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**Status of National Bibliographies in the CIS Countries  
of Central Asia**

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<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>109 Bibliography</b>
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**Abstract**

*This paper analyzes the contemporary status and trends for the development of librarianship and bibliography, legislation, bibliography control, national bibliography and the publishing business in five Central Asian states: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.*

## General Information

The former Soviet republics in Central Asia - Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan - are united not only by their geographic proximity but by their geopolitical and economic position and also by their shared history. Prior to 1991 they were all part of a single state - the Soviet Union, and before that (prior to 1917) they had been part of the Russian Empire. The Russian Empire was based on the principle of all its citizens having equal rights regardless their nationality or ethnicity. During Imperial times, population migration intensified which, in turn, had an influence on the interosculation of ethnic cultures which had been in formation for the thousands of years within the territory now occupied by modern Central Asian states. For example, the origins of the manuscript Tajik book date back to ancient Iranian writing and literature, specifically to the Iranian ancient book *Avesta* (3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> centuries). Within the territory of present-day Uzbekistan the palace book collections of the Samanids were renowned in the 9<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> centuries for their richness. It was then that, alongside with original literary works, works on philosophy, mathematics and medicine, translations of works by ancient Greek scholars began to appear. Many ancient memorial of written language of the peoples of Uzbekistan have not survived as they were destroyed during the Arab conquest (7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> centuries). Already Al Biruni wrote of the destruction of books and their keepers. During different periods of history different peoples were on the ascendancy and had their periods of dominance, the territorial borders of the countries changed over time. Today Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan are independent republics and member states of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Together with realization of their independence, these countries see intensifying integration processes which are caused not only by objective factors (geographic proximity, history, culture) but also by economic advisability and the need for closer cooperation to tackle social, cultural and ecological problems in each of these states. These trends are also became apparent in traditional cooperation in the field of bibliography.

The peoples of the Central Asian states practice the same religion: Sunni Islam. All of the languages (except for Tajik) are Turkic languages; Tajik belongs to the Iranian group of the Indo-European language family. Their written language is based on the Cyrillic script, except for Turkmen, which uses the Latin script. Their state languages are respective national languages but in many state agencies and local self-administration bodies Russian is used together with the respective national language. About 50 %

(48.5 %) of the population know Russian language. In Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, the Russian language is recognized as an official language<sup>1</sup>, in Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, it is recognized as a language of inter-ethnic communication; and in Uzbekistan, as an ethnic minority language. This status of the Russian language is reflected in the constitutions of the Central Asian states (the only exception is Uzbekistan where the status of the Russian language is not regulated explicitly in any law).

The total population of the region is 56.6 million people; the area of the region is over 4 million square kilometers (see Table 1). For comparison, the area of entire Europe is only approximately 10 million square kilometers. In area, Kazakhstan holds 9<sup>th</sup> place in the world and is behind only Russia, China, the United States, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, India and Australia. All of the Central Asian states are presidential republics. The highest legislative body is the parliament (*Mejlis*).

Table 1. Principal Data about the Central Asian Nations (as of January 01, 2004)

Country	Area (thou sq. km)	Population (million people)	Population density (per 1 sq. km)	State language
Kazakhstan	2724.9	15.1	5.5	Kazakh
Kyrgyzstan	199.9	5.1	25.5	Kyrgyz
Tajikistan	143.1	6.8	47.5	Tajik
Turkmenistan	491.2	4.2 <sup>2</sup>	8.6	Turkmen
Uzbekistan	448.9	24.8 <sup>2</sup>	55.2	Uzbek
Total	4008	56,6	14,1	

<sup>1</sup> In January 2006, the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbaev, delivered a part of his inauguration address in Russian.

<sup>2</sup> Data as of 2001.

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## Librarianship and Bibliography

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union librarianship and bibliography in the Central Asian states have been in decline to a certain extent. Library networks have been reduced. In Kazakhstan 3.5 thousand libraries were operating in 2003; in Kyrgyzstan, 1 thousand<sup>3</sup>.

Table 2. Access of the Population to Books in the Central Asian States (data as of January 01, 2004)

Country	Size of collection of all libraries, million copies	Number of units of issue per head
Kazakhstan	290,3	19
Kyrgyzstan	50	9,8
Tajikistan	~47	6,9
Turkmenistan	~30	7,1
Uzbekistan	140	5,6

In Turkmenistan and Tajikistan, the publication of national bibliographies has actually ceased, bibliographic control is practically not made, book publishing has been drastically reduced as has been new acquisitions of books to the libraries. There still remain however the main State (now “national”) libraries, which were established as far back as in the 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century. After the declaration of independence, new regulations have been enacted which now reflect the national status of such libraries as follows: Kazakhstan (two national libraries): the National Library (Almaty), 1991, and the National Academic Library (Astana), 2004; Kyrgyzstan, 1993; Tajikistan, 1993; Turkmenistan, 1992; Uzbekistan, 2002.

Table 3. National Libraries (as of January 01, 2005)

Country	Size of library collection (million copies)	Share of literature in the Russian language (%)	Staff (persons)	Annual budget (in \$ US million)
Kazakhstan:				
- Astana	0.1	61.4	150	2
- Almaty	5.8	87	280	0.867
Kyrgyzstan	5.7	93	312	0.211
Tajikistan	3	91	150	0.07
Turkmenistan	5.5	No data are available	330	No data are available
Uzbekistan	6.4+3.5 (periodicals print archive)	84 (without collection print archive)	250	0.634

<sup>3</sup> These are official data provided by the Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States. According to unofficial sources (publications in the library literature), the number of libraries in Kazakhstan is 11.5 thousand while in Kyrgyzstan, 3 thousand.

The national libraries of the Central Asian states actively cooperate on an inter-regional level, their senior managers regularly participate in meetings of the directors of CIS national libraries; all libraries are members of the Library Assembly of Eurasia (except for Turkmenistan). All this creates prerequisites for the broadening of traditional inter-State bibliographic exchange.

Library and bibliography organizations, and especially the national libraries and book chambers of the Central Asian states, are making efforts to broaden and strengthen their information cooperation in a wide range of areas covered by their activity. This goal is in particular served by the Issyk Kul and Tashkent international information conferences held annually under the aegis of the ministries of culture of Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. At these meetings are discussed matters pertaining to cooperation of publishers, booksellers, librarians and bibliographers, the development of new information technologies, the cataloguing of printed material, promotion of a national book culture and of serious reading to acquire new knowledge. At such conferences, more attention is progressively given to matters associated with the uniformed (standardized) software, the establishment and maintenance of current and retrospective databases and databanks. This is associated with the fact that the governments of the Central Asian states and sponsors have greatly intensified their work recently on technical re-equipment of library and bibliography centers.

### **National Bibliographic Agencies**

According to a tradition that was already well established in Soviet times, the leading national bibliographic agencies in the Central Asian states are not national libraries but rather are book chambers established during the 1920s and the 1930s: in Kazakhstan, on August 19, 1937; in Kyrgyzstan, in January 1939; in Tajikistan, on August 11, 1936; in Turkmenistan, on August 14, 1926; in Uzbekistan, on January 03, 1926. Since that time bibliographical control of printed materials published within the territories of the former union republics of the USSR has been ongoing. The Soviet Union created the world's largest, and excellently arranged, all-union legal deposit system which provided all of its constituent union republics with publishing output. This ensured that the national library-and-information collection of the country was established, national bibliographies were created. Also were effectuated centralized cataloguing and bibliographic control of printed material. And now the book chambers

are independent organizations functioning as national bibliographic agencies. The exception is the book chamber of Uzbekistan, which is now under the authorities of the national library although it still preserves its independent functions.

It is important to note that all of these chambers are members of the Association of Books Chambers of CIS members states and in their activity are guided by general principles and methods for bibliographic and statistical registration of published material. The main developer of such guideline documents is the Russian Book Chamber.

### **Legal Deposit Laws**

However, the Central Asian states have practically no normative and legal base underlying librarianship and bibliographic activity. Laws regulating the activity of libraries were adopted in three countries: Kazakhstan (1998), Tajikistan (2003), and Turkmenistan (2000). A legal deposit law was adopted only in Kyrgyzstan (1997).

In Kazakhstan no laws on librarianship or legal deposit have been adopted as yet. But there are other acts of legislation aimed at the development of this area of culture: "On Informatization" (2003), "On Science" (2001), "On Innovations", "On Culture" (1996, a new version is currently being prepared), "On Copyright and Adjacent Rights", "On the National Archival Foundations and Archives" (1998), "On Mass Media" (1999). In Kazakhstan, the provision of a legal deposit is regulated by the Law On Print Media and Other Mass Media Outlets adopted in June 1991 when Kazakhstan was still within the Soviet Union (as amended in 1995). Later a subordinate legislation was adopted – the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers "On the Procedure for the Distribution of Control and Legal Deposits of Print Materials" (1992). The Cabinet of Ministers also adopted the decree "On the State National Book Chamber of the Republic of Kazakhstan", in accordance with which an archive of print output is formed based on non-confidential control copies. The State National Book Chamber is a center for the state (national) bibliography, print statistics, an ISBN and ISSN national agency and conducts centralized cataloguing in the republic, control and scientific processing of all print material.

Kyrgyzstan is the only Central Asian state in which there is a sufficiently well developed normative and legislative base: adopted are laws on librarianship and a legal deposit. In the republic, the National Book Chamber is operational and serves as a center for the state (national) bibliography, centralized cataloguing activity, state print

statistics, standardization of bibliographic documentation. The Chamber is also a center where national print publications are stored and includes within its structure national ISBN and ISSN agencies.

Tajikistan has no legal deposit but has the Law "On Librarianship" (2003) which provides a definition of a legal deposit of a document, which is "copies of different kinds of document that will be delivered by makers to appropriate agencies and organizations in statutory quantity". In accordance with this law, the national library of the Republic of Tajikistan is also a national print archive. Its goals, along with others, include the formation of a depository of books and other documents published in the Tajik language within the territory of Tajikistan and of publications about Tajikistan irrespective of the place where they are published. According to its Statute adopted in 1992, the State Book Chamber of the Republic of Tajikistan serves as a center for the state (national) bibliography, state print statistics, retrospective bibliography, sociological centre for the problems of books and reading, keeps national archive of all printed documents, realizes centralized cataloguing, develops research and methodology materials of bibliographic description, classification and subject indexing.

Turkmenistan has no legal deposit law. The Law "On Libraries and Librarianship" (2000) specifies that the task of the national library (among its other tasks) is the conduct of unified state bibliographic control and a centralized catalogue of print publications and documents located in Turkmenistan's united library collection. The acquisitions of library collections (including the national libraries) with books and other print materials is fulfilled through the Book Chamber of Tajikistan, bookselling organizations and institutions and also by gratuitous assignment to libraries of publications and other materials by legal entities and individuals. All legal deposits of print material published in Turkmenistan have sent to libraries. The list of libraries and the procedure for the distribution of a legal deposit are determined by the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan. Unfortunately this provision of the Law "On Libraries and Librarianship" has not become a guarantee of library collection replenishment. It is necessary to have a different legal mechanism ensuring the provision of legal deposits to libraries.

In Uzbekistan, there are as yet no laws directly related to librarianship and bibliography. This makes the work of libraries more difficult, hinders inter-library cooperation, their entry into the world's information infrastructure and deprives libraries and librarians of any legal remedies. The National Library is guided in its activity by the

Decree of the President of the Republic and the Enactment of the Cabinet of Ministers "On Further Improvement of the Organization of Research Activity" (2002), the Statute on the library and its Charter. As the Book Chamber of Uzbekistan is now under the authority of the National Library, the book collection of the library was replenished by 3.5 million national print copies. The national library itself has been receiving a legal deposit of print output since 1920. To the main functions of the national library were also added the maintenance of a print archive and of the national bibliography. The library participates in State bibliographic control over national printed output, creates sources of bibliographical, reference and review-and-analytical information. By creating national bibliography sources it effectuates bibliographic control over all printed publications about the Republic of Uzbekistan published within its territory and abroad. Currently on the agenda is the creation of a center for corporate cataloguing.

### **National Bibliographies**

At the present time, bibliographic control is effectuated in the region's states only with printed material. Their book chambers are responsible for that. The ever increasing body of publications on other-than-paper media (electronic publications, audio and video products of all types and kinds) are not covered in any way so far. Retrospective bibliographical control has been suspended practically everywhere. As per historical tradition, national libraries are supposed to be responsible for such activity; however, it does not exclude the possibility of cooperation between national libraries and book chambers.

Today state (national) bibliographic indexes are available only in printed form (see Table 4), although plans have already been developed for the introduction of their electronic versions. Print runs of state (national) bibliographic indexes is usually 100-200 copies, and they are distributed mainly to libraries on an annual subscription.



Table 4. Types and Kinds of State (National) Bibliographic Indexes (BIs)

Country	SBIs Publisher	Universal BIs	Specialized SBIs	
			Book and brochures	Periodical and continuing publications
Kazakhstan	National State Book Chamber of Kazakhstan	<i>Letopis' pechati</i> (since 1957)	<i>Yezhegodnik Knigi</i> (since 1971)	<i>Letopis' gazetnykh statei</i> (since 1970), <i>Letopis' zhurnalnykh statei</i> (since 1940)
Kyrgyzstan	National Book Chamber of Kyrgyzstan	<i>Letopis' pechati</i> (since 1976)		
Tajikistan	Book Chamber of Tajikistan	<i>Letopis' pechati</i> (since 1950)		
Turkmenistan	Book Chamber of Turkmenistan	<i>Letopis' pechati</i> (since 1930)		
Uzbekistan	National Book Chamber of Uzbekistan	<i>Letopis' pechati</i> (since 1968)	<i>Yezhegodnik Knigi</i> (since 1977)	<i>Letopis' periodicheskikh izdaniy i not</i> (since 1976)

Only Uzbekistan publishes a specialized state (national) bibliographic index concerning all periodicals while Kazakhstan publishes specialized state (national) bibliographic indexes of an analytical nature (articles from newspapers and magazines). All other state (national) bibliographic indexes are mainly general-purpose ones, that is, each of them has parts dedicated to specific types of publications. For examples, *Letopis' pechati Kyrgyzstana* consists of the following independent parts: *Knizhnaia Letopis'*, *Letopis zhurnalnykh statei*, *Letopis' gazetnykh statei*, *Letopis' izoizdaniy*, *Letopis' retsenzii*, *Letopis' periodicheskikh i prodolzhaiushchikhsia izdaniy*, *Letopis' bibliograficheskikh posobii*.

Small quantities and small volumes of state (national) bibliographic indexes are explainable not only by the weakness and irregularity of bibliographical activity funding in the entire post-Soviet information continuum in general and in Central Asia in particular but is also due to the insignificant amount of printed output in these countries (see Table 5).

Table 5. Statistical Data on the Publication of Books and Brochures for 2001-04 (As of January 01, 2005)

Country	Year							
	2001		2002		2003		2004	
	Titles	Print run, thou copies.	Titles	Print run, thou copies.	Titles	Print run, thou copies.	Titles	Print run, thou copies.
Kazakhstan	2400	No data are available	3031	No data are available	3576	No data are available	3907	No data are available
Kyrgyzstan	510	749.0	672	1056.6	642	1885.0	703	1600,3
Tajikistan	No data are available							
Turkmenistan	No data are available							
Uzbekistan	1265	No data are available	1238	No data are available	1196	No data are available	1212	No data are available

As we can see, such large (as compared to Europe) states as Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan (with the populations of 15 and 25 million people, respectively) are putting out 5-6 times fewer publications (by titles) than most European states with comparable population levels. The situation is even worse in Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. There are no official statistic data on printed output for the last several years in these countries. However, experts estimate that the annual print output there does not exceed 150-200 titles. It is obvious that the activity or passivity of publishers to a large extent depends on the conditions of the economy and the standard of living of the population of a concrete country. The example of Kazakhstan confirms this thesis: the average month wage of its citizens (a little over US\$200) is several times higher than average wages in the other Central Asian states.

The timeliness with which state (national) bibliographic indexes are published leaves much to be desired practically in all of the above nations. The frequency of the publication of state (national) bibliographic indexes varies in a significant degree. Usually they are issued monthly or quarterly.

Problems associated with the preparation and publication of state (national) bibliographic indexes are both caused by the unevenness and incompleteness of delivery of legal deposits for books and other printed output and also by insufficient technical and staff resources available to the book chambers who function as publishers of state (national) bibliographic indexes. At the same time, it is necessary to note that the legal deposit coverage of all printed output of the Central Asian states is at least 70-80% which is quite consistent with the world standards of delivery of legal deposits to national depositaries. However, in the Central Asian states (unlike in most European states), neither book chambers nor national libraries have monetary assets to fill any

lacunas by purchasing additional copies of print material. Problems are also compounded by an extremely unsatisfactory condition of information and bibliographical support provided to the book publishing business in the Central Asian area. Attempts to launch national indexes, *Knigi v Nalichii i Pechati* (Books in print and in press), in these states cannot be called successful - both because of the limited resources of domestic publishers and book distributors and because of a lack of effective cooperation among representatives of various regions within each state and among various segments of the book-publishing business (metropolitan and provincial publishers and booksellers, librarians and bibliography experts).

The main criteria for the identification of material for current bibliographic control of publications of various types and kinds, arrangement by headings, bibliographic description in the language of the text of a particular publication (usually in the main language of the particular nation or in Russian), classifying according to the Universal Decimal Classification (UDC) and classification by subject, the design of state bibliographic indexes are effected on the basis of standards, methodology recommendations whose coverage is extended to all of the CIS states.

The main part of a state (national) bibliographic index consists of a totality of bibliographic entries grouped into sections. A bibliographic entry in its main part contains: ordinal (accession) number of the bibliographic entry; heading of the bibliographic entry; bibliographic description of the publication; number of State registration of the publication; class numbers (UDC and BBK indexes)<sup>4</sup>.

In indexes of books and brochures, articles and reviews, and bibliographic aids, bibliographic entries are grouped based on the UDC. The degree of detailing of an index depends on the specifics of its publication or the number of bibliographic entries located in it.

The titles of sections (subsections) in the main part should conform to the main sections of a classification scheme adopted for a specific state (national) bibliographic index and should be highlighted. The titles of sections (subsections) themselves are given in the main language of the nation.

The reference and search tools of the state (national) bibliographic index contain: an introduction, an overview article; a system of references; a list of information

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<sup>4</sup> BBK stands for *Bibliotekno-Bibliograficheskaia Klassifikatsia* [library-bibliographic classification], the classification system of the Soviet Union (now of Russia), which is still in use in certain kinds of libraries in the CIS (mainly in libraries run by Ministries of culture).

sources used; a list of abbreviations and symbolic notations, additional indexes; contents.

The text of the introduction comprises the following data:

- structure of the bibliographic publication containing sections conforming to the individual kinds of state (national) bibliographic indexes;
- purpose of the index;
- principles of bibliographic selection;
- rules for compilation of bibliographic records;
- grouping of bibliographic records;
- availability and composition of additional indexes; changes in publication (procedure for publishing the index, title);
- peculiarities of this issue and/or of individual issues of the index.

An introduction is mandatory in the first issue (volume) of a current, cumulative or retrospective state (national) index. In all other issues (volumes), the inclusion of an introduction is optional.

The Russian book chamber, together with the book chambers and national libraries of CIS countries, develops inter-state standards, most of which are based on international standards developed by the ISO and the IFLA. In recent years alone, new standards have been implemented with respect to biographical descriptions of publications (both in paper form and in other-than-paper form) and with respect to the identification of books and serial publications. All state (national) bibliographic indexes are provided with necessary reference and search aids (such as indexes by name, by subject, by series, by title and also a reference system and introductory articles). The high quality of auxiliary indexes to the national bibliographies of the region's countries was also noted by Barbara Bell in her report presented in 2001 to the 67<sup>th</sup> IFLA Conference in Boston (U.S.): "A particular strength of national bibliographies produced in Central Asia and Transcaucasia is provision of access points. Most have three or more indexes. This positive feature has been inherited from the former USSR system" (<http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla67/papers/120-199r.pdf>).

As regards communicative formats, the book chambers of Central Asia practically do not use any of the formats accepted in the West (UNIMARC, USMARC). A sort of replacement is offered by "own" modifications. Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan use

the RUSMARC format. The same can be said about transliteration and on the subject of authoritative databases.

## **Conclusions**

Today there are far more unsolved problems and difficulties in the organization of bibliographic control (registration) in the Central Asian states reviewed herein than there are achievements and clear development prospects. Retrospective bibliographic registration has been suspended practically everywhere, there is as yet no coverage of an ever increasing body of publications in formats other than the paper format (electronic publications, audio- and video products of all kinds and types), and the state (national) bibliographic indexes themselves are issued only in traditional print form. At the same time in certain countries, such as Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, fairly active efforts are made to modernize traditional technological processes and technologies in the area of print statistics and national bibliographies. There is no doubt that bibliography experts from the other countries in the region have long been ready to effect transition to international standards and computerization of their activity so as to establish their presence on the international information market. Existing problems here mainly lie in the logistic and financial plane, and their successful solution to a large extent depends on the assistance of the international bibliographic community, including assistance via the IFLA channels.

The states and peoples of Central Asia cannot conceive the development of their science, culture, education without the preservation and augmentation of past traditions or without the introduction of all that is new and progressive in the current book business. One of the principal and pressing tasks here is the development of a joint program for international cooperation among all parties concerned to support national book publishing and reading in each of the Central Asian states. Participants of the first international conference "Role of Books in the Development of Democracy" dedicated to the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Book Chamber of Kyrgyzstan (Bishkek, 2004) stressed the importance of universal introduction in their countries of new information technologies with the use of modern software for bibliographic and statistical registration, development of network technologies for provision of bibliographic and other information to remote users.

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