Providing Access to Sources for India Studies at Indiana University
Libraries: Piecing a Quilt

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Summary

Indiana University's India Studies program is young, as is the Indiana University
Libraries' (IU Libraries) focus on India in the context of area studies programs. The
process of crafting access to sources and developing library collections during a four-year
period is the subject of the paper. The metaphor of making a patchwork quilt
embellished with reflective mirrors representing virtual links is employed to emphasize
the cooperative nature of acquisitions and collections in 2001, the year the IU Libraries
migrated to a web-based catalog. Emphasis is placed on techniques for stretching
resources. Uniform Resource Locators (URLs) are included in footnotes to facilitate
access to websites. An appendix features practical tips for working in languages
unfamiliar to the selecting librarian, and cites sources helpful for working with Hindi and
Sanskrit.

Preface and Historical Background

Both H.S. Bhola[1] and Maureen L. P. Patterson[2] describe the cooperation and initiative of
Indiana University academics and administrators, members of the local and regional
Indo-American community, and the Indian Consulate-General in Chicago in encouraging
coordinated studies of India at the Bloomington campus of Indiana University in the early
1990s. By 1994 funds had been raised to endow the Rabindranath Tagore Chair of Indian
Culture and Civilization at Indiana University. The University brought Professor Gerald
J. Larson, a scholar of Indian religion, philosophy, and Sanskrit, to Indiana in 1995. As
Chair of India Studies, an undergraduate program within the College of Arts and Sciences
on the Bloomington campus, and as Director for the Indiana Network for the
Development of India Awareness, Larson began to work with others in the state to further
knowledge of contemporary India, and develop India Studies as part of the university's
international curriculum.

Larson quickly took two steps which would profoundly influence library development in
India Studies at the Indiana University Libraries for the next few years. He applied for a
U. S. Education Department grant[3] to develop India Studies resources including libraries
at Indiana University Bloomington and the other three institutions of an Indiana Network
for the Development of India Awareness: Depauw University, Greencastle; the
University of Indianapolis, Indianapolis; and Indiana State University, Terre Haute, and
was successful in winning the grant. He hired a recent PhD from the University of
Washington, Rebecca Manring, as a Visiting Assistant Professor, and asked her to serve
as faculty liaison to the Libraries.

Before the grant commenced, India Studies faculty had discussed program needs with the
Libraries' History and Religious Studies bibliographer, who was well-experienced in

meeting both faculty and student needs. When the grant application for supporting undergraduate education in the context of a network of Indiana colleges and universities was approved, the Libraries suddenly and unexpectedly became responsible for a sizable grant budget, and requirements for matching contributions for the Bloomington Libraries. Library administrators decided to support the India Studies efforts with a monographic budget, a modest serials budget and substantial staff support in areas including selection, acquisitions, and user service. This author was assigned to develop India Studies collections on a part-time basis in collaboration with the faculty.

New study programs do not automatically receive specially allocated resources and support, or continuing support at the end of a period of grant funding or "soft money". In the case of India Studies, however, collection development committees and library administrators have continued to support the program beyond the three-year long grant. This paper describes the Libraries' strategies for service in a new program, from 1997 to 2001.

Quilting as Metaphor

Bloomington, Indiana, the small city where the Bloomington campus of Indiana University is situated, is known for diverse cultural activities, and a stimulating four-season environment close to lakes and forests. Artists, artisans, and amateurs make handicrafts including textiles, and many people are interested in local and imported handicrafts, including quilts. During a pan-South Asian bazaar last summer, this author examined a small Indian cotton patchwork quilt. Its three layers included strong cotton backing, a light weight filling, and embroidered patchwork on the upper surface. On the top layer some individual patches were embellished with small mirrors. The structure of the quilt seemed a perfect metaphor for the ways the India Studies library acquisitions program has been pieced together in Indiana.

In the metaphor, the cotton backing is the strong collection base already present at the IU Libraries, while the fill is symbolic of new support for the new collection initiative. Subject and area studies librarians in the humanities and social sciences already worked daily with acquisitions librarians and catalogers to make available collections in dozens of languages from hundreds of countries. Consortial relations with other Indiana libraries, the Center for Research Libraries, the libraries of the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC)[4] and other linkages already extended Indiana collections through interlibrary loan. Acquisitions systems based on trade with many vendors, an approval program for publications of university presses, and a relationship with the Library of Congress's Field Office in New Delhi, which has supplied Tibetan and Mongolian materials to the Libraries for many years, were in place. Staff support included a system of employing student language specialists to work side-by-side with experienced catalogers in areas where the Libraries lack language expertise.

Though the base of the program was established, new initiatives were required to support a curriculum featuring basic and intermediate language instruction in Hindi and Sanskrit, and new courses in philosophy, literature, religion, and Indian culture. New networks

were required for Indiana University Libraries to link with other institutions with strong collections in India Studies, particularly in history, language, and linguistics. The Libraries supplied $2,000 of hourly funds for a student assistant to search holdings, prepare orders, and work with catalogers so that normal workflow could proceed while library staff quickly initiated and facilitated new programs.

Hindi, Sanskrit, and Networks

Faculty had already identified a need for Hindi and Sanskrit literature and language materials when the author was assigned to work with the faculty liaison to meet the needs of the program for language and literature. Blanket orders for Indian authors writing in English had already been established and the *Indian Review of Books*[5] and other selection tools for English language sources were informing purchase decisions. The libraries had also purchased materials from dealers and publishers based in India before the new program began, but the new initiative required classic and contemporary works in Hindi and Sanskrit, as well as an ongoing purchase program for new releases.

Irene Joshi, now South Asian librarian emerita at Rebecca Manring's alma mater, the University of Washington, responded to requests for help in developing a retrospective collection of works by authors writing in Hindi which would be appropriate for the curriculum. Joshi also introduced the author, whose specialities were government and social science information, to the specialist South Asian libraries network, Committee on South Asian Libraries and Documentation (CONSALD)[6] and librarians working to develop South Asia collections and services.

To bring work by authors writing in Hindi to the collection, a blanket order of works by eighteen authors, excluding their translations and other material considered peripheral was placed with D.K, Agencies,[7] whose representative visited Indiana during a U.S. trip to meet with bibliographers and technical services staff. The arrangement assured a core collection for basic student use. Titles selected as "classics" were not always widely held in U. S. libraries, and we were happy to make them available for interlibrary loan both within the India Network, and more widely.

For continuing purchases, we decided to expand an already existing profile with the Library of Congress (LC) Field Office in New Delhi to include Hindi and Sanskrit literature as well as reference tools. (Since the grant funds delivered the bulk of support early in a three-year period, we were able to adjust spending levels to arrive at a level of support which could be sustained without grant funds at the end of the third year.) Our decision to choose from the Library of Congress's program was based on our need for a continuing purchase plan which could be adjusted as the budget changed. We were happy to rely on LC staff's selection criteria and cataloging records, and felt that prices were reasonable for our small collection. The decision to enlarge the LC profile was taken after consultation with library managers responsible for selection (the author), acquisitions, cataloging, and shelf preparation. Public services staff responsible for making stack space available in specific call number ranges including the LC PKs, were not forewarned, and this consideration would have been good.

The arrangements described above satisfied some of our most pressing needs to support new courses in the curriculum: basic and intermediate Hindi, and basic and intermediate Sanskrit. Our profile with LC also emphasized reference tools and works in South Asian literature and religion, which were key areas of the India Studies curriculum.

Journal Subscriptions and Monographic Purchases

Our faculty liaison from the India Studies Program to the Libraries suggested the journal subscription purchases she and colleagues in Religious Studies and India Studies thought most important for Indiana University collections. The Libraries purchased backfiles for those on the list, and gave high priority to purchasing monographs suggested by faculty and students. On the Library Services web page, there is a link for users to "Recommend a purchase",[8] and Reference Department staff routinely forward requests they receive to individual bibliographers. From the same services page, one can access a list of links to the individual home pages of subject and area bibliographers, and the author worked with a student in the School of Library and Information Science to add an India Studies presence to the Libraries' website.[9] Suggestions for purchases and reference queries are the two types of messages most often directed to the author through this interface.

Other Collections Support

One of the pieces central to collection development involved enlisting the support of other bibliographers to highlight India Studies in their purchases. A collegial atmosphere for communicating with others responsible for purchases in professional schools, film and media, and social sciences and humanities including folklore ensured that bibliographers knew the relatively small size of the budgets specifically devoted to India purchases, and would continue to buy appropriate materials through their funds.

The author sought opportunities for competitive internal library funding for collections, and annual requests to the Libraries' Collection Development Committee were supplemented by success in acquiring funds for particularly expensive books through internal competitions. A request in collaboration with other fund managers to purchase preservation microfilm for Indian census materials was also funded.

During the first year of grant funding the author also wrote a sabbatical leave proposal to combine language learning, acquisitions travel to the annual New Delhi Book Fair, and participation in a faculty study seminar sponsored by the India Network consortium.[10] The Libraries supplied funds for book purchases, release time for the author, and hourly funds for a student to assist in searching lists of core materials such as Maureen L. P. Patterson's *South Asian Civilizations: A Bibliographic Synthesis*[11] to identify gaps in the collections. The University's Office of International Programs[12] provided a travel grant, and the India Studies Program permitted participation in a tour with faculty from two of the institutions in the India Network. The sabbatical also gave the author time to learn basic ALA romanization and transliterating skills for the Devanagari scripts in which

Hindi and Sanskrit are written. This skill has proven especially useful for pre-cataloging searching of gift books, and assisting cataloging staff. (See Appendix.)

Other acquisition collaborations include the expansion of selection of India-related titles published by university presses through an approval program, and the opportunity to suggest appropriate electronic book (e-book) titles for selections in a consortial arrangement through a statewide network.

Increased Cataloging

At this writing, with some exceptions, most of the Indiana University Libraries collections have been cataloged, and records appear for most items in IUCAT, the web catalog. However, many government publications including those of international governmental organizations and foreign governments are still being cataloged.

The higher use of South Asian materials since the inception of the India Studies program has raised the priority for cataloging censuses, education reports, gazetteers, and other documents from and about South Asia. (It is as if this material had been hidden, and it has now been brought into view through its inclusion in the online catalog, which remains the mainstream of access to library collections.)

Web (The Mirrored Embellishment)

Examples of pieces of a service and acquisitions program which are physically present in the Indiana University Libraries are described in the preceeding section of this paper. The resources described in the present section, however, are not present in the IU Libraries. Access to them has been created through web links made possible by virtual connections. Through membership in the Center for Research Libraries (CRL)[13] Indiana University faculty and students have access to rich research collections including foreign dissertations and theses, government publications, and journals. A membership in the South Asian Microform Project (SAMP), administered through CRL, provides access to filmed archival materials and other sources for specialized research. Through the IU Libraries India Studies website[14] we provide links to the Digital South Asia Library[15], a growing collection of reference tools, picture archives, and other sources freely available to all.

An important feature of the design of the website is to provide an easy to use interface for IU students and others to go outward to other collections and resources. The links to Columbia University's website, the home pages of the Indiana Network for India Awareness, and the interlibrary loan tools point quickly beyond our relatively small holdings. Yet the link reaching back into the not cataloged collections of our Geography and Map Library focuses on a bit of our collection which may be of use to others as well.

Another new feature of the mirror is a selection of India Studies related electronic texts, e-books, purchased with other Indiana libraries in a consortial arrangement. As in internal grant proposals, each bibliographer was invited to suggest titles for inclusion in

the collection which a committee then narrowed for submission to a state-wide group, who selected the e-book collection for all Indiana libraries.

As catalog records for e-books and full text electronic journals are added to the web-based catalog, IU librarians have been adding features to improve the ability of users to identify and search for materials available in electronic form. An Indiana University reference librarian developed a searchable database of full-text journal titles to which the library subscribes.[16] The potential of the new catalog to link quickly to websites and follow cross-references, and the provisions for controlled searching in fields such as language or format, which are built into the new catalog's interface, make it easier for users to quickly see whether or not specific items are available in the local collections. The prospect of patron-initiated interlibrary loan without exiting from the catalog promises even greater flexibility in the near future.

Conclusion

Many Hoosier (Indiana) quilts are not only pieced, but quilted or stitched through all layers, adding a subtle pattern which ties the entire piece together. The service orientation of staff in all the areas mentioned previously provides the subtle overall pattern which brings all the pieces of the program of acquisitions, cataloging, reference, interlibrary loan, and general management together so that library users can identify and make use of the sources they need. (This may appear obvious, but it can be a delicate matter, when time and resources are limited.)

The India Studies library program, pieced by librarians and library staff in collaboration with the India Studies faculty is now, in the beauty of the catalog's capacity for representing both individual books and vast websites, being used by both Indiana users and others. Parts of it may be used through inter-library loan, but much is freely available via the desktop. Thus, even though the "quilt" is small and light, it may be unique. It could become more special as it is shaped for the future through gifts and care.

Appendix
Tips for the Selector Working in Unfamiliar Languages

Even librarians familiar with user needs and the scope of a desired collection face challenges when making selection decisions for materials in languages unfamiliar to them. This brief essay presents suggestions about aids for developing a process for searching for records in databases such as OCLC's WorldCat when the searcher is new to a language written in a script that doesn't use roman letters. Catalogers will need more extensive guidance, but for simple searching to locate the useful information on already cataloged materials, these tips may assist. Records for the source in hand may readily supply subject headings, a list of holding libraries, and other information helpful in making selection or retention decisions, particularly for gift materials. The selector can often identify records helpful to catalogers while researching a gift, thus saving the cataloger's time. The examples below are based on the author's experiences in selecting

books for Hindi and Sanskrit collections, searching book jacket text for displays and publication, and assisting students. Bibliographic citations have been included in the body of the essay rather than as footnotes. The suggestions are practical in intent. Those interested in exploring farther may wish to consult the footnotes of some of the sources cited below.

Teach Yourself

A pre-requisite for searching a language which is not written in roman characters in most library utilities, online public access databases, and non-specialist online sources, is to transliterate the elements of the script system of the language into roman letters. This process is a partly mechanical substitution of the Latin alphabet for what is written in the book or manuscript in hand. *ALA-LC Romanization Tables: Transliteration Schemes for Non-Roman Scripts,* 1997 edition compiled and edited by Randall K. Barry (Washington: Cataloging Distribution Service, Library of Congress) is the primary source for romanization and transliteration. The 1997 edition contains 54 schemes covering more than 150 languages including Hindi and Sanskrit for use "when the consistent transliteration of a non-Roman (vernacular) script (e.g., Arabic script) into the Roman alphabet is needed." (Those interested in the technological challenge of reading non-Western scripts over the web, and the digitization of South Asian scripts will want to consult Suzanne McMahon's *South Asian Scripts on the Web: Standards and Software* by searching on the University of California Berkeley Library website at the url http://www.lib.berkeley.edu.)

Although the *ALA-LC Romanization Tables* contain notes in the individual language sections and general guidance in the preface, the closing note of the preface (page 6) advises: "In the application of the *ALA-LC Romanization Tables*, familiarity with the language involved is helpful, if not essential, for many scripts." In the case of Hindi and Sanskrit the author found that beginner's guides to language learning such as *Teach Yourself Hindi* by Rupert Snell and Simon Weightman (2nd ed., Lincolnwood, IL: NTC Publishing, 2000) and *Sanskrit: an Introduction to the Classical* Language, by Michael Coulson, Richard Gombrich, and James Benson (2nd ed., Lincolnwood IL: NTC Publishing, 1992) both part of the Teach Yourself books series, proved helpful in explaining the way letters might be dropped or diacritical marks added which affect transliteration. A succinct new book in the Teach Yourself series, *Beginner's Hindi Script: an Introduction to Reading and Writing Hindi* by Rupert Snell (Lincolnwood, IL:NTC Publishing, 2000) may be even more helpful since the focus is entirely on the written script.

Use Already Cataloged Materials

Using your familiarity with the information which appears on most title pages (author's name, title, and place and date of publication) can help you choose uncommon or less common words to transliterate for a keyword search in OCLC's WorldCat, or in another online database. A close examination of a book may reveal information in English which you can also use in your search. Additionally many of the contemporary books we have

received as gifts have come complete with jackets highlighting the author and his or her previous work. All this information can be helpful in formulating a search strategy which focuses on identifying the piece in hand by matching it with a catalog record.

If an alternative dating system is in use, reference tools can provide you with conversion tables. In the case of India, Robert Sewell's *The Indian Calendar, with Tables for the Conversion of Hindu and Muhammadan into A.D. Dates and Vice Versa* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1995) has helped both catalogers and searchers identify dates of publication.

Other reference tools such as gazetteers and biographical dictionaries in either electronic or print form can also hasten identification of a particular title.

Seek Help from Experts

Languages of the World: Cataloging Issues and Problems, edited by Martin D. Joachim (New York: The Haworth Press, Inc., 1993) includes essays focusing on language-related cataloging problems. Usha Bhasker's article, "Languages of India: Cataloging Issues", pp. 159-168, describes some of the pitfalls catalogers face in handling materials in Indian languages including transliteration and supplying name authorities and subject headings. She describes the problem of finding cataloging staff whose language expertise is sufficient for a large number of languages, and suggests the possible solution of hiring students with appropriate language skills, and training them as catalogers.

Searching problems are considerably less daunting than cataloging issues, so the strategy of hiring students, and learning from them may be very beneficial at the outset of work with a new language.

A final tip on accepting gifts, is, of course, that the donor may be your expert. The more information you can obtain in written form from a donor's description, the better the stockpile of clues for searching. In working with students and faculty to identify titles, the experience can be beneficial for everyone, since the librarian is generally more familiar with the online utilities, and the graduate student or faculty member is frequently more familiar with the content, and certainly with the language.

[1] Bhola, Harbans Singh. "Asian Indians." In *Peopling Indiana: The Ethnic Experience.* Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1966, pp. 38-53.

[2] Maureen L. P. Patterson describes the "hatching" of the India Studies Program at Indiana University in "Institutional Base for the Study of South Asia in the United States and the Role of the American Institute of Indian Studies", pp. 94-95 in *India's Worlds and U.S. Scholars 1947-1997,* edited by Joseph W. Elder, Edward C. Dimock Jr., and Ainslie T. Embree. New Delhi: Manohar/American Institute of Indian Studies, 1998.

[3] Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language Program of the United States Department of Education. See http://www.ed.gov/offices/OPE/HEP

[4] Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC), the academic consortium of the Big Ten universities and the University of Chicago. See http://www.cic.uiuc.edu/

[5] *Indian Review of Books* is published in Madras by Acme Books.

[6] Committee on South Asian Libraries and Documentation (CONSALD) See http://www.lib.virginia.edu/area-studies/SouthAsia/Lib/consald.html This group meets at the Annual

Conference on South Asia at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and at the annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies.

[7] D.K. Agencies, see http://www.dkagencies.com

[8] See http://www.indiana.edu/~libweb/service.html

[9] See http://www.indiana.edu/~libindia

[10] See http://www.indiana.edu/~isp/india.htm

[11] Patterson, Maureen L. P. *South Asian Civilizations: A Bibliographic Synthesis.*Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981.

[12] See http://www.indiana.edu/~intlprog

[13] See http://www.crl.edu

[14] See http://www.indiana.edu/~libindia

[15] See http://dsal.uchicago.edu

[16] See http://www.indiana.edu/~libej