

# Collection Plan 2022-2026

Library of the African Studies Centre,  
Leiden University

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## Executive summary

This Collection Plan is the successor to the 2011 ASCL Collection Plan and builds on the ASCL Library Policy Plan 2022-2026, 'Africa inside' and the ASCL Research Programme 2019-2024, 'Strident Africa'.

This Collection Plan proposes four things:

- \* The ASCL Library will acquire more books (etc.) produced in Africa in the coming period. This will be achieved in part by doubling the budget for the supplier Hogarth and through more book acquisitions trips in Africa.
- \* The ASCL Library will drop the old rule regarding language acquisition ("Western languages only") as a strict criterion, and will start a pilot with the acquisition of books in Swahili. The latter will be done in consultation with colleagues at Leiden University Library (UBL).
- \* The ASCL Library will further diversify its procurement in terms of materials, with more practical efforts in the coming policy period to acquire and make available (online) Africa-related films, photographs and archives.
- \* In principle, the above plans will be implemented in a budget-neutral manner. However, special attention must be paid to processing capacity and specific knowledge transfer (language and material knowledge) to the current staff.

## Introduction

This Collection Plan is the successor to the 2011 ASCL Collection Plan and builds on the ASCL Library Policy Plan 2022-2026, 'Africa inside' and the ASCL Research Programme 2019-2024, 'Strident Africa'. The Policy Plan addresses the library as a whole (collection, documentation and information, availability and lending) and sets out the direction of policies to be followed in the coming years. The Collection Plan describes, in more detail, only the collection and collection development.

## Short history of the collection

The African Studies Centre collection originated with the establishment of the Africa Institute, as it was originally called, on 12 August 1947. That institute consisted of an academic documentation centre in Leiden and a trade office in Rotterdam, the latter later moving to The Hague and changing its name to the Netherlands-African Business Council (NABC). The African Studies Centre (ASC) was officially established as an academic institute in 1958 and developed into a centre focused on the research and documentation of Africa. The African Studies Centre was a Foundation and not officially part of Leiden University, but had been accommodated in university buildings since its inception. In 1989, the library, together with the rest of the African Studies Centre relocated from the Stationsplein to the current home in the Pieter de la Court building. For a long time, the head of the library was also responsible for the development of the collection, while the so-called 'documentalists' (now called academic information specialists) made the collection accessible, especially by preparing abstracts of books and journal articles. Following a reorganisation of the institute in 1997, the head of the library also became vice-director and member of the Management Team, and the collection development task was transferred to information specialists. The collection development requires about 1 FTE, currently divided between 2 information specialists. In 2016, the African Studies Centre Foundation officially became part of Leiden University, as an interfaculty institute, and in 2018 the ASCL Library catalogue was added to the UBL catalogue.

## Description of the current collection

### Size

The physical collection has currently (2022) grown to about 95,000 books, 2000 journals and almost 2000 films on DVD. Roughly half of the collection is on open display, in order of arrival. The literature collection is separate, as are the reference books and large format items. The books are in 9 rows of 13 bookcases, the bookcases contain 7 one-metre shelves. In total 819 metres. The large format items are in 5 rows of 4 bookcases. In total 140 metres. The journals are in 9 rows of 4 bookcases. In total 252 metres. The paper journals are arranged in alphabetical order. The DVDs are in drawers in a separate cabinet. There is also a considerable collection of brochures stored in separate chests of drawers (14 m<sup>2</sup>). Atlases and geographical maps are placed in a separate, large-format cabinet (ca. 8 m<sup>2</sup>). Journals, reference works, atlases, maps and newspapers are not available for loan.

The other half of the collection has been stored elsewhere due to lack of space. Following a refurbishment of the FSW Library in early 2019, the space of the ASCL Library has shrunk significantly (-100 m<sup>2</sup>). In the Pieter de la Court building, parts of the collection are on different floors, in the basement and in the 'attic': in total ca. 500 linear metres. This mainly concerns decommissioned or little-used journals and newspapers. 30,000 books, reference works and journals (835 m) are in the UBL warehouse on the Witte Singel. This is the oldest part of the ASCL collection. Very recently, one

of the decommissioned journals (2 cabinets) was moved from the library to the Van Steenis building. This was to make room in the library, where the lack of space is now becoming acute. Another part of the collection will have to be moved to the Van Steenis building in order to make room for the anticipated increase in the collection (50 m per year). The relocation of the entire ASCL, including the library, to the Witte Singel Doelen complex, cluster South, was planned for 2022, but has now been postponed until 2023/2024. At that time, new choices will be made regarding which part of the collection will remain on open display and which (largest) part will be in the warehouse. A relocation committee will start looking into the furnishing issues surrounding the new accommodation.

### Provenance

Currently, about 50 % of the new (printed) book acquisitions come from Africa. (This is significantly lower for the collection as a whole, so in that sense there has been some trend reversal in recent years.) The other half is published in 'the West', i.e. Europe and the United States. A (very) small proportion is from Asian countries or the Arab world (if published in a Western language). The library also very regularly receives large and small donations from individuals and institutions (CBS, White Fathers, KIT).

### Carriers, material types and language

From the outset, the library (formerly the documentation centre) collected very diverse materials, including statistics, multi-year plans of African governments, demographic data, brochures of political parties, etc. In 1997, the library received a large gift, namely, the archive of the Africa in the Picture film festival, and it was decided to add film to the collection profile. Regular acquisition trips to Africa have been undertaken since ca. 2005, gradually giving the collection an even more diverse character. The vast majority of the collection still consists of paper materials. However, the digital collection is growing steadily. Most journals are online; in addition, the library team collects especially accessible (open access) digital material. (Due to difficult availability, the ASCL is reluctant to purchase commercial e-books.)

Currently, the printed collection consists of 65% English-language, 25% French-language and 3.5% Dutch-language materials. This is followed by smaller percentages of German, Portuguese, Afrikaans and Italian. For some African countries, the production in languages of the former coloniser will give a fairly good picture of what is published, for others it produces a strong bias. The ASCL Library believes it is important to facilitate not only African authors who write in a Western language, but precisely also those who write in a (major or minor) African language. The language discussions in African countries show how this field is in flux, and a collection policy must also reflect this.

### Monographs

The books are generally in good condition, very clear signs of use are visible in the case of the oldest literature. The books from before 1900 (ca. 65 volumes) are in a locked cabinet.

### Journals

Printed volumes were bound until ca. 2016. After this date, this was still done sporadically. Many journals appear online so print subscriptions to these journals have been cancelled. The budget for the binders came under pressure. Nevertheless, a number of journals published in Africa are available exclusively in print. In total there are 329 printed journals. Total number of current print journals is considerably lower, namely ca. 60.

Most journals are currently digital. A number of these are offered through digital packages offered by the UBL, such as CAIRN.

## Articles

Academic information specialists (previously: documentalists) enter the titles of articles from Africa journals in the UBL catalogue, often with an abstract and subject headings from the in-house-developed African Studies Thesaurus. Part of the metadata of articles is brought in semi-automatically.

## Films

Films on DVD are stored in extra-thin format cassettes in order to save space. DVDs are inconvenient to use, especially for students: their laptops no longer have a DVD drive and developments like Netflix and YouTube mean they are accustomed to watch streamed films. On the other hand, (Africa) films are increasingly offered as an electronic file and often no DVD of them is available. Currently, purchased films on file are still put on DVD by the SOLO service in the Pieter de la Court building, because that is the only way we can lend films. The possibility of offering films to the university community via a single streaming platform is being explored. With this aim, a Film Management Working Group was set up in 2020, consisting of an ASCL information specialist responsible for the film collection, UBL subject librarians dealing with audio-visual material, the head of Digital Services and the UBL's copyright specialist.

## Newspaper

The library has several volumes of African daily newspapers, most of which were microfilmed after receipt, after which the paper copy was deselected. Part of the South African newspaper *Die Burger* has been transferred to the Royal Library, where they are better equipped to preserve this kind of material in the optimal way. Currently, the library no longer has 'paper' subscriptions, except for the Rwandan newspaper *New Times*, which is received as a PDF and printed out on site. This seems old-fashioned but it is partly because the licence does not permit online availability and partly to give the "reading table" a bit of a face.

## Microfiches

The library collection contains a large number (2974) of so-called 'Development Plans' on microfiche, covering the period 1945-1998. These multi-year plans exist for almost every African country and provide a detailed picture of a country's socio-economic situation, each covering a four- or five-year period. In addition, there is an at least as extensive collection of African newspapers on microfiche. The microfiches can be viewed on site with a microfiche reader.

## Photographs

At present, the collection contains about 1000 mostly historical photographs, which have been digitised and offered online via Wikimedia Commons.

## Brochures

The brochures (about 1500) are in a separate chest of drawers. They include overprints, programmes of political parties, pamphlets of all kinds of organisations such as unions, speeches, conference papers. The brochures are not all in very good condition and are fragile. They are still on loan.

## Maps

More than 600 maps and atlases, accessed through the ASCL website and through the Leiden catalogue. A small proportion have been made digitally available online, but for copyright reasons this number is still limited.

## Archives

The library has a small but steadily growing number of archives (13), including those of former Africanists and missionaries. Ever more archives are being offered to the library. Selecting and describing them is time-consuming work, but the importance of archival material is increasingly recognised, also in education. To study an archive, a request must be submitted to the head of the library. Archives can only be consulted on site.

## Digital collection

As mentioned above, most journals are online; in addition, the library team mainly collects and describes freely accessible (open access) digital material. The digital collection further consists of the following elements:

[African Studies Centre Leiden collection](#). Part of the Leiden University Repository. Contains dissertations and other academic, professional or popular publications by Africanists affiliated to the African Studies Centre Leiden and also publications published by the ASCL.

[Connecting-Africa](#). A portal, set up and maintained by an ASCL ICT specialist in collaboration with information specialists, which provides access to online academic information about Africa. It contains ca. 83,000 publications from 99 repositories of African universities and other institutions.

[Africabib](#) A collection of more than 239,000 social science titles about Africa, brought together from diverse databases and maintained by an ASCL ICT specialist.

[ASCL country portal](#). This portal offers, per country, an overview of freely accessible internet sources and other information. Established and maintained by an ASCL ICT specialist in collaboration with library staff.

### [Kenya Coast Portal](#)

The Kenya Coast Portal is a service developed by the ASCL for students, researchers, people working in development, government officials and others interested in the Kenya Coast region. The Portal is divided into four sections: overviews of the academic literature on a sub-topic, e.g. 'Environment'; bibliography; statistical information and open-access publications. (Last updated in 2020).

### [African Newspapers Readex database \(restricted access\)](#)

Comprising more than 100 historical African newspapers and titles from Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe. The second set is an update of the first set.

### [African Writers Series \(AWS, restricted access\)](#)

The ASCL Library holds all print copies of this world-famous series, published by Heinemann from 1962 to 2003. This online edition consists of more than 250 titles: fiction, poetry, plays and non-fiction prose, with works by, among others, Chinua Achebe, Ama Ata Aidoo, Steve Biko, Buchi Emecheta, Nadine Gordimer, Bessie Head, Doris Lessing, Nelson Mandela, Dambudzo Marechera, Christopher Okigbo, Okot p'Bitek and Tayeb Salih.

### [Grand corpus des littératures française et francophone du Moyen Âge au 20e siècle \(restricted access\)](#)

Contains: 'Corpus de la première littérature francophone d'Afrique noire, écrite et orale, des origines aux Indépendances (fin 18e siècle-1960)' and 'Corpus de la première littérature francophone de l'océan Indien, écrite et orale, des origines aux Indépendances (18e siècle-1960). A corpus of medieval and modern French literature and Francophone literature from sub-Saharan Africa and the Indian Ocean region, from the Middle Ages to the 20th century.

### [African History and Culture, 1540-1921 \(restricted access\)](#)

More than 1300 searchable books, pamphlets, almanacs and ephemera on the history, ethnic groups

and socio-economic development of the African continent from the 16th century to the early 20th century.

## Relationship with other domain collections in UL and external libraries

The basic principle of the ASCL Library is not to purchase books that are already available elsewhere in Leiden. An exception is made for those books that are only available online at Leiden University, in which case we sometimes still proceed to purchase a print copy. This is done because printed materials can be borrowed via ILL outside the Leiden University environment, where many of our users can also be found. (Commercial online material cannot be borrowed via ILL.)

CA/OS: From the UBL Collection Plan: “The ASCL Library purchases exhaustively in the field of cultural anthropology relating to Africa, the Social Sciences Library limits its purchases to more general overviews relating to Africa, as well as literature used in teaching. When in doubt, they sometimes consult amongst themselves.” This is indeed the state of affairs.

Middle East: the ASCL Library regularly consults with the Middle East subject librarian to avoid overlap, on the one hand, and to achieve a good collection relating to Africa, on the other. Some countries on the African continent, such as Egypt and Libya, are often considered part of the Middle East and publish a lot in Arabic. The (Islamic) culture also makes a separation difficult. Until very recently, the ASCL Library collected only in Western languages, i.e. Arabic as left to the Middle Eastern subject matter expert. The ASCL would appreciate it if the UBL also started acquiring Arabic-language publications from, for example, Mauritania, as this would give a more complete picture of the region.

Linguistics: consultations are ongoing with the subject librarian about purchasing publications on African linguistics.

NIMAR: From September 2018, NIMAR (the Netherlands Institute in Morocco, part of Leiden University since 2015) has its own academic information specialist, who purchases for Leiden. This development has led to agreements being made regarding the development of the North Africa collection. NIMAR’s main focus is currently Morocco, which is also covered by the ASCL Library. Publications in Arabic and Berber will also be collected by NIMAR. The agreement is that the ASCL will continue to take care of Western, especially French-language publications on Morocco and North Africa.

Museum Volkenkunde: The museum has its own library with a collection mainly focused on ethnic art and culture. The collection is visible in WorldCat, but it is not on loan. A few years ago, the ASCL Library selected from a large collection of publications deselected by the museum. There are no collection development agreements with the museum.

Georg Eckert Institut (Leibniz Institute for Educational Media): The library of this German institute collects textbooks from all over the world, including from Africa. A fledgling collaboration has been started. Unfortunately, a planned trip in 2020 could not go ahead due to Corona, but further formalisation is being considered. ASCL metadata is in the queue to be uploaded into the Georg Eckert Institute catalogue.

Goethe Universität Frankfurt, Universitätsbibliothek: more or less the same policy seems to have been implemented at Afrikastudien as we have in mind, namely, collecting as many publications from Africa, and also in as many (African) languages, as possible. The latter is impossible for our library, we



are too small for that, in all respects (budget, space, manpower, language knowledge and technical possibilities to represent languages are too limited). Moreover, the academic landscape in Germany is very different (DFG provides funding that supports library collections enormously) and other libraries are able to fill potential gaps in collecting 'Western' publications.

NAI Uppsala. Many peer consultations and even occasional staff visits and exchanges, especially in the digital library field.

Further consultation and information exchange with European colleagues takes places at, among others, the annual ELIAS meeting (European Librarians in African Studies, in 2022 in Bordeaux).

## Relationship with education and research

**Education:** Currently, the African Studies Centre provides (or is closely involved in):

- Bachelor African Studies <https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/education/study-programmes/bachelor/african-studies>.

- a one-year Master (<https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/education/study-programmes/master/african-studies/about-the-programme>

- a two-year Research Master <https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/education/study-programmes/master/african-studies-research>

- the African Studies graduate programme (GPAS): <https://www.ascleiden.nl/content/graduate-programme-african-studies>. This programme is intended for PhD students supervised by one of the ASCL professors and is led by Prof. Rijk van Dijk.

**Research:** At the heart of research are seven Collaborative Research Groups (CRGs), working within one or more of the following themes: politics and security; society, religion and culture; economy; and history.

ASCL funds six Chairs in the fields of:

- Politics and Governance in Africa (Jan Abbink)
- Citizenship and Identities in Africa (Mirjam de Bruijn)
- Inclusive development in Africa (Marleen Dekker)
- Religion in Contemporary Africa and its Diaspora (Rijk van Dijk)
- African History (Jan-Bart Gewald)
- Stephen Ellis Chair in the Governance of Finance and Integrity in Africa (Chibuike Uche)

The library always procures suggestions from ASCL lecturers and researchers, makes copies of prescribed literature for students (where not available online) and makes it available in the library. Purchase suggestions from students are frequently adopted. Furthermore, tours are given, as are introductory lectures on the collection, on searching and retrieving and on possible thesis topics. The library also provides thesis supervision.

The ASCL Library is a place where many interns are placed (not only from Leiden, but also e.g. from the University of Utrecht).

## Target groups

The ASCL Library has very diverse users. Students, lecturers and researchers from UL form the largest user groups, but the library has always been open to anyone with an interest in Africa. In practice, these are students, lecturers and researchers from other Dutch education institutions, but foreign academics (-to be) also know how to find us. In addition, journalists, policymakers and secondary school students are frequent users. Examples abound: from the *New York Times* journalist specifically investigating the Stephen Ellis archive to the researcher from Italy and professors from Edinburgh and South Africa.

## Use/loans/ILL

Loans figures have fluctuated greatly for years. Some of the fluctuations can be well explained (2017: inclusion in the Leiden catalogue, 2020: corona pandemic).

2015: 4383

2016: 4052

2017 : 3614

2018: 6051

2019: 5782

2020: 3537

2021: 3604

Loans are reasonably well spread across the collection, with a fairly even distribution across the collection (publication date; languages; provenance; academic/literature, etc.).

For interlibrary loan requests, it is clear that ASCL customers are using the library less frequently to request material from elsewhere (on average, 134 per year over the first five years to an average of 58 in the last five years; decrease 57%), but external libraries are also requesting material from ASCL slightly less frequently (five-year average from 345 to 242, decrease 30%). See Appendix 2.

## Collection profile

### Focus areas

The ASCL collection has a broad, multidisciplinary character. Publications relating to Africa are collected within the fields of the Humanities, Social Sciences and, to a lesser degree, Law.

The unique ASCL collection is difficult to access with the standard classifications (NBC, LoC).

Therefore, we have developed our own thesaurus on the Africa domain. Previously, a refined version of the UDC codes was used; later, the development of a thesaurus tailored to the specific African Studies domain was initiated. The [African Studies Thesaurus](#) was launched in 2006 and is used to index all the material. On this basis, a rough analysis can be made of the current focus areas in the

collection. The university's Metadata Department provided the necessary data for this purpose (see Appendix 1). In the appendix, indications of the level of collection development have been omitted, as they give a distorted picture of precision.

These data are reasonably consistent with a previous (different type of) analysis of the ASCL collection in 2011:

1. Political conditions & developments (17,000)
2. Society, culture & social issues (16,000)
3. Economy & development (15,000)
4. Arts & Literature (11,000)
5. History (10,000)
6. Religion & philosophy (5,000)
7. Law & constitutions (5,000)
8. Education (4,000)

Two special collections are the large collection (now more than 13,000 titles) of African literature (novels (6469), short stories (1802), poetry (3363) and plays (1400)) and the film collection (more than 2200 films on DVD, both documentaries and feature films, with an emphasis on films produced by African film makers).

Over the years, the importance of publications from Africa for a balanced diverse collection has become increasingly clear, also in light of the 'decolonisation' debate. As laid out in the 'Africa inside' policy plan, in the coming five years (2022-2026) the collection will gradually continue to shift towards a collection more suited to "special collections" and "area studies". As a result, the collection will gradually become more diverse in terms of provenance, subject, material type and language.

There will be a greater focus on material produced in Africa. Besides academic output, such as monographs and academic journals, we will also focus on, for example, documents from governments and NGOs, and all kinds of (other) types of so-called "grey" literature. We will also continue, on a smaller scale than academic output, to collect, for example, textbooks (in consultation with the Georg Eckert Institute, see above), self-help guides, books about local culture and history, and works related to marriage and parenting. The supply in these areas is large (reflecting interest in Africa) and a reasoned choice is made from these. These sometimes prove directly suitable in Leiden: material about sex education in Africa was used in the CRG Masterclass Sexual Polemics in Africa. The collections of fiction and film produced in Africa will also be expanded.

This means that fewer will be acquired from Western countries. This shift is already underway, and is partly accommodated by monographs available online from major publishers such as Oxford University Press. A disadvantage of digital books is that they cannot be loaned through ILL. Yet, ILL in particular is a means of facilitating distinctive collections, where gaps in one collection can be filled by collections elsewhere in the country.

Another shift is also visible within the budget: there is less expenditure on journals, because some of the most important academic Africa journals have been included in packages to which the UBL subscribes, thus the costs are now shared with the UBL. The amount 'freed up' can therefore be spent on maintaining the 'Western' collection.

Much of the focus is on developing the digital collection, especially documents that are 'open access' on the internet.

## Acquisition and acquisition methodology

### Regular acquisition

Procurement through acquisition trips by library staff is seen as an important source (see below). Regular orders of 'Western' literature about Africa are made via Erasmus, Amazon and sometimes directly from smaller European publishers of African publications. Procurement from sub-Saharan Africa is largely through Hogarth Representation. We have agreed an Approval Plan or Blanket Order with this provider for each country, depending on the nature and quantity of publications to be expected per country. The differences between countries are significant. The budget for Hogarth was about ca. 5000 euro a year; this will be doubled to 10,000 euro, in line with the policy to increase the share of Africa publications and also to start collecting in an African language (see below). In addition, the responsible information specialists will, in principle, undertake an acquisition trip to one of more African countries twice a year. This was once a year until 2021. If possible, the timing of the trip coincides with a local book fair. Bookstores, universities and other institutions (NGOs, ministries) are also visited. (For the time being, this can be done without any budget implications, as the total costs for book acquisition trips in fact coincide with purchases from Leiden – the higher transport and travel costs are compensated for by lower purchase prices. However, a solution must be found for the more time-consuming cataloguing and description.) For South Africa, we work with a regular bookstore, namely, 'Folmer in Cape Town. There are also regular contacts with Booksellers (Kolade Mosuro) in Ibadan, Nigeria. In addition, various other brokers are used for African books, such as African Books Collective, MIPP and Africa Book Link.

### Gifts

The ASCL Library receives small and large donations with great regularity. The processing of these gifts has a significant backlog, but the library sees the great importance of these donations, which often contain unique, primary material from Africa and enrich the diversity of the collection. The books offered are checked – preferably in advance – to see whether they are already available in Leiden and NL.

### Selection criteria

#### Subject matter

The most important selection criterion is whether a publication contributes to the aims of the African Studies Centre:

- To promote and undertake scientific research on Africa;
- To function as a national centre in the field of African studies and to contribute to education and teaching in these studies;
- To promote the dissemination of knowledge and an understanding of African societies in the wider public sphere.

This is largely done by collecting and drawing attention to relevant academic output. This takes place in various ways: both via personal alerts and via semi-automated alerts developed by the ASCL Library (with hundreds of subscribers). Criteria such as quality assured by reliable peer-review mechanisms, relevance (research and teaching areas of Leiden students and researchers) and historical continuity (ASCL is building a broad area-studies collection in the fields of literature, humanities and the social sciences). In addition, the ASCL also has an eye for newer topics, other information carriers and marginalized voices.

### Place of publication

The ASCL aims for as many publications from the African part of ‘majority world countries’ as possible. This is because many of the sources are more difficult to access from Leiden’s ‘minority world’ perspective. The trend in recent years (about 50% of all publications per year come from Africa) will be continued in this policy period.

### Date of publication

We acquire mainly but not exclusively recently published material. Especially for countries with very large production (South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya) this is a strategy to still give some idea of recent developments. If the opportunity arises (for example, during an acquisition trip, an offered donation, a webdossier), the ASCL also acquires previously published material.

### Language

Following the Policy Plan 2022-2026 ‘Africa inside’, the current language criterion (Western languages only; mainly English and French) is being reconsidered. While the importance of Afrikaans-language publications <sup>[1]</sup> has always been recognised by the ASCL, until now it has not seemed feasible to implement it structurally. The current trend, which points to further integration with Leiden University, the importance of Africa for this university (‘with us you get to know the world’), the long Leiden tradition of education and research in Africa and the solid acquisition budget, do now offer this possibility. As a pilot, we will set up a modest collection of two African languages in the coming policy period. The following factors play a role in the selection of these:

1. **Importance for Africa** (number of speakers and/or volume of written production?) According to this criterion, the following are the most important languages in Africa <sup>[2]</sup>: **Swahili**, Arabic, French, Hausa, Yoruba, Oromo, Igbo, Amharic, Zulu and Shona. Arabic is already a focus area of Leiden and is also collected extensively by NIMAR. We hope to bring countries such as Mauritania and Libya to the UL. French is already extensively collected by ASCL; Swahili has roughly 100 million speakers and is a key lingua franca for East and Central Africa.
2. Importance for UL/ASCL **research**: Azeb Amha is conducting research on Afro-Asiatic languages. In addition, Berber is taught and researched (e.g. Berber street language in the Netherlands (Dr. Khalid Mourigh); development of the Berber collection is left to NIMAR. **Swahili** has a history of education and research in Leiden (Jan Knappert, Maarten Mous, Ridder Samsom). Recently, Annachiara Raia was awarded a Veni grant for research on Swahili literary networks. <sup>[3]</sup>
3. Importance for **education**: Both Berber and Swahili language acquisition are offered as BA; Second language used to be Ewe; recently, students have chosen Zulu/ Twi – Akan/ Luganda (4x or more) as second language. The description of the African Studies bachelor explicitly mentions the importance of African languages: “Leiden University is known for the many languages that are studied here. For students interested in learning extra African languages in addition to **Swahili** or **Berber**, there is ample opportunity to do so. Learning a second African language, however, will be done outside of the BA African Studies.”
4. **Library’s preservation function**. This last argument takes a long-term perspective, from which precisely the smaller, endangered languages and ephemeral material could be collected, using, for instance, acquisition trips. In the past, we have had success with small local collections in museums (Francistown) and a Christian literacy organization (SIL Ouagadougou). The nature of the material does not lend itself to official inclusion in e.g. Hogarth purchase profiles: this only pays off when blanket orders are placed with large budgets.

In sum, based on these four criteria, only **Swahili** emerges as a good candidate: Large number of speakers, important for research and education; scores less high on point 4 but that is relative. In consultation with researchers, a distinct collection can also be built here, for example, of less common literature. The fact that the UL already has 1536 publications in Swahili offers a good starting point. (Incidentally, more than half of these were acquired in 2001 and 2002 by one of the current ASCL information specialists, so the expertise is present at the ASCL). There has traditionally been an interest from the UBL in linguistics, and less in literature in African languages.

There are, of course, many other language candidates, but they do not currently qualify, either due to less attachment to Leiden research or teaching, the use of other scripts, or otherwise. Publications in Berber are already covered by NIMAR. Hausa or Igbo may be candidates for pilots in the future.

The current policy period will be used to explore this further and make a considered decision in this regard.

<sup>[1]</sup> See e.g. the article by Hans Zell <https://www.readafricanbooks.com/opinion/publishing-in-african-languages/>

<sup>[2]</sup> <https://www.africanexponent.com/post/7257-most-spoken-languages-in-africa-2020>

<sup>[3]</sup> <https://www.ascleiden.nl/news/annachiara-raia-awarded-veni-grant>

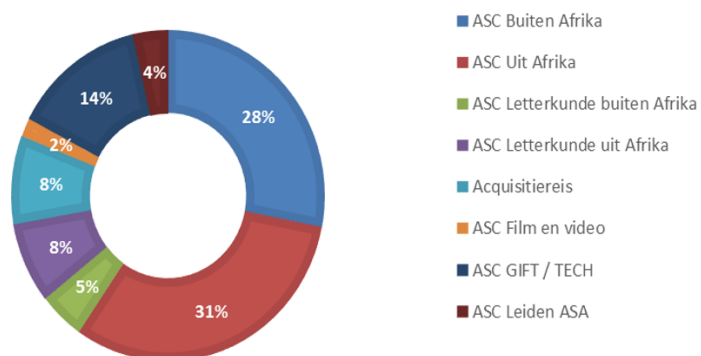
### Available funds

EUR 100k is available per annum for acquisition. In 2021, the distribution was roughly as follows:

Books:	60,000
Journals:	27,000
Films:	3,700
Databases:	9,300

## % acquisitions / fund November 2017- May 2019

%ACQUISITIONS/FUND  
OF ITEMS PURCHASED FROM NOVEMBER 2017



## Appendix 1: Most used subject indicators with number of monographs and articles per term<sup>[1]</sup>

ranking <sup>[2]</sup>	Keyword	Number of publications
<b>24</b>	<b>History</b>	<b>7302</b>
	Women	4874
	<b>Literature</b>	<b>4255</b>
	Colonial rule	4155
	<b>Foreign policy</b>	<b>4021</b>
	<b>Economic development</b>	<b>3262</b>
	Political condition	3114
	Economic conditions	2979
	Development	2885
	Economic policy	2815
	Democracy	2697
<b>89</b>	<b>Islam</b>	<b>2651</b>
<b>105</b>	<b>Customary law</b>	<b>2193</b>
	Politics	2178
	Laws/legislation	1971
	Developing countries	1964
	Civil wars	1959
125	Election results	1942
	Development aid	1928
	Independence movements	1833
<b>138</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>1816</b>
	<b>Aids</b>	<b>1805</b>
141	Land law	1757
	Fundamental rights	1710
	African religions	1691
	Political history	1674
	Statistics	1586
	Apartheid	1579
	Constitutions	1530
	Politicians	1513
	Journeys / travel	1510
	Colonial countries	1494
	Christian missions	1461
184	Archaeology	1447
	Rural development	1436
	Ethnicity	1435
	Agriculture	1421
	Political change	1415
200	Christianity	1371
	Social change	1338
	Gender relations	1269



	Novels	1243
	Political parties	1273
	Insurgencies	1235
	Environment	1231
	Chiefdoms	1230
263	Yoruba	1049
303	19th century	983
540	African languages	619

<sup>[1]</sup> Excluding the format indicators (top: conference papers, novels, biographies, dissertations, country studies, bibliographies) and the geographical indicators (south africa, africa, nigeria, africa south of the sahara, kenya, belgian congo, ghana)

<sup>[2]</sup> Total number of keywords (main keyword plus derived keywords) 13,133

## Appendix 2: Interlibrary loans

	Number of books requested by ASC researchers	Number of books and articles requested from ASC by other libraries
1996	139	276 (225 books/ 51 articles)
1997	150	328 (259 books/ 69 articles)
1998	130	335 (274 books/ 61 articles)
1999	115	372 (317 books/ 55 articles)
2000	137	415 (366 books/ 49 articles)
2001	213	399 (338 books/ 61 articles)
2002	192	314 (260 books/ 54 articles)
2003	127	365 (319 books/ 46 articles)
2004	70	346 (287 books/ 59 articles)
2005	96	370 (324 books/ 46 articles)
2006	127	395 (335 books/ 60 articles)
2007	81	473 (368 books/ 105 articles)
2008	105	443 (339 books/ 104 articles)
2009	89	353 (289 books/ 63 articles)
2010	61	340 (291 books/ 49 articles)
2011	59	339 (302 books/ 37 articles)
2012	55	256 (221 books / 35 articles)
2013	93	259 (230 books / 29 articles)
2014	47	217 (200 books / 17 articles)
2015	46 [plus 20 articles]	238 (201 books / 37 articles)
2016	15 [plus 13 articles]	241 (220 books / 21 articles)
2017		
2018	31	189
2019	5	127
2020	5	103
2021		ca. 100