

## ASTRONOMICAL LITERATURE ACQUISITIONS IN THE U.S.S.R.

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**ABSTRACT.** Ideas are presented relating to the problems encountered by astronomical libraries in the Soviet Union.

To begin with, I would like to note that scientific libraries in the Soviet Union are generally found to be those which belong to the system of scientific institutions. These include the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, the Academies of Sciences of the Soviet Republics, etc. The scientific libraries are subordinate to their corresponding academies and ministries, and use their own channels to exchange scientific literature with institutions of other countries.

One of the most authoritative and well-known libraries in the Soviet Union is the Lenin Library in Moscow. It is under the jurisdiction of the U.S.S.R. Ministry of Culture and provides services for anyone wishing to use it. The U.S.S.R. State Committee for Science and Technology also has its own library which is called the Main Scientific and Technical Library and is also situated in Moscow. This library collects information about all the books and journals on science and technology available at other Soviet libraries and provides this information on request.

In Leningrad there is the Main Library within the system of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences. It has two branches in Moscow: the Library of Natural Sciences of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences and the Library of Social Sciences of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences. The All-Union Institute of Scientific and Technical Information, within the system of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, and the U.S.S.R. State Committee for Science and Technology analyses the world's scientific literature and publishes journals of abstracts in all branches of science and technology.

These, as well as the large university libraries, have facilities permitting the selection of necessary books and papers, and subscriptions to periodicals. They can copy materials on readers' requests, including microfiche, microfilm, etc.

The libraries of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences provide assistance in funding the libraries of observatories and institutions of the

U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences at their request.

A similar system obtains at the libraries of the Academies of Sciences of the Soviet Republics and of the U.S.S.R. Ministry of Higher Education. Moscow State University Library performs these functions.

Now about the way in which libraries are funded. Naturally, there are no difficulties in automatic subscription for Soviet books and periodicals. There is also an automated international system of a summary catalogue of the editions of socialist countries. With the help of this system, Soviet libraries allocate funds for the purchase of scientific literature published in socialist countries.

As for foreign literature, there are two ways to obtain it: by purchase or by exchange. The large libraries listed above and practically all libraries of the astronomical observatories and institutes have a small foreign currency appropriation with which to purchase foreign literature. But this amount is so small that, as a rule, there is only enough to subscribe to a few principal astronomical journals. For this reason the international book exchange is very important. I would like to illustrate this importance with a few figures. The Lenin Library exchanges editions with 3290 organizations from 116 countries, including 23 astronomical organizations in 21 countries. The State Public Scientific and Technical Library deals with 1000 exchange partners from 70 countries, half of them capitalist countries.

In the Soviet Union 129 organizations participate in book exchange. The database of the State Public Scientific and Technical Library stores all information about book exchanges of Soviet Libraries. This information is used to create exchange lists for distribution worldwide. In this connection, institutions and observatories that publish monographs, journals and proceedings have the advantage over those which do not publish. For example, the Astronomical Council of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences publishes five titles and distributes them among approximately 300 institutions worldwide, receiving in exchange 12 periodicals from 6 countries, for a total value of about \$1500.00US. Between 1000 and 1500 items are received annually from 80 foreign observatories and astronomical institutions. Thus the total value of periodicals received by the Astronomical Council of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences on the exchange basis is approximately equal to the value of the items purchased with foreign currency.

In the Ministry of Higher Education, the Moscow State University Library has coordinated the book exchange program since 1854. The Sternberg Astronomical Institute and the libraries of 60 institutes of higher education exchange books on their own. As in the system of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, relatively low allocations of foreign currency are made for subscriptions to the main journals. For example, the Sternberg Astronomical Institute subscribes to 11 journals, at a total cost of \$3000US per year, while as little as \$200US is left for the purchase of monographs. Thus the book exchange is vital to us.

Moscow State University exchanges books with 85 libraries of 57 universities in the U.S. In the system of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, 6 libraries exchange with 26 American observatories. The staffs of these libraries have asked me to thank these exchange partners, especially the Library of Congress. For any library which might be interested in participating in the book exchange program, I have information about the titles which the Lenin Library, the Moscow University Library, the Astronomical Council Library, etc. exchange, as well as a list of titles desired.

As has been seen, it is most difficult for astronomy/astrophysics libraries to purchase books, especially as the agency Mezhniga sells Soviet books in many countries without buying foreign editions, depriving our libraries the opportunity to exchange. Therefore I ask the directors of the libraries represented here today to implement a direct book exchange program with Soviet observatories through the Library of Natural Sciences in Moscow. This library could undertake to inform observatories and institutes wishing to exchange books with Soviet institutions about astronomy books to be published in the U.S.S.R. as well as informing them of the titles desired by our observatory libraries. Those wishing to carry out this activity may contact either me or the Library of Natural Sciences in Moscow. There is also the alternative of exchanging publications directly between libraries. Advance information about the several astronomical titles published annually by the Astronomical Council of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences is available to any library requesting it; information is also available from us on the titles we desire to receive.

I would like to discuss our interlibrary loan system. To find a needed book, central libraries use the automated Summary Catalogue of foreign serials, the database of the Institute of Scientific and Technical Information (and others), as well as the databases of other countries. They also photocopy paper and copy microfiche and microfilm editions. During 1987, libraries of institutions of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences sent out 1200 requests to 223 libraries of 34 countries, 1000 of them to 10 libraries of socialist countries and 1100 to 200 libraries of capitalist countries. In response, they received 765 items, most of them from the U.S.A. (especially from the Library of Congress), Great Britain, the Netherlands, and the Federal Republic of Germany.

During the same year about 1500 requests from 64 libraries of 19 countries were received. Of these requests, 14% were for Soviet literature; the rest of them were for foreign literature. Most of the requests were from socialist countries (Bulgaria, Cuba, Romania). The ratio of requests received to literature distributed is 1:17 for the socialist countries and 33:1 for the capitalist countries. The majority of requests from socialist countries (80%) were for foreign publications. All this indicates a low representation of foreign literature in Soviet and socialist libraries. Our libraries also have difficulty

buying interlibrary loan request forms because of the acute shortage of foreign currency.

Finally I would like to address one more question which is closely associated with the difficulty of obtaining Western scientific literature. Many of you may know that the General Catalogue of Variable Stars is published by the Astronomical Council of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, and the Supplements to the Catalogue of Clusters and Associations (by Ruprecht, Balazs and White) are published in collaboration with astronomers in Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic. Both of these catalogues are compiled based on the analysis of newly published data, for the lack of which the work becomes all too complicated. I would like to ask your advice on how best to solve this problem. Shall we ask observatories to send reprints of papers and information about other publications of scientists on these topics to the Astronomical Council, or are there any other ways to overcome the lack of timely data?

Thank you for your consideration.