple categories. While other vendors were also named, it is clear that D.K. Agencies is heavily used by South Asian librarians. If all South Asia subject specialists are using D.K. Agencies as their primary source for firm orders, to what extent are we ordering the same things and what items or genres that they do not carry might we be missing? A future study looking at overlap between South Asia collections at CONSALD member institutions would be worthwhile.

It is worth noting that CONSALD members and institutions skew towards a certain type of institution. These institutions tend to be prestigious private universities, or large, top-tier public research institutions. In the case of the survey respondents, all are listed as ARL members, denoting a certain size and status. These are historically the only universities with funding to support dedicated South Asia centers or programs and, therefore, dedicated South Asia subject specialists within the library. According to a 2004 study, ARL Libraries account for 76.7 percent of the total OCLC holdings for South Asian materials.[14] This is important because there are other institutions with sizeable South Asia collections and other librarians who do collection development for South Asia that are not represented in this study because they are not dedicated South Asia specialists and are harder to identify on a national level. It is also worth noting that two large, top-tier public research institutions with large and prestigious South Asia collections are not represented in this study due to personnel changes during the deployment of the survey.

Despite certain similarities between many of the institutions, there are variations in the sizes of the collections and programs that impact the budget allocated for South Asia. The subject specialists at institutions with less funding or smaller South Asia collections may be responsible for collecting for other areas, which will impact the time, effort and techniques chosen to build the South Asia collection. This may explain why some institutions rely almost exclusively on LC's cooperative programs. Placing firm orders, attending book fairs, and taking buying trips, while more conducive to building unique collections, require a significant investment of time and money that may not be feasible for some librarians.

Buying trips, while very time and resource intensive, provide the opportunity to purchase ephemera, rare or out-of-print materials, popular culture materials, and items from small publishers. Yet this method was used by less than half of the survey participants. It was beyond the scope of this paper to examine why this is the case, but a forthcoming study will focus on buying trips to assess their value as a collection development tool.

One more popularly used collection development tool is the use of approval plans. These are not accurately represented in this study as a result of some confusion regarding the classification of LC's cooperative programs. While LC's cooperative programs operate similarly to approval plans and are occasionally colloquially referred to as "the LC approval plans," they are not true approval plans. When adapting Keren and Dilevko's survey, which was focused on approval plans, the author did not adequately adapt the language to differentiate between the two. When the survey went live, some participants expressed confusion about where LC's plans fit into the survey, and a follow-up message was sent to the CONSALD listserv instructing respondents to include LC's plans in the approval plan section. As a result, other approval plans were omitted. While this is a limitation in comparing the present study to Keren and Dilevko's original study and indicates that the present study is somewhat incomplete, the information obtained is still valuable and important for considering area studies collecting practices, particularly in the case of South Asia. Furthermore, given that participants reported using LC's plans for up to 98 percent of their collecting and shared a variety of other methods, it is likely that (non-LC) approval plans play a minimal role in South Asia collecting.

If the data is taken at face value, book fairs play a minimal role in South Asia collecting. However, it is probable that these were underreported as a result of being subsumed under the "buying trips" category, despite being purposefully separated. Participants may have chosen not to separately report attending book fairs if they happen in the course of a buying trip to avoid counting the same method or trip, twice. While survey respondents were not asked for further clarification for the purposes of the current study, a follow-up study on best practices, challenges, and opportunities in overseas buying trips should shed light on the role book fairs play in planning overseas buying trips.[15] Given the value placed on book fairs by Slavic and Eastern European area selectors, Africana selectors, and, anecdotally, Latin

American selectors, it is probable that South Asia selectors are attending book fairs but as part of their overall buying trip strategies, where possible. Certainly there are many large and popular book fairs in South Asia, including but not limited to the New Delhi World Book Fair and the Kolkata Book Fair. Given that South Asia selectors seem especially tied to working with bookstores, vendors, and the LC Offices that are located within the region of coverage, it is logical that they would primarily attend book fairs within the region and that these book fairs would be part of a buying trip.

Looking at the bigger picture and putting South Asia collecting practices in perspective with collecting practices for other areas, it is clear that South Asia is idiosyncratic in its dependence on the LC cooperative plans, both currently and historically. While the case study about building an Africana collection mentioned using the LC field offices, the author emphasized buying trips, and working with vendors and jobbers as the primary useful tools for collection development. South Asia selectors contrast with selectors for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian collections in another important way. The LC field offices and the majority of the vendors used to build South Asian collections are located within the region of interest whereas for the Slavic, East European, and Eurasian collections the majority of the vendors they worked with are located in North America or Western Europe. This can be indicative of a few things. It may just be the result of different publishing and distribution models between the regions, or it may indicate a difference in how selectors define the scope for their collection. Another interesting follow-up study would be to examine the difference in scope of collections between area specialists. Are they defining their collections by language, country of imprint, or the theme of the materials, or are they using some other criteria? Furthermore, who is responsible for defining the scope of the collection?

Conclusion

In their most recent presentations to CONSALD at the annual meeting in Madison, Wisconsin, the field directors of the LC Islamabad and Delhi field offices expressed concerns about their ability to maintain the level of service that SACAP and CAP participants have come to expect. Their concerns are rooted in the ongoing uncertainty in the federal budget, which impacts their abilities to hire, train, and retain skilled catalogers and has also reduced the scope of their collecting activities. In addition, the LC office in Islamabad is dealing with the repercussions of new restrictions on travel within Pakistan.[16] The 2006 ARL report revealed the shift from the P.L. 480 program to cooperative acquisitions programs as they are today impacted collections—while there

was a reduction in duplicate holdings there was also a steep drop off in overall acquisitions for the area. Given South Asia selectors' continued and idiosyncratic dependence on these offices for building their collections, there is a need to advocate with the United States government, which funds the LC field offices, and look to other models of area studies collection development practices and adapt new practices for the South Asian context.

Some methods that seem especially promising include buying trips, book fairs, and working with vendors and jobbers within South Asia. These methods are promising both because they are endorsed by other area specialist collectors but also since these methods better facilitate the acquisition of unique, less-widely held materials as compared to LC's cooperative programs. While many specialists already take buying trips and all work with bookstores or vendors within South Asia, many South Asia specialists do not take buying trips, and many specialists work with a limited number of vendors. It is therefore important that South Asia specialists continue to communicate with one another and coordinate collection development activities on a national level, as they have done for the last five years through the annual South Asian Cooperation workshop in Madison, Wisconsin. Furthermore, cooperative buying trips may provide an opportunity for institutions to pool resources and utilize a collection method that is incomparable in facilitating the acquisition of unique, rare, and ephemeral materials, but this model will require further investigation.

Cooperating and building unique collections that include rare, out-of-print, and vernacular language materials is important to support today's global scholar. Advances in ILL and document delivery services and technology have made it possible for rarely held materials to be used by scholars from across the country. In this way, strong local collections when taken in aggregate form a strong national collection. This highlights the importance of inter-institutional cooperation and maintaining a strong network of area studies colleagues. These networks of colleagues, in addition to cooperatively building collections, can and should take the opportunity to advocate with vendors, administrators, and interest groups to ensure that area studies materials are not left behind or misunderstood in the increasing rush to transition collections to the digital world. Area specialists can work with publishers and vendors to explain the needs and interests of American institutions and support new digital projects, while working to make clear to administrations and interest groups that the publishing context for some world regions continues to emphasize print-based resources and therefore new and large cooperative endeavors need to be inclusive of these types of materials. In this way, area specialist librarians can ensure that area collections remain well rounded and accessible to scholars in the future.

References

1. Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954, Pub. L. No. 83-480, 68 Stat. 454 (1954).
2. Pamela Howard-Reguindin, "To the Ends of the Earth: Acquisitions Work in the Library of Congress Overseas Offices," *Library Collections, Acquisitions & Technical Services* 28, no. 4 (2004): 410–19.
3. It is worth pointing out that one of the national languages of India, the South Asian country with the largest publishing output, is English. Therefore, studies that look at foreign language collections often overlook South Asian materials.
4. John M. Kistler, "Special Acquisitions: Collecting African Materials," *Acquisitions Librarian* 15, no. 29 (2003): 31–50; Keren Dali and Juris Dilevko, "Beyond Approval Plans: Methods of Selection and Acquisition of Books in Slavic and East European Languages in North American Libraries," *Library Collections, Acquisitions, & Technical Services* 29, no. 3 (2005): 238–69.
5. John H. D'Arms et al., "Acquisition and Distribution of Foreign Language and Area Studies Materials," *Journal of Library Administration* 29, no. 3–4 (2000): 51–75.
6. Judit H. Ward, "Acquisitions Globalized: The Foreign Language Acquisitions Experience in a Research Library," *Library Resources & Technical Services* 53, no. 2 (2009): 86–93.
7. Ibid., 86.
8. Deepa Banerjee, "South Asian Librarianship: Current Challenges and Future Trends," accessed January 21, 2015, www.lib.washington.edu/subject/SouthAsia/lcdparticle.html.
9. Mary E. Jackson et al., *Changing Global Book Collection Patterns in ARL Libraries* (Washington, DC: Association of Research Libraries, 2006).
10. Samuel Wright, "Towards a Seamless National Collection: Assessing Online Discoverability and InterLibrary Loan of South Asian Language Periodicals," 2011, accessed February 21, 2014, www.library.wisc.edu/guides/SoAsia/Towards%20a%20Seamless%20National%20Collection.pdf.
11. South Asian Cooperation workshop webpage, accessed January 21, 2015, www.lib.utexas.edu/collection/south-asian-cooperation. This webpage includes the full list of workshop participants.
12. CONSALD: Committee on South Asian Libraries and Documentation, accessed February 21, 2014, http://consald.org.
13. Presumably this is referring to the LC circular lists.
14. Jackson et al., *Changing Global Book Collection Patterns.*
15. Since the initial draft of this article was submitted, the interviews with survey respondents who indicated they go on overseas buying trips have been completed. Preliminary analysis does show that area specialists do often incorporate book fairs into their overseas buying trips.
16. Pamela Howard-Reguindin, "Report on LOC-Islamabad" (report presented at the Annual Meeting of the Committee on South Asian Libraries and Documentation, Madison, Wisconsin, October 2014); Laila Mulgoakar and Atish Chatterjee, "LOC-Delhi Report: The Overseas Field Office Replacement System" (report presented at the Annual Meeting of the Committee on South Asian Libraries and Documentation, Madison, Wisconsin, October 2014).

Appendix A. Online Survey Instrument

Part I: Questions 1 to 3—General Information about Responding Libraries.

1. Please name your library and the parent institution, if applicable (this field is mandatory).
2. Approximately how many books published in South Asia are in your library's collection? Give your best, informed estimate.
3. Approximately how many books published in South Asia does your library add on average to the collection each year? Enter the number in the box below. Give your best, informed estimate.

Part II: Methods of Selection and Acquisition of Books.

4. Does your library use an approval plan (or approval plans) of any kind to add materials published in South Asia to your collection?
   ○ Yes or No (if you answered no, go directly to Question 8)
5. Approximately what percentage of books published in South Asia added to your collection each year is purchased using an approval plan (or approval plans)? Enter the percentage in the box below.
6. Approximately how many vendors supplying books from South Asian countries do you deal with in total? Enter the number in the box below.
7. The next questions deal with one specific selection/acquisition method that can be used for books published in South Asia in addition to or instead of approval plans. Look at each heading, which specifies one selection method.

8. Printed and online catalogs of foreign-language publishers. I have:
   a. not used this method in the last 5 years.
   b. used this method in the last 5 years to select books and have then ordered them from my approval plan vendor.
   c. used this method in the last 5 years to select books and have ordered them directly from the publisher(s) in question.
   d. done both *b* and *c* in the last 5 years.
9. If you checked either *b* or *c* or *d*, now please provide some examples of publishers whose books you purchased in the last 5 years either directly from the publisher or through the vendor (please indicate the publisher's name and location). You can enter up to 5 publisher names and locations.
10. National bibliographies or subject bibliographies compiled by specific institutions or individuals. I have:
    a. not used this method in the last 5 years.
    b. used this method in the last 5 years to select books and have then ordered them from my approval plan vendor.
    c. used this method to select books and have ordered them directly from the publisher(s) of the title(s) in question.
    d. done both *b* and *c* in the last 5 years.
11. If you checked either *b* or *c* or *d*, now please provide some examples of bibliographies you used to select books published in South Asia in the last 5 years (please indicate the title and the country of publication). You can enter up to 5 titles and places of publication.
12. Bookstores in your city/town or other North American city/town that sell books from South Asia. I have:
    a. not used this method in the last 5 years.
    b. used this method in the last 5 years to select books and have then ordered them from my approval plan vendor.
    c. used this method to select books and have ordered them directly from the bookstore(s) in question.
    d. done both *b* and *c* in the last 5 years.
13. If you checked either *b* or *c* or *d*, now please provide some examples of the bookstores carrying books from South Asia that you have dealt with in the last 5 years (their names, languages they carry materials in, and locations). You can enter up to 5 examples.
14. Bookstores in South Asian countries. I have:
    a. not used this method in the last 5 years.
    b. used this method in the last 5 years to select books and have then ordered them from my approval plan vendor.
    c. used this method to select books and have ordered them directly from the bookstore(s) in question.
    d. done both *b* and *c* in the last 5 years.

15. If you checked either *b* or *c* or *d*, now please provide some examples of the bookstores in South Asian countries that you have dealt with in the last 5 years (their names and locations). You can enter up to 5 examples.
16. Online bookstores offering books published in South Asia. I have:
    a. not used this method in the last 5 years.
    b. used this method in the last 5 years to select books and have then ordered them from my approval plan vendor.
    c. used this method to select books and have ordered them directly from the bookstore(s) in question.
    d. done both *b* and *c* in the last 5 years.
17. If you checked either b or c or d, now please provide some examples of the bookstores offering books published in South Asia that you have dealt with in the last 5 years (their names and URLs). You can enter up to 5 examples.
18. Independent book agents in South Asian countries. I have:
    a. not used this method in the last 5 years.
    b. used this method in the last 5 years to select books and have then ordered them from my approval plan vendor.
    c. used this method to select books and have ordered them directly from the agent(s) in question.
    d. done both *b* and *c* in the last 5 years.
19. If you checked either *b*, *c*, or *d*, now please provide some examples of institutions/libraries in South Asian countries that your agents are affiliated with (please provide the institution/library name and location). You can enter up to 5 examples.
20. Lists of current books recorded by journals in the field and/or book reviews. I have:
    a. not used this method in the last 5 years.
    b. used this method in the last 5 years to select books and have then ordered them from my approval plan vendor.
    c. used this method to select books and have ordered them directly from the publisher(s) of the title(s) in question.
    d. done both *b* and *c* in the last 5 years.
21. If you checked either *b*, *c*, or *d*, now please provide some examples of journals that you have used to select books published in South Asian in the last 5 years. List the names of up to 5 journals.
22. Lists of books available for purchase or lists of free duplicates generated by other institutions. I have:
    a. not used this method in the last 5 years.
    b. used this method in the last 5 years to select books and have then ordered them from my approval plan vendor.

c. used this method to select books and have ordered them directly from the institution(s) in question.

d. done both *b* and *c* in the last 5 years.

23. If you checked either *b* or *c* or *d*, now please provide some examples of titles of books published in South Asia that you added to your collection using this method in the last 5 years. List the names of up to 5 lists you have used.

24. Lists of new acquisitions from other institutions with significant South Asia collections. I have:

a. not used this method in the last 5 years.

b. used this method in the last 5 years to select books and have then ordered them from my approval plan vendor.

c. used this method to select books and have ordered them directly from the publisher(s) of the title(s) in question.

d. done both b and c in the last 5 years.

25. If you checked either *b* or *c* or *d*, now please provide some examples of books published in South Asia that you added to your collection using this method in the last 5 years. List the names of up to 5 lists you have used.

26. Award winner lists (provided by vendors, published in print, or available on the Internet). I have:

a. not used this method in the last 5 years.

b. used this method in the last 5 years to select books and have then ordered them from my approval plan vendor.

c. used this method to select books and have ordered them directly from the publisher(s) of the title(s) in question.

d. done both *b* and *c* in the last 5 years.

27. If you checked either *b* or *c* or *d*, now please provide some examples of the lists that you used in the last 5 years to select books published in South Asia. List the names of up to 5 lists you have used.

28. Book Fairs (not to be confused with buying trips which is the next question):

a. I do not use this method.

b. I use this method.

29. If you answered *b*, how many book fairs have you visited in the last 5 years to buy books from South Asia? Enter the number in the box below:

30. Please provide some examples of book fairs that you attended in the last 5 years to buy books in from South Asia (their location and year they took place). List up to 5 names of book fairs attended.

31. Buying Trips (does not include book fairs, see previous question):

a. I do not use this method.

b. I use this method.

32. If you answered b, how many buying trips to purchase South Asian titles have you made in the last 5 years? Enter the number in the box below:

33. Please provide the names of some cities to which you made buying trips in the last 5 years to buy books published in South Asia (include the year). List up to 5 names of cities.

34. If you selected *b*, may I contact you to set up a phone or Skype interview to ask some follow up questions? (If yes, enter email address here)

35. Exchange programs:

a. I do not use this method.

b. I use this method.

36. If you answered *b*, how many South Asian titles have you added in the last 5 years through exchange programs?

37. If you do use this method, please provide some examples of your most active exchange partners in South Asian countries (their names and locations). List up to 5 examples:

38. Gifts (books donated to your library by individuals or organizations). My library:

a. does not accept gifts of titles published in South Asia.

b. accepts gifts of South Asian titles.

39. If you answered *b*, how many titles published in South Asia have you accepted as donations in the last 5 years?

40. If you answered *b*, please provide some examples of South Asian titles that you added to your collection using this method in the last 5 years. List up to 5 examples:

41. Monetary donations from individuals or organizations directed to the purchase of specific materials in specific languages. My library:

a. does not accept monetary donations from individuals or organizations.

b. accepts monetary donations from individuals or organizations.

42. If you answered *b*, how many titles from South Asia have you purchased in the last 5 years using monetary donations from individuals or organizations? Enter the number in the box below.

43. Please provide some examples of titles published in South Asia that you added to your collection using this method in the last 5 years. List up to 5 examples of titles purchased through donations.

44. Describe any other methods not listed in the previous questions that you have used to select and acquire titles published in South Asia:

45. What types of books published in South Asia do you mostly add to your library collection using methods

listed in previous questions (e.g., out of print books, titles published by small publishers, alternative press titles, titles at a specific reading level, titles for specific audiences, translations, etc.). In other words, what types of books would your library lack if you relied solely on an approval plan?

46. Given the advantages of an approval plan, do you feel that there is still merit in spending time and effort on the selection and acquisition of books from South Asia

using alternative or additional methods addressed in this survey? Think, for example, in terms of costs, uniqueness of books added, ready availability of search tools, difficulty/easiness to order and purchase titles, labor-intensiveness to process, etc.

47. Are there still any types of book materials published in South Asia that you would like to have in your collection but that you cannot get no matter what method you use?

Appendix B. Complete List of Bookstores, Institutions, and Vendors Named by Survey Respondents (in alphabetical order)

Amazon.com (USA)
Anand Publishers (Kolkata, India)
Anthem Press (New Delhi, India)
Banerjee Books (India)
Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (Pune, India)
Cafe Hindh (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, US)
Charles Davis Numismatic Books (Welham, Massachusetts, US)
Crosswords (India)
D.K. Agencies (New Delhi, India)
Godage Bookstores (Sri Lanka)
Himalayan Booksellers (Kathmandu, Nepal)
Kannada Sahitya Ranga (US)
K.K. Agencies (New Delhi, India)
K.P. Bagchee (Kolkata, India)
Kutub Khana Anjuman-e-Taraqqi-e-Urdu bookshop (Old Delhi, India)
Lancers Books (New Delhi, India)

Library of Congress (New Delhi, India, and Islamabad, Pakistan)
LiFi Publications (New Delhi, India)
Mary Martin Books (Singapore)
Motilal Banarsi Das (New Delhi, India)
Popular Books (Pune, India)
R.N.Bhattacharya (Kolkata, India)
Tamil Nadu State Archaology Department (Chennai, India)
South Asia Books (Columbia, Missouri, US)
Star Publications (New Delhi, India)
Vajra Books (Kathmandu, Nepal)
Venus Publications (Pune, India)
Zubaal Publications (New Delhi, India)
Madan Puraskar Pustakalaya (Lalitpur, Nepal)
Social Science Bahal (Kathmandu, Nepal)
Mushfiq Khwaja Research Library (Karachi, Pakistan)
Roja Muthiah Research Library (Chennai, India)