

# **MEMORY OF THE WORLD PROGRAMME**

**First Meeting of the Bureau of the International  
Advisory Committee of the  
"Memory of the World" Programme**

London, 4 - 5 September 1998

Information and Informatics Division  
United Nations Educational,  
Scientific and Cultural Organization

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## **1. Agenda:**

The proposed agenda was accepted (see ANNEX B)

## **2. Report by Programme Officer and Review of Activities:**

Abdelaziz Abid reported on the progress of the Programme since the meeting in Tashkent in September 1997. Three new pilot projects to produce CD-ROMs had been agreed:

1. The Dar al-Kutub manuscripts at the National Libraries and Archives of Egypt, Cairo containing scientific treatises from the Arabic world;
2. The historical collections of Vilnius University Library, Lithuania. This collection has also been nominated for inclusion on the World Register;
3. A joint project by the national Libraries of Brazil and Venezuela and other Latin American and Caribbean countries with technical assistance from the University of Colima in Mexico. The project was for the digitisation of 3000 photographs from the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries of South America and the Caribbean. Description of the photographs and comments were provided in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish.

A fourth project was under active consideration. This was to produce a CD-ROM of the collection of Egyptian postcards held by the Louvre in Paris.

One publication associated with the Programme had been issued and two others in preparation. The first - *Safeguarding the Documentary Heritage: A Guide to Standards, Recommended Practices and Reference Literature Related to the Preservation of Documents of All Kinds* - has been prepared by the Sub-Committee on Technology. It is a guide to the standards and reference works for the different types of information carriers. It is available in English and French from UNESCO and has been frequently requested in the short time since publication. It was hoped to make the publication available in other languages to widen its usefulness.

The second publication was a *Worldwide Survey of Digital Collections* being prepared by IFLA. The publication foreseen for end 1999 will give an overview of the current state of digitisation in collections around the world. The work is being undertaken by the IFLA PAC programme and the UAP.

The other publication in progress is to be a CD-ROM. The preparation is being co-ordinated by Astrid Brandt of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. The CD will provide the equivalent of 3000 pages of text and it will give more detailed information about preservation and restoration techniques for a variety of information carriers. It will initially be published in English and French. Moncef Fakhfakh commented that the project had not been publicised widely. It must make itself better known so that more experts could participate in the preparation of the

texts. The finished product must also be made available in other languages including Arabic and Spanish.

Two projects were being considered for granting of the right to use the Memory of the World Project label. The first was to examine the Slave Trade Archives and will be funded by NORAD.

The project will be a co-operative venture involving Angola, Benin, Brazil, Ghana, Haiti, Mozambique, Nigeria and Senegal. The project is to start in September 1998 with the preparation of a detailed specification and plan of action for the project. Another Programme within UNESCO is running a project to review the slave routes. The two projects will co-operate with each other and run in parallel.

The second project will be funded by the Netherlands and will work on the archives of the Dutch East India Company. The project will digitise the scattered papers of the Company and provide digital copies to the participants. A sub-project will be to produce optical character recognition (OCR) software that can read hand writing. This part of the project will be funded in part by the European Commission.

It is intended to produce new publicity material for the Programme during 1999. The Programme is now well-known in professional circles but needs to increase public awareness. One item being considered was a book provisionally entitled *Works That Have Changed the World*. This would be a collection of essays by prominent people each writing about the importance, relevance and effect that a document had had upon the world e.g. Darwin's *Origin of the Species*. Suggestions for documents that should be included should be sent to Abdelaziz Abid. Jean-Pierre Wallot suggested that the Presidents of the NGOs working in the archive and library field be asked to propose five documents each.

A book had been published in Mexico based upon the report given by Abdelaziz Abid in Tashkent.

### **3. The Report of the External Evaluation of the Programme:**

The Report of the Evaluators - Guy Petherbridge, Christopher Kitching and Clemens de Wolf - had been completed and the Bureau discussed the main conclusions and recommendations. The Bureau welcomed and approved the Report. It was very informative and provided a number of good suggestions for the future progress of the Programme. For example, the suggestion that other institutions with World Wide Web sites should provide links to the Memory of the World site was cheap and easy to do but would greatly improve the publicity for the Programme. The suggestion that the NGOs be asked to recommend techniques to be used for preservation of and access to documents would be taken up by the Sub-Committee on Technology. It provided clarification of the role of the IAC in certain areas and gave support for the current review of the working and application of the Selection Criteria for the World Register.

The Report also stressed the need for an increase in staff resources allocated to the Programme. The Evaluators recommended an increase to a minimum of four people working in the Programme Secretariat. The IAC had also drawn attention to the need for an increase in resources available to the Programme in the report of the Tashkent meeting. The response from UNESCO to these requests was that any increase beyond the current 1½ people had to be funded from external sources.

#### **4. Selection Guidelines for the Programme - Report of the Working Groups appointed in Tashkent:**

A Discussion Paper prepared by Ray Edmondson was presented by Habibah Zon Yahaya (see ANNEX C). The Paper made a number of comments and suggestions regarding the future application of the Selection Criteria for nominations for inclusion on the World Register. In general, the Bureau supported these comments and recommended that they be further examined by the three Working Groups.

The Bureau also took the opportunity to modify the membership and timetable for the Working Groups in the light of the progress made to date. It was agreed that the three groups should work consecutively and not concurrently and a period of six weeks should be allowed for each group to undertake its part of the work. The Convenor for each group should be a member of the Bureau and the three Convenors would also sit on each Working Group.

The topic for Group 1 was *To Refine and Develop the Criteria*. The work of this group should be completed by October 30<sup>th</sup> 1998. The group would consist of Edwina Peters (Convenor), Evgeny Kuzmin, Joachim-Felix Leonhard, Habibah Zon Yahaya and Moncef Fakhfakh.

The report of Working Group 1 would be passed to Working Group 2 with a copy sent to Abdelaziz Abid. The topic for Group 2 was *To Develop Guidelines for the Application of the Criteria to Specific Circumstances*. The work of this group should be completed by December 18<sup>th</sup> 1998. The group would consist of Habibah Zon Yahaya (Convenor), Ray Edmondson, Ingun Kvisteroy, Edwina Peters and Moncef Fakhfakh.

On completion, the report of Working Group 2 would be passed to Working Group 3 with a copy sent to Abdelaziz Abid. The topic for Group 3 was *To Develop Procedures for the Processing of Incoming Nominations*. The work of Group 3 should be completed by February 26<sup>th</sup> 1999. The Convenor of Group 3 was Moncef Fakhfakh and the members Edwina Peters, Habibah Zon Yahaya and George Boston.

#### **5. Consideration of the Nominations Deferred in Tashkent:**

There were eleven nominations deferred from Tashkent. The Bureau considered the new evidence submitted in support of them and recommended what further action, if any, should be taken (see Annex D for details).

## **Consideration of Nominations Received Since Tashkent**

Thirty six nominations had been submitted in time for them to be circulated to the Bureau prior to the meeting. An additional eleven were submitted and were distributed to the Bureau at the meeting. All were discussed and the Bureau made recommendations for further action by the IAC (see Annex E for details).

### **Any Other Business:**

Jean-Pierre Wallot proposed a new wording for the advice sent out to those wishing to make a nomination for inclusion on the World Register to help ensure that nominations were stronger and targeted more closely on the Selection Criteria. It was hoped that this would reduce the amount of administrative time taken up with editing and improving nominations. The proposed text is:

*The International Advisory Committee recognises that all archival fonds are generated organically by state administrations, corporate bodies and individuals in the course of their normal activities. The IAC considers, however, that the World Register of the Memory of the World Programme cannot include all the records in state and municipal archives, no matter how important those states and cities may be. A large proportion of the records are concerned with local, national and, sometimes, regional issues.*

*Repositories should nominate for inclusion on the World Register only those documents that are clearly of world significance. The nomination may consist of complete fonds, a sous-fonds, series or groups of records or even a single document within a collection.*

This wording was agreed by the Bureau and its acceptance by the IAC at its next meeting was recommended.

The next meeting of the IAC is planned for June 1999 in Vienna at the invitation of the Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

The meeting concluded with the Chairman offering thanks on behalf of the Bureau to the British Library and its staff for providing such excellent facilities.



## ANNEX A

### "Memory of the World" - Bureau of the International Advisory Committee

#### List of Participants

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Sue BOSTON was also present to provide administrative support for the meeting.



**"Memory of the World" - Bureau of the International  
Advisory Committee**

**Agenda**

1. Administrative Matters
2. Report from Programme Officer, Abdelaziz Abid, and Review of Activities
3. Report of the External Assessors for the Programme
4. Selection Guidelines for the Programme  
Report of Working Groups Appointed in Tashkent
5. Consideration of Nominations Deferred in Tashkent
6. Consideration of Nominations Received Since Tashkent
7. Any Other Business



## "Memory of the World" - Bureau of the International Advisory Committee

### Discussion Paper on Selection Criteria, Guidelines and Processing of Nominations

*Prepared by Ray Edmondson*

#### **1. Introduction**

At the meeting of the Memory of the World International Advisory Committee convened in Tashkent in September/October 1997, I was asked to:

“Oversee the setting up of three working groups to examine different aspects of the criteria [for assessing material nominated for inclusion in the Memory of the World register] and their application as follows:

Group 1 - to refine and develop the criteria

Group 2 - to develop guidelines for application of the criteria to specific circumstances

Group 3 - to develop procedures for processing of incoming nominations”.

*(Item 8 of the minutes)*

This paper is written in response to that request and proceeds as follows:

Discussion of some general issues

Discussion of issues specific to each of the three working groups

Suggested terms of reference for each working group

#### **2. Point of Departure**

2.1 The point of departure for this paper is the Memory of the World document *General Guidelines to Safeguard Documentary Heritage* (1995) and, in particular, sections 4 and 5 which deal with the Memory of the World register, the selection criteria and matters of process. It therefore relates primarily to Objective 1 of the Memory of the World programme: the objective of preservation (para 2.2.1 a). Reference is also made to *Memory of the World Programme External Evaluation* (May 1998) report insofar as it relates to the criteria.

2.2 Unless otherwise evident from the context, my comments refer to the top level international Memory of the World register, for which the IAC is responsible. This is

for the sake of simplicity. The points made can also apply to regional and national registers where this is appropriate.

### **3. General Issues**

#### **3.1 Definition of Documentary Heritage**

3.1.1 the Memory of the World programme is aimed at “safeguarding the world’s documentary heritage, democratizing access to it, and raising awareness of its significance and of the need to preserve it” (General guidelines para 1.2). What is the world’s documentary heritage?

3.1.2 Section 2.4 of the *General Guidelines* amplifies this concept to cover the materials normally thought of as comprising the collections of libraries, archives and comparable institutions. As presently drafted, the definition needs some revision to keep it updated and to remove ambiguities. For example, it appears to exclude certain audio-visual materials such as non-electronic sound recordings and non-photographic moving images, and would generally benefit from some revision in the audiovisual and electronic data areas. There are anomalies in the present division between textual and non-textual materials (for example, posters can be both). The purpose would be to arrive at a definitional statement that was both as simple and as unambiguous as possible.

3.1.3 The definition apparently excludes what might commonly be called “museum objects”: if this is intentional, the exclusion does need to be made explicit (which raises the question of the need for a scheme parallel to Memory of the World to account for such material). It would, therefore, mean that art works such as paintings and posters would be included and other art works, such as sculptures, would be excluded: so the *Mona Lisa* could be “in”, while the *Venus de Milo* would be “out”.

3.1.4 The *Evaluation* makes reference, in its section 2.1.11 onwards, to both ambiguity and change over time in the statement of the Memory of the World programme objectives. While evolution may be no bad thing, and is to be expected at this early stage, it is equally important - for the fundamental credibility of the programme - that both its objectives and selection criteria become clear and unambiguous now that its structures are crystallizing and its profile is growing.

#### **3.2 Selectivity**

3.2.1 A contentious issue in Tashkent was the degree of selectivity with which the criteria should be applied: for example, the selection of individual documents as opposed to large collections or fonds, or indeed whether to define the entire holdings of an archival institution as meriting inclusion in the World Register.

3.2.2. A key part of the rationale of the World Heritage scheme, on which the Memory of the World programme is modeled, is the extremely high degree of care and selectivity applied to the selection of additions to the World Heritage List. It is possible to argue that many thousands of sites and buildings - even entire towns - throughout the world could merit inclusion on the List - but if this was done, it

would “debase the currency” and the scheme would lose its impact. It would take a new selective list - say, the “Best of World Heritage List” - to recover the impact! Part of the reason that Governments take the Convention so seriously is that the list is short enough and grows slowly enough to be comprehensible and to maintain its impact; the label carries prestige and publicity value; inclusion is very selective and through a rigorous process, so it is difficult to achieve and is, therefore, coveted; and it attracts tourism. A corollary is that Governments also have an incentive to respect and maintain a World Heritage site, and popular acceptance of the validity of preserving heritage sites has grown along with the scheme.

3.2.3 The inescapable message is that the Memory of the World World Register needs to show a comparable degree of high selectivity if it is to have a comparable impact. This indicates, in my view, some strategic principles for including items in the Register.

- They need to be single items or clear, comprehensible, cohesive (and so, probably relatively limited) collections of items - not vast or diffuse collections or fonds
- Their importance needs to be capable of recognition in simple terms by ordinary people - not something that only an elite will understand
- They need to be of major - indeed, overwhelming - international significance
- They are added to the register only after a very rigorous evaluation

Without such perceptive selectivity, especially in these formative years, I believe that the Programme will have correspondingly diminished publicity value or political effect. If non-selectivity is taken to its logical conclusion - for example, by including the entire contents of all the world’s national libraries and national archives - the Programme would provide no value-added dimension over and above what these institutions and their professional associations are already doing, and would be redundant.

3.2.4 There are currently just over 500 sites (in 108 countries) on the World Register List: it has taken 25 years to reach this number, which will continue to grow at a measured pace. To date, the Memory of the World Register is growing at a much faster rate. That does not mean that we need to place any artificial limit on the number of entries in the Register, but it does not mean we need to match growth rate to quality of result.

3.2.5 It also does not mean that we should artificially constrict our imaginations in considering possible future inclusions: for example, there are worthwhile ideas in Appendix D of the *Evaluation* to be considered. One can imagine, for instance, the inclusion of an entire institutional collection on the World Register if it is clearly of overwhelming importance: but the rapid inclusion of such several such collections would an entirely different message!

3.2.6 If regional and national Memory of the World registers mirrored the same careful selectivity, one could expect a comparable impact at the regional and national levels.

### 3.3 Comprehensiveness

3.3.1 The register needs to be comprehensive in scope: not just traditional written, printed or manuscript material, but the harder-to-define area of graphic materials and the spectrum of 20<sup>th</sup> century media - including all types of audiovisual materials and the emanations of the Internet. To keep this in perspective, it should be noted that half the people who have ever lived are alive now, and hence over half the total documentary heritage and memory of humankind has been created in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It may be easier to focus on (say) a 400-year-old document as meriting inclusion on the Memory of the World register than to sift a film or TV programme of world importance from the vast output of our film studios and TV networks - but it is our obligation to do so. More often than not, it is the “modern” media that have the shortest shelf life and, therefore, merit urgent attention.

3.3.2 In the same way, we need to be careful that the concept of documentary heritage is not presumed to be the exclusive property of a particular type of cultural institution (libraries, archives, museums etc.) or a particular profession or discipline, or apply only to material in such institutional settings. Particular items on the Memory of the World register may prove to be kept within other organizational settings or in private hands.

### **3.4 Credible Evaluation Process**

3.4.1 The credibility (and, therefore, the image and the impact) of the Memory of the World Register rests on the self-evident quality of its content. It must be such as to rapidly convince an average, educated reader that not only is every item indeed critical and precious, but that over time the overall balance of identified inclusions - chronologically, geographically and, in terms of diversity - is about right.

3.4.2 the process of selecting items for inclusion needs, therefore, to be *rigorous* rather than *rapid*. It does not matter if it takes a couple of years, or longer, for a nomination to reach the point of decision by the IAC, if that is what it takes to develop a convincing case for inclusion: it does not matter that the process is seen to be careful and thorough, and to communicate the message that inclusion in the Register is not a step taken lightly. Along with a high degree of *selectivity*, a high degree of *rigour* adds to the credibility of the Memory of the World label.

3.4.3 By definition, a body as small as the IAC cannot contain within its own membership enough detailed expertise to be able to reliably evaluate and validate every nomination. Rather, the IAC will need to judge the quality of the cases presented to it by those who *do* have credible expertise to evaluate the nomination in question. It needs to be the last stop on the path, rather than the first. It follows that the nomination process needs to allow for such cases to be developed before the nomination reaches the IAC.

3.4.4 At the same time, the nomination of an item for the Register needs to be a democratic and accessible process. In many cases, we could expect nominations to be initiated by or through regional and national Memory of the World committees. But there will be other cases where this will be neither possible, easy or appropriate . . . for example, where a country does not have a national committee or the nominee does not have access to a regional committee, or the impetus may need to come from



an entirely different direction. So the instigators of a nomination may be (for example)

- a national, regional or global professional or academic association or NGO
- a body representing a transnational or subnational cultural minority
- a government or a government institution
- a corporation or private organisation
- a private individual
- the IAC itself

because what really matters is not *who* nominates it but *what* is nominated.

3.4.5 The process which follows the receipt of a nomination by the Secretariat must be thorough and appropriate and is a subject in itself.

### **3.5 “Value Added” of the Memory of the World Concept**

3.5.1 The validity of the Memory of the World programme rests on its potential to deliver an outcome which cannot be achieved any other way. There must be some “value added” dimension above and beyond the work which archives, libraries, museums, governments, NGOs and the rest are already doing. Such a topic is a paper in itself but I touch on it here because this “value added” dimension should inform the nomination, selection and approval process.

3.5.2 Of course, the programme has the potential to offer funding, facilitation and other services. However, its unique attribute is the capacity to exercise a comprehensive and objective global perspective on the documentary heritage which is independent of time, political or ethnic boundaries, and so to promote the adoption of universal principles and changes in global consciousness. By clearly and authoritatively identifying what documentary materials are of paramount value, it can encourage change in the way they (and, by extension, the global documentary heritage) are perceived, preserved and accessed.

### **3.6 Use of Title and Logo**

3.6.1 the use of the Memory of the World name and logo, and especially its use to identify particular items as having been listed in the World Register, merits careful consideration along with the reviewing and tightening of selection criteria. It is crucial not to “debase the currency” by the inappropriate or unregulated use of the logo.

3.6.2 At the same time, there is room for some lateral thinking about how the logo and name may be used in other ways, not necessarily directly related to the World Register. Appendix D of the *External Evaluation* document offers some suggestions. Perhaps we can think of others!

## **4. Specific Issues**

### **4.1 Refining and Developing the Criteria**

4.1.1 The basic criteria for inclusion in the Register have been well conceived but there is a need to refine and test them now, both in the light of experience and in the light of comments made elsewhere in this paper and in other documents. There is a need, especially, to consider the issues of greater selectivity, comprehensiveness, and the relative weighting of the criteria. This should also involve elaborating the criteria: a useful tool could be the construction of some fictitious scenarios as a means of testing or demonstrating how a particular type of item might be measured against them.

To undertake such a review is a significant task in itself and outside the scope of this paper. It is suggested that it be undertaken by one of the working groups.

4.1.2 To complement the revised criteria there is a need for a clear, simply worded but comprehensive public statement which sets out the vision and purpose of the Memory of the World programme, the selection criteria and an explanation of the process of receiving and assessing nominations. The need for such a statement, which can be used consistently around the world - in brochure format and translated into as many languages as possible - was identified by the First Regional Memory of the World Experts Meeting held in Xiamen, China (in December 1997).

4.1.3 The criteria for the World Register need to be suitably recast as reference points for the respective regional and national registers. While there would be some logic in introducing variations to suit specific countries or regions, the overall selectivity and rigour of the World Register needs to be reflected at the regional and national levels.

### **4.2 Guidelines for Applying Criteria to Specific Circumstances**

4.2.1 Existing entries on the World Register, as well as the current queue of nominations, reflect a geographic bias towards Europe, a format-based bias towards manuscript materials and a chronological bias towards the 18<sup>th</sup> century and earlier. Developing strategies and guidelines to achieve a more balanced coverage in the register will be essential to its credibility as well as its impact on contemporary attitudes. This will not be easy - the IAC is itself a microcosm of the differing world views and subjectivities which need to be harmonized - but it is necessary.

4.2.2 Regional or national Memory of the World committees so far cover only part of the world and it may be some time before anything like a complete network can be achieved. At the same time, nominations need to be encouraged from other sources - such as NGOs or individual collecting institutions - and, where necessary, may need to be initiated by the IAC itself. Encouraging and initiating nominations - as opposed to responding to those initiated by Memory of the World committees or others - involves careful judgments, the clear statement of guidelines in advance, and a recognition of the politics involved. For example, were the IAC itself to initiate a nomination for an item from a very under-represented part of the world, could it ultimately reject the nomination should it prove, after expert analysis, not to meet the criteria?

4.2.3 There are two types of instance in which the IAC will have to manage the consequences of rejecting a nomination. The first is in deciding to reject a new nomination, regardless of how it was initiated or by whom. The second - and probably more difficult - is in deciding to remove an item from the register because it no longer meets the criteria and guidelines. It is inevitable, as the programme develops and the criteria and guidelines are tested, that they will evolve and change. It is equally inevitable - if the World Register is to have the credibility it needs - that some items presently listed will have to be removed at some stage. Guidelines for both making the decision, and managing the process, will need to be developed.

4.2.4 A consequence of having a hierarchy of international, regional and national committees is that their terms of reference, and the way that they relate to each other, have to be defined. Supporting such a network as it grows, and maintaining communications within it, will be a major task. Further, to the extent that these committees maintain regional and national registers, there will need to be careful quality control to ensure that selection standards, guidelines and processes remain in step with those at the international level. If this is not done, any differing standards will tend to undermine the credibility of the programme globally.

### **4.3 Procedures for Processing Nominations**

4.3.1 As mentioned above, the criteria and guidelines for lodging and processing nominations need to be made clear and accessible via a standard statement. Redesign of the nomination form - whether it be available in hard copy or on line - should accompany the design of that statement.

4.3.2 The contents of the form should be revisited to ensure that it comprehends all the international elements that would be required as the basis for a fully informed nomination and recommendation. To some extent these elements would be predictable, to some extent they will need to be specific to the nomination.

4.3.3 There needs to be a clear and adequate mechanism to:

- a. Receive and register incoming nominations, filter out obviously ineligible ones, and manage the queue of nominations in process.
- b. Decide on the range of information needed to properly support each project and correspond as necessary with the proponents to ensure that they assemble this.
- c. Separately, seek independent expert opinion on each nomination proposal.
- d. When the information gathering process is complete, assess the nomination and develop a recommendation (e.g. Include in World Register, include in Regional or National Register, reject).
- e. Present a documented recommendation to the IAC for decision.

Whether this mechanism should be the Secretariat, the Bureau, a new subcommittee of the IAC or some combination of these, is a matter for consideration, dependent in part on the likely workload involved.

4.3.4 The quality of documentation on each nomination submitted to the biennial IAC meeting is a matter for guidance by the IAC, but I would suggest that the quantity needs to be kept within realistic bounds. The IAC will also need to keep a general overview of the way the World Register is developing, the effect of new listings and de-listings, and monitoring compliance with the selection criteria and guidelines. It cannot realistically consider the detail of, say, a hundred new nominations within a single meeting.

4.3.5 As a general principle, I would like to see it as important to have some degree of independent expert assessment of each nomination: that is, assessment by a qualified individual or body which has NOT been suggested or obtained by the proponent.

## 5. **Proposed Terms of Reference for Working Groups**

### *Group1: Refine and Develop the Criteria*

- \_ Review and develop the existing criteria, with a view to testing their continuing validity, establishing greater selectivity and comprehensiveness, and correcting existing omissions and ambiguities.
- \_ Consider whether any existing criteria should be modified or deleted or new ones added.
- \_ Consider a relative weighting of the criteria.
- \_ Produce a revised statement of criteria.
- \_ Develop a public statement (see para 4.1.2 above).
- \_ Develop recommendations for applying the criteria to regional and national registers.

### *Group 2: Develop Guidelines for Applying Criteria to Specific Circumstances*

- \_ Develop guidelines for achieving, over time, a coverage in the register that is balanced in terms of geography, chronology, format, national/transnational representation and otherwise.
- \_ Identify major gaps in the present coverage of the register and develop strategies for stimulating nominations to fill them.
- \_ Develop guidelines for the filtering and rejection of nominations, and for the de-registering of items that no longer meet the criteria.
- \_ Develop guidelines for managing quality control of Regional and National Registers.

### *Group 3: Develop Procedures for Processing Incoming Nominations*

- \_ Develop detailed procedures for filtering, processing, gathering information and managing incoming nominations.
- \_ Redesign and review the content of the nomination form (see para 4.3.2 above).
- \_ Consider alternatives and recommend an appropriate mechanism for managing nominations and their preparation for decision by the IAC (see para 4.3.3 above).

## 6. **Conclusion**

6.1 Conveners, and some members, of the three groups have been identified (cf. minutes of Tashkent meeting, item 8). I would suggest that the Bureau agree on arrangements for completing the membership of each group, and that the conveners then consult with their group members on how their respective tasks are to be addressed. If all members are connected to e-mail, much of the consultation, and exchange of drafts as they develop, could be done by this method.

6.2 A deadline for the completion of each group's work and the circulation of its output among IAC members should be set by the Bureau. It is important that this be done in good time for any necessary decisions at the next IAC meeting.

Ray Edmondson  
10 August 1998

## "Memory of the World" - Bureau of the International Advisory Committee

### Nominations for the World Register

#### *Deferred from Tashkent:*

- Belarus:** **Manuscripts and Rare Books of the National Library** - Further information in support of the nomination awaited.
- Belgium:** **The Archives of Emile Vandervelde** - The Bureau considered that the nomination did not meet the standard required under Criteria 1. The nomination was not recommended for inclusion in the World Register.
- Centre of Communist Archives** - The Bureau considered that the nomination failed to provide the necessary level of justification for the archives to be included in the World Register and was not recommended to the IAC.
- Bulgaria:** **Unique Manuscripts of the Balkans** - The Bureau considered that the Criteria had not been adequately addressed in the nomination and recommended that further consideration of the nomination be deferred until additional justification for inclusion in the World Register was received.
- China (Tibet):** **The Tibetan Archives** - The period covered by the nomination was unclear. It was felt that the nomination should focus on periods and events which had an impact on an area wider than purely Tibet. Although the collection contains documents of great interest, the Bureau felt unable to recommend this nomination to the IAC at this stage.
- Denmark:** **Classen Collection of Natural History Plate Works** - The collection, while worthy, is very diffuse in its subject matter. In addition, the nomination does not address the criteria. The Bureau felt unable to recommend this nomination to the IAC.
- Nigeria:** **Black Heritage and Kanta of Kebbi** - Despite requests for further information in support of these nominations, none had been received. In addition, none of the experts in film that have been consulted were able to find any record of the films. The Bureau felt unable to recommend these nominations to the IAC.

**Pakistan:** **Quaid-i-Azam** - Subject to some minor editing of the text of the nomination, the Bureau recommend that the IAC consider this collection for inclusion on the World Register.

**Paper Archives of the Freedom Movement** - The Bureau felt that this nomination was only part of the story of the Freedom Movement in the Indian Sub-Continent. It was recommended that a joint application from India and Pakistan, and perhaps including Myanmar (Burma), would be a much better nomination.

**Trinidad & Tobago:** **The Eric Williams Memorial Collection** - The Bureau recommended that this collection be considered for inclusion on the World Register by the IAC subject to some minor changes to the text of the nomination. It was also recommended that the title be changed by deleting the word "Memorial".





## "Memory of the World" - Bureau of the International Advisory Committee

### Nominations for the World Register

#### *New Nominations:*

**Austria:**        **Johann Strauss Jnr. "Die Fledermaus" ("The Bat")** - The Bureau felt that this nomination failed to demonstrate what was the significance of the work of Johann Strauss Jnr. and Die Fledermaus in particular. They questioned the relative importance of Strauss when compared with other Viennese composers such as Mozart. This nomination was not recommended for consideration by the IAC at this stage.

**The Phonogrammarchiv of the Austrian Academy of Sciences** - While accepting the importance of the Phonogrammarchiv's collection, the Bureau felt that to recommend the whole collection for inclusion on the World Register would be wrong. A revised nomination focusing on either the early recordings or on specific collections within the Phonogrammarchiv's holdings would be better.

**Benin:**        **Collection of Ancient Books** - The Bureau considered this collection to be of great value and recommended that they be the foundation of the Dahomey National Register.

**China:**        **Archives of the Ming and Qing Dynasty Central Government and Imperial Court** - The Bureau felt that this vast collection contains within it a number of fonds or series that were of outstanding importance to world history. Accordingly, the Bureau recommends that the nomination be re-submitted focusing on one or more of this fonds that cover periods and events that have a wide influence on world history.

**Costa Rica:**    **Colonial Records of Cartago, Guatemala and Area**  
**Collection of Colonial Maps and Plans**  
**Records of the Court of Justice for Central America**  
**Federal Records**  
**Anexion a Mexico**  
**Provincial Independiente**  
**Collection of Jose Fidel Tristan**  
**Collection Album of Jose Maria Figueroa Oreamuno**  
**Records of the Presidency of the Republic**  
**Guerra y Marina**  
**Records of the Constitutional Congress** - The Bureau found all of these nominations lacking in evidence to support of the claim that the

documents were of world significance. In general, the Selection Criteria were not addressed. Accordingly, the nominations cannot be recommended to the IAC for consideration for inclusion on the World Register at this stage.

**Greece:** **Oral Histories of Cretan Resistance during World War II** - The Bureau wished to have more information about the methodology employed in the collection of these oral history recordings. It was also felt that comments from experts in the field should be sought to help confirm or otherwise the importance of these recordings as a record of the Cretan theatre of war. The Bureau cannot recommend this nomination to the IAC at the moment.

**Lithuania:** **Autograph Collection of Vilnius University Library** - The Bureau could find no common thread between these documents other than the fact that they are autographs. In addition, the nomination does not address the Selection Criteria. The collection cannot be recommended for consideration by the IAC at present.

**Montenegro:** **Oktoih prvoglasnik (Ochtoechos - First Voice)** - The Bureau felt that the significance of this document - an early, if not the first, printed book from Montenegro - had not been demonstrated. It was recommended that more evidence and expert advice be sought.

**Jevand elje Divoša Tihoradica (The Gospel of Divoš Tihoradic)** - With so many Gospels from the period, the Bureau felt that the significance of this particular one had not been demonstrated. It was recommended that more evidence and expert advice be sought.

**Philippines:** **The Siniloan Copper Plate**  
**Philippine Paleographs**  
**The Philippine Declaration of Independence**  
**Three Manuscript Texts by Jose Rizal - Noli Me Tangere;**  
**El Filibusterismo;**  
**Mu Ultimo Adios**  
**The Earliest Score of the Filipino National Anthem**  
**The Trial of Bonifacio Manuscripts**  
**The Malolos Constitution of 1899**

**The Filipino Constitution of 1935** - These ten documents and groups of documents were included in one nomination. In addition, a number of other documents were quoted as possible candidates for inclusion on the World Register. The Bureau could not decide on the basis of the information provided. However, it appeared that the first two items may be of wide significance. A re-drafted nomination for each item should be sought containing better evidence to support the claim for inclusion on the World Register and, in particular, with more attention paid to the Selection Criteria.

**Poland:** **Scientific Codices from the Jagiellonian Library, Cracow** - The Bureau accepted that the main work in this nomination - the original

manuscript of Copernicus's *De revolutionibus libri sex* - was potentially of world significance. The other works, however, were not. It was recommended that the nomination be redrafted focusing on the Copernicus work and including other subsidiary works that have a direct connection to it. This revised nomination would then be recommended for consideration by the IAC.

**Works of Fryderyk Chopin** - The Bureau recommended that this nomination be considered by the IAC for inclusion on the World Register subject to the inclusion of some audio and textual illustrations being included.

**Collections of the Ossolinski National Institute, Wroclaw** - The Bureau considered that there were three separate nominations contained in one. The nomination should be re-drafted focusing on the three sections separately and giving more attention to the Selection Criteria. The nomination is not recommended for consideration by the IAC in its present form.

**Archives of the Warsaw Ghetto (Ringelblum Archive)** - The Bureau recommends that this nomination be considered by the IAC for inclusion on the World Register. It also recommends that the text of the nomination be edited to improve its clarity.

**The Crown Archives** - The Bureau found this nomination lacked focus. It recommended that the nomination be re-drafted concentrating on fonds or series that had a wide significance.

**The Old Polish Archives of the City of Cracow** - While the Archives of Cracow are of outstanding importance locally, many of the series and groups of documents had little significance outside Cracow. The Bureau, therefore, recommended that the nomination be re-drafted with a focus on series of documents which demonstrated at least a Central European significance.

**Codex Suprasliensis and Cyrillic Manuscripts** - The Bureau considered this to be two nominations in one. The Codex Suprasliensis was thought to be of world significance but the nomination covered only one of three sections of the book. The Bureau recommends that the National Library in Warsaw cooperate with the Lublin University Library and the Russian National Library in St Petersburg to make a joint nomination for the complete book. As was recommended by the IAC in Tashkent, a joint management board should also be set up to ensure that there is a common policy for the safekeeping of the three sections.

The Bureau was less clear about the significance of the Cyrillic manuscript collection. This was not recommended for consideration by the IAC at this time.

**Sweden:** **Parish Registration Records of the Church of Sweden** - While of outstanding interest to historians researching Swedish social history, the Bureau could not accept that this collection was of more than national significance.

**Viet Nam:** **Papers of Pétrus Ky** - This collection demonstrates that not every one was opposed to colonial rule. While this may be unfashionable, the collection does, therefore, shed a significant light on the tensions at this period of history in Indo-China. The Bureau recommended that this collection be considered for inclusion on the Vietnamese National Register and, if one is formed in Indo-China, on the Regional Register.

## "Memory of the World" - Bureau of the International Advisory Committee

### Visit to the University Library, Cambridge

The Bureau visited the University Library, Cambridge on Thursday September 3<sup>rd</sup> to see the work being undertaken by the Library to make some of its manuscripts accessible via the Internet. The Bureau were shown how two particular parts of the Library have been digitised - a 13<sup>th</sup> Century illuminated manuscript book *The Life of King Edward the Confessor* and manuscript fragments from the Genizah of a Synagogue in Cairo.

The Bureau began its tour of the Library with the original manuscript of *The Life of King Edward the Confessor* - the Saxon King of England from 1042 to 1066. The history of the book was explained by Dr Mark Nicholls of the Manuscript Department. Then the Bureau went to the photographic studio to see the equipment used to capture the pages. The staff photographer, Les Goodey, showed how the equipment was used and the care that had to be taken to light the pages evenly to obtain the best possible image. The next stage was to set the digitised images into the web pages with the accompanying texts and finally make it available for viewing via the World Wide Web.

The manuscript can be found at <http://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/cgi-bin/Ee.3.59/browse>

While *The Life of King Edward the Confessor* was most interesting, it was of local significance compared with the Taylor-Schechter Collection. Ellis Weinberger, Research Assistant, Genizah Research Unit, explained the significance of the manuscripts.

The manuscripts come from an annex - the Genizah - to the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Cairo which was used as a receptacle for any unwanted writings. It was considered wrong to destroy any document that might contain the name of God. Over the centuries, the Genizah became full of all types of document from the various communities bordering the Mediterranean Sea - religious writings (Christian, Islamic as well as Jewish), notes from husbands to wives, shopping lists - in a number of languages (Hebrew, Spanish, Arabic etc.). In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century a number of these documents came to the market and, as a result, came to the attention of Dr Solomon Schechter who negotiated to buy most of the manuscripts. The collection contains about 140,000 documents in a various states of preservation.

The Taylor-Schechter unit has produced a number of thematic catalogues of the documents and is now making them available via the Internet. In addition, a number of documents have been digitised and are also available on the Internet. The same

basic system used to digitise *The Life of King Edward the Confessor* has been used to digitise manuscripts from the Taylor-Schechter collection.

The home page for the collection is <http://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/Taylor-Schechter>