

REPORT TO 6th MOWCAP GENERAL MEETING, 13-15 MAY 2014, GUANGZHOU

This report covers the main activities of MOWCAP since the previous General Meeting in Bangkok, in May 2012.

MOWCAP comprises the delegates of the national MOW committees and equivalent bodies in the Asia Pacific region, as defined in the MOWCAP statutes. MOWCAP relates to, and is accredited by, the UNESCO Regional Office in Bangkok, Thailand.

MOWCAP's statutes, minutes of meetings, and other documentation are available on its website at www.unesco.mowcap.org

Background

MOWCAP embraces UNESCO's Asia-Pacific area – that is, the 45 countries bounded by Mongolia in the north, New Zealand in the South, the Pacific island countries in the east, and Iran and the “stan” countries in the west. Notable characteristics of the region are:

- Political, linguistic and cultural diversity
- Economic disparity: first world to third world.
- Population size ranging from the world's largest (China at 1.3 billion) to smallest (Niue at 2000)
- Its size and the tyranny of distance. Much of the Asia Pacific is ocean, many countries are islands, travel and communication is costly.
- Cultures of great richness and antiquity, yet many nation states are relatively young in their present form. A general history of colonization creates particular issues in the repatriation of documentary heritage.
- Many countries are tropical, with temperature/ humidity destructive of documentary heritage.
- Archives, libraries and museums often lack adequate funds, infrastructure and skills.
- Contains almost 50% of the world's population and 25% of UNESCO member countries.

MOWCAP membership

Current members are Australia, Cambodia, China, Fiji, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Krygyzstan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Vanuatu, Vietnam. In addition, at the 5th General Meeting in May 2012, delegates from Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR, Singapore, Myanmar and India attended as observers.

Meetings

The 5th General Meeting of MOWCAP was held in Bangkok, Thailand on 14-16 May 2012. It attracted a record 61 participants and was jointly hosted by the Ministries of Culture and Education, the Thai National Commission for UNESCO and the Thai National Memory of the World Committee. The Bureau met in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 12-14 March 2013, hosted by the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts and the UNESCO National Commission of Cambodia.



Bureau

The current Bureau, now ending its term of office, comprises:

Chair: Ray Edmondson

Deputy Chairs: Carmen Padilla, Li Minghua

Secretary General: Helen Swinnerton

Regional UNESCO Advisor: Rosa Gonzalez

Register Subcommittee chair and Goodwill Patron: Rujaya Abhakorn

Special advisors: Sarah Choy, Simon Chu, Richard Engelhardt, Kwibae Kim

Just prior to this General Meeting, Setareki Tale tendered his resignation as a Vice Chair.

Asia Pacific MOW Register

There were 4 new inscriptions to the Asia Pacific Register at the MOWCAP General Meeting in March 2010, chosen through secret ballot by voting members. The ceremony for presentation of certificates was part of a celebratory dinner. The inscribed items were:

China: *Qiaopi and Yinxin: Correspondence and remittance documents from overseas Chinese*

Papua New Guinea/ Australia: *F E Williams Collection of photographs 1922-1943*

Tibet Autonomous Region of China: *Official Records of Tibet from the Yuan Dynasty China 1304-1367*

Vietnam: *Woodblocks at Vinh Nghiem Pagoda, Bac Giang Province*

The inscription from Papua New Guinea represents the country's first appearance on any MOW register.

“Memory”

This is the working title of a coffee table book celebrating the documentary heritage of Asia Pacific with illustrations and explanatory text on every inscription from the Asia Pacific Region which appears on the International and Asia Pacific MOW Registers. The texts have been prepared by Hong Kong historian Dr Patrick Hase, with financial support provided by the MOW committees of China and Australia.

Unfortunately the project has been long delayed because discussions with a chosen commercial publisher could not reach a satisfactory conclusion. At the time of writing, however, discussions well advanced with another publisher and a status report will be provided at this meeting..

Communications

An occasional **MOWCAP newsletter** continued to be published. It was distributed electronically to members and other interested recipients, both inside and outside the Asia Pacific region. UNESCO Bangkok is preparing a **MOWCAP brochure** for general distribution following this meeting.

The **MOWCAP Facebook page** is now well established and has attracted a pleasing level of activity. Most Facebook users are aged under 35, so it is a prime avenue for communication with younger people. It is a social networking service and website that has around a billion users globally.



A project to redesign the **MOWCAP Website** is in progress and a status report will be provided at this meeting by the Secretary General. The website – www.unesco.mowcap.org – is the central reference point for minutes, governance documents, reports and the Asia Pacific Register. The project is dependent on voluntary effort.

Workshops and events

May 2012 **World Human Rights City Forum/ Academic symposium**, Gwangju, Republic of Korea – the first anniversary celebration of the nomination of the May 18th Democratic Movement Records to the International MOW Register. Dr Roslyn Russell and Dr Rujaya Abhakorn spoke on the world significance of this documentary heritage, and measures for exchange and cooperation between cities that have inscribed documentary heritage on MOW registers.

August 2012 **International Council on Archives (ICA) Congress** in Brisbane, Australia – Dr Roslyn Russell and Dr Ray Edmondson conducted a MOW workshop for participants.

September 2012 **16th International Congress of Oriental Medicine (ICOM)** Speech by Dr Rujaya Abhakorn on *The value of Donguibogam and Traditional Knowledge in the Global Context*. Seoul, Republic of Korea

October 2012 **Archives and Records Association of New Zealand (ARANZ) Conference** in Wellington, New Zealand – MOWCAP chair Dr Ray Edmondson announced the new inscriptions to the New Zealand National MOW Register and presented certificates of inscription to the representatives of the custodial institutions.

October 2102 **Sub-regional seminar on evaluating achievements of the MOW program** in Tehran, Iran brought together participants from Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Turkmenistan to encourage development of MOW in adjoining countries.

December 2012 **A MOW Workshop for African Countries** was hosted by the UNESCO

National Commission of the Republic of Korea, the third in this workshop series (previous workshops were held in Korea and Indonesia). From the Asia Pacific region, Dr Ray Edmondson and Dr Roslyn Russell participated as tutors. They were joined by Ms Joie Springer and Mr Jan Bos.

January 2013 International Workshop-seminar “Sharing experience participating in the MOW Program” in Hanoi, Vietnam was hosted by the State Records and Archives Department of Vietnam. MOWCAP Chair Dr Ray Edmondson was joined by speakers from Korea, China and Vietnam. The occasion marked the transition of the Vietnamese MOW Focal Point to a fully fledged national MOW committee.

March 2013 MOWCAP Bureau Meeting in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The Bureau met with stakeholders who are in the process of formalizing the national MOW committee, and also visited the Genocide Archive at Tuol Sleng, which is inscribed on the Asia Pacific and International MOW Registers.

April 2013 International Symposium on Chinese Qiaopi and UNESCO Memory of the World Program held in Beijing, China. Held in the Great Hall of the People, this event drew speakers from Europe, North America and S E Asia as well as China. MOWCAP Chair Dr Ray Edmondson and IAC member Professor Luciana Duranti were among the speakers. Also attending from MOWCAP were Dr Rujaya Abhakorn, Professor Simon Chu and Professor Suh Kyung-ho.



Hanoi workshop

May 2013 World Human Rights City Forum/ Conference for institutions holding human rights records registered on MOW in Gwangju, Republic of Korea – Dr Ray Edmondson spoke on the topic “Human Rights Documentary Heritage: the Way Ahead”.

July 2013 MOW Seminar on protecting ancient documentary heritage in the Democratic Peoples’ Republic of Korea Hosted by the Grand Peoples’ Study House of DPRK and the

National Commission for UNESCO in DPRK, and led by Professor Simon Chu.

October 2013 **Training course on the preparation of nominations for MOW registers** in Hanoi, Vietnam, hosted by the State Records and Archives Department of Vietnam. Teachers were Dr Rujaya Abhakorn, Dr Roslyn Russell and Professor Simon Chu.

October 2013 **MOW Workshop** to refresh the national MOW committee and discuss potential nominations for the national MOW register, in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. Hosted by the UNESCO National Commission for Kyrgyzstan, and led by Dr Ray Edmondson.

November 2013 **MOW Workshop for training in the Asia Pacific Region** in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, hosted by the UNESCO National Commission and the Cultural Heritage Administration of the Republic of Korea, together with the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts of Cambodia. Dr Ros Russell, Dr Ray Edmondson and Professor Kyung-ho Suh participated as tutors.



Phnom Penh workshop

Forthcoming events:

May 2014 **Historical Memory and Urban Development** International conference at Shanghai Normal University. Papers relating MOW to the conference topic will be delivered by Dr Rujaya Abhakorn, Professor Simon Chu and Dr Ray Edmondson.

June 2014 **MOW experts meeting on the proposed formal instrument for MOW** in Warsaw, Poland. Dr Ray Edmondson has been invited to attend.

September 2014 **MOW Workshop for training in the Central Asia Region** in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. Hosted by the UNESCO National Commission of the Republic of Korea.

Other regional issues and perspectives

Dr Susanne Ornager's retirement: UNESCO Regional Advisor Dr Susanne Ornager retired immediately following the MOWCAP General Meeting in May 2012. At the conclusion of that meeting she was warmly thanked for her guidance and steadying hand almost from the inception of MOWCAP. Replacing her as CI Regional Advisor in Bangkok, and ex officio member of the Bureau, is Ms Rosa Gonzalez who has established a good rapport with the Bureau.

Joie Springer retirement: The head of the MOW Secretariat in Paris, Ms Joie Springer, retired on 31 March 2014. A farewell gathering was held for her at UNESCO HQ and I sent messages of appreciation on behalf of MOWCAP which were read out on the occasion. Joie has guided the program for many years and has a considerable corporate memory of its development. She has expressed a willingness to remain associated with MOW in a voluntary capacity, and as evidence of that she will be the keynote speaker at the SEAPAVAA (South East Asia Pacific Audiovisual Archive Association) conference in Vientiane, Laos, later this month. She has been replaced by Ms Iskra Panevska.

Website sponsorship In the interests of transparency I need to declare my position in relation to the sponsoring of the re-development of the MOWCAP website. I operate a non-profit consultancy company, Archive Associates Pty Ltd, which is a registered UNESCO provider and which periodically donates its trading surplus to worthwhile causes. With the agreement of the MOWCAP Bureau, the company is donating the majority cost of the current website development. I should add that, for obvious reasons, I have stayed at arm's length from the project which, since its inception, has been in the hands of the Secretary General.

National committees

This report does not cover the individual activities of national MOW committees in the region...that would make it far too long. National reports are added to the MOWCAP website as agenda papers for General and Bureau meetings. Some countries still fail to report so the data available remains incomplete.

Regional office support and financing

MOWCAP's operating resources come from many quarters – from the immense amount of volunteer time devoted to its work, and the substantial costs in cash and kind absorbed or donated by individuals and supportive institutions, as well as UNESCO itself. Certain direct costs have been met by UNESCO's Regional Office in Bangkok, including travel by some MOWCAP officers and some other meeting participants, and other expenses. It maintains MOWCAP's "budget line" in its system.

UNESCO's funding support for MOWCAP remains tight because of UNESCO's current budgetary situation, but is slightly expanded compared to the 2012 meeting. We are grateful, too, on this occasion, for a measure of funding assistance from the Regional UNESCO office in Beijing.

Final comment

As I am stepping down as MOWCAP's chair at this meeting, after more than eight years, I want to close by saying how much I have enjoyed the journey so far, working with a group of committed people on the Bureau and seeing the programme grow so steadily across the Asia Pacific region. I've particularly enjoyed the privilege of visiting so many MOW committees and communities in so many countries, and seeing so many precious collections and documents at first hand. I intend to remain active in MOWCAP in other capacities and look forward to continuing the associations and friendships that we all share in this vital work.

Ray Edmondson
Chair, MOWCAP

3 May 2015