

## QUESTIONS OF WRITTEN HERITAGE AND ACCESS : SOME POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

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### *Access to What, to Whom, for Whom, and Why?*

*Knowledge as a tangible object.* Compare attitudes towards what a manuscript is – for example that the knowledge therein is the possession of the manuscript owner and therefore if duplicated or widely dispersed in identical format, this diminishes the knowledge and prestige of the owner--with the concept that the manuscript is merely a way of transmitting information to make it available, and knowledge of that information is an individual matter not linked to the possession of the actual object. What are we talking about when making manuscripts accessible? What is it that is being made accessible?

*Questions of attitudes towards ownership of cultural heritage lie behind any consideration of access.* There are conflicts between private and public, local versus national, and certainly national versus international ownership. Western scholarship regards written heritage as uncontested – the written word is seen to be in itself a tool for making knowledge and information accessible. Compare attitudes towards ownership of material heritage – the actual *things*, the manuscripts themselves, sensitivity for which is to western scholars more understandable, just as artifacts owned by museums acquired in colonial times are now contested objects. There are deep cultural differences in attitudes towards scholarship as linked to heritage and identity. Why should outsiders “know”; and what *can* they know? What right have outsiders to build their careers and prestige through peeping into the culture of others?

*Conflicts surrounding a sense of ownership* of and access to manuscripts arise at every level of the chain. Suspicion towards foreign access to one’s “own” literary heritage is particularly charged because it is linked to the foreign western business of scholarship, publishing and prestige, which in themselves purport to be international businesses transcending national boundaries. This is a world to which access is already restricted to scholars from Asia – through language, and often – but not always – money, and the fact that western scholarship sets its own rules.

*Money and technology.* Everywhere in the world of manuscript ownership and access, money is involved but not spoken of directly. Access to funding sources for projects to save, conserve, preserve and duplicate written heritage is usually taken

for granted by westerners/Japanese. Such funds are found for high motives, for doing good. But at the same time such activities are also businesses in themselves. In developing countries, access to project funds is often linked to a culture and attitude of petty corruption. Access to money is linked to one's status in the bureaucratic structure – the higher the status, the more the expectation of receipt of honoraria, etc., for less or no actual task.

*Initiative—getting things done and seeding ideas.* In developing countries, particularly, access not only to funding but to moving the wheels of bureaucracy to allow one to get things done is entirely linked to social status and place in that bureaucracy. The daily users and keepers of tradition—written and otherwise—are at the bottom of the heap, and their voices unheard.

*Access*—refers not only to access to the physical manuscript, but also includes:

- access to the philological and cultural tools to read them
- the social prestige given to reading such material from the past/appreciation of both the skill involved and the value of the material itself
- participation in a wider community of discussion about the contents – often conducted (predominantly in written form) in foreign languages
- participation in and access to opportunities to raise discussions of attitudes towards knowledge, cultural heritage, nationalism and internationalism, cooperation, exchange.

*All characters appearing in the following story are entirely fictitious.  
Any resemblance to any person is entirely coincidental.*

## THE KEEPERS

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### *Mr. Pustaka*

In 1937, when Mr. Pustaka was 18 years old, he was formally accepted as a dancer in the palace of Yogyakarta, central Java and given a title to show his rank as a palace official. Because of his expertise in reading and writing Javanese script and his Dutch high school education, he was soon given the task of copying manuscripts held in the palace library to be used for weekly rehearsals. Through personal interest he began to collect other manuscripts about history, dance, literature and music, and also copied whole texts or parts of manuscripts from the palace for himself.

From 1942, when the Japanese invaded the Netherlands East Indies, Mr. Pustaka's future as court dancer and keeper of manuscripts was no longer secure. When the war ended and the republic of Indonesia was declared, the type of court life that had been protected under Dutch colonial rule was over. Mr. Pustaka no longer had a palace salary, and regular court performances ceased. He took up school teaching - but continued to collect manuscripts and to copy texts from the palace library. He also began to write his own texts about dance and music, compiling bits from other manuscripts in his collection about history and philosophy, adding his own thoughts, interpretations, and stories he had picked up from other artists over the years.

For the next fifteen years or so, no one was much interested in Mr. Pustaka's skills and knowledge. But in the early 1970s, staff from the new government performing arts schools, eager to find some kind of written material for their newly-created courses, began to visit him to ask about his manuscript collection. Access to the palace library was difficult - it was rarely open, and was in disrepair. The collection of manuscripts was not organised in any order, and no lists were available. Many of the young teachers at the government school found it difficult to read the Javanese script anyway. It was easier to visit Mr. Pustaka to ask him for manuscripts, and request his help in reading and transcribing the contents. Mr. Pustaka felt flattered that the young teachers respected his status as the keeper of knowledge, and pleased that they had come to him, and not to another palace dancer, Mr. Waluyo, who also kept copies of various manuscripts from the palace, but whose collection was not as complete as his own. Anyway, in Mr. Pustaka's

opinion, Mr. Waluyo's knowledge was limited. He was not such a good dancer and his experience was limited to one particular style.

At about the same time, foreign students started to arrive and ask for private lessons. Mr. Pustaka was amazed at this interest in Javanese culture by young people from so far away - America, Europe, Australia - when there was so little interest shown by young people in Indonesia. Many of the foreigners wanted to study dance, and they paid good money. Mr Pustaka found himself to be in real demand. These foreign students also began to pay interest in his manuscript collection. Mr. Pustaka gladly made copies and transcriptions for them. Using a typewriter and carbon paper, he was able to make multiple copies - say 4 or 5 at once, which meant that he could earn money for each copy, but had to do the copying and transcription only once. Mr. Pustaka knew that by giving copies of his manuscripts to his foreign students, it would show them that he was the best teacher of dance, the one with the deepest knowledge, and so the students would come to him for interviews and lessons, rather than to Mr. Waluyo.

One day, Mr. Pustaka was invited to the dance school as an examiner. There he found his manuscript on the history of dance that he had copied for one of the young teachers, being used as teaching material - but it existed in about 30 copies in a new form called photocopy. This was the first time he had seen a photocopy. His initial pride at seeing his own manuscript used at the school turned to dismay when he found that his name was not on any of the copies, and that the teacher of the course was claiming this text as his own. Even worse, the teacher had recently got his B.A. degree which meant that he got paid more as an examiner than Mr.. Pustaka did himself - despite the fact that the young teacher had studied dance for only 5 years, and knew nothing about its history and meaning.

Mr. Pustaka's feeling of unease as he saw his knowledge spread far and wide deepened as his foreign students returned one by one to their own countries. One of his American dance students who had been doing research for her degree in history had spent months visiting him and discussing his manuscripts about Javanese dance and music. A few years later, he heard that she had got her degree, and one day her received a copy of her thesis in the post. He could follow some of the English, and could see that she had used a lot of the information he gave her. He had mixed feelings - on the one hand he was proud, and showed the book to people who came to visit (especially to friends of Mr. Waluyo) - but at the same time he could not help but feel a little dismayed to see his name was nowhere on the cover.

Mr. Pustaka decided that he would move his collection of manuscripts from the bookshelf in the sitting room where his visitors could see them, to his bedroom where they were safely hidden away. He knew that he had to hold carefully to those manuscripts that he had not yet copied. If he kept on giving copies to people

who could now so easily use them to write books or to make so many photocopies of them to give to others without letting people know that this was *his* knowledge, where would that leave him? He would be nobody.

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### *Tom*

In the early 1970s Tom was a doctoral candidate in history at UCLA. He had studied Javanese dance in America and decided to focus his research on Javanese perceptions of history as manifest in narratives of cultural history, particularly dance and music. When doing field research on a Fulbright research grant, the most important of his dance teachers had been Mr. Pustaka. He had soon decided to specialise in Mr. Pustaka's dance style.

Mr. Pustaka also had a wonderful treasure trove of manuscripts, which he would pull out, one by one, from his back room. Tom would read them together with Mr. Pustaka during his private lessons, and then ask for certain of them to be copied for his research. He was touched by the fact that Mr. Pustaka was so enthusiastic about his interest, and felt that he had a duty to his teacher to use the information that had been given to him, and, no matter what, to write up his research. He was particularly interested in Mr. Pustaka's own particular interpretation and rewriting of the manuscripts, to illustrate the process of personalisation of cultural history. As a Javanese dancer thoroughly immersed in court arts and history, and as an artist still involved in actually creating texts about that history, Mr. Pustaka was to Tom the very epitomisation of Javanese-ness. He took copious notes at his lessons, and later taped their conversations. Mr. Pustaka was, to him, the voice of Java.

But Tom was also concerned about the state of the manuscripts themselves. While the manuscripts clearly meant a lot to Mr. Pustaka, nevertheless they were just piled carelessly in the bookshelves or even on the floor. Many had pages loose or missing. Some manuscripts had insect holes, or tea stains. Tom wondered about the state of the manuscripts in the palace, and finally asked Mr. Pustaka to if he could see the collection. He was dismayed to see that the collection was in a terrible condition - manuscripts piled everywhere, with no system of shelving. The roof of the library was leaking, and many of the pages of manuscripts had been torn out as scrap paper. No one seemed to care. Why were the staff and students at the dance school not using these manuscripts, he wondered – and why were they and other Javanese scholars not saving them? Was this a question of money, or just neglect? If they are so worried about foreigners having access to these manuscripts, he thought, why were they not reading them and caring for them themselves? He wondered what he could he do to save this precious knowledge and make it

accessible to scholars. As a research student, he was familiar with writing proposals, and might be able to find the money to save these manuscripts. He decided to seek funds from a US philanthropic organisation for a documentation and microfilming project. In the meantime, his access to the manuscript collection allowed him to further his own doctoral research. As he was still far from write-up, he did not want to share information about the manuscripts with other foreign researchers who heard of his work. He needed to keep this to himself for the time being until later when he might publish his dissertation and maybe a catalogue of the collection. After all, he was able to read these manuscripts only through a long period of study and building up a good relationship with Mr. Pustaka and others at the palace. Let other researchers go through all the work he had to if they also want this information, at least until all the results are published under his name.

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### *Mrs. Nuryati*

Mrs. Nuryati is head of the local government office for arts and culture in Yogyakarta. She is the daughter of Mr. Waluyo, one of Yogyakarta's most famous court dancers (now in his late 70s), and she herself is also a dancer. Mrs. Nuryati is in charge of government projects for arts heritage, and although government funds are minimal and her own salary negligible, she is able to get more funds for her office and staff by submitting plans for specific projects to the central government office in Jakarta. Unfortunately this usually meant meddling from the central office. They would decide to send down “experts” from Jakarta to supervise, people from the university or from the government office who thought they knew more than local people just because they had some fancy title or government position. She and her staff would have to play along, or otherwise the project money would dry up.

Mrs. Nuryati knew that many foreigners came to study music and dance in Yogyakarta. Some studied dance with her father, but many studied with Mr. Pustaka, who taught a different, less sophisticated style. Mr. Pustaka had never been as accomplished a dancer as her father. It was well known, though, that Mr. Pustaka had a collection of manuscripts that they say he stole from the palace, and he made money by selling them to foreigners. Because he still had an honorary position at the palace, he had also helped a foreign student read all the manuscripts there and copy whatever he liked. Later the student had published some of these manuscripts using his own name, and had got a position as a professor at a university because of this. Mrs. Nuryati had once seen a copy of his book at Mr. Pustaka's place. It certainly looked very impressive as far as books go, but then no

matter how clever those foreigners are, they never really manage to get to the true spirit of Javanese culture. They might be able to analyse, but they will never understand. That student had also managed to get huge project money from an American organisation to put the manuscripts on microfilm, and had earned money for himself running the project. Copies of these films had been sent overseas to libraries, where now anyone can read them and make copies.

Mrs. Nuryati decided to shape a project run by her staff to reorganise the palace library and catalogue the manuscripts. It angered Mrs. Nuryati that foreigners have such easy access to money and information. It should be local Javanese reading these manuscripts. The information about history and culture belongs to them, after all, and they are the only ones who are able to truly understand it. It is too easy, she thought, for foreigners to exploit the generosity of the old people who have this information and who are so easily flattered by foreign attention. These teachers need to be alerted to the fact that they are being exploited and that the knowledge of Javanese history and culture is all being carried off overseas. There should be rules to control access. What if all the knowledge of Javanese culture is in the future all held outside of Java, by foreigners? She felt sure that this project would easily get funds from Jakarta, and that she would get good credit towards her promotion for devising it.

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### ***Dr. Hamid***

Dr. Hamid is the Director-General for Culture. Although his area of expertise is education rather than culture, as a Sundanese he has championed the cause of his Sundanese culture throughout his career. In his new position he knows that his role is to strengthen national culture, and to ensure that expressions of local cultural identity do not threaten national integrity. But privately, he is annoyed at the disproportionate interest given to central Javanese culture both nationally and internationally, and feels that the rich Sundanese culture is under-researched and little known.

Dr. Hamid knows of the Javanese manuscript collections held in the palaces, and has heard of the documentation and microfilming projects organised by foreigners and paid for with foreign money. As most of those projects had come through his office for the official permission process, he knew how huge those budgets were. In comparison, the annual funds for culture that his office gets from the ministry are miniscule – so of course his office should get a percentage of those foreign funds. Nevertheless, he feels it a shame that such work is spearheaded by foreigners and paid for by foreign money. It smacks of colonialism and third-world dependency.

But on the other hand at least the funds are managed well and the work is done professionally. It is so difficult to get professionalism in the civil service, and maybe one of these projects, if run well, can be used as a model for others.

Dr Hamid is most concerned that control of the manuscript collections is lifted out of local hands and that they become part of the national heritage. The owners must be made to see that their first duty is to the nation, not to their local region or to an aristocracy from an outdated feudal system. Manuscripts are now part of the nation's heritage, not the private libraries of sultans and princes. Ideally, the manuscripts themselves would be moved and kept in the national library. After all who is reading them in the palaces? They would be in better in the national library which has air-conditioning and trained staff. Indonesia needs to build up the prestige of its national institutions. It would also ensure that the manuscripts are not lost – sold to foreigners, for example – and would make them more accessible to the nation. Foreigners would then have to come to the national library to read them, which would ensure that the right systems of control could be put into place.

But then again, Dr. Hamid also knows of a collection of Sundanese manuscripts that he would like documented and microfilmed. He could find some government funds for this, but the costs are high – and if those other manuscript projects could be supported by foreign money, why not this one too? He asked someone from the university to contact the office of both an American and a Japanese foundation to see if they will fund the project. If foreign experts are involved, he has decided to accept this as long as he himself can be project advisor, with an appropriate honorarium of course. Basically, he is wary of including foreigners who get all the credit, and just want to build up their own careers and their own libraries abroad. But then again, having some foreign involvement will mean that this collection of manuscripts gets attention – at last people may realise that Javanese are not the only ones with literature!

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### *Mrs. Pratiwi*

Mrs. Pratiwi is the head of the National Library. She has worked as a librarian all her life, and believes fervently in the need to raise professional standards of librarianship, and public awareness of this profession. She has fought hard over the past 25 years to get the status of the library acknowledged, and used all her connections to get infrastructure funding. Her mission has been to Indonesia's

name to be nationally recognised as the source of expertise and policy direction for all libraries in the country, and internationally known in the world of librarianship. In this, she fights a battle nationally to keep the library out of the direct administrative control of various competing government departments, and to maintain the independence of the national library against encroachments from other national institutions, like the Archives.

Mrs. Pratiwi sees that training workshops for her staff led by foreign experts are excellent in terms of raising the library's prestige. Just this year alone, there have been four workshops in manuscript and microfilm conservation techniques, one funded by the Dutch, one by the Germans, one by the Japanese, and one by the Australians. It seems to be that the more workshops the library organises, the more they seem to be offered by other foreign embassies and agencies. Sometimes Mrs. Pratiwi finds it difficult to fill the numbers for new staff to attend, and so some staff have been to two or three of the same workshops given by different presenters. It helps the staff learn different international styles and approaches, anyway, and of course the staff don't mind attending again because they are given points towards their staff promotion for every workshop they attend. Staff members who have gone to some of these workshops can then be sent out to the regions to teach others what to do. This is good for the status of the library as the nation's source of expertise. Most recently, the head of the arts and culture office in Yogyakarta asked for staff to come and help catalogue manuscripts in the palace. Some work had already been done by a team led by and paid for by Americans, but the library staff improved on this.

The library's manuscript collection was also filmed in a major project funded by an American foundation. It seemed that money was no object, and so the library was able to order the latest equipment and also use project funds for staff training. Some staff were sent overseas for special training. This helped them get promotion, of course, and so most of them moved on to other areas in the library administration. Mrs. Pratiwi was pleased that the library had foreign experts involved with the project in terms of the international attention they brought, but of course these experts just don't really understand how to make sure that staff do not get jealous if some are singled out to work on special projects. The foreign experts also always want to bring in outside Indonesian manuscript experts—non-library staff—to help document and catalogue the manuscripts. This makes problems, of course, with the library staff who feel this is their job, and do not like outsiders who think they know more than them.

Recently, the American foundation stopped funding projects for manuscripts and microfilming. Mrs. Pratiwi doesn't really know why, but it looks like Japanese foundations might be more interested in this kind of project now. She wants to approach them to get money for more equipment to make sure the library is always

up to date. Another national agency in Jakarta has equipment for vacuum pack film storage – but Mrs. Pratiwi does not want to ask them to treat the library’s films. As the nation’s most important keeper of manuscripts, the library must have its own equipment. Then again, some people are talking of scanning now. Maybe the library would stand a better chance of getting another big project funded by the Japanese if it is for the latest scanning equipment?

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### *Tony*

Tony works for an American foundation based in Indonesia and gives grants for cultural activity. He knows Indonesia well, having lived there for many years, and knew most of his grantees before stepping into the job. This helps him get projects moving, but can also be a problem, for friendships are at stake once money comes into the picture. It is easier to give grants – as friends expect - than to follow up on their management, when supervision can be interpreted as a kind of imperialistic interference. He is serious about his work, seeing it as an opportunity to help some good people move ahead with good ideas, and also to spearhead some important projects for Indonesian culture that would otherwise not be done by government – or would be badly done by the government.

Six months into the job, Tony was told that his grant budget was going to be increased by 50%. The foundation’s investments had been doing extremely well, and there was suddenly an increase in everyone’s grant budgets. This was a wonderful opportunity, the memo explained, to make bigger bets – to spend more on worthwhile projects that will have impact, that will make a difference; an opportunity to take risks and bet on the future. Tony was worried – he had to finish all his grant-making by the middle of the year. It was so difficult to find organisations that could even write proposals, let alone handle huge sums of money.

A few years earlier he had given funds to the microfilming project in Yogyakarta headed by an American doctoral student. This had gone pretty well, and had led to a flurry of interest in manuscript projects elsewhere. He saw that this could be now fashioned into a concerted program with various institutions and experts, both foreign and Indonesian, involved. It would be a good way to use these extra funds and also to give focus to his grant-making, especially at a time when staff were being pressured to write up their grants in terms of an overall definitive program statement for the foundation’s Board meeting.

Key to the project was establishing one organisation as the centre for the grant, and then bringing in other outside partners, to demonstrate collaboration. In justifying the grant to the head office, he stressed the imminent loss of Indonesia’s literary heritage, and also the need for staff development in a developing country. Funds

were set aside for study abroad and workshops, with details to be settled later. It was essential for a foreigner to run the project, both to ensure professional standards and to oversee the management of the grant.

After the first eighteen months, the project was running okay, all things considered, with the usual problems of staff changes, murky management, unclear responsibilities, and resentment of the role of the foreign project leader. There was no indication that the library was committed to long-term co-ordinated planning for manuscript conservation and documentation, but nevertheless Tony wrote a good report on the project for the head office, indicating that he was now negotiating a much bigger grant as follow-up, linked to other projects elsewhere. It would not do to write a negative report, anyway. Such things were frowned on at the head office. Tony was pleased that he had his grant budget for next year well mapped out.

At the same time, the World Bank was getting interested in funding heritage projects, and looking around for activities to support. Tony was afraid that they would step in and start funding the library project as well. Clearly, they had little understanding of this field and any funding would just make matters worse. At a lunch meeting with the Bank's project representative, he managed to channel his interest into other areas, such as heritage sites.

After the project had been running for five years, the head office had a major change of staff. Funding for culture worldwide was now going to focus on contemporary cultural expression. Conservation and preservation were no longer funding priorities. Tony had already made plans for follow-up projects all over the country, compilation of catalogues, an exhibition and also a major international workshop to discuss questions of access to microfilms, looking to possible future projects that would provide training in data entry, on-line access to manuscript descriptions and catalogues. Now he realised that this was not going to be the right program to present to the head office.

Maybe the World Bank would be interested?

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### *Jane*

Jane is head librarian for a major European university library which specialises in Southeast Asia. It is particularly renowned for its collection on Indonesia, especially its priceless manuscript collection. Every four years, the funding for the library comes up for review, and a small team of outside evaluators writes a report about the library's collection, staff, and services.

As funds for acquisitions decrease with each budget cut, the library has to justify its staff levels by stressing its expertise and services, especially on a user-pays basis.

Jane knows that library funding is contingent on convincing the university board – and in turn the government that funds the university - of the importance for the nation of maintaining international prestige as the most complete and most significant library and manuscript collection about Indonesia. It is also important to stress the library's role as a service provider, and so the participation of staff at international meetings about library and manuscript matters is most important. Most recently, she has been involved coordinating a meeting to discuss international collaboration between libraries on matters of conservation and access to manuscript and microfilm collections. Now that many collections of manuscripts have been microfilmed in Asia, it is important to discuss questions of access to these films, and Jane knows her library can play a key role. It is always difficult, though, to persuade the libraries and archive holders in Asia to appreciate the value of international cooperation. Many are suspicious of opening access beyond their own countries, seeing their collections as part of national heritage, which is threatened if too openly accessible to outsiders.

In the 1980s, her library had participated in various microfilm projects in Indonesia funded by an American foundation, through providing training workshops and information for the manuscript documentation. In return, the library received copies of the entire collection of microfilms. Recently, Jane heard that some other libraries were being provided with copies of these microfilms free of charge – with funds from a Japanese foundation-funded project. This did not seem fair. After all, they had not contributed to the earlier projects in any way. And if other libraries also got complete collections, her own library would lose some prestige as the major and most complete collection. This would have repercussions on her next library evaluation. It was imperative for her to be at the forefront of all discussions of access and development projects for manuscripts in Asia, in order to maintain her library's leading role in the field.

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### *Tuti*

Tuti has been working on her PhD dissertation at the University of Indonesia for the past five years, where she is also a tutor. She is studying philology in the department of Indonesian languages, specialising in Javanese. She herself doesn't often speak Javanese. She grew up in Jakarta, and only hears Javanese when her parents speak it at home, or of course when she goes to visit family in central Java. She did not learn to read Javanese script until she went to university. But she loves

the language, and is fascinated by the rich literature and history that the language opens up to her.

Tuti's dissertation is a critical edition of a nineteenth century Javanese treatise on the arts, from Yogyakarta. She was inspired to write on this through the work of Professor Tom, a world-famous American specialist of Javanese history. She is amazed that a foreigner can know so much about Javanese language and culture. He is a real example. His book, a revision of his 1980 dissertation, was recently published – in English of course. Tuti could read most of it with the help of a dictionary, although there were some theoretical bits where the English was too difficult to understand. Most of the reading material set by her supervisor is also in English – and some in Dutch. Tuti wishes there was more reading material in Indonesian. She just doesn't have the time needed to read so much in foreign languages, what with her teaching load in the department and extra projects often given to her by her supervisor. Last year, for example, she had to go to Lombok to advise on a cataloguing project. Her supervisor was supposed to go, but didn't have time and so asked her to go instead. They split the fee from the Directorate of Culture, and Tuti was pleased to get a little extra money.

Tuti has been in contact with Professor Tom to ask him about what manuscripts she should read. He was helpful, and told her that she could get microfilm copies of most of them from the national library, but that she should make sure that she still consult the original manuscripts in the library and in the Yogyakarta palace library. Tuti was able to use Professor Tom's catalogue to get the references, and went to the library to start her research. It took a couple of weeks to get into the manuscript room. She had get letters of reference from a her professor, her supervisors and her head of department; renew her identity card (she had forgotten to change her place of residence, so it was out of date); and write an outline of her dissertation topic explaining why she had to see the manuscripts. When she got permission to use the manuscript room, it was not easy to see manuscripts other than the ones she had already stipulated. She found another related manuscript quite by chance – one day an Australian researcher was reading in the manuscript room (she was only in Jakarta for a week, but had managed to get permission immediately) - and by chance she saw that the manuscript she was reading was on a related topic.

It was much more difficult trying to order microfilm copies of the manuscripts. Professor Tom had told her that the library could make copies, but at the library she was told that this was not possible unless she got permission first from the Yogyakarta palace. Someone even said she had to get permission from an American foundation that had given money for the films. But when she tried to contact the palace, no-one knew that the films even existed, and no-one knew who she had to ask, and when she contacted the foundation, the person there told her that they had nothing to do with permission for copying the films – this was the right of

the library. Tuti went to Yogyakarta to try to get a letter – and also to read some of the manuscripts in the palace. When she asked the palace custodian for the manuscripts, she found that the numbers were not the same as the ones that Professor Tom had given her – and she was not allowed to actually search in the palace library to find the manuscript herself.

Tuti reread Professor Tom's catalogue carefully. She realised that there was a complete set of microfilm copies of all the manuscripts she wanted in a university library in Holland. It would be so much easier to read them there. Maybe she could get a travel grant from somewhere to go there for her research – she had heard that the Dutch government or maybe the American foundation could help.

By coincidence, a few days back she read in the local Yogyakarta newspaper that Mr. Pustaka, a famous court dancer had died. She remembered the name from Professor Tom's book. He had been one of Professor Tom's informants. It was a pity she had never got around to visiting him. She must send an email to Professor Tom to let him know.

## **PRESERVATION OF LAO MANUSCRIPTS PROGRAMME**

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### **Background**

Laos, the site of the ancient kingdom of “Lan Xang” (“Million Elephants”) possesses a rich literary tradition dating back to the 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> century AD. Works

have survived in the form of palm-leaf manuscripts kept at the libraries of some 2,800 Buddhist monasteries (vats) scattered all over the country. As for their content, they comprise not only religious texts, but include the whole range of learned and literary writings such as works about history, traditional law and customs, astrology and magic, mythology and ritual, traditional medicine and healing, grammar and lexicography, as well as poetry and a huge number of verse epics and folktales. Some of these texts are written on “Sa” (Mulberry tree) paper which is much less durable than palm-leaf.

Many of the works, only very few of which have been edited properly, are not known outside Laos and still await systematic study by the scientific community. In addition to works written in Lao, there are many important manuscripts written in Pali, the sacred language of Theravada Buddhism. The oldest of such texts discovered up to now dates from A.D. 1521. Handed down to the present through continuous copying and traditionally stored in wooden caskets, tens of thousands of invaluable manuscripts have run into danger of destruction during the last decades.

### **Objectives**

The main objectives of the project are threefold:

- to help Lao PDR physically preserve the national literary heritage which has been handed down through the centuries in the form of palm-leaf and paper manuscripts kept at monastic, public, as well as private libraries by the application of adequate, i.e. traditional as well as modern technology, incl. *Microfilming* of important documents;
- to revitalize public awareness of the value of traditional literature and provide the know-how about basic methods of appropriate maintenance and safeguarding of manuscripts;
- to guide and assist in the creation of scientific and technical tools such as databases, study material, textbooks, special computer software etc., as well as in the development of academic and human resources needed for utilizing the manuscripts for teaching and research in the field of traditional Lao language and literature at institutions of higher learning.

### **Activities**

Activities start from and center around the task of preserving manuscripts in monastic, public, as well as private libraries in all parts of the country. Within a time frame of about ten years manuscript holdings of some 650 selected Buddhist monasteries will be preserved and important documents microfilmed *in situ*. Work is carried out with as much participation of the local people as possible. Under the

guidance of a mobile preservation team of four who are joined by locally recruited volunteers, manuscripts are systematically scrutinized, reassembled, cleaned, titled, classified according to their content, and bibliographic data collected to be incorporated into a computerized database. Damaged holographs are restored or repaired if necessary and feasible, and the holding stored in an appropriate way, i.e. safe from termites, mice and mould.

Before starting field work in any province, an “Orientation Workshop” is held in collaboration with state authorities and other organizations, e.g. the Lao Buddhist Fellowship and the Lao Front for National Construction, in order to inform the public about the value of traditional Lao literature, and the activities needed for the preservation of manuscripts.

### **PLMP’s Contribution to Cultural Development in Lao PDR**

The project responds directly to locally felt need; though considered sacred by Lao Buddhists and generally highly revered, innumerable palm-leaf manuscripts have been lost due to a combination of unfavourable circumstances during decades of constant war, economical hardship and general insecurity. Joining in the task of safeguarding endangered scriptures can therefore be seen as tantamount of prolonging the life of the Buddhist religion, a highly meritorious act. Consequently, acceptance of the project and active participation of local people in preservation work has been very high. The project recognizes and enhances the role of the Buddhist monasteries and communities as active guardians of the literary heritage and traditional knowledge.

It is devised as a multiplying agent by providing help for self-help: during their participation in the preservation work, local people are being instructed about, and trained in basic methodology of preserving manuscripts so as to enable them to advise and help monasteries not covered by PLMP in preserving their manuscript holdings on their own. Being linked up to a central computerized data base, Buddhist monasteries are proud to become part of a nationwide network of important libraries; so a gap is being bridged between traditional and modern institutions of education.

### ***Summary of Results (as of October 1999)***

During the past seven years, the major efforts of the programme were concentrated upon

- the raising of public awareness of the importance of the literary heritage,
- dissemination of basic know-how of manuscripts preservation,
- setting up a model of palm-leaf and paper manuscripts preservation,

- encouraging the use of manuscripts not only for religious, but also for scholarly and educational purposes,
- dissemination of traditional literature for scholars as well as for the general public,
- setting up a bibliographic data base of Lao literature.

Concretely, since the inception of the project in September 1992

- manuscript holdings of some 460 Buddhist monasteries, a total of about 240,000 palm-leaf fascicles (*phuk*) including some 4,600 paper manuscripts, have been preserved in ten (out of a total of 17) provinces;
- some 430 rolls (35 mm, 30m) of microfilm comprising about 30,000 fascicles have been produced;
- eight booklets in Lao language and modern Lao script
- as well as 14 vols. of a project newsletter (*Khao Bai Lan*, “Palm-leaf News”) each with an average of 20 pages and 1,000 copies, have been printed for public distribution;
- PLMP’s policy contributed to the reintroduction of Buddhist Studies as well as the study of Pali language and Lao traditional literature into the curriculum of monks’ education;
- Buddhist institutions of higher learning in nine provinces have improved their teaching efficiency in the subjects of Buddhism as well as Lao and Pali language through financial assistance provided by the project;
- academic cooperation with the Department of Lao Language and Literature of the National University of Laos (NUOL) has been substantially deepened and expanded through support given by DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) and Toyota Foundation:

in 1996, a 3-years appointment of a German expert in “Traditional Lao Literature” was supported by DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) at the newly founded National University of Laos (NUOL); the long-term appointment which ended in August 1999 will be followed up by a series of short-term visits by German scholars at NUOL as well as by short-term research visits of Lao scholars in Germany (Universities of Munster and Passau); and

- scholars from Laos, Thailand and from abroad, e.g. Germany, France, Japan , are making increasing use of the data pool and the microfilm collection of PLMP.

NB: PLMP was officially accepted as a contribution to the UNESCO World Decade of Cultural Development (1987-1997) and will be represented at the upcoming World Exhibition “EXPO 2000” Hanover, Germany: (1) within the Lao Pavilion, (2) as one of “projects all over the World”.

### ***Conclusion***

*Factors contributing to successful cooperation within PLMP:*

- mutual respect and trust, patience and tolerance on all sides involved
- PLMP’s strictly non-centralized policy: “cultural property of the people should stay with the people”: no acquisition nor removal of originals to other places (except for microfilming)
- participatory approach: fostering spiritual attachment to Buddhist values and active involvement in preservation work through voluntary participation of the people

### ***Preconditions of sustainability***

- institutionalization of preservation and conservation of manuscripts within Lao governmental administration
- follow-up activities (regular checking of manuscript holdings and microfilm storage)
- further enhancing the use and copying of traditional manuscripts
- continuation of public relations activities and dissemination of valuable contents of traditional literature via mass media

- long-term assistance in order to help develop human resources in the field of Lao language, history and culture in Lao institutions of higher learning including in Buddhist monks' education

*Can PLMP serve as a model for effective use of international cooperation?*

Hopefully (at least in Laos).

## General Discussion

### **Policy Questions:**

### **Topic 3: Evaluating Effective Use of International Cooperation as a Project Model**

#### *Paper Presenters*

*Jennifer Lindsay*

*Harald Hundius*

#### *Moderator: Reiko Ogawa*

#### Moderator

Thank you very much. I think we have two very strong, profound sensitive presentations. In a way, Jennifer's presentation was giving us the whole picture of the complexity of this issue. I don't know whether you have read her beautiful story of "The Keepers", which is a fiction, based on her experience. She is a wonderful script-writer. In this story there are people, from traditional custodians, local government, central government, cultural institutes like national libraries, foreign students, foreign librarians, local students, and foundation workers. Everybody has their own rationale to think, and to act in a particular way. This helps us to understand the rationale behind and the complexity of this issue. She raised very important questions, including questions of ownership and the role of the foreigners. Dr. Harald Hundius's presentation is in a way giving some kind of an answer to this question, which is the empowerment of the traditional custodians. Yesterday I was talking to Madame Dara, and after her ten years' effort, I asked how much the public awareness had been raised. She said that she was so surprised when she was told by the local policemen that "oh you the one working on the palm-leaf manuscripts." So, because she appeared in the media very often, together with Mrs. Kongdeuane, many people in Laos are already aware that these kinds of things are going on. So now I would like to open the floor for questions and discussions.

#### Barbara Berger Eden

This question is directed to Dr. Hundius. I am curious, you said that you were able to get people to volunteer to assist in the project. In countries where wealth is quite great, it is very difficult to get people to volunteer, and I was wondering how you were able to motivate people to volunteer when they are just struggling to get through their day-to-day lives to do something extra and work on the manuscripts.

## Harald Hundius

As is mentioned briefly in the paper, religious manuscripts, that is palm leaf manuscripts, are basically in the consciousness of the Lao people and of other Buddhist people in Southeast Asia. Palm leaf manuscripts are connected with the Buddhist religion. Basically, the teaching of the Buddha was written down on palm leaf manuscripts, so they are, so to say, holy objects. To join in the work of cleaning manuscripts or of maintaining manuscripts, people are making merit. So, the motivation is mostly merit-making. Then of course there is a tradition of communal work in the villages. This is a common task which is morally very high. So, it is a matter of being and working together for a good end, for a morally high end. It is a way of prolonging the life of the Buddhist religion, which is a highly meritorious act. After a certain period where Buddhism was not really supported by the government, now the government has changed its policy, and people are now really feeling free, and they are very happy that Buddhism is now fully acknowledged and recognized as a valuable asset of Lao culture, so they stream, sometimes, into joining the work, up to the point that there are some problems with managing so many people coming to work so that there is no confusion about what is being done.

## Tim Behrend

This is addressed to Ms. Lindsay. I would like to say that I think Jennifer's paper is perhaps the most valuable that has been offered in this meeting because of its complexity and subtlety for the nuanced depth of its reading of very complex issues. I think one of the reasons why I consider it to be the most useful, as well as the most powerful, is because in her written paper, she does not attempt to offer resolution. In fact, the paper ends with an irony. It is precisely because of the incommensurable perspectives that she separates out and illuminates one by one, that it tells us so much about aspects of the work that we are all involved in that we don't perhaps think about on a daily basis. Because of that, I think that what she did sitting at the table was a much lesser accomplishment than the paper itself, because she took on part of one persona, perhaps an illuminated one, but nevertheless it was reductionist. The strength of her *tableau vivant* of characters is that it does not take one perspective over another. I think, Jenny, that the next year in Sydney should be devoted to the novel that these character sketches represent a very preliminary sort of sketch of. I really do; I think there is a novel there. That novel might go much further than anything else that you might do. I really do. I would take issue with one thing you said, just for the sake of our friendship, and that is you ended with a happy sort of pronouncement that once each party feels secure, then things could proceed, but that is not possible. All parties can never feel secure, because there are huge and structural differences in power distribution, not just between the wealthy nations that through their institutions provide funding, but

within this region, within each state, within each province, within each institution, and among the individuals who are involved—the sort of people that you sketched for us—there are always power imbalances. So, it is this dynamic process that at some point might come to a place where some good result could come out, but it will constantly be moving.

Jennifer Lindsay

Thanks Tim. I'll give you rights to the films! You are right, absolutely. I am sort of taking much more of one position here. I don't believe either that there can be a great resolution on this, but I think people can be securer. If I am taking one position it is merely to say that I believe that this is a very thin layer that is discussing the issues here. If this is to proceed in any way, in any meaningful way within the countries represented here, regionally and internationally that layer of discussion has got to be widened and deepened, and there has to be more participation from all of the various fragments here, and in a more honest way. So, if I am taking one position, it is merely to say that at the moment this is not really apparent. So, the donors, who are giving their culture, are not really truly recognized in this particular forum.

Tim Behrend

I think that this document should be sort of the spirit of the conference that will underline whatever declaration comes out of it, but that this is the spiritual heart of the technical details and organizational details and the plans that come out.

Alan Feinstein

What happened to the German microfilms?

Harald Hundius

You mean the German microfilms? There are Lao microfilms, the original of which belongs to the Lao government and it is kept at the National Library. There is another copy of that set which is being used for making paper reproductions and for users in Laos, and one copy will be given to the German side, but the German copy is still in Laos.

Judith Henchy

I think my question has to do with what appears to be a contradiction coming out. That is the question of neglect, and the other, in contrast to that, is the question of a kind of offense to national pride which is derived from a sense of ownership. There seems to be a contradiction there. It seems that Professor Hundius has shown us how, in a very kind of traditional manner, that sense of ownership is regained, and that these manuscripts become part of a working, live culture again.

On the other hand, I see that some of these projects are trying to engender a sense of a sort of Western notion of technology and progress. I am not quite sure what I am getting at there, but it seems that there are a couple of contradictions that are working against each other.

Harald Hundius

I don't think there are contradictions in practice, because to attract younger people, members of the younger generation, within Laos and within the academic community, where new technology is very much in, people like to use computers and to do everything the same way as westerners or more developed people do of their age group. So, in this case, I think that the use of modern technology, like computer fonts, which we are developing also, is something which will attract people to this domain of the manuscripts. Otherwise, traditional manuscripts will be seen as museum objects or as mummies. This is exactly, I think, a way of attracting younger people to work with such texts, and to develop means and media to get into them, to study them, to research them, and to make them accessible through editions which then can use computer fonts, for example, for scripts which are not available in normal printing business. So I think it is an opportunity; it is not contradictory, I would say. Of course, on the other hand, [there is] the writing of palm-leaf manuscripts, which we also try to maintain and encourage, like Madame Dara mentioned in the morning. It is something which in a certain way contradicts the use of computer technology. This is the fact, that in countries like Laos, there is this parallelity between very old ancient technology and modern technology, which is a fact of life. We try to bring these two things together in a constructive way, without any side contemplating or looking down on the other side.

# TOPIC 4

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## **ESTABLISHING REGIONAL TRAINING AND MICRORORM MASTER STORAGE FACILITIES**

**EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR THE STAFF OF SOUTHEAST  
ASIAN LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES AND THE PRINCIPALS  
OF CENTRALIZED ARCHIVAL STORAGE**

John F. Dean  
Director of the Department of Conservation and Preservation  
Olin Library, Cornell University  
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There are a number of approaches to education and training for preservation, ranging from one-day workshops to lengthy academic or internship programs. All of them have their advantages and disadvantages.

**Workshops and seminars** can be an excellent way to help raise awareness of some of the challenges in preservation and to identify some of the general areas where particular attention should be concentrated. These, usually, one day affairs are also helpful in demonstrating special techniques or apparatus, or in introducing new approaches to old methods. They can be valuable to administrators, as they often engender ideas, and valuable to preservation professionals, especially if they are used to add information. For example, disaster response exercises are useful in that they add to the existing skills and experience of preservation professionals. However, they tend not to be useful in fostering the establishment of preservation programs through the development of staff skills and knowledge.

**Academic programs** can be valuable in that they can combine a more scientific approach to preservation combined with one that is more generally managerial. Clearly, this approach seems most useful to preservation administrators, as classroom work is designed to build theoretical knowledge rather technical skills. A major disadvantage is very few such programs exist anywhere in the world, and this form of education tends to be lengthy, especially if extended from courses in library science.

**Apprenticeship programs** are based on the long-term acquisition of skills and knowledge by serving a formal, usually hands-on, schedule of training by working in a facility where a high standard of work is being done. For conservators and technicians, this is probably the most effective way to develop a high level of skills. However, for apprenticeship programs to succeed, there needs to be a network of model preservation programs in place, and the training is lengthy, often several years.

**Internship programs** are designed to allow interns to work directly within an existing preservation program, preferably one that is comprehensive, and develop

skills and knowledge simultaneously. Internship programs provide the intern with a learning environment that does not end when the period of internship is completed, as the comprehensive host program establishes a continuing relationship as a mentor. At the present time, the only appropriate model programs are outside the region (1).

I have a fair amount of experience in all the types of training and education noted above. I have trained six-year and five-year apprentices, taught in academic graduate programs in England and America, have conducted many workshops in Europe, America and Southeast Asia, and developed a series of internship programs, including the current program described below. Of the methods I have experienced, I believe that internship provides the most useful approach for Southeast Asia, as it places librarians in a setting where there are skilled people and proven operations without too large a commitment of time.

If a preservation centre were to be established somewhere in the region, an important role would be staff training and education through intermittent internship. The mentor role could easily be extended to cover consultancy visits to interns' budding operations and to offer some specialized services (2).

**Regional Preservation Center for Southeast Asia.** In March 1991, a plan for the establishment of an international cooperative preservation/conservation center was distributed to a number of parties, including Chiang Mai University (Thailand), NIAS, SPAFA, and various international funding agencies. The plan describes a full service center located at a host institution in an economically and politically stable country in the region, to permit personnel from neighboring countries to pass freely to and fro. The center would function as a service facility, undertaking the preservation/conservation work of the host institution and specialized work of other institutions on a cost-recovery basis. Trainees from around the region would serve as interns at the center, working at a range of tasks in ascending levels of difficulty according to their needs and levels of expertise. Training would operate on two levels, administrative and technical.

Administrative training would expose potential preservation administrators to some of the practical aspects of preservation through short training sessions in the operational units of the center, but the primary focus would be on program development and managerial skills, needs assessment techniques, strategy planning, and proposal writing. Interns at this level would be librarians and archivists.

Technical training would be designed to develop skills and increase knowledge. Interns would work in the appropriate operational unit at the center, acquiring skills through practical apprenticeships. Because of the realities of local program development and to maintain momentum, interns would be trained on an

intermittent basis, and would work at the center in the area most relevant to his/her needs for three months, then would return to the home institution to implement the newly acquired procedures and in turn, to train local staff. After an appropriate period, the intern would return to the center for more advanced training.

The center would be staffed by a skilled and knowledgeable working group, who would assist the establishment of local facilities by site visits, but more important, would act as continuing mentors. In this role, the center staff would advise and encourage former interns, and supply technical back-up and specialized, capital-intensive services. The interaction of center staff and interns from the nations of the region, would inevitably forge formal and informal cooperative links that would lead to the development of a solid body of knowledge and professional activity.

One of those services could be central storage for microfilm and other non-book media, similar to the storage used by most American research libraries for their master camera negatives. At this point, I won't discuss the technical aspects of this kind of secure and stable storage except to say that the basic requirements are that the film be safe and accessible only to the owners of the camera negatives, environmental control mechanisms must include fail-safe systems to automatically switch to generators if central electrical power fails. Ideally, one central storage facility for film would be maintained, but if political complications arise to prevent the movement of film across national boundaries, then some way must be found to place facilities within each of the cooperating nations or institutions. Storage facilities would provide more than one temperature zone, ranging from below freezing to 15 Celcius with 30 percent relative humidity.

The freezer portion would be used to kill insects and to freeze wet paper materials.

1. At the end of December 1996, the Henry Luce Foundation awarded Cornell \$210,000 to assist with the support of a preservation internship program for conservators, technicians, and librarians, from libraries and archives in Southeast Asia. The series of internships are designed to prepare staff to begin to address the manifest deterioration of research materials in the region and to help to establish preservation programs in key institutions. Additional funding by the Harvard-Yenching Institute, the Open Society Burma Project, and

Cornell alumni allowed twelve interns from Southeast Asia to complete six months of education and training at Cornell.

2. In 1991, efforts were made by Cornell to establish a Regional Cooperative Preservation Center to serve as a service and training facility for the nations forming the northern region of Southeast Asia. Funding obtained by Cornell and

Chiang Mai University from the government of the Netherlands enabled scholars, librarians, and archivists from a number of institutions in Burma, Laos, Vietnam, and Thailand to meet in conference at Chiang Mai University in Thailand in 1993. The pressing need for preservation action was clearly articulated by all the delegates, and it was unanimously agreed that a center to serve the region was the best guarantee of a sustained effort, and would lead to the establishment of national programs. A further meeting of the group in September 1994 resulted in the formation of a formal consortium, and the recognition that the center must be a long-term goal, with three more immediate objectives. 1. Establish a system for the exchange and sharing of information on preservation strategy and activities among the consortium members. 2. Develop education and training programs in preservation management and conservation practice. 3. Facilitate the creation of preservation programs in each member library and archives. The institutions forming the basis of the original consortium include : Thailand. Chiang Mai University; National Museum, Bangkok; Thammasat University, Bangkok; National Archives, Bangkok; Academic Resources Center, Srinakharinwirot University, Mahasarakam; Naresuan University; Royal Institute, Bangkok; Khon Kaen University; Payap University, Chiang Mai; Mahidol University. Laos. National library, Vientiane; National Archives, Vientiane. Burma. Universities' Central Library, Rangoon; Universities Historical Research Centre, Rangoon. Vietnam. National library, Hanoi; National Archives, Hanoi; Institute of Sino-Nom Research, Hanoi; Social Science Institute, Ho Chi Minh; Institute of Social Science, Hanoi; General Science Library, Ho Chi Minh. Cambodia. National Library, Phnom Penh.

**EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVE USE OF INTERNATIONAL  
COOPERATION AS A PROJECT MODEL**

*The Development of a Preservation Program at the Institute  
of Sino-Nom Studies in Hanoi-Vietnam*

Chu Tuyet Lan, M. S.

The Institute of Sino-Nom Studies  
Hanoi-Vietnam

The collections of the Institute of Sino-Nom Studies are the most important in the world for the study of early Vietnam and Chinese/Vietnamese literature. Over the years, climate, insects, and war have severely damaged the collections. This real and ever-increasing threat of the deterioration of our national written, printed, and otherwise recorded heritage coupled with a lack of funding and knowledge of preservation techniques forced us to ask for help from some international foundations and outside preservation experts. We requested support for training, designing preservation facilities with proper equipment, and supplies and tools, a basic requirement for doing preservation and conservation work.

***I. Description of The Institute Of Sino-Nom Studies and Its Collections***

The Institute of Sino-Nom Studies is considered to be the largest Center in Vietnam devoted to collecting, preserving and researching the Han-Nom heritage. It originated out of the Ecole Francaise d'Extreme Orient (EFEO) established in 1898. The EFEO was the focus of most of the early scholarship on Asia and remained active in Vietnam until 1958. The EFEO library functioned as the centre for all documentation resulting from archeological explorations, research projects, and acquisitions, including a vast range of epigraphic, printed, and manuscript materials from East and Southeast Asia. After the EFEO was closed in 1958, by the decree of the State of Vietnam, the Social Sciences Information Institute of the State Committee for Social Sciences, now the Vietnam National Centre for the Social Sciences and Humanities, moved almost all of the collections devoted to *han* and *nom* to the Institute of Sino-Nom Studies in 1979. (*Han* refers to anything written in classical Chinese, and *Nom* is the Sinitic or democratic script first used to write Vietnamese from the eighth to the twentieth century).

At present, the Institute of Sino-Nom Studies maintains holdings of approximately 20,000 books dealing with Genealogies, Deity Legends, Royal Decrees, Early Land Registrations, etc., (among these holdings include Nom books on the Dao, Tay and other ethnic groups) and nearly 40,000 paper rubbings from stone steles, bronze bells, stone gongs and wood plaques (including stele inscriptions left by the Cham minority group) dating from the Ly dynasty (10<sup>th</sup> century) to the Nguyen dynasty (20<sup>th</sup> century). In addition, the Institute holds more than 15,000 units of wood block printing and around 14,000 copies of specialized reference books and serials (written in modern Vietnamese, Chinese and other languages).

As mentioned earlier, the collections of the Institute of Sino-Nom Studies are the most important in the world for the study of early Vietnam and Chinese/Vietnamese

literature. The entire fabric of the Institute (the research programs, studies and publications, etc.) is based on the availability of the collections, for without these collections, the Institute would be useless.

But over the years, climate, insects, and war have caused severe harm to the collections, and help is needed to preserve these unique and rare materials. Great effort has been made by the Institute to improve conditions and expand access to the collections, including staff participation in international preservation initiatives, upgrades in storage facilities, and increased bibliographic activity. However, effective as these efforts have been, they alone cannot bring the collection to full physical accessibility, so a more active approach is needed. Until now, the Institute of Sino-Nom Studies has been successful in requesting international foundations to establish and equip a preservation/conservation facility designed to begin the work of conservation, initially with the help and technical advice of a top American expert.

International support as mentioned earlier is very important to the Institute of Sino-Nom Studies. We now have better conditions (with standard tools and equipment, . . .) and the knowledge of proper preservation techniques for our unique collections. Over the past few years, the Institute tried to do some preservation work, but because of poor knowledge in preservation and conservation, these earlier activities worked against the preservation of the collection. Many books fell into a worse state than before.

## ***II. The Institute's Collection Condition and Its Plan Of Work***

It is clear that the climate conditions in Vietnam are very severe. Fluctuating temperatures and high levels of relative humidity combined with sub-standard storage to produce an environment of water, mold, light, and other factors leading to damages. Insects have ravaged the collections over time, and large numbers of books and documents need paper repair to prevent additional damage through use. The quality of housing for the documents and the stele is especially in need of upgrading, as many are crushed and folded into the original containers transferred from the old EFEO facility. For many years, the Institute did not have any space for preservation/conservation work.

Presently, thanks to the great help from international foundations, a top American preservation expert, Mr. John F. Dean, Director of Preservation and Conservation at Cornell University, traveled to Hanoi and worked together with the author of this paper, Chu Tuyet Lan, to begin to train the staff in basic conservation techniques such as doing paper repair, making boxes and containers for vulnerable materials. Moreover, Mr. Dean also worked closely with me to place orders for equipment, supplies, and tools for preservation work. So far, conservation facilities and operations have been established to repair damaged books, restore deteriorated manuscripts and stele, and construct more effective protective enclosures for

vulnerable materials in a room which was newly cleaned and repainted with standard equipment, tools and supplies. We highly appreciate Mr. John F. Dean for his much-needed efforts during his time in Hanoi. In addition to the training the staff and designing the facilities, he also met with the President and other leaders of the National Center for Social Sciences and Humanities to inform them of the importance of preservation work in the Institute of Sino-Nom Studies as well as in Vietnam. This role of advocacy is very important as collection preservation has been overlooked in Vietnam.

Presently, we do a lot of paper repair because the Sino-Nom collection was mainly written on a special kind of paper called poonah-paper, which is very thin, strong, and flexible, similar to Japanese paper. These materials rarely have problems with spines, covers and binding like the others. But because of severe climate conditions, insects and heavy use, many pages have been damaged with a lot of holes in the middle or at the corner, so doing paper repair needs top priority, especially for those materials recently donated to the Institute of Sino-Nom Studies by private families.

A further indication of deterioration is discoloration, which can frequently be seen working from the margins toward the center of the paper. To combat this problem, we must do paper washing before using the technique for paper mending with Japanese paper. The technique for mending tears and holes has been chosen carefully, after consideration of a wide range of paper strengths and surface characteristics. While mending paper, we always keep in mind that our repairs must not be too strong or too weak, too stiff or too plain on damaged items, lest our efforts cause further deterioration.

It should be mentioned that part of the preservation knowledge mentioned above I gained during a six-month internship program at Cornell. Upon my arrival at Cornell Library in July 1997, I was given the clear directive of improving my comprehensive knowledge of preservation and conservation both in theory and practice. Parallel with having been sent to work in ten distinct units within the Department of Preservation and Conservation to do preservation practice, I was

given a long reading list of works relating to the training and education in various units of the Department. All the knowledge gained there provided me with experience of how to manage the preservation and conservation work at the Institute of Sino-Nom Studies at present.

*In short*, thanks to the financial support of international foundations and outside expertise, the Institute of Sino-Nom Studies already has some basic standard, modern equipment, tools and supplies for preservation/conservation work. But they are only tools—the decisive factor is human intelligence. It is critical for library

staff to be well trained so they know how to use the modern equipment in the most effective way.

I am hoping that with this conference, we can persuade those who have responsibility in Vietnam, especially in the National Center for Social Sciences and Humanities, to pay more attention to preservation work. Unlike the United States, there is no Document Conservation Center in Vietnam, so when we encounter problems with preservation work, we have no one to ask. Therefore, we urgently need to establish a centre for preservation at three levels: the level of unique library collections (libraries with materials written in Japanese papers like National libraries, the Social Science Information Institute, the National Archives and the Institute of Sino-Nom Studies...); the national level; and the Southeast Asian regional level in order to share responsibilities and techniques as well as exchange experiences and educate professional conservators. In this way we can say three heads are better than one.

## **General Discussion**

### **Policy Questions :**

**Topic 4: Establishing regional training and microform master storage facilities**

### ***Paper Presenters***

*John Dean*  
*Chu Tuyet Lan*

*Moderator: Daw Ni Ni Myint*

Moderator

Thank you both of you. John has discussed the education and training for the librarians of Southeast Asia, as well as a need for a regional preservation center for Southeast Asia, and how it will function. At the same time, Mrs. Lan has stressed the need to establish a center for preservation on three levels, local, national, and regional. Now I will open the floor.

Kieu Van Hot

I would like to appreciate the experience from Dr. John Dean on the organization and management of training courses, especially on the form of the training course, conservator, and on microform. My question focuses on the optimum solution on the organization and management of training course. So, I would like to have one question. What about the optimum or different solution for the organization, management, and training courses for different countries, for example, developing, developed, and underdeveloped countries. Are all these solutions suitable for all countries, or should we have different solutions for different countries?

John Dean

You are right. It is difficult to come up with a single solution that will be appropriate for all situations. However, I really do believe that training and education are contagious, and that you can develop good programs emanating, sometimes, from a single source. One of the phrases that has been used a couple of times in this conference is 'training the trainers'. One of the things I think that is maybe the most valuable aspect of the idea of a center is that a center is only a center does not necessarily mean that it is the single solution. One of the things that we envisioned when we started talking about a preservation center was an entity that would help institutions establish their own preservation programs. It was not meant at all, nor I don't think does anybody intend it to be a substitute for individual preservation programs. One of the things that we realized as a result of some of the programs that we worked in the past is that perhaps the most important benefit of working within a model program is that you really begin to get some general idea of what some of the managerial challenges are. It is not just a matter of learning what kind of sticky stuff to put on something so it won't fall apart. It is a matter of getting some sense of what kinds of strategic planning needs to be put into place so that you can gradually develop a program. One of the points that I tried to make in the discussions earlier about funding was that it does seem to me that the funding agencies, particularly the private foundations, really need to look at institutions that provide some kind of coherent plan before they start funding

projects. I think that coherent plan can only come from some kind of managerial training.

Helen Jarvis

I wanted to take the opportunity to just share some experiences that I have had with different training models. Thank you, John, for that introduction and overview, and also for Lan's experiences at her institute, which are very valuable. I have been involved in something called the BISA course, which is Bibliographic Information Services for Asia and Pacific, since 1981 training in Sydney. Some of our people here today, Mr. Hot from the National Library of Vietnam and Khun Suwakhon from the Director General of the National Library of Thailand, and other people were graduates from our original BISA program, which was a six month [course], and in a way similar internship arrangement, but it was in cataloguing and computerization. We then moved to the University of New South Wales, and the course continued in a different form. We found it was difficult to have people released for six months, that was one problem, and secondly, to find the funding for the six months. Also, we found it was a little bit difficult to continue to operate such a program outside an educational institution that was devoted to that. So, at the University of New South Wales we had the benefit of being based within what was then called the School of Librarianship, and so we reintroduced the BISA program, but this time for six weeks, and that has been going since 1989. Some hundreds, or over a hundred people have been trained there from Southeast Asia and also from Pacific countries, mainly in computerization, but also library management, and also we have had some preservation workshops. That program still continues, and in fact they just had the BISA dinner and the latest group of graduates are on their way home now, just this week.

Then, in the last two years, we have also moved towards a new model, which is developing programs through the Internet. We have a graduate certificate in audio-visual management, and I have put a printout on people's desks. I had asked for the brochure to be sent here by courier. Unfortunately they haven't arrived, so this is just a printout, but it shows you that there are four subjects integrated as a graduate certificate, and that can also be combined with a longer graduate diploma and a master's degree. One of those subjects that have been offered in that graduate certificate is a broader, not just audio-visual management, but preservation and conservation management in libraries and archives. That was developed together with Wendy Smith, who is now at the National Library of Laos. We could also consider if we do develop a center to make some arrangement to have that course and some of our other courses perhaps made available. I should mention that the audio-visual courses will be available with sponsorship from ASEAN's COCI. They have agreed to sponsor a scholarship for each of the ASEAN countries. So, they will be ten scholarships for students to

study in those, and I am hoping that that will be matched by scholarships from the University of New South Wales. That is a bit of a long intervention, I apologize, but I was intending to refer to it earlier when I was giving my paper, but I didn't really want to sound like a carpetbagger when I was speaking from the podium. But just to say that there are some other methods too, that we might like to consider.

Gardjito

I will address my question about the training to John Dean. I have experience about the training. Sometimes after having trained outside or abroad, we have a problem about the method that has been taught in other countries, because they use specific equipment and specific materials. After finishing their training, they cannot do anything in their own country. What is your solution about this? Thank you.

John Dean

I would say that that is probably inappropriate training. It does seem to me that the training programs clearly have to be focused on problems that are most likely to be encountered in the institution involved. The training program at Cornell, the six-month internship program, came out directly from the discussions that we had here in 1993. Somebody said here that nothing happened. Well... [We set up the] program, basically in a way that we believed was sensitive to the needs of this region. Obviously there is no sense in training people to use equipment that they haven't a hope of ever acquiring; that doesn't make any sense at all. At the same time, it does seem to me that we have a responsibility to make sure that we train people in a number of different approaches, and not one single approach in preservation. There are a number of approaches, as anyone in conservation particularly will tell you, to achieve the same results.

Nguyen Van Quang

Ladies and gentlemen, I am not going to ask any question. Actually, we are talking about the training of archive staff in Vietnam and what we have been

doing, and I hope it can be some sort of answer to the question raised by our Indonesian friend here. This is the way we go. I really don't know whether it works with other countries, but it actually works very effectively in Vietnam. When we are granted fellowships from international organizations or institutions, we send our most able staff overseas, for example to Cornell University, to University of London, and to Japan also. After that, when they come back home they are well trained, and they come back to their institution, of course, and work and be ready as the trainer. After that, if we get the funding from the government or from international organizations, we will invite the foreign experts, for example, Mr. John Dean, or some other experts to Vietnam, and work together with the local

staff who have been trained overseas, and who are well trained. They are working together, and they are going to work together with staff from various institutions, libraries or archives, and we ask them for their needs and expectations. Of course because they are from various institutions they have different needs and expectations, and that is why we have this analysis of needs and expectations. Then, we work together, I mean the foreign trainers and our local parts work together, and we work out the things, the contents, and the activities that we are going to use during the course. We focus on something really practical, something that can help them in their practical work. We haven't got to the results at the moment here, but according to the ideas that were taken from my colleagues here, this kind of training proves really very effective and low cost. So that is the way we go with training our staff. I really don't know whether it works with others, but as I said to you it works really effectively in the practical situation in Vietnam. Thank you.

John Dean

If I can just respond a little to that, and also to something that Ms Lan said. One of the things I really would urge is to develop a fairly high level of informal cooperation. By that I mean that there has been a lot of discussion about making sure that things are approved and within the ambit of particularly governmental approval. One of the things I have seen in some parts of Southeast Asia is actual competition amongst institutions, even within the same city. That is really unfortunate. One of the things that I would urge people—not necessarily the directors or even the deputy directors—working in preservation to cooperate informally with one another, to exchange ideas in exactly the same way that my colleague here has just described. In some cases there is a real crisis in these libraries, and as I said it isn't just in the traditional materials. For example, I know in the General Science Library in Ho Chi Minh City, there are a thousand readers a day using the reading room. They are beating the collection to death. At some point those materials aren't going to exist anymore. These are materials, a part of our culture that from now is the stuff that is part of what we are developing for our successors down the line. There are some really important issues that we really need to address in terms of how we manage our collections, and the interaction of ideas really does not really weaken any individual institution. We really need to cooperate informally in a way that we really have not done too well in the past.

A Participant

I have another comment. I [worked for] several years in the preservation program in Vietnam, mainly in the National Archives. However, it is very important that many preservation staff or people work together and share their experience, but it is very important to see [this] on their own ground, not looking outside to foreign countries or foreign support. For example, last year, Vietnam had a big part in the ancient city, Hue. Just before I came to this conference, the Japan Foundation had an

emergency rescue proposal and invitation from the Ministry of Culture and Information of Vietnam. It is a very big problem of how to commit to these emergency situations in Vietnam. It's a real problem in your country, not looking and waiting or training or cooperating with different institutions, but big problems happen in your country in ancient cities, and rescue requests are sent to other countries. But many skillful Vietnamese staff members do not know the requests and problems, so it is a good chance to cooperate and share experience now in Vietnam. So I requested to cooperate, and working together for example, in an emergency situation in Hue area, the National Archives, Ministry of Culture and Information, or another important institute in Vietnam. I think it is a good state to work together in the future. I request that we look at the present situation from the ground, and not to the outside.

#### Akira Genba

I missed one thing in my presentation. We are now preparing for the archivist training course with the Hong Kong government record service as a key function with the understanding that many archivists in Asia are still lagging behind their counterparts in other parts of the world in concepts, theories, techniques, and methodologies with regards to archival administration in a modern information world. This has adverse effects on the identification, appraisal, safe custody, preservation, accessibility, and the use and sharing of the ripe, rich archival heritage in Asia, and the rest of the world. So I suggested [this to] the Hong Kong Government Record Service Director, and he organized a study group, which was officially authorized by the Hong Kong government. He has been working very hard in negotiating with the UBC in Canada, and we are now coming to the final stage in opening up these training courses. This work has been done with the full support of the Asian center, Japan Foundation.

I want to summarize for outsiders the major points of this training program. This program is for the Asian students, and that is a limitation in terms of the geographical area of Asia and Asian students. Why UBC? Because UBC is the university which showed the most eagerness to give us training courses for Asian students. So, if there is any university or educational institution, we will consider some alternative cooperation activity. Anyway, UBC is our key educational institution. The entrance requirements are having a recognized bachelor degree with two years working experience in the archival or record environment, and English language proficiency with TOEFL scores roughly 500 to 600. The problem [is that] this program is a four-month full time condensed on-campus program, 100% taught by UBC academic staff and archive specialists. The subjects taught include the nature of archival materials, the principles of record keeping, archival arrangement and description, record appraisal and acquisition, advanced records keeping and management, archival preservation, archival automation, and management of electronic records retrieval and reference services. In terms of the assessment, it is based on written work. As to the class size and the composition, with the intensity of the work to be accomplished within a short period of time, the class will not be larger than 25 students. To stimulate comparison, and increase

cultural exchange, this program welcomes enrollment of students from different countries and territories in Asia. The most difficult point is fees and the cost. About the fees, we proposed that the cost for tuition and fees, and accommodation and meals—the total cost—be 12,000 US\$, but UBC confirmed that the tuition fee would be set at 12,000 Canadian dollars. Therefore it is still under negotiation with UBC. So, if you are interested in this program, please contact us.

Judith Henchy

I want to return to Mr. Gardjito's point, which was the inappropriateness of the training that he seemed to have received. John, I am reminded of our trip to Vietnam in 1995, where we traveled with buckets of glue, binding board, and huge reels of binding cloth. I am thinking along the lines of again returning to this notion of returning to needed research for appropriate technologies for the region. Perhaps there should be more research to find substitutes for those buckets of glue that we lugged around Vietnam, and had to bribe Vietnam Airlines to carry for us. I wonder if there are any comments on that.

John Dean

I think one of the big challenges is finding appropriate archival quality supplies. I think, there is actually some sort of substitute for some of the adhesives now. The big difficulty is in archival board, folder stock, and things of that kind. Again, it is a serious barrier to anyone wanting to establish a preservation program. It means that everything, or most of those things have to be imported, which more than doubles the cost because of shipping costs. Actually, Lan is really the pioneer here because of the development of her own preservation program. One of the things we have been trying to do is to identify suppliers, at least in the region. In one case, we were able to find a supplier for a piece of equipment, who was the agent of a German company that manufactured equipment. When Lan and I were in Bangkok, we did a bit of flitting around to various warehouses trying to identify suppliers actually in Thailand. One of the reasons I think Lan is a pioneer here is that once we have identified those supplies, clearly, that is information that is of value to other people, particularly in Vietnam. Again, it speaks once more to the notion of having some kind of method for exchanging information on resources and so forth, [such as] the website, or something similar.

## **THE NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF TRADITIONAL MANUSCRIPTS IN MYANMAR**

U Thaw Kaung  
Myanmar Historical Commission  
Myanmar

About five and a half years ago on 8th September 1994, the National Commission for the Preservation of Traditional Manuscripts was formed by the Myanmar government's Ministry of Education. The composition of the Commission is:

- (1) A Member of the Myanmar Historical Commission  
(Ministry of Education) - Chairman
- (2) A Member of the Myanmar Language Commission  
(Ministry of Education) - Member
- (3) Director General, Cultural Institute Department  
(Ministry of Culture) - Member
- (4) Director General, National Archives Department (Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development) - Member
- (5) Director General, Department of Archaeology  
(Ministry of Culture) - Member
- (6) Director General, Religious Affairs Department  
(Ministry of Religious Affairs) - Member
- (7) Director General, Department for the Promotion and Propagation of the Sasana (Ministry of Religious Affairs) - Member
- (8) Director, National Library (Ministry of Culture) - Member
- (9) Director, Defence Services Historical Research Institute and Museum  
(Ministry of Defence) - Member
- (10) Director, Universities Central Library  
(Ministry of Education) - Member
- (11) Director, Universities Historical Research Centre  
(Ministry of Education) - Secretary
- (12) Librarian, Universities Historical Research Centre  
(Ministry of Education) - Joint Secretary

It is an inter-Ministry Commission with high officials and Heads of Departments from the Ministry of Education (5 officials), Ministry of Culture (3 officials), Ministry of Religious Affairs (2 officials), Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development (1 official), and Ministry of Defence (1 official).

In October 1999, the composition of the Commission was enlarged with a new post of Vice-Chairman, a Member of the Myanmar Historical Commission (Ministry of Education), Director General, Department of Information and Public Relations (Ministry of Information), Director General, General Administrative Department (Ministry of Home Affairs) and Director Generals, Department of Higher Education (Lower Myanmar and Upper Myanmar) (Ministry of Education). At about the same time the Universities Historical Research Centre was upgraded to directorate level and the Head of Department became a Director General (from the former post of Director).

The enlargement of the Commission was done to make its work more effective and efficient. With the increasing volume of work the Commission also needed a Vice-Chairman in carrying out its work more efficiently.

The Commission has its base on the main campus of the University of Yangon, at the Universities Historical Research Centre. With the Director General of this Department serving as its Secretary, the staff of the Centre functions as its Secretariat. The Myanmar Historical Commission which is headed by the Minister for Education and composing of prominent historians (mainly retired professors) and retired heads of departments, also has its headquarters in the same place.

The National Commission for the Preservation of Traditional Manuscripts was formed with the aim of pooling resources and facilities of the participating departments and institutions which had the largest collections of manuscripts in the Union of Myanmar.

The Commission has the following aims and objectives:

- (1) the preservation and conservation of Myanmar literary and historical heritage
- (2) the provision of training for the preservation and conservation of traditional manuscripts
- (3) the provision of services relating to the preservation and conservation
- (4) the preservation and conservation of traditional manuscripts in Myanmar, Pali, Mon, Shan, Rakhine, Kayin and other national languages and dialects.

The core group in the Commission which is initiating, organizing and managing the Preservation and Conservation Programmes in our country comprises of Professor U Tun Aung Chain, Chairman, U Thaw Kaung, Vice-Chairman, Daw Ni Ni Myint, Secretary, and U Pe Thein, Joint Secretary. The Commission needed competent personnel at different levels: at the top decision makers, lower down manuscript subject specialists, librarians and archivists with active support from technicians to operate the microfilming cameras and other machines and to undertake the conservation, repair and rebinding of mss. materials in our laboratories.

We have the advice of two subject specialists, U Nyunt Maung, former Head of the Mss. Section of Universities Central Library (UCL) (1972 to 1996) and at present Mss. Consultant at Universities Historical Research Centre and also Librarian at the Shwe Dagon Pagoda Pitaka-taik (Library), and U Myat Soe, Librarian of the Yangon (Rangoon) University Library.

I was very fortunate to get the services of U Nyunt Maung, a former Buddhist monk who passed with distinctions the Setkya Siha Dhammasariya examinations in Mandalay and thus obtained one of the highest degrees for monks; he also had a Bachelor of Arts degree with specialization in Myanmar Language and Literature from the University of Mandalay, and later in 1971 he attended our first course leading to the Postgraduate Diploma in Library Studies of the University of Yangon

(Rangoon). In 1971 he joined the Universities Central Library where he handed the Mss. section till his retirement in 1992. U Nyunt Maung not only had the right combination of academic specialization, he has constantly taken a keen interest in mss. work and knows in depth the subjects covered by the mss., e.g. which mss. are rare and who wrote which work, whether particular mss. texts have been transferred into printed form or not and so on. He also collaborated with me in formulating cataloguing and classification procedures for Myanmar manuscripts and devised catalogue headings and entries, especially for Buddhist Literature and Uniform Titles. He wrote articles in Myanmar language on mss. And later a number of books on Myanmar Mss. which won literary prizes. He also taught mss. work, to Library Studies students at the Dept. of Library Studies which I headed from 1971 to 1997, as I appointed him as a Lecturer on Myanmar mss.

U Myat Soe, Head Librarian of the University of Yangon Library, had specialized and takes a keen interest in Myanmar Language and Literature and we could get his advice on this subject as well as on Traditional Medicine and Customary Law texts found in our mss.

The Commission needs the assistance of local authorities in listing, microfilming and digitalizing old manuscripts in various parts of the country, some in far outlying places. Hence, the main organizers decided to include from late 1999 the Director-General of the General Administrative Department of the Ministry of Home Affairs, because he has under his control the district and township local administrative offices right down to the village level.

The Director-General of Religious Affairs was also included as a member as there are District and Township Religious Affairs Officers who can give considerable assistance to the Preservation Teams sent out by the Commission. The Director-Generals of Religious Affairs and the Department for the Promotion and Propagation of the Sasana established only about ten years ago to propagate Buddhism in Myanmar and abroad can also give much assistance where monastic libraries are concerned. There is also a Central Committee of Senior Presiding Buddhist Monks called the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee which has the leading Sayadaw (Abbots) of all the main Buddhist Sects of Myanmar. Through the Director-Generals of the Department of Religious Affairs and that for the Promotion and Propagation of the Sasana we can obtain much assistance from this committee of Presiding Monks. For example we have obtained a list of all the monasteries in Myanmar and has asked the Department officials to get for us a list of the monastic libraries and the number of mss. still extant in each library.

We proposed the inclusion of the two Director Generals of Higher Education, one for Lower Myanmar located in Yangon, and the other for Upper Myanmar in Mandalay because they control about 40 universities and colleges. When we send

teams out from the Commission in Yangon we try to get the help of the librarians and historians working at the nearest institute of higher learning. These academics and librarians posted in the districts know the local officials and monks and also the local conditions and situation, and thus we can get valuable advice and help from them if they willingly cooperate with us. Quite often the librarians and historians in the districts carry out preliminary surveys and make arrangements for the Commission's teams to come. In Myanmar we sometimes have to make complicated arrangements for logistics of transportation, to provide accommodation, food and so on.

Most the Director-Generals and Heads of Department are extremely busy officials and it is difficult to convince some of them that preserving our textual/literary past is as important if not more important than as for example building new edifices or monuments. But we have tried our best to get their active support even if they are unable to come to all our meetings.

The main Commission has also appointed a Working Committee which meets more often to carry out the important tasks laid down by the Main Commission. In this Working Committee, the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Joint-Secretary represent the main Commission and we have at present the following officials, librarians and archivists who work closely with us:

- (1) U Khin Maung Tin, Deputy Director-General, Cultural Institute Department (former National Librarian and also for many years a professional librarian at universities and college libraries).
- (2) U Myint Kyaing, National Librarian (former librarian with the university and college libraries).
- (3) Daw Khin Khin Tun, Acting Director-General, National Archives, a graduate of our library Diploma Course and a former lecturer in History Department at the University of Yangon. (A Masters graduate in History and with a Postgraduate Diploma in Library Studies )
- (4) Daw Tin Phone Nwe, Chief Librarian, Universities Central Library.
- (5) U Myat Soe, Librarian(1), University of Yangon Library.
- (6) U Nyunt Maung, Librarian, Shwe Dagon Pagoda Pitaka Taik Library and Mss. Consultant, Universities Historical Research Centre.
- (7) Daw Khin Nwe Han Kyi, Librarian, Department for the Promotion and Propagation of the Sasana (who stood first in her batch at the Library Diploma Course).
- (8) U Aye Kyu, Librarian, Defence Archives and Library. (A graduate of our first batch of Library Diploma Students).

- (9) Daw Ni Ni Aye, Librarian, Myanmar Language Commission.  
( A graduate of the Library Studies Diploma Course )
- (10) U Maung Maung Thein, Head of Reprographic Department  
Universities Central Library.

The Commission has carried out (4) main types of activities:

- (1) Training for Preservation and Conservation.
- (2) Taking inventories of mss. collections.
- (3) Microfilming and digitalizing for preservation.
- (4) Making rare mss. accessible to scholars.

#### (1) Training Programmes

The training programmes are based on lectures, workshops and seminars with hands on practical work with mss. materials. Before the National Commission was formed the Universities Central Library was the first Myanmar library to systematically organize training programmes for preservation and conservation of library materials. UCL ran two types of training courses:

- (1) Regular courses in PAC work as a compulsory course for the Postgraduate Diploma in Library Studies. UCL librarians organized, administered and taught at this course for the University of Yangon (Rangoon) from 1971 since its inception to end of 1997 when a full-time Department of Library and Information Studies was established by the University.
- (2) Apart from the Library Diploma course which include PAC training, UCL also conducted short-term special courses in PAC with lectures by both local and foreign Conservation Experts. For example in Dec.1993 PAC training courses were given at UCL by Dr. John Badgley, Curator of the Echols Southeast Asian Collection and Mr. John Dean, Head of the Conservation Dept. of Cornell University.

After the National Commission was formed UCL integrated its PAC training programmes with those run by the Commission and they are now all under the auspices of the Commission, from 1994 right up to the present. Mr. John Dean again joined the local trainers in March 1995. In 1997 we held the 2nd workshop with Japanese conservation experts from the National Diet Library.

In 1999 the Japan Foundation sent two Japanese experts who were in Myanmar attached to the National Commission for 3 months and they organized PAC

workshops for books and paper which were attended by 75 participants from libraries and archives.

Recently in January 2000 University of Canberra conservation experts held a two day workshop organized by the National Commission and attended by about 60 participants. The Commission is not limiting its activities only to PAC of traditional mss., but have organized training programmes which cover many aspects of preservation and conservation, such as environmental control, protection against insects, rodents and so on and on how to prepare Disaster Plans.

After the present meeting in Chiang Mai, the Commission will be conducting a three day conservation workshop led by Mr. John Dean with Ms. Barbara Berger to teach standards and quality control for microfilming.

## (2) Taking Inventories

Another main activity of the National Commission is to survey mss. collections in monastic and private libraries. Although the Universities Central Library had done similar work on a small scale since the 1960's, only after the National Commission was formed in 1995, we have been able to take inventories on a more systematic and sustained way by sending groups of about 10 librarians to different collections.

The teams are given carefully worked out catalogue forms on which they have to enter particulars for each item of mss. such as author, title, dates of composition and copying, number of *angas* (leaves) of palm leaf or folds of *parabaik* paper mss., classification into designated subject fields with annotations and notes, and of course giving the location also. These forms will eventually be entered on computers for a Union List, a Data Base of Mss. Collections in Myanmar.

We started in Amarapura, an 18th century capital near Mandalay, at the newly rebuilt Bargaya Monastery where we catalogued 1108 mss. (876 palm-leaf and 232 paper *parabaik* mss.) from 11th to 26th February 1995.

That same year from 1st to 13th August 1995, another inventory was taken at the Nan-Oo Monastery at Paunde in Bago Division. A full listing of the entire collection of 378 palm-leaf mss. was made.

The inventory taking was continued in 1996 at the Pyi Monastery, (154 mss.) and Ar-thawka-rama Taik in the Manikaron Monastery (262 mss.), both in Mandalay.

In 1997 we started taking inventory of mss. in the Inle Lake area, at Tha-lei south monastery (927 mss.) and at Kandauk Monastery in Pindaya (307 mss.) both in the southern Shan State.

In 1998 inventories were taken at Shin-bin-thalyaung Pagoda Library (448 mss.) at Natmaw village in Hinthada(Henzada), Ayeyawady Division, at the Shwe Hponbwint Pagoda Library (674 mss.) in Pyi(Prome), Bago Division, the private collection of Myanmar scholar U Maung Maung Tin, Member of the Myanmar Historical Commission (538 mss. in Yangon and 746 mss. in Mandalay), U Po Thee Pitaka-taik or Thadama Zawtika-rama Monastic Library (810 mss.) in Thaton, Mon State.

Work continued at U Po Thee Pitaka-taik Library in 1999 and later that year at Setkya Yan-aung monastery (398 mss.) in Pyapon, Ayeyawady Division and at the Buddhist University Library (1229 mss.) at Sagaing.

### (3) Microfilming of Manuscripts

Microfilming of mss., rare books and periodicals was initiated by the Universities Central Library which first established a microfilming unit from the 1970's. It has over 500 reels of mainly 35mm. microfilms, and the library has microfilmed nearly all its mss. collection on Yazawin and Thamaing (History), Dhammathat(Law), Sekyan (Traditional Medicine) and other texts under a preservation microfilming project started with Cornell University from around 1990. A microfilming camera and other equipment were provided under a Henry Luce Foundation grant to Cornell, Northern Illinois and Michigan Universities.

The National Commission started microfilming in March 1998 with a portable camera and accessories bought with the grant from the Japan Foundation. During 1998 microfilming was carried out for 60 mss. at the Tha-lei south monastery in

Inle Lake and 7 mss. in Pindaya, 26 mss. in Shwe Hponbwint Pagoda Library, 49 mss. from U Maung Maung Tin's collection in Mandalay, and 43 mss. at U Po Thee itaka-taik: a total of 185 mss. microfilmed during the year.

Microfilming continued in 1999 with a second lot of 52 mss. Microfilmed at U Po Thee Pitaka-taik, 54 mss. from the National Library microfilmed at the National Archives with support from the National Commission, and 181mss. at Buddhist University Library in Sagaing, a total of 287 mss microfilmed within the year.

We have, therefore, microfilmed 472 mss., and the microfilming is continuing from the beginning of this year (2000) at the National Archives where the valuable mss. collections from the National Library are being microfilmed with microfilms provided by the National Commission. Teams will also be sent out within the year to some of the outlying States and Divisions of Myanmar to continue microfilming rare mss.

### International Cooperation

One of the main functions of the National Commission is to coordinate international assistance. At the same time the Commission will provide scholars from abroad with bibliographical information and access to the collections.

The impetus for formation of the National Commission came partly from the Conference on Library and Archives Preservation Needs of Southeast Asia organized by Chiang Mai University Library and Cornell University Library and held in Chiang Mai in December 1993. There was a follow up meeting again at Chiang Mai in August 1994.

Libraries and archives in Myanmar have been implementing preservation and conservation programmes individually, but we felt, after attending those two conferences that we needed to make a more concerted effort to tackle the numerous problems and to consolidate our limited resources. So the National Commission was formed a few weeks after the August 1994 meeting at Chiang Mai. We thought then that at least some other Southeast Asian nations would follow suit and form their own National Commissions and that later on there will be a Consortia of these National Commissions.

Our National Commission was one of the main organizers, together with the National Archives of Myanmar for the SARBICA (Southeast Asian Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives) Seminar on the Preservation and Conservation of Traditional Manuscripts for the 21st Century held in Yangon, Myanmar in December 1997. The Resolutions of that Seminar were drafted in consultation with the leading members of the National Commission and include the identification of important collectins of traditional mss. in Southeast Asia for inclusion in the Unesco Memory of the World Programme. This is being carried out by the National Archives of Myanmar with active support from the National Commission, and also from SARBICA and Unesco. There was also a resolution to publish guides and inventories on traditional mss. And facilitate access among Southeast Asian countries (and also from those outside the region). Another resolution which the National Commission is helping to implement is to publish selected rare mss. in the media of print, Electronic, microfilm, etc.

During the five years or so since the National Commission was formed we have received grants from the Japan Foundation for the last three years for which we are very grateful as it has enabled us to buy a much needed portable microfilm camera and accessories, also a processor and chemicals and raw microfilms which are not available at first in our country, but are now being imported through a local firm because of our orders.

Cornell University, Chiang Mai University, the British Library and the National Diet Library have all helped by training some of our staff. We would be needing more assistance in this area and hope that the Library of Congress and the National Library of Australia and other libraries and archives abroad with good preservation programmes will train some more staff selected by the National Commission, so that they can in turn give lectures and demonstrations throughout Myanmar.

If a regional Commission for Preservation and Access is formed, the Myanmar National Commission will take an active role. We also strongly support the formation of such a Commission on the models of those for North America and Europe.

In conclusion I would like to express, on behalf of the Myanmar delegation, our thanks to the organizers of this International Meeting. We are especially grateful to Ms. Judith Henchy of the University of Washington and to Dr. Rujaya Abhakorn of the University of Chiang Mai for enabling us to participate in this important meeting on Microform Preservation and Conservation Practices in Southeast Asia.

## **ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL COMMISSION ON PRESERVATION IN THE PHILIPPINES**

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### ***INTRODUCTION***

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The celebration of the Centennial of the Declaration of Independence of the Republic of the Philippines on 12 June 1998 triggered the donation of priceless incunabula and historical records to the University of the Philippines Library by scholars, historians, government officials and writers. As most of these materials were in various stages of deterioration, from warping, brittleness and infestation with fungus and termites for a very long time, the library, together with some government agencies with conservation laboratories, had to apply immediate restoration and preservation measures, before putting the materials on display to the public in a number of Centennial exhibits. The content of the materials run the gamut of Philippine culture spanning over 300 years and ranging from civil engineering to local heroes throughout the archipelago, labor, literature, music, radical politics, religion and others.

Many more priceless documents and records were collected by the National Centennial Commission which have not been fully organized and catalogued up to now, because of the sorry state of deterioration which the records are in. Added to these are the important documents, books and other library materials contained in various libraries, information centers and archives which have deteriorated due to age and repetitive handling and use.

Indeed the Philippines is faced with a gargantuan task of preserving important records, which constitute only one facet of its rich cultural heritage. The purpose of this paper is to present the current state of conservation in the country and to propose a National Commission for Preservation.

### ***CONSERVATION PROGRAMS IN THE PHILIPPINES***

Various institutions in the country have long realized the permanent value and importance of these materials to Philippine society. The tremendous wealth of information contained in such materials will be permanently lost if they are not preserved. Consequently, these institutions have established programs to preserve their collections. Let me give you a brief presentation of conservation programs of these institutions.

#### ***A. SOUTHEAST ASIAN REGIONAL BRANCH OF THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES***

Thirty years ago, the Philippines participated in a regional project to compile a Masterlist of Southeast Asian Microforms, initiated by the Southeast Asian Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (**SARBICA**), and subsequently endorsed by the Second Conference on Southeast Asian Librarians (**CONSAL II**) in 1973. The Masterlist would collect together information regarding Southeast Asian documents and publications already reproduced on microform in

the region. In 1978 the SARBICA-CONSAL Regional Microfilm Clearing-House reported a total of 17,670 shelflist cards, 6,557 of which were from the Philippines. Our last record of SARBICA is a receipt for over 1,000 more shelflist cards in 1980. We have not heard of it ever since.

### ***B. NATIONAL COMMISSION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS***

During the decade just past, in 1992, the Philippine government created a National Commission on Culture and the Arts (NCCA) by Republic Act No. 7356, with a mandate to develop, promote and preserve Filipino culture and the arts, by formulating policies in coordination with affiliated private and public cultural agencies.

Attached to the Office of the President, Republic of the Philippines, the NCCA has 15 members including the Chair, of whom 11 are from the legislative and executive branches of government in an ex-officio capacity. The remaining four members are private sector representatives who are elected to head sub-commissions on (1) the arts; (2) cultural dissemination; (3) cultural communities and traditional arts; and (4) cultural heritage. The four are elected by artists and cultural workers who have volunteered to serve on any of the 22 committees that fall within the area of the subcommission concerned. Each of the 22 committees are composed of Executive Committee members who act as the National Advisory Board to the Commission.

The Commission is mandated to coordinate with national cultural agencies (Section 18) including, but not limited to the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP), National Historical Institute (NHI), National Museum (NM), Records Management and Archives Office (RMAO), and the National Library (TNL). These agencies act independently of NCCA, having existed before NCCA's creation.

One of the goals of the Commission is the conservation of the Filipino cultural and historical heritage. In pursuit of this goal, the Commission assesses and funds projects concerning the following:

1. Restoration and conservation of world heritage sites
2. Archaeological survey, exploration and excavation
3. Conservation of immovable cultural / historical landmarks
4. Maintenance of national collections
5. Provision facilities for cultural communities, e.g. community centers/  
museum of anthropology
6. Research and documentation of indigenous knowledge and systems

It must be pointed out that conservation is just one of the many functions of NCCA. An assessment and evaluation of the Medium-Term Plan of NCCA 1992-2004 shows that the Commission identifies location sites in various areas of the country that need to be preserved. The NCCA, upon assessment, approves and funds conservation programs proposed by government agencies, associations and private institutions.

### ***C. UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES***

As early as November 1954, the UP Institute of Library Science (UPILS), then Department of Library Science under the College of Liberal Arts, recognized the importance of instituting specific courses in archives administration and has continuously offered these subjects. As a matter of fact, the Institute has recently submitted a proposal for the Master's degree in Archives and Records Management. At the regional level, the SARBICA identified the Philippines with the UPILS as the focal node for the establishment of an archives training center. The UPILS is the recognized pioneer of the training component to the various conservation programs of the NCCA and RMAO.

The University of the Philippines Library has a conservation program through its University Archives and Records Depository (UARD) and Microfilm Laboratory. It serves as the laboratory of the UPILS for its formal and short-term courses, particularly on conservation. It has a regular microfilming program to preserve its special collections, consisting of rare, unique, out of print, unpublished, fugitive as well as non-textual materials. In addition, the UP Library has the facilities: fumigation chamber, bindery, microfilm laboratory and Media Services Section; and the expertise to undertake a conservation program.

### ***D. GOVERNMENT AGENCIES***

Among the government agencies that undertake conservation are the National Library, National Historical Institute, Records Management and Archives Office, National Museum and Cultural Center of the Philippines.

The National Library is currently undertaking digitization of rare book and picture collections from its Filipiniana collection.

The National Historical Institute undertakes programs concerning development and management of historical landmarks, advocacy activities for historic conservation and education, and the restoration and conservation of related world heritage sites.

The Records Management and Archives Office is digitizing selected Spanish Royal Decrees and Civil Registry Documents relating to Philippine history.

The National Museum not only undertakes preservation of aspects of traditional culture (preservation of syllabic writing and inventory of Kabayan mummies) but also the conservation of its ethnographic, archaeological, geological and scientific artifacts.

The Cultural Center of the Philippines continues to preserve its library and archival materials, museum collection, visual arts collection and the restoration, preservation and conservation of films.

The Philippine Information Agency undertakes film conservation of all materials on film used in information dissemination concerning government programs.

### ***E. PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS***

A number of private agencies and associations undertake preservation of different media of information. These are the Filipinas Heritage Foundation Library (Digitization of historical materials in CD); Lopez Museum (Acquisition program of microforms in Philippine History); the Laurel Foundation (Microfilm of the Papers of J.P. Laurel, Philippine President during the Japanese Occupation); and the Society of Film and Video Archives (Restoration and preservation of motion pictures and video recordings).

Among the oldest sectarian institutions, the University of Santo Tomas Archives, the Archdiocese of Manila and the Agustinos Recolletos allow use of their conservation laboratories to meet training requirements on conservation.

The Society of Filipino Archivists and the Society of Film and Video Archivists undertake training programs on conservation of print and non-print materials, especially motion picture films, sound and video recordings in cooperation with the UP Institute of Library Science.

### ***ASSESSMENT***

1. The NCCA serves both as a finding and funding agency which identifies or pinpoints specific historical sites and materials that need to be preserved and funded.
2. While the sub-commissions interface in this function, there is no central focal body to coordinate and monitor the extent of implementation of conservation projects. Such a body should also institutionalize the loose linkages of government agencies with private institutions/organizations concerning conservation projects.
3. Definitely, there are other institutions outside of the metropolis undertaking conservation that were not mentioned in this paper. There is a need to conduct a nationwide survey or inventory of existing conservation programs and laboratories.

4. The University of the Philippines Library and Institute of Library Science have the training program, laboratory, expertise, outstanding collections, linkages with government and private agencies involved with conservation, including the Philippine legislature. Most executive members of the different NCCA committees are members of the faculty and staff of the University of the Philippines.
5. It appears that the country has the capability to undertake coordinated nation-wide conservation programs, considering a number of institutions and agencies, both government and private, which have the facilities and laboratories.

### ***A NATIONAL COMMISSION ON PRESERVATION***

The foregoing shows that the Philippines is capable of undertaking a nation-wide conservation program for its varied heritage contained in print and non-print materials and found in historical sites and landmarks.

To be able to create a strong conservation program, there is, however, a need to establish a National Commission on Preservation that ensures continuity of

programs despite changes in the thrusts of government, because of a highly politicized environment. This body will have the following functions:

1. Serve as the central node for cooperative efforts and linkage among Southeast Asian countries.
2. Conduct the inventory of all existing conservation facilities and programs.
3. Set standards, policies and guidelines on conservation
4. Monitor conservation programs in the country and serve as clearinghouse and/or depository of microform or non-print copies of cultural and historical materials
5. Coordinate training programs on conservation
6. Undertake research to improve conservation programs and methods, including application of new technology other than microfilming, eg. optical disks
7. Undertake documentation and publication to disseminate information on conservation.

### ***SOME POLICY CONSIDERATIONS***

In establishing this national body, some issues should be considered:

1. Organizational Structure

A directive or law is needed to create this body. If it is under a government body or under the Office of the President, the continuity of conservation programs may not be assured, because if there are changes in government administration, the thrusts may change.

Should this body be based in an academic institution, preferably a state-run institution, it has the advantage of being a government body and has better assurance of continuity of programs, especially if the institution has long been established. By comparison, private institutions run by corporate bodies or families, may easily change thrusts.

## 2. Budget

State-run academic institutions have specific allocations for specific programs that get presented to the legislature. Unfortunately, such budget can also be cut. However, endowment funds can be tapped.

Private academic institutions are at an advantage because funds dedicated to specific programs are readily made available.

## 3. Staffing

Will the staff complement of the proposed National Commission be necessarily drawn from those institutions which have the available expertise, training and facilities?

## 4. Legal considerations

Will the establishment of this body trigger changes in existing laws? If it does, what are its implications to agencies created under such laws?

**REGIONAL PRESERVATION COMMITTEE AND CENTRES :  
AN URGENTLY NEEDED BY THE ASEAN COUNTRIES**

Djoko Utomo  
Deputy Director - General  
National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia  
Indonesia

**Definition**

**Preservation is (1) “a basic archival function of storing and protecting records/archives, and (2) the totality of processes and operations involved in the physical protection of records/archives against damage or deterioration and in the restoration/repair of damaged or deteriorated documents.”** (Walne (ed.) 1988). Preservation may also include the transfer of information to another medium such as microfilm.

**Preservation is one of the defining concepts of archives management. Among all archival tasks preservation plays a key role, also because the achievements of archival work depend on a competent and effective fulfillment of the task of preservation. Preservation of archives is of vital importance to society since such recorded information serves as the base for each generation to build upon the accomplishments of the past. Preservation is about assessing and reducing the physical risk to the archival material.**

**Preservation is a process to be managed, not a problem to be solved** (Peterson, 1996). Peterson's statement above has been enlarged upon by Helen Forde at the CITRA conference in Budapest, October 1999. It should be added that on 6-9 October 1999 there was a CITRA meeting on preservation of archives.

### **Preservation Policy**

A preservation policy can not be prepared in isolation; it must form an integral part of overall policy for archive management. A preservation policy should define the objectives which an archive seeks to achieve in maintaining the structure and/or usefulness of its holdings to meet the needs of its users. It should include:

- (1) a set of standards for the storage, cleaning and handling of material;
- (2) a contingency plan for disaster recovery;
- (3) a maintenance program to repair damaged documents;
- (4) priorities for conservation treatment;
- (5) introduction of surrogates to replace the original documents;
- (6) a training program for staff and users

### **The Importance of Archives**

How important archives are can be seen from the statements below:

**“Of all national assets, archives are most precious, they are the gift of one generation to another and the extent of our care of them marks the extent of our civilization”** (Sir Arthur Doughty, 1924).

**“ A government without archives would be something like a warrior without weapons, a physician without medicines, a farmer without seed, an artisan without tools. Public records are the solid ground on which the statesman can tread with security in the incessant toil of conducting the affairs of a nation. They are the silent, impartial, reliable and eternal witness that bears testimony to the toils, the misfortunes, the growth and the glories of peoples”**  
(Richardo J. Alfaro, 1937)

Archives are unique, and their information is recorded on a medium, an original text. They are the collective memory of a nation, the national identity and cultural heritage, which can be used only if handled and perused. This character of uniqueness leads to a specific duty to protect them, preserve them durably, and make them accessible. Obviously, archivists have to apply Jenkinson's concept of “the moral and physical defence of the archives”. **Moral defence** means that archives must be cared for in ways that safeguard their contents/information and the

authenticity, and **physical defence** means the physical care and security required for long-term preservation (Ellis (ed.) 1993).

### **Cooperation**

Furthermore, library materials are also important as well as archives, and there is no doubt that preservation of the library materials is actually the same to preservation of archives. So, cooperation between archives and libraries is very important, as well as between archivists and librarians. Moreover, archivists and librarians should cooperate with conservators and scholars. Then, they have to establish an organization or committee in their country and regional countries, such as in the United State of America, **US Commission on Preservation and Access (CPA)**, or in Europe, **the European Commission on Preservation and Access (ECPA)**. It should be noted that the ECPA was founded by a group of archivists, librarians and scholars of European countries out of concern for the fate of the millions of books and archives threatened by acidification and embrittlement.

The cooperation should be perceived as a mutual benefit to provide the impetus for action and an acceptance of responsibility for maintaining accurate and up-to-date information. With the development of preservation policies comes a better understanding of the range and level of the problems and an acceptance of the scarcity of resources to address them. At this stage the perception of the benefits of cooperation will become more apparent and this should provide the incentive necessary for action.

### **Regional Committee on Preservation**

As far as I know that up to now there is no national committee on preservation of archives and library materials in Indonesia as well as a regional committee in South East Asia. Actually the idea of establishing national and regional committees on preservation is not new. As far back as 1982, at the meeting of the working party on the physical protection of books and documents held in Copenhagen, clear statements were being made about the enhanced cooperation at the regional and international level between organizations and institutions concerned with the physical protection of books and documents. The establishment of a National and Regional Committee on Preservation in South East Asia is very urgent because among the archive and library materials in the tropical countries, more than 20% of them are in dangerous condition (Sakamoto, 1999).

### **Regional Preservation Centres**

It is important to establish the Regional Preservation Centres beside the Regional Committee. According to Cunha (1983), Regional Preservation Centres are a logical intermediary between curators and administrators and the scientific community, and between the scientific community and professional conservators, in order to provide a constant flow of reliable information. Regional Preservation Centres can provide the lectures and instructors for the seminars and workshops that will be such an important part of any preservation effort. Regional Preservation Centres can provide microform service and a processing facility for preservation microfilm and magnetic/optical disc/tapes.

### **Conclusion**

ASEAN countries are tropical countries. More than 20% of the archives of the tropical countries are in dangerous condition because of the high temperature and humidity. To cope with this problem, Regional Preservation Centres should be established soon.

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## General Discussion

### Policy Questions:

#### Topic 5: Establishing Regional or National Commissions on Preservation

#### *Paper Presenters*

*U Thaw Kaung*

*Salvacion Arlante*

*Djoko Utomo*

*Moderator: Harald Hundius*

Moderator

Since we are really running out of time, I would like to just open the floor for two questions, or maybe three, one for each speaker. So I would like to ask for some questions.

John F. Dean

This is just a general question, and I guess it's to all three speakers. There has been a great deal of discussion on the role of commissions. Mr. Utomo mentioned the role of the Commission on Preservation and Access in the United States, and the European Commission, and U Thaw Kang mentioned the commission established in Myanmar. The organization that Professor Arlante mentioned also hints towards a commission. I was wondering what the speakers think about the possible establishment of a commission for Southeast Asia.

U Thaw Kaung

I think we should have maybe a commission for Southeast Asia. I don't know about the whole of Asia because I am familiar only with Southeast Asia, but at least for Southeast Asia it would be a great benefit for us. We already have in Myanmar a national commission, but we would welcome a regional commission for preservation and access, like the one in Europe or the United States.

Salvacion Arlante

I think that if we have the commission for Southeast Asia, there is a need to study where the base of such a commission would be, because there are differences in the organizational structure of the different countries. This might be a serious thing to consider. This specifically goes to legal implications too, because there might be existing laws also that may be affected in the different countries of Southeast Asia.

Djoko Utomo

My idea is that before you set up the commission in Southeast Asia, first set up your commission in your country. Secondly, maybe if I could suggest the center of the commission in Singapore, because Singapore is neutral. They don't have the old, old documents. Why Singapore? If Laos, Myanmar, or Indonesia, maybe there is a conflict of interests, but I think Singapore is the best.

Salvacion Arlante

May I just have a follow up, Dr Hundius? I would think that a consortium would be a better idea, as presented by Dr. Rujaya or Kim See. We are active members of CONSAL, for example, and we have a round-robin turn of hosting the programs and projects of the region. And so a consortium, I think, would be best, instead of pinpointing a commission for the whole region.

Gardjito

I want to address this to Utomo. It seems like you are blaming the publishers for using the bad paper so that everybody has to preserve them in the future. So you are suggesting that maybe, from now on, we start from creating instead of preserving it later. Maybe all the governments should have a law banning the production of acidic paper. So, it is a law to introduce that all publishers must use paper that will last hundreds of years. So, you are going to be out of a job, there is going to be no preservation in the future!

## **THE CHIANG MAI DECLARATION**

### **Background**

On February 21-24, 2000, the Chiang Mai University Library convened an International Meeting on Microform Preservation and Conservation Practices in Southeast Asia, with the support of the Japan Foundation Asia Center and the Ford Foundation, at which 68 participants from various professions (history and philology, book and archives conservation, microphotography, librarianship, archives administration) and organizations (national libraries, national archives, research libraries, universities, professional associations, grant-making foundations, inter-governmental organizations, and library and archives consortia) from 16 countries took part. The meeting elected a steering committee of country representatives and an implementing committee with representatives from several professional sectors (see Attachment A). The meeting also agreed upon the following mission statement, objectives, and short-, medium- and long-term action agenda, which we have termed the “Chiang Mai Declaration”.

### **Mission Statement**

We resolve to:

- Reaffirm the critical need for action to preserve and provide access to the published and documentary heritage of the Southeast Asian region;
- Reaffirm that microform remains the primary reformatting medium for long-term preservation of the contents of library and archival materials, providing that international standards for production and storage are adhered to. Emerging new technologies such as digitization may be useful adjuncts for

access and image-capturing, but must not be seen as substitutes for preservation on microfilm;

- Recommend that each country in the region have at least one center of excellence or model program in microform reformatting that conforms to international standards for production, storage and access;
- Emphasize that reformatting of materials does not in any way reduce the institution's responsibility to preserve the original artifact where this is appropriate; and
- Recommend the formulation and adoption of national preservation and conservation policies for each country in the region.

## Objectives

The meeting resolved to establish the **Southeast Asian Consortium for Access and Preservation**, or **SEACAP**, to encourage, develop, facilitate and support collaboration among libraries, archives, and other concerned institutions and individuals in order to preserve and provide access to the published and documentary heritage of the region.

**SEACAP** will undertake to serve local communities and scholars worldwide in providing access to materials relating to Southeast Asian studies, and enhance preservation activities in the region by carrying out the following tasks which are:

- To serve as a clearinghouse for sharing and exchanging information (in printed and electronic formats) on all aspects of preservation-related activities—for example, sharing information on preservation projects or on potential funding sources for carrying out such projects;
- To update and maintain bibliographic tools, such as **the *Masterlist of Southeast Asian Microforms*** database;
- To provide and coordinate training opportunities (including new and existing programs at institutions within and beyond the region) in order to increase benefit and reduce duplication;
- To publish and disseminate training materials and the results of new research;
- To promote research agendas relating to preservation issues;
- To advise and consult on preservation issues and strategies;
- To identify funding sources and to assist with the preparation and negotiation of proposals;
- To promote the objectives of **SEACAP** to governments, international organizations and foundations;

- To coordinate activities with other networks and consortia, such as International Council on Archives (ICA), Southeast Asia Regional Branch, International Council on Archives (SARBICA), International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), Southeast Asia Microforms Project (SEAM), and South East Asia-Pacific Audio Visual Archive Association (SEAPAVAA);
- To promote public awareness of the need to protect and preserve a threatened heritage; and
- To promote understanding of international and local copyright laws and to develop protocols and suggestions for emphasizing the rights of fair use.

## Action Agenda

### *Short-term*

- Create a **SEACAP** temporary implementing committee comprised of representatives drawn from a cross-section of professions and institutions, and from a range of nations in the region, to plan and implement the immediate short-term resolutions of the meeting.
- Establish a **SEACAP** website.
- Establish listserv discussion group(s).
- Publish and disseminate the Proceedings of this meeting.

### *Medium-term*

- Form technical working groups.
- Compile and make available a database for a revised *Masterlist of Southeast Asian Microforms*, adding data on film type and condition.
- Begin emergency rescue of damaged microfilms in the region.
- Assess the scope of the need for remastering of acetate films to polyester and initiate a plan to begin that work.
- Conduct research on the suitability of storage of microfilms in hermetically sealed vacuum pouches.
- Explore the cost-effectiveness of digitizing as a means of input to microform.
- Produce guides to various collections.

### *Long-term*

- Gather and share information on the best practices for filming special materials such as *lontar* (palm leaf), *parabaik*, indigenous paper and bindings, etc.

- Conduct research into (a) the physical characteristics of local writing materials; and (b) appropriate indigenous preservation materials and techniques, including safe and effective insect repellents, etc.
- Plan and hold future similar conferences (on the basis of implementation of some of the above-outlined short- and medium-term goals).

# APPENDICES

## **A. Project and Program Schedule**

### **International Meeting on Microform Preservation and Conservation Practices in Southeast Asia : Assessing Current Needs and Evaluating Past Projects Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai, Thailand February 21-24, 2000**

An international meeting of preservation practitioners and conservation experts in manuscript and archival materials is to be held at the Chiang Mai Orchid Hotel, Chiang Mai, Thailand from February 21-24, 2000, as a cooperative venture and at the initiative of the Chiang Mai University Library, the Southeast Asia Microform Project of the Center for Research Libraries, Chicago, USA, SPAFA Library, Bangkok, the Japan Foundation Asia Center and the Ford Foundation. The meeting will follow up on a previous meeting held at Chiang Mai University Library in December 1993 at which a regional consortium for preservation and conservation was first proposed. Scholars, preservation experts, archivists, librarians, funding agencies, government officials and decision makers will discuss the effectiveness of preservation filming practice and develop guidelines for future practices that will take advantage of the experiences of past projects.

The meeting will bring together scholars and administrators who have been actively involved in preservation efforts in the region, including representatives and managers from the major projects, and from the funding agencies who have been responsible for underwriting some of these efforts. Representatives from the region, or consultants with knowledge of regional issues, will present position papers suggesting ways in which problems which currently hinder efficient preservation management might be solved.

The objective of the meeting is to examine preservation needs and practices in Southeast Asia and to evaluate the effectiveness of international cooperative projects. Discussion will focus on all aspects of preservation management: needs assessment and collections surveys, scholarly priorities, funding opportunities, conservation and micrographics technologies, and bibliographic access. It is hoped that the meeting will result in guidelines which will make future projects more effective, by establishing international conventions for such issues as:

1. Minimum storage requirements for camera negatives; establishment of national or regional underground microform storage facilities.
2. Establishment of international preservation copyright understandings, and a standard preservation filming contract.
3. Establishment of a regional registry of microform master bibliographic records.

4. Establishment of international conventions protecting endangered scholarly research materials.
5. Establishment of a regional Commission on Preservation and Access to oversee the implementation of recommendations of the meeting.

The first two days of the meeting will consist of discussions relating to technical operations and management issues raised in position papers, with the intention of establishing feasible solutions which are compatible with international standards, regional conditions and cultural expectations. On the third and fourth day regional officials with policy making responsibilities will be invited to participate in the discussions on the resolutions of the meeting and offer recommendations that would be in line with governmental and state policies and receive immediate official and national support.

## Program Schedule

### Monday February 21, 2000

- 8.00 - 9.00 a.m.      **Registration**
- 9.00 - 9.15          **Opening Ceremony**  
*The Director of Chiang Mai University Library presents a report on the background and orientation of the Meeting. The Vice President of CMU delivers a speech and declares open the Meeting.*  
*Khunying Maenmas Chavalit, Library and Documentation Officer, SPAFA Library presents tokens of appreciation to the Meeting sponsors.*
- 9.15 - 9.45          **Keynote addresses**  
***The View from Doi Suthep***  
***Tun Aung Chain, Chairman, National***  
 Commission for the Preservation of Traditional Manuscripts, Myanmar
- 9.45- 10.15        ***Briefing on the Meeting's Agenda by the Organizers***  
 Judith Henchy  
***Introduction of the Participants***  
 M.R. Rujaya Abhakorn
- 10.15 - 10.30      Refreshments Break
- 10.30 - 11.15      ***Setting the stage:***  
***An overview of the preservation problem***  
 John F. Dean, Director of the Department of Preservation and Conservation, Cornell University Library, USA
- 11.15 - 11.30      ***Comments and questions***
- 11.30 - 12.30      ***Technical Operations***  
**TOPIC 1 : *Meeting international standards effectively within local budgets and resources***  
 Nguyen Thi Bac, Vietnam  
 Peter Arfanis, Cambodia  
 Melvin P. Thatcher, USA  
 Moderator : Dara Kanlaya

- 12.30 - 1.30 p.m. Lunch
- 1.30 - 2.45 **Technical Operations (Continued)**  
**TOPIC 2 : Providing bibliographic access both locally and internationally**  
 Tim Behrend, New Zealand  
 Kieu Van Hot, Vietnam  
 Moderator : Henri Chambert Loir
- 2.45 - 3.00 Refreshments Break
- 3.00 - 4.15 **Technical Operations (Continued)**  
**TOPIC 3 : Best practices for the conservation of original texts and film negatives**  
 Blasius Sudarsono, Indonesia  
 Gardjito, Indonesia  
 Barbara Berger Eden, USA  
 Moderator : Cesar G. Lacanienta
- 4.15 - 5.30 **TOPIC 4 : Providing effective and cost effective technical training**  
 O.P.Agrawal, India  
 Helen Jarvis, Australia  
 Moderator : U Pe Thein
- Comments and questions*
- 6.30 - 8.30 p.m. Reception

**Tuesday February 22, 2000**

- 9.00 - 10.15 a.m. **Management Issues**  
**TOPIC 1 : Implementing effective preservation management on a national scale**  
 Khunying Maenmas Chavalit, Thailand  
 Tun Aung Chain, Myanmar  
 Rosalina A Concepcion  
 Moderator : Ch'ng Kim See
- 10.15 - 10.30 Refreshments Break

- 10.30 - 12.30      ***Management Issues (Continued)***  
**TOPIC 2 :** The potential for regional cooperative  
 Preservation management  
 Ch'ng Kim See, Singapore  
 Ryuji Yonemura, Japan  
 Kwek-Chew Kim Gek, Singapore  
 M.R. Rujaya Abhakorn, Thailand  
 Moderator : Jennifer Lindsay
- 12.30 - 1.30 p.m.      Lunch
- 1.30 - 3.00      ***Management Issues (Continued)***  
**TOPIC 3 :** Exploring alternative funding models for  
 sustained preservation activity  
 Susan Go, USA  
 Salbiah Yusof, Malaysia  
 Cesar G. Lacanienta, the Philippines  
 Moderator : U Thaw Kaung
- 3.00 - 3.15      Refreshments Break
- 3.15 - 4.30      ***Management Issues (Continued)***  
**TOPIC 4 :** *Establishing management practices for effective  
 quality control and project evaluation*  
 Roger Tol, Netherlands  
 Wim J. Th. Smit, Netherlands  
 Moderator : Barbara Berger Eden
- 5.00 - 6.30 p.m.      ***Special Public Lecture***  
*"Documenting the Khmer Rouge Genocide in Cambodia"*  
 Helen Jarvis : Associate Professor in School of  
 Information System, Technology and Management,  
 University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia.

**Wednesday February 23, 2000**

- 9.00 - 9.30 a.m.**      ***Summary of the Discussions on Technical Operations  
 and Management Issues and their Relation to Policy  
 Questions***  
 Judith Henchy, USA

- 9.30 - 10.45      ***Policy Questions***  
**TOPIC 1 : *Forming political support and consensus nationally and institutionally***  
Daw Khin Khin Tun, Myanmar  
Alan Feinstein, Japan  
Akira Genba, Japan  
Moderator : Peter Arfanis
- 10.45 - 11.00      Refreshments Break
- 11.00 - 12.30      ***Policy Questions (Continued)***  
**TOPIC 2 : *Formulating fair and effective copyright agreements***  
Judith Henchy, USA  
Susanne Ornager, UNESCO  
Rashidan Hakkam, Malaysia  
Moderator : Alan Feinstein
- 12.30 - 1.30 p.m.      Lunch
- 1.30 - 2.45      ***Policy Questions (Continued)***  
**TOPIC 3 : *Evaluating effective use of international cooperation as a project model***  
Jennifer Lindsay, Australia  
Harald Hundius, Germany  
Moderator : Reiko Ogawa
- 2.45 - 3.00      Refreshments Break
- 3.00 - 4.30      ***Policy Questions (Continued)***  
**TOPIC 4 : *Establishing regional training and microform master storage facilities***  
John F. Dean, USA  
Chu Tuyet Lan, Vietnam  
Moderator : Daw Ni Ni Myint

**TOPIC 5 : *Establishing regional or national commissions on preservation***

U Thaw Kaung, Myanmar

Salvacion Arlante, The Philippines

Djoko Utomo, Indonesia

Moderator : Harald Hundius

4.30 - 6.30 Visit to the National Library, National Archives and Wat Chiang Man

7.00 - 8.30 Dinner

**Thursday February 24, 2000**

9.00 - 10.30 a.m.	<b><i>Plans for Future Development</i></b>
	1. <i>Technical Operations Policy</i>
10.30 - 10.45	Refreshments Break
10.45 - 12.00	2. <i>Management Policy</i>
12.00 - 1.00 p.m.	Lunch
1.00 - 2.00	3. <i>Funding Policy</i>
2.00 - 3.00	Comments by regional senior officials
3.00 - 3.15	Closing Remarks

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## D. Abbreviations

ABN	Australian Bibliographic Network
AIIM	Association for Information and Image Management
ANSI	American National Standards Institute
ANU	Australian National University
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEAN-COCI	ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information
BAS	Bibliography of Asian Studies
BILCO	Bibliographic Services and Library Cooperation
BISA	Bibliographic Information Services for Asia and Pacific
CCP	Cultural Center of the Philippines
CIC	Committee on Institutional Cooperation
CLIR	Council on Library and Information Resources
CNP	Current Newspaper Project
COCI	Committee on Culture and Information
CONSAL	Congress of Southeast Asian Librarians
CORMOSEA	Committee on Research Resources on Southeast Asia
CPA	Commission on Preservation and Access
CRL	Centre for Research Libraries
DAAD	German Academic Exchange Service
DC-CAM	The Documentation Centre of Cambodia
ECPA	European Commission on Preservation and Access
ÉFEO	École Française d'Extrême Orient
EROMM	European Register of Microform Masters
FAQs	Frequently Asked Questions
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
HTML	Hypertext Mark-up Language
ICA	International Council of Archives
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IFLA	International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions

INTACH	Indian Council of Conservation Institutes
IRT	International Review Team
ISEAS	Institute of Southeast Asian Studies
IT	Information Technology
J.L.A	Japan Library Association
JSCLCBS	Joint Standing Committee on Library Cooperation and Bibliographical Services
KITLV	Royal Institute of Linguistics and Anthropology
LAN	Local Area Network
LE100	Life Expectancy of One Hundred Years
LIPI	Indonesian Institute of Sciences
MANASSA	Indonesian Manuscript Society
MARC	Machine Readable Cataloging
MRC	National Archives of Cambodia
NACESTID	National Center for Scientific and Technological Information and Documentation
NAS	National Archives of Singapore
NBDCS	National Book Development Council of Singapore
NCCA	National Commission for Culture and the Arts
NDL	National Diet Library
NEH	National Endowment for the Humanities
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NHI	National Historical Institute
NLB	National Library Board (Singapore)
NLG-SEA	National Libraries Group in Southeast Asia
NLI	National Library of Indonesia
NLV	National Library of Vietnam
NM	National Museum
NSSTI	National System of Scientific and Technological Information
NUOL	National University of Laos
OCLC	Online Computer Library Center

ODA	Outside Donnor Assistance
OPAC	On-line Public Access Catalog
PAC	Preservation and conservation
PAT	Photographic Activities Test
PDII	Indonesian Centre for Scientific Documentation
PDII-LIPI	Scientific Documentation and Information
PGI	General Information Program
PLMP	Preservation of Lao Manuscripts Programme
PPM	Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (Library Association of Malaysia)
PPS	Persatuan Perpustakaan Singapura (Library Association of Singapore)
RH	Relative Humidity
RMAO	Records Managemant and Archives Office
SARBICA	Southeast Asian Regional Branch of the International Council of Archives
SCOM	Standing Committee on Microform
SEACAP	Southeast Asian Consortium for Access and Preservation
SEEAFILA	Southeast Asian Foreign Language and Area Studies
SEAM	Southeast Asian Microform Project
SEAMN	Southeast Asia Microfilm Newsletter
SEAPAVAA	South East Asia-Pacific Audio Visual Archive Association
SPAFA	Southeast Asian Project for Archaeology and Fine Arts
TRIPS	Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property
UARD	University Archives and Records Depository
UCL	Universities Central Library
UCLA	University of California Los Angeles
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UPILS	UP Institute of Library Science
VUC	Vietnam Union Catalogue
WAN	Wide Area Network
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization







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