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# Organizing Regional Bibliographic Services in Libraries

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A B S T R A C T
*This article discusses the traditional role of regional studies as one of the primary areas of library activities, emphasizing the unique relevance of regional studies today. It explores the growing regionalization of library services and the increasing interest of users in the history, modern life, local characteristics, and traditions of their respective regions.*

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## Introduction.

The revival of regional library studies today is driven by an unprecedented rise in national identity awareness. While recognizing universal human values, regional library studies can complement moral processes by fostering love and attachment to one's homeland.

Regional studies have traditionally been a key direction of library activities. The unique relevance of this field is characterized by the strengthening regionalization of library services and the increasing curiosity of users about the history and modern life of their region, as well as its local peculiarities and traditions.

Meeting the demand for information contained in regional study documents and ensuring the comprehensiveness of regional collections is impossible without clearly defining the core concepts and resolving existing contradictions in their interpretation. The meaningful aspect of these concepts is determined by the methodological foundations of regional studies, where the concept of "region" serves as the central axis in theoretical and practical movements.

The completeness of regional collections and the satisfaction of users' informational needs depend on defining the specific boundaries of the area for which document selection should be conducted. The volume of documents included in a regional collection increases or decreases depending on whether the geographical boundaries are expanded or narrowed.

## Materials.

Analysis of literary sources reveals that the concept of "region" is a subject of development across various disciplines, such as geography, history, regional studies, literature, bibliography, and library science.

The term "region" has been extensively utilized in the works of renowned local bibliographers and library scientists like N.V. Zdobnova. For instance, geographers often define a "region" as a small area like a village, city, or district. Literary scholars, on the other hand, suggest using the term "region" for large administrative-territorial units, including autonomous provinces.

The distinguished bibliographer and regional scholar N.V. Zdobnova proposed defining regional boundaries based on the administrative-territorial division of a historical period, taking into account national, cultural, historical, and economic characteristics. By "region," he referred to an area delineated by various criteria, including geographical, cultural-historical, administrative-political, or economic factors.

The diversity in approaches to defining the concept of "region" has not significantly influenced the interpretation of another concept, the "document on regional history." For a long time, social information about regions was initially preserved in handwritten and later in printed books. These records serve as historical and cultural monuments of their time, symbolically reflecting the language, attitudes, and ways of thinking of our predecessors.

The application of the term "regional literature" to written and printed works about a specific area is entirely justified. "Books, as a means of recording information, have proven to be an optimal method for transmitting knowledge across space and time." Today, the range of sources of documentary information has significantly expanded, encompassing not only printed and manuscript works but also gramophone records, magnetic tapes, magneto-optical discs, compact discs, CD-ROMs, video discs, and others. These entities constitute a specific segment of the regional collection necessary for the subscriber. The term "regional literature" refers to books about a particular region as well as books published within that region. Often, the term "regional literature" has been used in two senses: "provincial literature" and "regional studies literature."

Terminological discrepancies are the result of the historical peculiarities of the library's practical activities, as it had to meet diverse informational needs. During the rapid development of the regional studies movement, library services were utilized by regional researchers, amateur historians, teachers, school students, enterprise leaders, and government employees. Therefore, the use of various terms to denote documents related to a specific region in the works of many authors is unsurprising.

By the late 1930s, to eliminate terminological confusion, there emerged a general tendency among authors to focus on a single term. The expressions "provincial literature" and "regional studies literature" gradually disappeared from specialized library vocabulary, with the term "regional studies literature" becoming established in professional usage.

**Research and methods.**

While addressing the methodological issues of selecting documents for regional bibliographic guides, N.V. Zdobnov also examined their content. He noted that printed works are locally relevant if they describe, analyze, or summarize events:

- That do not occur within the region but arise as a result of its forces and activities.
- That originate outside the region, due to external forces, but influence or pertain to the region and its study.

Clearly, documents in disciplines where the territorial aspect predominates, such as geography, history, geology, botany, zoology, archaeology, and statistics, are richer in regional content. At the same time, it is important to note that the regional studies focus is characteristic not only of entire industries but also of their individual sections, such as medical geography or regional animal geography.

Additionally, disciplines like physics, chemistry, and mathematics may also involve regionally focused research addressing specific localized issues. Regional documents should include descriptions of technology, equipment, products of regional enterprises, rationalization proposals, and inventions implemented within the region.

Special attention is given to information about notable representatives of the region. Various terms are used in specialized literature to identify individuals associated with a region. The most common term is "compatriots." To eliminate terminological ambiguity, it is proposed to use the unified term "notable residents of the region." Based on three key parameters—place of birth, place of residence, and nature of activity—seven primary groups of individuals connected to the region can be identified:

1. Individuals born, residing, or currently living in the region and associated with it through their activities.
2. Individuals connected to the region by place of birth or residence, regardless of the nature of their activities. In this case, the defining feature is non-creative ties to the region, such as being born there.
3. Individuals linked to the region by their place of birth and activities, regardless of where they live.
4. Individuals associated with the region by place of birth, irrespective of residence or creative connections with the region.
5. Individuals connected to the region by place of residence and nature of activity, regardless of place of birth.
6. Individuals linked to the region by place of residence, regardless of place of birth or nature of activity.

- Regardless of place of birth or residence, individuals associated with the region through the nature of their activities.

Thus, notable figures of a region include individuals connected to the region through the nature of their activities, place of residence, or place of birth. The presence of at least one of the characteristics listed allows us to classify a document about the individual as a regional studies document. Furthermore, the same person may be considered an object of regional studies in different territorial units, including abroad.

**Results.**

Relevant documents should be fully compiled, regardless of the time and characteristics of these individuals' lives and activities. These documents must be widely promoted among subscribers to inspire pride in their region and its remarkable people, encouraging active participation in the further development of the region's economy and culture. They serve as a link between generations, fostering a sense of belonging to the spiritual heritage of the past, awareness of one's duty to the homeland, and readiness to protect and enhance the achievements of one's people.

Using this approach, all aspects of the content of regional studies documents can be systematized into five main categories:

- Natural and climatic;
- Socio-political;
- Socio-economic;
- Cultural and educational;
- Personalization.

If this approach is adopted, the defining characteristics of a regional studies document's content should be considered:

- Information on the region's geographic location, relief, climate, natural resources, water sources, flora and fauna, and ecological activities.
- Information on the activities of regional, city structures, and their executive bodies, as well as other public organizations (e.g., session materials, plenums, conferences, meetings reflecting their activities, and workers' participation in socio-political events of state governance). This also includes documents and materials of central government bodies containing information about the country and the region.
- Data reflecting industry, agriculture, transport, communications, and other branches of the regional economy.
- Information about culture, science, and education in the region.
- Biographical data on individuals who are a source of pride for the region's population. Biographies and activities of prominent figures may also include information about their relatives and friends.

As seen, social information about the region is highly diverse in content. It reveals the unique characteristics of natural resources, the economic and industrial profile of the region, and its enterprises or specific industries. It contains a wealth of factual material, enabling researchers to identify the unique aspects of the region's historical and cultural development and restore the distinctiveness of its inhabitants' lives and traditions. In other words, the content of a regional studies document reflects the overall socio-natural appearance of the region.

A regional studies document pertains to a region based on its content or form. The content of a regional studies document refers to the information it contains about the region, while its form includes details about the place of publication, authorship, and other contributors involved in its creation.

According to the general theory of bibliography and library science, it is more appropriate to use the term "regional collection" to define a collection of regional studies documents. A regional collection is a compilation of documents related to a region in terms of content and/or form, intended for public use. The regional collection is a valuable informational resource for comprehensively understanding and developing each region.

**Discussion.**

The understanding of the terms "regional studies document" and "regional studies collection" is essential for libraries.

Regional studies work is conducted by amateur local historians and the scientific research groups of various local institutions, organizations, and educational institutions. Historically, three main organizational forms of regional studies have developed: public, school, and state.

Public regional studies emerged in various institutions such as museums, cultural centers, and libraries. In some regions, special councils for regional studies work or societies have been established by local historians.

Amateur local historians form the backbone of local societies dedicated to preserving nature, cultural heritage, and art monuments. Valuable regional studies materials are identified and collected during numerous excursions and trips through their homeland.

At the present stage, school-based regional studies have become widespread. They encompass millions of students who study their region through lessons, excursions, and trips organized in clubs and school museums.

An integral part of public regional studies is library-based regional studies. Local higher education institutions, specialized scientific libraries, and state public libraries with centralized library systems are actively engaged in acquiring, supplementing, and organizing collections of region-related literature, as well as creating the necessary bibliographic reference tools. Based on this foundation, libraries carry out targeted individual and mass promotion of regional knowledge among various reader categories and provide regional studies assistance to local organizations and institutions.

The advanced practices of libraries in the field of regional studies are widely covered in both local and central media. Within the framework of library-based regional studies, bibliographic regional studies work is also carried out.

One of the main sources for identifying publications dedicated to a region, city, or village is regional bibliographic guides.

Centralized libraries managing systems in almost all regions and other republics produce regional bibliographic indexes on a quarterly, semi-annual, or annual basis.

In most areas, comprehensive guides, including general advice, scientific, auxiliary, thematic, and general indexes for different directions, have been published. Bibliographic guides, separate leaflets about books, and significant date calendars or publications that replace such guides are released annually by almost all regional libraries.

Working with bibliographic sources is conducted regularly, alongside collection reviews. Library work plans include provisions for reviewing and recording a certain range of indexes, and lists of these indexes

are compiled.

When identifying new literature, it is important to remember that the primary part of regional studies literature is published in local publications.

When studying the thematic plans of local publishers and placing orders, attention should be paid not only to literature about your region or city but also to books dedicated to the region as a whole.

It is also important to consider that many central publishers annually plan and release a large number of books, brochures, albums, booklets, postcards, maps, and atlases dedicated to specific regions.

Books and brochures on regional studies are often published in series, primarily by central publishers.

Sources for identifying new regional publications include bibliographies of current literature, regional indexes compiled by provincial libraries, and central and local newspapers and magazines.

Aligning bibliographic guides with library collections and utilizing auxiliary bibliographic indexes available in regional studies guides help identify materials on provinces, cities, and villages missing from library collections. However, regional-scale bibliographic indexes do not and cannot fully reflect literature on smaller territories such as specific districts, cities, and villages.

**Conclusion.**

For this reason, librarians in district, city, and village libraries independently search for books related to their regions. This involves reviewing literature not only based on bibliographic indexes published by local institutions but also those by central organizations and libraries, and sometimes consulting bibliographic materials within books, articles, and journals.

During visits to regional libraries for courses, seminars, conferences, or meetings, librarians are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the regional studies catalogs of these libraries. Regularly reviewing the sections of these catalogs can help identify materials about one's city or region.

It is essential to maintain a systematic record of the sources reviewed. To achieve this, libraries should create a "Sources Card Index" comprising sections such as "Catalogs," "Book Collections," "Collections, Journals, Newspapers," and "Bibliographic Indexes," each with a subsection titled "Reviewed."

Identified books, brochures, articles, and other types of publications, such as printed graphics, atlases, maps, and others, can be acquired through public libraries, bookstores, subscriptions, exchange and reserve collections, as well as through purchases or donations from provincial, district, and city sponsors or readers.

The effectiveness and organization of efforts to purchase regional studies literature largely depend on the operational connections of the working apparatus, the acquisition department of the central library, the alphabetical catalog of current readings, the systematized card catalog for ordered literature, and the control over the unified collection of regional studies literature. This allows for clear insights into the work conducted in this direction at any time.

For the section on regional publications, a visible space should always be designated, marked in a consistent location, and highlighted with colored ink for easy identification.

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