The work leading to this report was supported by funds provided by the National Council for Soviet and East European Research. The analysis and interpretations contained in the report are those of the author.
NOTE

This report provides a brief technical summary of work performed under the subject contract toward the creation of a bibliographical database on Central Asia. When the database is complete, a printout of its contents will be deposited with the National Council, which thereafter can provide copies to interested Government readers on request. The researchers plan to advertise availability of information from the database to other readers at the cost of reproduction.
CENTRAL ASIAN ARCHIVES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Central Asian Archives Project has created a computerized bibliographical database of published works on the history and civilization of Islamic Central Asia, covering the period beginning from the 7th century A.D., through the incorporation of most of Central Asia into the Russian empire in the 19th century, until 1917. To date the database consists of over 17,000 individual entries, over half of which cover the period of Russian rule in Central Asia; additional entries, most expected through the cooperation of Soviet colleagues, will bring the total to nearly 20,000. The bibliography will be made available to researchers both in the form of published subject-defined sections of the entire database and in the form of partial printouts tailored to the needs of individual users.

Central Asia, defined as the Soviet republics of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kirgizia, Turkmenia, and Tadzhikistan, together with adjacent regions of the People's Republic of China, Iran, and Afghanistan, has drawn increasing international attention in recent years, attention that has highlighted the inadequate scholarly resources in this country for the study and understanding of the region in its historical context. The bibliography, designed as an expandable and fully classified comprehensive database of literature on Central Asia, in all aspects of the humanities and social sciences, provides access to bibliographical information which has never before been available in its full scope or in a systematically classified form; it will thus serve as an essential research tool for specialists in Central Asian studies as well as for specialists in contemporary Central Asia and related areas (Soviet studies, Near Eastern studies, etc.) who seek accurate and reliable bibliographical information on Central Asia in the pre-Soviet period.
CENTRAL ASIAN ARCHIVES

A two-year project funded by the
NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN RESEARCH

Final Report

The Central Asian Archives project undertaken by the Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies (RIFIAS) at Indiana University entailed the creation of a bibliographical database of published works on Islamic Central Asia (i.e. from the 7th Century A.D. to 1917 for most of Central Asia, incorporated into the Soviet Union, or to 1949 in the case of regions incorporated into the PRC); the bibliography, designed to include all works dealing with the history, culture, ethnography, anthropology, archeology, art and architecture, and historiography (including the auxiliary historical disciplines) of Central Asia, with language and literature excluded for the initial phase of work, was intended to provide an expandable, classifiable database on scholarly publications and published source material for the study of Islamic Central Asia, thereby providing information vital to researchers in the fields of both historical and contemporary Central Asia which cannot be obtained anywhere else either in its full scope or in a fully and systematically classified arrangement.

No bibliography of comparable scope has been conceived or attempted before; indeed, Central Asian studies has long suffered from the inadequacy of bibliographical resources available to researchers, since only partial, topical, and as a rule incomplete bibliographies have been published in books and monographs in the field, while established national or disciplinary bibliographies do not even list "Central Asia" as a distinct subject category. In response to this situation the present bibliography not only brings together all material relevant to Central Asian studies, but classifies it and allows for regular updating as well.

The creation of the bibliographical database required a series of stages, several of which were already undertaken through university support before funding began through the National Council. In particular, the work of planning the bibliography, finding and experimenting with bibliographical software suitable for such a project, defining the classification scheme and the coding system for entries, establishing a system of abbreviations and other standards for the entry of data, and identifying the bibliographical sources to be checked for relevant entries, was essentially completed before the two-year funding period (1987-89) began, with only minor refinements needed in each case. The work undertaken with the National
Council's support included the essential steps needed to locate, identify, classify, and enter the individual records into the database, as well as the final editing of all entries and the preparation of the final publishable product(s).

Thus, during the two-year funding period, a number of graduate assistants were trained to identify bibliographical entries to be included from the numerous source bibliographies; these entries were then xeroxed (or in some cases copied by hand), to be cut and pasted on individual cards, which were then alphabetized to facilitate the elimination of duplicates, each step again performed by graduate students; the individual entries were then assigned the appropriate codes from the classification scheme, a function left to the project director, assistant director, and three of our most experienced graduate students; the coded entries were then typed into the database, using the Pro-Cite® program developed by Personal Bibliographical Software, Inc. of Ann Arbor, Michigan, by three typists, two of whom were able to transcribe directly from Cyrillic as they entered the data, thereby saving considerable time and expense by eliminating the need to transcribe by hand the Russian entries -- by far the most numerous in the database -- into Latin characters for the typists; finally, each item was edited by the project director to ensure the accuracy and standardization of entries.

The project employed 13 people during the first year (including 9 graduate students) and 16 people during the second year (including 12 graduate students); 9 persons of those who worked during the first year of the project continued to work during the second year as well. The total number of volumes of bibliographic sources searched (counting each journal run as one volume) is about 400. The number of initially produced bibliographical cards (before their subsequent checking, typing and editing) was about 29,000. A rather high percentage of excluded entries was due to partial overlapping between various bibliographical sources utilized for the work, which in many cases could be eliminated only in the course of editing the database in the computer.

In addition to complete bibliographical information, individual entries may provide abstracts describing the content of the work if this is not apparent from the title; these were produced by the project director and assistant director from abstracts in the source bibliographies or from direct checking of the works. Each entry is "retrievable" according to the codes it was assigned, which include notations for the language and date of publication as well as the combined letter- and number-codes of the classification scheme, and according to key-words added to the code-field, key words in the title, and the author's name and place of publication.

To date the database includes over 14,500 fully-edited entries, with an additional 3000 items entered but not yet edited; approximately 2500 more await
entry into the database, most of which have been delayed owing to our new cooperative arrangement with Soviet specialists (on which see below). The completed database, then, covering publications in Russian and western languages through 1987, will amount to approximately 20,000 entries; this is in keeping with our initial projection of 30,000 entries, a figure reached while still envisioning the inclusion of works on languages and literatures. By our estimates over half of the entries cover works on the period of Russian rule in Central Asia down to 1917, thus enhancing the database's value to specialists in Russian and Soviet studies.

In terms of our coverage of available material, through the Soviet national bibliographies (full access to which required travel to other U.S. libraries to fill gaps in I.U.'s holdings) and a large number of extensive pre-Soviet bibliographies, we have for all practical purposes exhausted the sources for Russian-language publications on Central Asia. The same holds true for publications in the native languages of the Central Asian republics, although in an unfortunately large number of cases we have had to enter these according to their Russian colophons, as given in the Soviet national bibliographies; this proved to be necessary because of the unavailability in the United States of complete sets of the republican bibliographies, and this factor may also have caused us to miss a small number of low-tirazh publications in the native languages altogether. Addressing this problem will no doubt require the cooperation of Soviet colleagues, since even the initial process of determining the extent of the holdings of the republican bibliographical series in U.S. libraries took several months of correspondence and personal checking; inasmuch as Soviet cooperation is already underway, as will be discussed, it seems pointless to proceed with the scattered and incomplete holdings of the republican bibliographical sources available in the U.S. This limitation is hardly a serious one, however, since at least the basic information on the vast majority of republican-language publications is already included through the Soviet national bibliographies.

In addition to the data obtained through the various source bibliographies, about 4000 items -- approximately one-fifth of the total projected number in the database -- have been examined personally to check or complete various bibliographical details or to ascertain their content; this direct checking is also being facilitated by cooperation with Soviet colleagues.

The bibliography's coverage for publications in other European languages may also be regarded as exhaustive, while both Persian and Turkish publications on Islamic Central Asia -- not a large number in either case -- have been only partially covered as of yet; Indiana's holdings of the Turkish national bibliography have major gaps, while the rarity of qualified graduate students with a reading knowledge of Persian limited our coverage of publications in this language to the articles listed
in Iraj Afshar's *Index Iranicus*. On another front, however, we have been able to establish on a preliminary basis the unexpected possibility of including the considerable number of Japanese publications on Islamic Central Asia in our database; correspondence with the Toyo Bunko in Tokyo has provided us with both access to their general bibliography of Japanese publications in Oriental Studies, complete with English translations of titles, and the opportunity for collaborative work on the bibliography. These preliminary contacts and cooperative efforts were undertaken without utilizing any project funds provided by the National Council.

More importantly, however, we have recently reached an agreement with the Leningrad Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Soviet Academy of Sciences (LOIV AN SSSR) for cooperative work on the bibliography, which will allow us to check bibliographical details and contents for a substantial number of works which are so far unavailable in this country. Such cooperation was not originally envisioned as part of the current project, but in view of its great importance for the thoroughness and accuracy of the database, as well as for the enhancement of scholarly links in general between the Leningrad Branch and the RIFIAS, it is well worth the slight delay it will cause with the readiness of the final product.

Specifically, the Leningrad Branch has established a budget line and assigned a person to work on the bibliography, checking xeroxed copies of our bibliographical cards; agreement regarding this cooperative arrangement was reached in principle in December, 1988, while formal notification that an individual had indeed been assigned to this work came only at the beginning of June, 1989, and the inevitable start-up delays (as well as simple postal delays, which have in some cases amounted to nearly three months) have left over 1500 entries yet to be returned from Leningrad. We expect their work to be completed and the materials returned by the end of this summer, at which time most of these entries will have to be added to the database (although some have already been typed, with only corrections necessary upon receipt of the Leningrad material).

It is important to note, in view of the termination of the National Council's funding and of our interest, perhaps shared by the Council, in the continuation of the bibliographical work begun through this project, that the RIFIAS has received, from Indiana University's office of Research & Graduate Development, funding in the amount of $10,000 for the upcoming budget year for the updating and continuation of the Central Asian bibliography; this will enable us (1) to include the materials to be returned from Leningrad in the database, (2) to include the Japanese publications identified through the assistance of the Toyo Bunko, (3) to
update our coverage of Soviet and western publications through 1988, and (4) to prepare the final version of the initial database for printing.

The preparation of the printout has been delayed past the end of the National Council’s funding period due to a number of factors, including the unexpected backlog of entries for typing and, more importantly, the new and equally unexpected "windfall" of Soviet cooperation. We anticipate a further delay in the preparation of the final printout due to the constraints imposed by our software. While the Pro-Cite© bibliographical program serves all of our needs in terms of creating, storing, and manipulating the database, it cannot print the bibliography with the full range of diacritics and transcription signs required by bibliographical entries in the many languages of the Soviet Union, the Middle East, and Europe; it has therefore been our plan to prepare the database for printing using Pro-Cite© and then transfer it to the "Special Language Supplements" version of the word-processor Nota Bene©, which can print all the signs needed for the bibliography. Unfortunately, Nota Bene©’s promised support for italics printing with the Special Language Supplements has been delayed until the fall of 1989, and for this reason we cannot expect to be able to produce the initial printout until the end of this year.

Once the printout is available, we expect to offer it for sale at or near cost; although our initial plans called for the production of a two-volume publication of the entire bibliography, we have recently been exploring other means of making the bibliography available, including serialization and the issuing of topically-arranged sections. It is still unclear how many total pages, or even how many individual fascicles or issues, will be required for the bibliography in its entirety, but in any case it is clear that the organization of the database will allow us to offer the bibliography in the most flexible, and economically feasible, ways possible. When the form of the publication(s) has been established, we will be able to place advertisements in the growing number of Central Asian studies journals and newsletters as well as in similar publications serving the fields of Soviet and Near Eastern studies.

Two major elements in the importance of the present bibliographical project were its ability to expand and its suitability for serving as a "pilot project" to demonstrate the feasibility of such a large-scale bibliographical undertaking. Both elements demand a commitment not only to regularly update the bibliography but to expand it beyond the limits set for this project. There are a number of directions an initial expansion may take; our proposal for expanding the bibliography into the Soviet period was not funded by the National Council, but we plan to submit proposals to other funding agencies either for coverage of the Soviet period in Central Asia or for "geographical" expansion to include Inner Asia at large. At
some point it will be important to add languages and literatures as well, although this may be better conceived once the basic Inner Asian expansion has been initiated. In any case each proposed expansion will necessarily be constrained by the orientation of the funding agency concerned and by the interest and expertise of faculty and students willing to continue and expand upon the work of the Central Asian Archives project.

In addition, it is hoped, the bibliography's importance will be measured not only by its thoroughness or accuracy or other technical features of the database, but by the ways in which it will facilitate the development of Central Asian studies in this country. It goes without saying that it will provide an essential service for any researcher seeking material on any particular topic or issue in Central Asian studies. But perhaps more importantly, in its scope and conception it will serve to provide definition for a field that remains poorly understood in its own right; it will in a very real sense "define" the field and help to highlight issues and subjects conspicuous either by their neglect or by the relative abundance of relevant material not yet explored by specialists.

Finally, the bibliography will serve a much under-appreciated need by facilitating efforts to collect the substantial amount of published material on Central Asia which is simply unavailable in this country; by showing unequivocally how much vital material is inaccessible to western researchers, by obviating claims that relevant materials cannot even be identified, and naturally by providing a means for organizing and systematizing bibliographical data, it will serve as a foundation for long-overdue efforts to fill in the gaps in U.S. libraries' holdings of published material on Central Asia.

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Project Director