Specialized Cooperative Efforts in Collection Development: An Analysis of Three Slavic Programs

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The ever-increasing cost of acquiring publications and providing access to scholarly information has driven academic and research libraries to search for ways to maximize collection development resources. Cooperative efforts increasingly appear to be the only viable way for libraries to provide their patrons with access to the broadest amount of published research and information currently available. As Richard M. Dougherty succinctly states, "No research library is self-sufficient."[1] Similarly, Joseph A. Boissé recently wrote: "The phrase 'library cooperation' has become something of a mantra in the library world in the late 20th century. … In our Herculean efforts to overcome many of the enormous obstacles which we face, we look to 'library cooperation' as a panacea."[2] Boissé is correct in his assertion that cooperation will help, but it is not an all-inclusive cure for collection development financial woes.

Although not a panacea, there is certainly room in this age of both "traditional" paper and electronic resources for many types of cooperative collection development activities among academic libraries. Some of the most successful cooperative programs, such as the Online Computer Library Center, Inc. (OCLC), the Research Libraries Information Network (RLN), and the Center for Research Libraries (CRL), have a national and international focus. In addition to national and international cooperatives, there is also a need for small-scale efforts to solve specific or local collection

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development challenges. If they are to succeed, these specialized cooperative ventures must not only be carefully planned and implemented, but librarians must begin to understand their importance and offer them the same level of consideration as the larger programs.

Donald B. Simpson, President of the Center for Research Libraries, warns against librarians duplicating cooperative programs simply to acquire local control over a project. Such actions result in scarce resources being spread too thin as "overhead and management and governance structures (of cooperative ventures) are needlessly replicated again and again."[3] According to Simpson, the one exception to this caution is the creation of statewide consortia that are more in touch with local needs and priorities.[4] Although not the same as statewide consortiums, the programs examined in this paper are similar because they are focused cooperative efforts enacted to solve specific needs. This paper will examine three such efforts in the field of Slavic collection development.

The programs include a Slavic duplicate book exchange arrangement; *Slavcopy*, a cooperative program to preserve brittle Slavic books at reduced costs; and, finally, a consortial arrangement between five university libraries to acquire a Slavic electronic database. These cooperative ventures, which have experienced varying degrees of success, range from informal to very formal arrangements. The University of Kansas (KU) Libraries' Slavic Department plays a leading role in all of these ventures. After briefly reviewing these programs, the paper will examine the challenges of operating these programs and outline some of the conditions that need to exist in library institutional culture to better facilitate cooperative programs between libraries.

Slavic Duplicate Book Exchange

Since 1989 the KU Libraries' Slavic Department has worked with North American libraries to exchange duplicate Slavic publications. There are a number of reasons why libraries tend to acquire duplicate publications. To explain briefly, during the Soviet period and even in the post-Soviet period, libraries used and continue to use a variety of sources to acquire publications from East Central Europe. The two primary sources are Slavic book vendors and library book and serial exchange partners.[5] Many libraries have established approval plans with both vendors and exchange partners so the duplication of titles occasionally occurs. Slavic books tend to be priced in a range where it is often cheaper to keep the duplicate book than to go to the expense of returning it. This, combined with donations which also generate duplicates, means that most Slavic collections have at least a small number of duplicate titles. Fortunately, these duplicate titles can be put to good use. The Slavic publishing market is such that once a book is published it is only available for a relatively short period of time—perhaps a month or two. Once the printing of a title is sold out, there is very little chance that a library will be able to acquire the book unless a vendor that still holds a copy is located. Therefore, duplicate Slavic books exchanged between academic libraries are a valuable commodity because they are often no longer available on the open market. In addition, the exchange allows libraries to acquire specialized materials that are on the periphery of the institution's collection development parameters. For example, Romanian publications are not a high priority for KU. However, the library is interested in some reference and literature materials and is able to acquire them through its duplicate exchange program.

The KU Libraries' Slavic Department exchanges its duplicate Slavic books with about twelve other libraries in the United States and Canada. Reciprocal arrangements are established individually between each institution. For example, KU has established an individual arrangement with Indiana University; it also has a similar arrangement with the University of Chicago, and so forth. This is an uncomplicated system that allows each library freedom to negotiate arrangements. So although KU exchanges with twelve partners, its partners may exchange books with more or fewer libraries. An effort is made to maintain exchange equity between partners. However, libraries are free to be as active or inactive as they choose; the level of participation is often based on both the numbers of duplicate books on hand for exchange and staff time available to work on the program.

Title pages of each book are photocopied and sent to an exchange partner. (Some libraries use variants of this procedure, such as creating electronic lists that include all bibliographic information. Regardless of format, the program continues to operate on the same principles.) That partner selects needed titles and returns all of the photocopies. The requested books are sent to the partner and the unclaimed titles are offered to the next partner. KU covers the cost of shipping duplicates to the partner; in return, the partner will do the same. This simplifies the process because there is no need to bill partner libraries for this expense. Each participant is encouraged to keep track of the titles that are sent and received from each partner to ensure that there is a fairly equitable exchange of materials in order to justify shipping costs.

In 1997, KU acquired 462 titles on this exchange program and sent out 541 titles on exchange. The following year KU received 1,182 titles and sent out 867 titles. As a

result of this program, 1,644 Slavic titles that could not be acquired in any other way were added to the KU collections from 1997 through 1998. In addition 1,408 volumes were sent to other libraries to benefit students and researchers at these institutions. This program plays an integral role in the collection development strategy for KU Slavic studies.

Slavcopy

Slavcopy is a cooperative effort established and administered at the KU Libraries to facilitate the acquisition of archival-quality preservation photocopies of brittle Slavic materials at reduced prices.[6] The focus of this program is the preservation of Slavic and other East Central European language publications. Currently there are over 20 libraries that participate in *Slavcopy*. The program operates through an electronic listserve to which participating libraries post the bibliographic data of titles they wish to preserve. If additional libraries wish to acquire preservation copies of a listed title, the price for that title is reduced. Titles submitted to *Slavcopy* must be old enough that their reproduction will not violate copyright laws.

Citations and orders are listed on *Slavcopy* for one month. The list is updated and sent out to subscribers on a regular basis. This allows participating libraries to see which other libraries are ordering a copy of a specific title. Librarians can then make an informed decision about acquiring the title based on their collection development needs, which can include a consideration of the expected use of the title. If the book falls outside of the institution's collection development parameters and other libraries are ordering the title, it is probable that the book will be available to patrons through

interlibrary loan. Therefore, not every library needs to purchase a copy of each book listed on *Slavcopy*.

After the book is posted on *Slavcopy* for one month, it is sent to KU Libraries' Preservation Department for processing. Prep work includes erasing marks in the text, mending tears, and checking for and replacing missing text. Once the book is ready, it is sent to National Bridgeport Bindery in Agawam, Massachusetts, for processing. After the reproduction is completed, National Bridgeport Bindery sends a copy and an invoice directly to each library that requested the title. The institution that submits the book will also receive the original volume, which is taken apart during the copy process to ensure that the sharpest reproduction of each page is produced.

There are a number of benefits for participating in *Slavcopy*. First and foremost are the substantial savings on the cost of these photo reproductions. The savings can be as much as 50 percent off the listed catalog price for similar services offered by some vendors. All books are prepared for copying by the staff of the KU Libraries' Preservation Department, therefore, libraries participating on *Slavcopy* further reduce their preservation costs because KU bears the labor costs of preparing and processing the materials for reformatting. Another benefit is the ability to create a completed copy from incomplete texts. For example, many of the works submitted for preservation are in very poor physical shape—with some volumes missing text.[7] On a number of occasions, *Slavcopy* has orchestrated the reproduction of a single title by using copies of the book held by two or more libraries. In some cases, these books were in such poor physical condition that they were only one use away from destruction. Finally, unlike many other preservation projects, *Slavcopy* allows librarians to identify and preserve publications on

a title-by-title basis. A library can submit as many as twenty titles or more, or as few as a single title and still receive savings through this program.

Consortia Access to the Russian Academy of Sciences (INION) Database

In May 1996, the KU Center for Russian and East European Studies and the KU Libraries hosted a meeting of Slavic Librarians from five schools to discuss possible cooperative ventures. This meeting was funded as part of the Center's US/ED (United States Department of Education) Title VI Comprehensive National Resource Center Program grant. The National Resource Center Program has long encouraged linkages and collaboration between institutions. The KU Libraries provided additional funds for the meeting. Slavic Librarians from Indiana University, the Ohio State University, the University of Michigan, and the University of Texas, Austin, met with the KU librarians for three days to discuss possible cooperative ventures in the field of Slavic studies. These institutions were invited to participate because their Slavic collections and programs were similar in size and scope to the program and collections at KU. One of the firm proposals that came out of these meetings was to work together to purchase access to the Russian Academy of Sciences (INION) Database which is offered through the Research Libraries Group (RLG).

The primary reason for establishing consortial access to the Russian Academy of Sciences database was financial. Currently, RLG charges $1,500 for access to the database for one library. Additional users in a consortium can be added at $500 per site. Therefore, five libraries subscribing as a consortium can acquire the database for $700 per library, rather than $1,500 for a single library subscription. While consortial access

does provide substantial savings, one limitation is that the consortium libraries can only have five simultaneous users accessing the database at a given time. However, after one year of consortium access, this limit has posed no problems to the users. In fact the KU group voted to expand the group to include a sixth library. If the limit of five simultaneous users is insufficient, RLG will upgrade access to allow ten users—of course; this would result in a price increase for the consortium.

Savings of $800 for access to the database may sound insignificant, particularly when the savings are seen in light of academic library acquisition budgets that can run three million dollars or more per year. However, if an academic library could save over fifty percent on each of its electronic subscriptions through consortial access with no noticeable deterioration in service for its patrons, these savings would be substantial indeed!

Evaluation of the programs

Other than their focus on Slavic collection development and preservation activities, the three projects described above are very different from each other. They range from an informal arrangement for the exchange of duplicate Slavic books; to the semi-formal *Slavcopy* program (semi-formal because libraries do need to sign up to participate on *Slavcopy*[8]); to the formal consortium arrangement to subscribe to an electronic database. One project is focused on preservation while the other two deal with collection development issues. All of the programs have had varying degrees of success. The common thread in these Slavic programs is that the KU Libraries and the author have played a leading role in their organization and operation. As such, the author has gained

experience in dealing with a number of issues and challenges in the operation of

specialized cooperative ventures. A discussion of these issues and challenges may assist

other librarians as they work on focused cooperative ventures.

Numerous library scholars have published articles that examine issues related to

library cooperation. Many of the authors have listed a number of characteristics or basic

principals that must be met in order for cooperative ventures to be successful. Joseph A.

Boissé published eleven postulates that should be considered when initiating a

cooperative project. These postulates are:

1. Library cooperation is easy when money is plentiful.
2. Library cooperation is easier to launch with someone else's money.
3. The more meaningful it is, the more difficult it will be to implement.
4. Library cooperation is easier to establish in a hitherto unexplored area.
5. The more democratic the organization you create is, the more difficult the decision making.
6. Your own library will never be the same.
7. Be prepared to lose some autonomy.
8. Success will be dependent on the effectiveness of delivery systems.
9. Once established, a library cooperative never ceases to exist.
10. Don't boast too much about success of cooperatives.
11. The proof is in the implementation. [9]

Most of Boissé's postulates are self-explanatory and self-evident, although, one

must question his first postulate because if money is plentiful, the incentive for libraries

to cooperate diminishes. However, the other postulates are agreeable. Any type of

program, cooperative or not, is easier to establish when outside funding is available. In

addition, it is also simpler to create new programs, rather than attempting to convert

existing library program into cooperative ventures. The establishment of the *Slavcopy*

programs provides a good example of this concept. While many libraries preserve Slavic

materials in their collections, few if any were participating in cooperative ventures that

allowed each institution to preserve books on a title-by-title basis before *Slavcopy* was established.

Frederick C. Lynden argues that real resource sharing must meet a number of characteristics in order to be considered a success. Such characteristics include, but are not limited to the following. First, requirements of the users must be satisfied and resources available when needed. Second, local programs will result in more resources being available locally; national programs will result in resources being shared nationally. Third, these projects allow libraries to realize savings and reduce costs. Finally, real resource sharing projects will receive the support of library administrators.[10]

Donald B. Simpson adds five key questions, regarding the sharing of electronic resources, that are similar to Lynden's key characteristics needed for success. Basically, these five questions are most applicable to the discussion of the Russian Academy of Sciences database. Although these questions are aimed at electronic resources, they do have some relevance to other cooperative ventures and should be considered when cooperative programs are in the planning stage. The five questions are:

1. What are the expectations of students and faculty in relation to the availability, accessibility, and their use of electronic resources?
2. What criteria will the library use to make decisions about what electronic resources it holds locally versus what it obtains through resources sharing mechanisms?
3. What kinds of resource sharing mechanisms for electronic resources are most likely to be effective for an individual library?
4. What impact will sharing electronic resources have on cooperating libraries and the library cooperative?
5. What are the costs of sharing electronic resources and are there cost advantages in doing so?[11]

The characteristics, postulates and questions discussed by these authors, as well as others, are important ideas to consider when establishing cooperative collection development projects. Based on the author's experiences of organizing and operating the

above-mentioned Slavic projects, there are also a number of other issues that must be resolved and conditions that must be met for the successful operation of cooperative programs.

Library administrators and other staff must be willing to make *accommodations* in local procedures to assist employees who are working to establish and/or participate in consortia. Consortial access to the Russian Academy of Sciences database did not come easy. It took almost two years to negotiate the contract and to have all of the schools agree to its terms. The KU Libraries took the role of lead institution in this undertaking. As such, KU signed the contract with RLG and paid for the full subscription. Each of the other consortium libraries signed a letter of participation stating that they would follow the terms of the contract, reimburse KU for their share of the subscription price, and notify the other libraries in a timely fashion if they planned to leave the group. It was necessary for each library to review the contract since each was asked to adhere to it. Lawyers from each institution made suggested changes to the wording. Each time this took place all of the other schools reviewed the contract once again. Also, the electronic resources committee in each library reviewed and then re-reviewed the documentation, further slowing the process. Not surprisingly, this took an inordinate amount of time to complete. With much persistence the consortium libraries, which now comprised Indiana University, the University of Michigan, the University of Pittsburgh, the Ohio State University and the University of Kansas, finally offered patron access to the database at the start of the 1998-1999

academic year. The project's success has led the consortium to expand to include George Washington University at the group's second meeting at KU in June 1999.

As mentioned above, it took almost two years to establish consortium access to the Russian Academy of Sciences database. Under different conditions the project would not have taken so long. Before other institutions were asked to review the documents, KU lawyers reviewed and revised the contract in coordination with the database vendor to meet the requirements of KU, the signatory institution. Upon review of the revised contract, lawyers at most of the other institutions suggested changes. These revisions dealt with editorial minutiae that did not change the underlining meaning or basis of the document. Since the contract was only signed by KU, the lawyers at the other institutions could have streamlined the process by avoiding simple editorial changes and suggesting only revisions that actually impacted the contract.

Furthermore, the process was slowed by each institution's electronic resources committee that reviewed each change made by the lawyers. Unfortunately, several committees were unwilling to give priority consideration to the consortium documents, so paper work often sat at a library for months without being considered. This of course, forced every other participant to wait.

For one member of the consortium, the problems did not end when the contract was finally signed and the database purchased. It was an easy and quick procedure to mount and make available the web-based database at the other institutions. However, after one year, the database was still not accessible to the patrons of one library because the electronic resources committee at this library did not undertake the implementation of the database. This institution already offers many other RLG products, so their

reluctance to add this database is not due to any technical reasons. The committee has simply not made the effort to add the Russian database to the public catalog. This is unfortunate because the library paid for this resource that it has yet to make available to its patrons. Because of this, the Slavic librarian at this institution may drop out of the consortium because he rightly can not justify paying for an item that his patrons can not use. He also believes that this database is a resource that his library should offer to its patrons; and, ironically he fears that he will eventually be forced to purchase the database individually for $1,500 simply because the appropriate officials in his library refuse to add the database in a timely fashion.

If the staff and administration in the participating libraries were more accommodating in instituting consortium access to electronic resources, the implementation would have gone more smoothly and quickly. Unfortunately, because this did not take place, KU, as lead institution, had to invest an extraordinary amount of staff time in order to shepherd this process to a successful conclusion.

A lack of accommodation by administrators or staff has not hindered the other programs outlined in this paper as much. In many ways, the Slavic duplicate exchange program is the most successful program that needs the least accommodation by library staff for its implementation. On occasion, libraries have withdrawn from the exchange. Each time this has happened over the last five years it was because the library administration at the withdrawing institution decided that the exchange was labor intensive and therefore not worth participating in. It usually appeared that the decision was made without an understanding of the Slavic book trade. And in all cases, after the value of this program was explained to the library administration, the institution was

again allowed to participate in the exchange. This illustrates the importance of librarians taking the time to explain and justify reasons for participation in a specialized consortium to their administration. Such efforts will prevent any misunderstanding regarding the value of the program in the future and promote more accommodating efforts by administrators.

Regarding accommodation by library staff, *Slavcopy* falls somewhere between the two other programs. As mentioned above, *Slavcopy* is a new title-by-title approach to the cooperative preservation of Slavic publications. As such, many libraries have added the *Slavcopy* service to their library's preservation program. However, the Slavic librarians at some non-participating institutions have told the author that although they would like to work with *Slavcopy* they are unable to participate. The preservation librarians at these institutions do not see the need to participate in a cooperative project, even if the materials can be preserved in a more cost-effective manner through the program. It is unknown whether these librarians are refusing to participate because they fear loosing local control over some preservation activities.

Cooperative collection development projects will succeed only if all of the participants are flexible and willing to compromise in order to implement and participate in a program. Many cooperative programs generate lower prices by using standardized procedures to acquire materials or to access information. Unfortunately, these procedures may not precisely mirror established routines at each participating library. If librarians are really committed to successfully implementing cooperative

programs, they will make every effort to make local procedures flexible to accommodate these programs.

The operation of *Slavcopy* illustrates the need for local institutional procedural flexibility. In order to lower costs, each volume preserved on *Slavcopy* is produced and bound identically with each step of the process, meeting or exceeding established preservation standards. To facilitate the copy process, the book is taken apart to ensure the best reproduction of each page. When this is completed, every copy of the book is identically bound. Because every step is standardized, it is impossible to entertain specific requests, such as not taking the book apart for copying or producing each title with a different color binding. These types of requests defeat the standardization process that the cooperative implemented to lower costs. Therefore, when participating in cooperative ventures, libraries must be flexible. Being flexible does not mean that a library needs to accept a lower quality resource through cooperative programs. However, it may mean that the institution may have to compromise on how the resources are produced and/or offered to its patrons.

The cooperative implementation of the Russian Academy of Sciences database demonstrates how libraries can compromise. Five libraries now share access to a database that allows only five simultaneous users. This means that it is possible that a patron may not be allowed into the database on their first attempt to access the resource. They would have to wait until one of the five users signs off. While this is not as convenient as immediate access that some electronic resources provide, the members of the consortium decided that in order to save money, the group would only offer access to five simultaneous users rather than upgrading to ten users. This decision was based on

the idea that most libraries generally purchase a single copy of a monograph and only one person at a time can use the item. Only recently, with the widespread implementation of electronic resources, have libraries begun to offer immediate, remote access to information for multiple simultaneous users. In order to save money, libraries and consortia need to consider limiting simultaneous users to specific products such as the Russian Academy of Sciences database which is generally used for quick subject searches to identify journal articles. It should be noted that in the first year of consortial access to this database, not a single complaint regarding access was made to any of the participating librarians. By limiting simultaneous access to five users the consortium is able to save money and still provide access to this important and highly specialized resource.

Successful cooperative projects must receive the support of the library administration and the commitment of the other participants in the group. This is particularly true during the organization and implementation stages of a project.[12] Specialized projects, such as those outlined in this paper, are developed with little or no additional staff assistance or financial support. Librarians who organize these projects do so in the belief that their efforts will ultimately make a difference in helping participants to provide better service to their patrons. Library staff, administrators, and other project participants can help by simply supporting the efforts of the project leader. An institution's willingness to be flexible can provide an important display of support to a burgeoning cooperative program. In addition, library and university administrators can provide support by recognizing the efforts of staff in their performance evaluations.

"Such incentives are likely to reinforce positive, committed attitudes towards the projects and other participants."[13]

Along with recognition by administrators, there is also a need for the participants to acknowledge the efforts made to initiate and run a program. Specialized cooperative programs are generally conceived and established by one person. Upon implementation, other institutions are then invited to participate. The other participants need to be aware that the leader of the project is often organizing the initiative in addition to all other responsibilities. Therefore, participants need to **understand** that because there is often no extra help provided to work on these projects, it occasionally takes a little longer than usual to process or acquire materials cooperatively. Once again, *Slavcopy* provides a good example. Upon joining the list, new members are informed that it usually takes at least 12 weeks or more from the time that a title is posted until the book is processed and sent to the ordering library. (Books generally stay on the electronic list for four weeks; it then takes at least eight weeks for the titles to be prepared and processed.) Sometimes it takes longer than 12 weeks to process books for a number of reasons. First, the KU Preservation Department, which prepares all books for processing, also deals with institutional preservation projects. Therefore, the books may not always be prepared in the outlined timeframe. Also, because *Slavcopy* contracts its reproduction services with an outside vendor, it often takes longer than the outlined time because the vendor has other commitments. Unfortunately, the facilitator of *Slavcopy* has no influence over the vendor's production schedule. Although this situation is made clear to all participants when they join the listserve, there are often complaints that the process takes too long. Generally, a library's acquisition staff makes these complaints because their acquisition

system automatically claims materials that are not received in a short period of time—for example, within eight weeks of creating the order in the acquisition system. Such complaints can be demoralizing for the project staff who work very hard to keep this program afloat. In addition, responding to these inquiries places additional demands on the staff, who often have limited time to work on cooperative projects.

Similarly, several of the participants in the consortium to access the Russian Academy of Sciences database complained when the database was not immediately available. Although it took the participants almost two years to sign the letter of participation, patience was lost when the KU staff could not provide immediate access to the database for only one week after the contract was signed. An impending price hike prompted KU to sign the contract early, before the details of providing consortium access to the product were fully worked out. By signing the contract early, each consortium member saved about $90 on the subscription price. Even after this situation was explained to the members, one institution went so far as to complain about the fact that it took a week to establish web access and requested a refund for the week that the database was not available. While no institution should pay for a resource that it does not receive, in this case, the contract was signed early to save money. The only alternative was to work out the access issues before signing the contract and then pay the higher subscription rate, which did not seem logical. Once again it was a demoralizing situation for the leader of the consortium who worked hard to establish this arrangement. In light of this type of interaction, one must be committed to the idea of library cooperation to play a leadership role in specialized consortium arrangements.

It is also important that all members understand that cooperative programs are established as on-going projects. Unfortunately, as Christy Hightower and George Soete write:

> Some participants however, will view pilot collaborative projects as not serious—perhaps as a momentary diversion from the real business of acquiring and building local collections. Such misunderstandings can lead to broken agreements and feelings of betrayal.[14]

Such an incident happened as this paper was being written. On June 3-6, 1999 members of the Russian Academy of Sciences database consortium met at KU for their second biannual meeting. During this meeting, the group voted to expand the consortium to include George Washington University. A week after the meeting one of the Slavic librarians informed the group that his institution would be withdrawing from our consortium access to the database because his library was now working with a statewide consortium to acquire the same database. His administration simply made this decision without his input, and they did not inform him of the decision even though they knew that KU was sponsoring his trip to Lawrence for the consortium meeting. Such actions by library administrators belittle the work of specialized consortia and show a lack of respect for the librarians and libraries involved in this project. It also means that the other members of the consortia will have to seriously consider not working with this institution on other projects if they are not committed to previously established groups to which they have signed formal letters of participation.

It should be noted that the library that withdrew from the KU Russian Academy of Sciences database consortium remains committed to cooperative collection development. However, the institution has prioritized the cooperative ventures in which

it will participate. In this case, the statewide consortium negotiated the purchase of a number of RLG products that included the Russian Academy of Sciences database. It is understandable that the institution would choose to obtain this database at no cost. However, the actions of the library's administration in withdrawing from the established cooperative are reason for concern. When they joined the specialized consortium to access the Russian Academy of Sciences database, they should have informed the other members that their membership in this group was a lower priority than the statewide consortium and that they would drop out of the specialized consortium if the statewide group ever acquired the product. More important, they should have followed the letter of agreement that they signed which stated that they would provide advanced notice of their intention to back out of the consortium. It is very likely that this statewide consortium spent time negotiating with RLG for the acquisition of the database, so there is no just reason for their late notice to withdraw. Furthermore, the institution's administrators knew that KU was paying to have their Slavic librarian travel to Lawrence to attend a consortium meeting, yet they said nothing. Rather, they waited until the meeting was over to announce their withdrawal from the group. This is an unacceptable way to treat the other members of the consortium and illustrates the lack of support and respect some library administrators have for specialized cooperative efforts. To avoid these setbacks, librarians who establish specialized consortiums must ask potential members what their library's priority is for membership in the group. If the priority is low, the leader of the consortium should seriously consider not including the institution in the project.

A similar situation regarding the possible withdrawal from the consortium occurred earlier with another library. In this case, the library administration was

considering acquiring the Russian database by other means when the Slavic librarian reminded them that they already received the database through an established consortium. As a result, the administrators decided to continue to acquire the database through the established consortium.

Conclusions

Given all of the problems of small cooperative efforts, one may ask why institutions like the University of Kansas Libraries bother with establishing and participating in such arrangements. For programs like the Slavic duplicate book exchange, the answer is simple. KU benefits through participation. KU acquires important Slavic publications through this program that could not be acquired in any other way. This program is very informal and the only effort involved is to exchange information on what books are available and then to ship the books to the requesting institution. The benefits of operating *Slavcopy* are also fairly easy to explain. The preservation work accomplished through *Slavcopy* needs to take place, whether it is done cooperatively or not. Thanks to electronic mail, it is rather easy to establish a cooperative program. Furthermore, by running *Slavcopy* KU can negotiate very good pricing structures with the vendor who does the photo-reproduction work. So while KU staff do all of the work to prepare materials for *Slavcopy*, all KU preservation photocopying, whether it is on listed on the cooperative programs or not, receives the favorably negotiated prices.

In the case of the Russian Academy of Sciences Database, the answer to why we do it is not so evident. Money spent on KU staff time to implement the program far

exceeds the $800 per year it saves on the annual subscription cost. However, the organizer hopes that this consortium arrangement can be expanded to include other resources, both electronic and more traditional forms of publishing; thus allowing the consortium to work together to offer a wider range of materials to its patrons.

For this reason, the KU Libraries' Slavic Department staff, with the support of the administration and other staff continue to work on specialized cooperative ventures. Although there are many challenges in establishing and operating specialized cooperative ventures, the value of these programs far outweigh all of the problems encountered during their implementation.

Unfortunately, until librarians and library administrators are truly committed to all forms of cooperation, the smaller specialized programs will be difficult to establish and continue to struggle in their operation. If cooperatives are to succeed, librarians and administrators must do more than simply profess a readiness to cooperate. They must actually be willing to:

- Be flexible and willing to make accommodations and compromises in local procedures for consortial participation.
- Be supportive and committed to the idea of local or specialized cooperative collection development programs.

Until library culture changes so that these criteria are met, it will continue to be difficult, or even impossible to establish and implement specialized cooperative programs that can be used to address many of the collection development challenges academic and research libraries are currently facing.

Endnotes

[1] Richard M. Dougherty, "Resource Sharing Among Research Libraries: How it Ought to Work," *Collection Management* 9, Number 2 / 3 (1987): 79.

[2] Joseph A. Boissé, "Library Cooperation: A Remedy But Not a Panacea," *IFLA Journal*, 21 (1995) No. 2: 89.

[3] Donald B. Simpson, "Solving the Challenges Presented by Electronic Resources: Creating Opportunities Through Inter-Institutional Collaboration," *Journal of Library Administration* 24, number 4 (1997): 55.

[4] Simpson, "Solving the Challenges," 55.

[5] For a good summary and description of Slavic book and serial exchanges see: Tatjana Lorkovic and Eric A. Johnson, "Serial and Book Exchanges with the Former Soviet Union," *Serials Librarian* 31, no. 4 (1997): 59-87; Margaret S. Olsen, "The More Things Change, the More They Stay the Same: East-West Exchanges 1960-1993," *Library Resources & Technical Services*, 39, no. 1 (January 1995): 5-21; and, Bradley L. Schaffner, "Slavic Book and Serial Exchanges," chapter in *Libraries: Global Reach—Local Touch*, edited by Kathleen de la Peña McCook, Barbara J. Ford and Kate Lippincott (Chicago: American Library Association, 1998): 144-149.

[6] For a more detailed account of *Slavcopy* and its sister program *Brittle* (for the cooperative preservation of all other materials) see Brian J. Baird and Bradley L. Schaffner, "Extinguishing Slow Fires: Cooperative Preservation Efforts," chapter in *Racing Toward Tomorrow: Proceedings of the Ninth National Conference of the Association of College and Research Libraries, April 8-11, 1999*, edited by Hugh A. Thompson (Chicago: Association of College and Research Libraries, a division of the American Library Association, 1999): 228-233. ACRL is also planning to post the corrected version of the paper (which should include the footnotes which were inadvertently left out of the paper publication) at: http://www.ala.org/acrl/detroit.html

[7] For a discussion of the condition of Slavic publications see: Bradley L. Schaffner and Brian J. Baird, "Into the Dustbin of History? The Evaluation and Preservation of Slavic Materials," *College & Research Libraries* 60, number 2 (March 1999): 144-151.

[8] Libraries can participate on *Slavcopy* by sending an e-mail request to: Slavcopy@ukans.edu

[9] Boissé, "Library Cooperation": 90-93.

[10] Frederick C. Lynden, "Will Electronic Information Finally result in Real Resource Sharing?," *Journal of Library Administration* 24, numbers 1 / 2 (1996): 63-64.

[11] Donald B. Simpson, "Electronic Resources: A New Set of Questions for Resource Sharing Efforts," *Collection Management* 21, number 1 (1996): 61-62.

[12] For a good discussion of the implementation of cooperative collection development programs see: Christy Hightower and George Soete, "The Consortium as Learning Organization: Twelve Steps to Success in Collaborative Collection Projects," *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 21, number 2 (March 1995): 87-91.

[13] Hightower and Soete, "The Consortium…," p. 90.

[14] Hightower and Soete, "The Consortium…," p. 90.