## 2011 South Asia Cooperative Collection Development Workshop
## Summary Report and Outcomes

Building upon the success of the 2010 "Cooperative Collection Development for South Asia Partnership Workshop," librarians from 19 North American academic libraries in held a second workshop in October 2011 to collaboratively explore new ways of collecting South Asian library materials. Whereas the 2010 workshop focused on diversifying and deepening our monographic collections, the 2011 workshop focused on broadening the base of serial publications subscribed by North American research libraries.

### Rationale

As librarians and as scholars, participants affirmed the importance of serial literature from South Asia. Collectively, North American institutions acquire and maintain thousands of periodicals from the subcontinent, in dozens of languages and in every subject area.

At the same time it was recognized that print serials present not inconsiderable challenges for libraries as well as users. Costs of acquisition (even while cheaper than US publications), processing, access, and storage of these materials continue to rise. Simultaneously, the number of publications coming out of South Asia continues to grow. New publications have emerged that reflect some of the best scholarship in the subcontinent, but have not always found the audience they deserve.

The "end of print journals" described in library literature in the United States does not accurately represent the current publishing trend in South Asia. The majority of serial publications still exist primarily in print form. All the while, patrons have increasingly come to expect easy access to literature through technological means, and library administrations exert increasing pressure to deliver content electronically and "retire" the print versions.

Weighing the North American collection as a whole, the amount of duplication of serial titles is not high. Of the 4700+ titles offered through our major serials vendor, the Library of Congress Cooperative Acquisitions Program (LC-CAP), less than 10% of titles are held by 10 or more institutions. In fact, nearly 70% of all titles offered are subscribed by five or fewer institutions (including the Library of Congress). Participants acknowledged that adjustments could be made to better cover under-represented publications, in part by reducing the amount of overlap in highly-subscribed areas.

It was agreed that institutions should better coordinate serials subscriptions on a national level. That said, if cooperation determines that that access is not to be local, proximate and reliable access to the literature is critical. Libraries must lobby for better indexing and discovery tools—or to create them ourselves—so that discovery leading to successful interlibrary loan is actually feasible.

It was this two-pronged approach to the serial literature—balancing the national subscribed collection and exploring improved access—that was addressed at the 2011 workshop.

**Workshop Process and Outcomes**

In assessing the "landscape" of serial collecting, the coordinators of the 2011 workshop (Bronwen Bledsoe, Mary Rader, and James Simon) analyzed serials subscription data provided by the Library of Congress field offices in New Delhi and Islamabad to ascertain the level of duplication among participating institutions, noting highly subscribed titles as well as titles subscribed by few, if any, institutions. The results of this assessment were posted to http://www.library.wisc.edu/guides/SoAsia/cooperation.htm.

Participants reviewed the results of the assessment, posted as spreadsheets that could be sorted by title, number of subscribers, country/LC-CAP Office, language, or by each participant's profile. Each institution was asked to identify titles they might be able to drop—suggested, but not required, by the highly redundant subscriptions—and those lesser-represented titles they might pick up in exchange.

The goal of the workshop was to exercise a 10% reduction (in number, not in cost) in each member's serials subscription, with a 5% take-up of new titles by the next serial renewal cycle. The number of subscriptions held by participating institutions ranges considerably, from fewer than 20 serials up to more than 1000 titles. By suggesting a percentage change, rather than a predetermined number of titles or a specific dollar amount, institutions with varying program and budget sizes would make a "small but meaningful" shift of allocations to better balance the aggregated subscription base.

At the workshop, each participant described their process for identifying titles—or kinds of material (by subject, language, type of publication, etc)—they could drop and add. Participants' approaches varied in interesting ways, taking into consideration local needs, usage/circulation statistics, emerging collection emphases, curriculum developments, and other factors. Many mentioned other decision factors, such as the availability of indexing; presence of electronic editions; and coverage of titles by trusted repositories, such as the Center for Research Libraries, or resource sharing partners (2CUL, etc.).

Rather than require" drops" and "adds" to be presented at the meeting itself, participants were asked to submit lists following the workshop and to communicate those subscription changes to the Library of Congress by the end of February 2012. Not every institution reported changes back to the coordinators. However, those reporting to the group demonstrated a remarkable impact on the distribution of subscriptions from highly-subscribed content to lesser-represented titles.

**LC-CAP participant redistribution of subscriptions (May 2012)**

|  |  | Cuts | Additions |
|---|---|---|---|
| Highly-Subscribed Titles | (10+) | 182 subs. | 23 |
| Average Subscribed Titles | (4-9) | 143 | 81 |
| Low Subscribed Titles | (1-3) | 24 | 144 |
| **Total redistribution** |  | **349** | **248** |

Similar results can be found by comparing serial lists provided by LC-New Delhi between 2011 and 2012. Assessing the highest- and lowest-subscribed titles offered to participants, it can be seen that in the aggregate, the number of subscriptions to highly-subscribed titles (10+) remained static, while the

number of titles subscribed in the "3 or fewer" category among participating institutions increased 25%, a significant boost in coverage of these "at risk" publications.[1]

At the same time, the total number of subscriptions received a significant boost as Princeton and New York University both joined the LC-CAP serials program in 2013. Both institutions participated in the workshop, and informed by the process, Princeton signaled its intent to subscribe to 490 titles in the lesser-subscribed categories (in addition to about 200 higher-subscribed titles). New York University indicated that, for its contribution to the effort, it would select new periodical titles from circulars offered through LC-CAP, most of which will not be heavily subscribed.

**Next Steps**

Participants finalizing profile changes will report their changes to the group. Participating institutions will be asked to report on a regular basis on the additions and cuts to their serial profiles through LC-CAP. Participants committed to retain and preserve materials collected under the auspices of the initiative "to the extent practicable," and to engage in periodic review and revision of commitments.

Participants expressed strong interest in **extending the availability and discoverability of indexing** for top journals to allow institutions to more comfortably relinquish physical access to local copies. For South Asian content, the primary resource for indexing is the Bibliography of Asian Studies (BAS), produced under the auspices of the Association for Asian Studies. Participants expressed interest in working more closely with the BAS to provide feedback on priority titles, promote its use among scholars, and encourage technological developments.

In addition to working more closely, participants also agreed to pursue the following:
- Work with JSTOR to recommend additional titles of value for full-text digitization
- Explore alternate indexing models, in particular for vernacular language journals. Participants agreed to further develop a pilot indexing effort for vernacular serials, to test models and costs of non-English indexing. Participants will seek to leverage existing infrastructure to make records available for key—but underrepresented—titles.
- Encourage existing indexes and online table of contents to extend their visibility by exposing records to major discovery systems (Summon, Primo, EBSCO Discovery Service, etc).

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[1] While title-by-title comparison is not feasible with the two data sets in hand, comparing coverage of the set of serials in the same LCCN range from 2011 to 2012 for 15 participating intuitions shows an increase of highly-subscribed titles from 3392 titles in 2011 to 3407 titles in 2012. For the titles subscribed by 1-3 participants, the data shows a 25% increase in coverage, from 774 titles in 2011 to 956 in 2012.

**2011 Participating Institutions**

Center for Research Libraries
Columbia University
Cornell University
Duke University
Emory University
Library of Congress Field Offices (New Delhi, Islamabad)
New York University
Princeton University
Syracuse University

University of California, Los Angeles
University of Chicago
University of Hawaii
University of Iowa
University of Michigan
University of Minnesota
University of Pennsylvania
University of Washington
University of Wisconsin
Yale University