

Theme I: Collaboration

Area and International Studies Librarians have always functioned in a collaborative environment. For them, collaborative activities can take many forms ranging from collection development and reference with colleagues at the national level to close collaboration with academic departments and programs on campus and, in many instances, collaboration with librarians at the international level. The Center for Research Libraries' Area Microform Projects (AMPs), which include collaborative digitization and microfilming projects with libraries in various areas of the world as well as collaborative collection development projects, are just one example of this wide range of collaborative activities. More recently, several institutions have experimented with and implemented new models of collaboration where an area studies librarian position is shared by more than one institution.

With the increasing awareness in recent years among large research libraries in the U.S. that no library can build and maintain comprehensive collections anymore, combined with developments related to the digital age, collaboration among research libraries in general has been taken to a higher level. The development of shared print repositories, partnerships such as HathiTrust as well as consortial purchase agreements are just a few examples that illustrate the importance of and reliance on collaboration and partnership as defining themes going into the future.

What does this mean for area and international studies library collections?

In light of this scenario, we would like the participants to consider this set of issues:

- What kinds of partnerships and collaborations will take us into the future? For area and international studies librarians, should there be a focus on partnerships at the international level? The increased trend towards partnerships and collaboration has been discussed at recent conferences (e.g., "International and Area Studies Collections in the 21st Century" at Yale University in November 2012; "The Global Dimensions of Scholarship and Research Libraries" at Duke University in December 2012), and area librarians at several institutions are involved with innovative partnerships at the international level. How can these initiatives be linked and networks of partnerships be created?
- The level of electronic availability of scholarly resources among area and international studies collections varies – in some instances there is still heavy reliance on print, in others a combination of print and electronic formats. With this in mind, what forms of collection development should we practice to build strong and relevant collections? What is the model of collecting going forward? Could international partnerships be a form of collaborative collection development? How can we bridge the gap of access to electronic equipment, bandwidth, and training in

such partnerships? How can questions of intellectual property be addressed at the international level?

- With the growth of the internet and social networking sites, as well as open access movements in virtually all area of the world, an increasing amount of knowledge is produced outside the traditional publishing channels. While web archiving initiatives exist, they tend to focus on specific subjects, such as human rights, or on a small number of countries in connection with a subject (e.g., a recent ALC project on African countries in conflict). How can knowledge produced on the web be incorporated into our collection activities? How can area and international studies librarians develop strategies for the collaborative collecting of web resources?
- For the past 3-5 years, several institutions have experimented with a new form of collaboration where one area studies librarian shares his/her expertise among two or three institutions. How effective is this kind of position sharing in terms of building international and area studies collections? Is it a way to build stronger, more comprehensive collections for a network of institutions? Does this collaboration come at the cost of other services, such as intense liaison work by the librarian with academic departments on one campus? (While we see the sharing of positions as a form of collaboration, it is clearly also connected to another theme of this workshop, i.e., "Recruitment, Training, Mentoring.")