

# **CURRENT STATUTE AND THE TASK OF SAFEGARDING DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC REGION**

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## **1. OVER VIEW OF THE ASIA - PACIFIC REGION**

The Asia Pacific Region is an immense region, comprise 45 countries and covering some 2.8 billion hectares of land area, approximately 22 percent of the global land area. The Asia Pacific region incorporates conditions of moist tropical to arid and semiarid desert. The geography position in the tropical climate is one of the big challenges of preservation of the documentary heritage.

## **2. UNESCO'S MEMORY OF THE WORLD (MOW) PROGRAM**

UNESCO launched the Program in 1992. It is an international cooperation strategy aimed at safeguarding, protecting and facilitating access to and the use of documentary heritage, especially heritage that is rare and endangered. The MOW Program recognizes documentary heritage of international, regional and national significance, maintains registers of it, and awards a logo to identified collections. It facilitates preservation and access without discrimination. It campaigns to raise awareness of the documentary heritage to alert governments, the general public, business and commerce to preservation needs and to raise funds.

## **3. MEMORY OF THE WORLD COMMITTEE FOR ASIA/PACIFIC (MOWCAP)**

MOWCAP was set up in 1998 during its First General Meeting held in Beijing, China and is a subsidiary body of the International Advisory Committee (IAC) which itself was established in 1992 by UNESCO. MOWCAP embraces the Asia/Pacific region - one of the five UNESCO regions across the globe. MOWCAP is composed of UNESCO National Committee for MOW Program in the Asia/Pacific region. It is a cooperative structure through which people from two or countries in the region can be brought together to pursue the objectives of the MOW Program.

## **4. MOWCAP'S STATUTE**

The name of the Committee is the Regional Memory of the World Committee for Asia and the Pacific, referred to as MOWCAP in these statutes. MOWCAP is a subsidiary body of the International Advisory Committee (IAC) of Memory of the World (MOW), created in accordance with the General Guidelines of the MOW Program.

## **5. MOWCAP'S TASKS**

The MOWCAP's tasks are to promote, facilitate and monitor the MOW Program within the region, and to represent the region at the international level. Among other things, MOWCAP supports and facilitates nominations and encourages adequate representation of the region's documentary heritage in the International MOW Register. It also supports and complements the work of the National MOW Committees. It seeks to raise awareness of the Program and of the documentary heritage in the Asia-Pacific region.

## **6. NOMINATIONS IN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGISTER : 47**

### **(1) Australia: 3**

- F.E. Williams Collection of Photographs 1922-1943 (2012)
- Queensland Indentured Labour Records 1863-1908 (2014)
- Landmark Constitutional Documents of the Commonwealth of Australia (2008)

### **(2) Cambodia: 2**

- The Reamker by Takrut (2014)
- Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum Archive (2008)

### **(3) China and Special Administrative Regions: 10**

- Official Records of Macao During the Qing Dynasty (1693-1886) (2016)
- Archives and Manuscripts of Macau Kong Tac Lam Temple (1645 - 1980) (2016)
- Archives of Confucius' Family of the Ming and Qing Dynasties (2016)
- Archives of Suzhou Silk Samples (2016)
- The Double Stellar Hemisphere (2014)
- Tibet Autonomous Region of China: Official Records of Tibet from the Yuan Dynasty China, 1304-1367 (2012)

- Qiaopi and Yinxin: Correspondence and Remittance Documents from Overseas (2012)
- Archives and materials of the Macao Diocese from the 1550s to 1800s (2010)
- The Yellow Emperor's Inner Canon (2010)
- Compendium of Materia Medica (2010)

**(4) Cook Islands :1**

- The Proclamation (E Tutatua Akakite) of 1891 (2014)

**(5) Democratic People's Republic of Korea: 1**

- Mu Ye Do Bo Tong Ji, Comprehensive Illustrated Manual of Martial Arts (2016)

**(6) Fiji :2**

- Polynesian Immigrants Records 1876-1914 (2014)
- Documentary Heritage of the Indian Indentured Labourers (2010)

**(7) Indonesia: 1**

- Nāgarakrētāgama or Description of the Country (1365 AD) (2008)

**(8) Iran: 5**

- Arafāt al-Āshiqīn va Arasāt al-Arifīn (2016) :
- Vendidad (2014)
- The Soul of the Reef (2014)
- Collection of Documents and Images of Karbala (2014)
- Al-Masaalik Wa Al-Mamaalik (2014)

**(9) Japan: 1**

- Suiheisha and Hyeongpyengsa (records of cross border solidarity between the minorities that have been discriminated against) (2016)

**(10) Lao PDR: 1**

- Neo Lao Hak Xath Film Collection (2014)

**(11) Malaysia: 1 (manuscript)**

- Kitab Ilmu Bedil (MS 101) or Book of Malay Traditional Weaponry (2016)

**(12) Maldives (copperplates)**

- Loamaafaanu (2014)

**(13) Mongolia: 3**

- Tibetan Dictionary of Definitions and Terms entitled as The Space for Attaining Wisdom (2016)
- Sutra of Great Diety Tara (2014)
- Lu. "Altan Tobchi" (2010)

**(14) Myanmar: 1**

- King Bayintnaung Bell Inscription (2016)

**(15) New Zealand: 2**

- Western Pacific Archives (2014)
- The Tokyo War Crimes Trials 1946-1948 (2010)

**(16) Papua New Guinea: 1**

- F.E. Williams Collection of Photographs 1922-1943 (2012)

**(17) Philippines: 1**

- The Presidential papers of Manuel Luis Quezon (2010)

**(18) Republic of Korea: 1**

- Pyeon-aek : Hanging Wooden Plaques in Korea (2016)

**(19) Samoa: 1**

- Archives of German-Samoa Colonial Administration (2014)

**(20) Singapore:1**

- Asian Film Archive Collection Cathay-Keris Malay Classics (2014)

**(21) Thailand**

- The Epigraphic Archives of Wat Pho (2008)

**(22) Uzbekistan**

- Turkestan Collection (2016)

**(23) Vietnam: 5**

- Royal Literature on Hue Royal Architecture (1802-1945) (2016)

- Phuc Giang School Woodblocks (18th-20th Centuries) (2016)
- Imperial Records of Nguyen Dynasty (1802 - 1945) (2014)
- Stone Stele Records of Royal Examinations of the Le and Mac Dynasties 1442-1779 (2010)
- Woodblocks at Vinh Nghiem Pagoda, Bac Giang Province (2012)

## **7. TASK OF SAFEGARDING**

Documents are in many forms: Cloth, glasses, film, metal, palm leaves, paper, photos, silk, stone steles and stone tablets, woodblocks, woodplaques, ... It comprises analog or digital form. Each type has its own inherent preservation challenges but the greatest problem is in tropical climates. This may be done by direct practical assistance, by the dissemination of advice and information and the encouragement of training, or by linking sponsors with timely and appropriate projects.

## **8. PRINCIPLES OF PRESERVATION**

Some key principles of good preservation practice are summarized in the General Guidelines to Safeguard documentary heritage:

(1) Careful documentation and collection control - "good housekeeping" - is a precondition for preservation. Labelling and documenting the nature and condition of individual carriers so they can be securely managed and retrieved is an important aspect of "housekeeping".

(2) Storage environments - including temperature, humidity, light, air pollutants, animals and insects, physical security - should, as far as possible, be such as will maximise the life of the carriers being stored.

The "ideal" requirements vary greatly depending on the type of material concerned: for example, paper, film and videotapes have different, desirable levels of temperature and humidity.

(3) The old maxim that "prevention is better than cure" is widely accepted as a truism for documentary heritage. Practices and techniques that slow down deterioration and potential handling damage are far better and cheaper than any recovery process.

(4) Conserving an original document and protecting its integrity means that no information is lost, and all future options for preservation and access are kept open.

(5) Content migration or reformatting - copying a document onto a different format - is useful and often necessary for access purposes. Indeed, the Memory of the World Programme encourages digitization and microfilming as a means of providing universal access, and access copies of any kind reduce pressure on the original document and so aid preservation.

(6) Putting long-term preservation at risk in order to satisfy short-term access demand is always a temptation, and sometimes a political necessity, but it is a risk that should be avoided if possible. In cases when there is no duplicate access copy, saying "no" is usually a better strategy than exposing a fragile original to possibly irrecoverable damage.

(7) One size doesn't fit all: different types of carrier not only require different types of storage environments but different methods of handling, management and conservation treatment. Traditional "human readable" materials, such as printing on paper, are increasingly complemented by "machine readable" documents, such as computer disks and videotapes, whose survival and retrieval are dependant on technologies with an increasingly high rate of obsolescence.

(8) Cooperation is essential: In such an increasingly complex field, even large institutions find the need to network, to share facilities and expertise. Some institutions develop specializations so they can service other institutions costeffectively.

(9) Traditional knowledge: Many cultures have traditional and effective means of preserving their own forms of documentary heritage, which reflect their own ethos and customs. Conversely, modern methods have often developed from a scientific understanding of the nature of materials and the mechanisms of deterioration, and come from a "western" tradition. In individual countries, finding an accommodation between these two approaches may be important in developing management plans. Both areas of knowledge are essential if collections are to be adequately maintained.

(10) The standard of professionalism is an indicator of the importance placed on libraries and archives by governments. Professional education needs to cover the whole range, from basic skills to specialized preservation knowledge.

## **9. MOWCAP'S PRESERVATION WORKSHOP AND PROJECT**

There are regular seminars, training workshops to assist countries to MOWCAP, for eg.

### **(1) Workshop on Archives Preservation held in Xi'an (China)**

“The UNESCO Memory of the World workshop on Archives Preservation in the Asia Pacific Region was organized in Xi'an. The event was organized by MOWCAP and the State Archives Administration of China (SAAC), in cooperation with the Shaanxi Provincial Archives and Shaanxi Normal University.

More than 50 participants from Australia, Cambodia, China, Czech Republic, India, Thailand, Turkey, Republic of Korea and Mongolia attended the workshop. The purpose of the gathering will contribute to implementing the objectives of UNESCO's MOW Programme to facilitate the effective preservation, by the most appropriate techniques, of the world's invaluable documentary heritage.

### **(2) Seminar on Safeguarding documentary heritage in Suva, Fiji from October 20th to the 22nd, 2015**

These Archivists are representatives and leading figures in the preservation, conservation and facilitation of access to documentary heritage kept safe in National Archives of Fiji, Samoa, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea and Tuvalu.

### **(3) Project “Safeguarding the Documentary Heritage of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in Southeast Asia through the UNESCO Memory of the World (MOW) Programme”.**

The objectives of the project was achieved through four main actions:

- International seminar on the implementation of the UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Preservation of, Access to, Documentary Heritage including in Digital Form:
- National Capacity Building Workshops on the MoW Programme;
- Regional and national study of significant documentary heritage in Timor-Leste, Myanmar and wider Southeast Asia;
- Illustrated publication (online and hardcopy) of the results of the study of significant documentary heritage and its launch.

## **10. CONCLUSION**

In occasion of one year celebrating of anniversary of the Inscription of Confucian Printing woodblocks to the Unesco MOW Register, we think one of the most task of MOWCAP is to increase dialogue and cooperation among the countries in the region through the training and workshop on preservation and access to the documentary heritage on the different theme. It will be the good occasion that the countries of Asia-Pacific could share common heritages, traditions, influences,

roots of knowledge, languages and scripts, etc. Because we are the similar kind of document inscribed in the MOWCAP's Register like woodblock, stone, palm leave etc., we have to share each other our experiences on preservation of documentary heritage. And we think that the technic of preservation of woodblocks of the Tripitaka in Haeinsa Monastery and the Confucian Printing woodblocks in good condition is for us an exemple./.