

ASIA PACIFIC REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR MEMORY OF THE WORLD (MOWCAP)

GOODWILL PATRON'S REPORT TO THE 5th MOWCAP GENERAL MEETING, 13-16 May 2012 Bangkok, Thailand

This report is a summary of the activities of MOWCAP Goodwill Patron, Dr. M.R.Rujaya Abhakorn, between March 2010-February 2012.

BACKGROUND

The voluntary position of “Goodwill Patron” by Dr. M.R.Rujaya Abhakorn was created by MOWCAP in 2005 as an advocacy strategy to provide information to the Asia/Pacific countries about the MOW Programme, to encourage the establishment of National MOW Committees and the submission of nominations to the International and Regional Registers. Since then he has travelled to all of the ASEAN countries who are now better aware of the MOW Programme, have established some links with MOWCAP in different ways and have submitted nominations for the Asia/Pacific Memory of the World Register in 2008 or 2010.

ACTIVITIES

1. Attendance as Speaker at the International Confucianism Woodblock Conference in Andong, Republic of Korea, October 2010.

Dr.Susanne Ornager of UNESCO Bangkok, IAC member Professor Kyung-ho Suh, MOWCAP Bureau member Carmen D. Padilla, and Dr. Rujaya were invited by the Korean Studies Advancement Center to speak on the MOW Programme at the International Confucianism Woodblock Conference in Andong, Republic of Korea, on October 14, 2010. Later visits were made to the Woodblock Research Center and Museum of the Korean Studies Advancement Center and the Andong region. Woodblocks inscribed with Confucian teachings made by the Andong communities form an important part of cultural heritage in the region.

2.Attendance as Speaker at a Public Seminar in Hong Kong: “From memory, archives and heritage: the UNESCO Memory of the World programme”, November 2010.

Organised by the Archives Action Group of Hong Kong, the Seminar was held at Admiralty Learning Centre in Hong Kong on 25 November, 2010 to introduce the Memory of the

World Programme of UNESCO and its works in promoting global awareness in the identification and preservation of documentary heritage of world significance. The importance of archives and archives legislation behind such a programme, as well as the experience of a country in preparing the nomination and getting the collection registered, was highlighted. Speakers from the UNESCO MOW Programme included Dr. Luciana Duranti from Canada, Dr. Lothar Jordan from Germany, Dr. Rujaya and Ray Edmondson, the MOWCAP Chair.

The Seminar was attended by academics, lawyers and those concerned with the preservation of documentary heritage and the roles of archives and who would like to see archival legislation in Hong Kong.

3. Attendance as Speaker at the International Conference in Macau on “World Documentary Heritage and the Memory Program”, November 2010.

The Macau Documentation and Information Society and the Academic Committee of the Library Society of China organized an International Conference in Macau on 25th to 28th November, 2010 on “ World Documentary Heritage and the Memory Program” in order to enhance the digitization of documentation management and the Memory Program, and to promote the documentation preservation and importance to the public. There were 24 speakers from the UNESCO MOW Programme, China, Hong Kong, Macau, Singapore and Taiwan. Dr. Rujaya gave a presentation on “The preservation of documentary heritage and its importance for Asia/Pacific”.

4. Mission to Brunei Darussalam in January 2011

At the invitation of the National Archives of Brunei Darussalam, the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, Dr. M.R. Rujaya Abhakorn, MOWCAP Goodwill Patron, gave a talk and held discussions with the Brunei Darussalam authorities on the MOW Programme and related issues of interest on January 25, 2011

The Memory of the World Committee for Asia/Pacific (MOWCAP) of the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme was approached by Ms. Hajah Fatimah Haji Aji, Head of Archivist Officers of the National Archives of Brunei Darussalam who indicated that the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports would like to get more input in relation to the MOW Programme and would also like to invite an MOW expert to provide more information on MOWCAP and the MOW National Committee. As Dr. Rujaya had to attend the 46th SEAMEO Council Conference in Brunei Darussalam in January 26-29, 2011 in his capacity as Director of SEAMEO SPAFA (Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts), holding the talk on January 25, 2011 before the SEAMEO Council Conference was cost-saving.

The talk was held at the National Archives and chaired by Mr. Awang Bantong bin Antaran, Director of Brunei Museums. It was well organized and attended by 31 officials from the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the National Archives, the National Library, the Language and Literature Bureau, Academy of Brunei Studies of the University of Brunei Darussalam and members of the mass media. As this was the first time that Brunei was exposed to MOW, general information about the MOW Programme was provided, examples of items inscribed on the International Register were shown and the issues related to the MOW National Committee were discussed. The audience showed great interest and asked several general questions. At the end of the meeting MOW greeting cards and bookmarks were distributed to the audience and an interview was given to a reporter from the Brunei Times.

An extra visit was arranged to a royal cemetery and an Islamic cemetery that contains an important inscription that has valuable historical information which could be a candidate for nomination to a MOW Register.

Evaluation

1. To objectives of providing information on the MOW Programme, the roles of the Regional Committee (MOWCAP), the Registers, the criteria for the selection of documents and the guidelines for setting up a National Committee in the country were met. The meeting was successful in raising awareness about the MOW Programme especially among the national officials working in the heritage fields.
2. There was a good media coverage, especially by the newspapers in both English and the local language.
3. As in most countries, the challenge was the coordination between the various governmental agencies, the academics and the communities especially in the nomination process.
4. It was hopeful that there would be 2 outcomes: the formation of a National MOW Committee or its equivalent and the reviewing of documents suitable for nomination to either the Regional Register or the International Register.

5. Attendance at the Second Regional Training Workshop on the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 11-14 March 2011

With the aim of helping fellow countries in the Asia and Pacific Region in preparing their nominations for the Memory of the World (MOW) International Register by providing them with technical assistance, the Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea, UNESCO and the Korean National Commission for UNESCO organized the *Second Regional Training Workshop* as part of the Korean Government's Official Development Aid Programmes, following the successful conclusion of the first workshop in February 2009 in Korea. The

objectives and format of this second workshop remained the same as the first while the venue shifted to Jakarta, Indonesia with local support from the Indonesian MOW National Committee and the Indonesian National Commission for UNESCO.

The objectives of the Workshop were

- To increase awareness of the existence and significance of Asian-Pacific documentary heritages
- To select approximately ten member states in the Asia-Pacific region that have not yet registered any documentary heritage on the UNESCO Memory of the World international register and assist them in identifying important documentary heritages that have world significance
- To assist the selected countries in preparing their applications for nomination to the international register
- To increase the number of submissions and inscriptions of nomination forms for the UNESCO Memory of the World international/regional register by Asia-Pacific countries as a result of this workshop.

The Workshop was led by 5 MOW experts:

1. Ms. Roslyn Russell (MOW International Advisory Committee, Chair)
2. Mr. Ray Edmondson (MOW International Advisory Committee, Register Sub-Committee member / Chair of the Memory of the World Committee for Asia Pacific)
3. Dr. M.R. Rujaya Abhakorn (MOW International Advisory Committee, Register Sub-Committee member / Register Sub-Committee Chair of the Memory of the World Committee for Asia Pacific)
4. Prof. Kyung Ho Suh (Professor, College of Liberal Studies, Seoul National University / Register Sub-Committee Member of the Memory of the World Committee for Asia Pacific)
5. Ms. Joie Springer (Section Chief, Universal Access and Preservation Section, Communication and Information Sector, UNESCO)

Draft Nominations were presented at the Workshop for discussion by 13 countries, namely Bangladesh, Bhutan, Fiji, Indonesia, Laos, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka and Vietnam.

Evaluation

1. This Workshop was a very good exercise in creating a better understanding of the aims and criteria for the assessment of nominations to the MOW Registers.
2. It became clear to the participants that the MOW assessment process is a rigorous one and careful preparations of documents for nomination is always necessary.

3. This kind of Workshop should be supported and conducted regularly if financially possible.

6. Attendance as Speaker at the International Symposium in Commemoration of Millennial Anniversary of the Tripitaka Koreana in Changwon, Republic of Korea, September 2011

In Commemoration of the Millennial Anniversary of the making of the first set of the Tripitaka Koreana woodblocks in the 1011, an International Symposium was held on September 28-29, 2011 in Changwon, Republic of Korea. IAC chair Roslyn Russell, MOWCAP Chair Ray Edmondson and Dr. Rujaya were invited to speak on the importance of the Tripitaka Koreana which had been inscribed on the UNESCO Memory of the World Register in 2007.

7. Attendance as Speaker at the International Seminar on Qiaopi Studies in Guangzhou, China, in December 2011.

MOWCAP Chair Ray Edmondson, MOWCAP Bureau member Simon Chu, and Dr. Rujaya were invited to present papers on the MOW Programme and the techniques in filling out the nomination forms on December 8, 2011 by the State Archives Administration of China and the Guangdong Provincial Archives, as the Provincial Archives were preparing documents relating to the overseas Chinese for nomination to the MOW Registers. Visits to Qiaopi Archives Repository in Shantou and Overseas Chinese History Museum in Jiangmen were also made on December 9-12.

Summary

The work of the Goodwill Patron has now passed the initial stage. Most countries in the Asia/Pacific region now have a better knowledge of the UNESCO MOW Programme because of the frequent personal contacts with the Goodwill Patron and other MOWCAP Bureau volunteers at workshops and seminars. In this respect, the support of the State Archives Administration of China and the Korean National Commission for UNESCO must be recognized. What is needed further is a deeper understanding of the MOW criteria and the meaning of global historical significance. The MOWCAP could also work on the other aspects of the Programme such as preservation and access, which will make the inscribed documents more meaningful to the global general public.

*Rujaya Abhakorn
MOWCAP Goodwill Patron
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