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South Asia Cooperative Collection Development Workshop 2014 Summary Report and Outcomes

The 5th Annual South Asia Cooperative Collection Development Workshop was held in Madison, WI on October 17th. The theme of this year's workshop was Collection Assessment and Promotion.

The first order of business in this workshop was revisiting our SACAP profiles, aiming to improve coverage and to reduce needless duplication in the North American collection of LC-provided materials on South Asia. Our conversations were informed by profile spreadsheets featuring overlap calculations, and by reports from the Library of Congress Field Offices. LC cutbacks in its own acquisitions may diminish its provisions to us, but LC's new data management system (OFORS) may enable cooperation through its potential for finer-grained collecting decisions than profiles have traditionally provided.

Two breakout sessions teamed up participants by geographic/borrowing groups and by interest affinities of language, subject, Indic region, and format. The pattern of conversation varied in each breakout group. A few specific outcomes are summarized below, and notes from the individual sessions are appended to this report.

- Substantial improvement in coverage for languages long-identified as under-collected
 - Panjabi, Marathi, and Malayalam showed particular gains
- Two patterns of subject/language pickup
 - One language to be collected across many or all subject areas
 - One subject collected across many languages
- Coordinating GACs (geographic areas of concentration) within a subject area for better coverage at less cost
- STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) materials present special challenges of location and retention in our institutions' non-area studies collections.

Business to carry forward in the coming year includes:

- Intent of all 3 regional groups of to continue coop discussions by email
- Revision and renewal of the SAC-West MoU on collecting responsibilities
- Documentation of do's, don'ts, and resources for special format collecting
- Articulation by all workshop participants of geographic areas of focus, as a complement to our niche collection declarations in 2012

The workshop turned to its 2014 theme of Collection Analysis with a presentation by Jeff Martin on the potential of the OCLC Collection Tool, which has been revised in recent years (now termed the WorldShare Collection Evaluation System). The WorldCat system offers potential to compare up to 50 institutions at once. It has built additional functionality to scope by subject hierarchies, publication date range, and to limit by format, circulation information (if available), language, and other fields. The system generates title comparisons among selected institutions, displaying unique and shared title lists, calculating the “uniqueness factor” among collections.

Jeff also reported on alternative collection analysis approaches, sharing information on a preliminary analysis of Southeast Asian collections in the US performed by Richard Entlich (Cornell). Though collection analysis using questionably reliable information such as that in WorldCat poses its own unique challenges, the group expressed interest in pursuing further information on collection case studies the group might undertake. The group also considered ways to approach OCLC from an organizational perspective to help improve gaps in available tools.

Niche collections are unique gems created where librarians’ talents and enthusiasm mesh with institutional interests. Workshop participants declared niche specializations in 2012, and presentations by Mara Thacker and David Hirsch were highlights of our meeting last year. In 2014 two participants reported on their special initiatives:

- Aruna Magier (NYU) has been reaching out to diasporic South Asian communities in the New York area and across the country to build a collection of LGBTQ materials from the diaspora.
- Edward Proctor (Duke University) collects ephemera from the Indic subcontinent. He showed photos of a recent acquisitions trip to Sivakasi, a printing center in South India, with brilliant popular imagery and publisher hospitality as major themes.

Pamela Howard-Reguindin, incoming Director of the LC Field Office in Islamabad expressed appreciation for the workshop’s aims and activities. She will work to make participant data available as LC Delhi has done, and to enable a future workshop to review our investments and commitments in Pakistan.

2014 Participating Institutions

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Indiana University
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