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Al Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation: Its Scope and Achievements

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Abstract: Since 1989, al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation has been working to assess the contents, condition and accessibility of Islamic manuscripts wherever they are located. This work has culminated in a three-volume "Survey" covering 105 countries. Twenty-two countries in Africa were initially selected for handlisting, on the grounds that many of their collections are in particular danger. Handlists have arrived from Kenya, Mali and the Comoro Islands, and work is in progress in Mali, Mauritania and Nigeria. Catalogues have been completed in Lithuania and Latvia and have been commissioned in Tatarstan and Belarus. Cataloguing will

begin in India this year. First steps have been taken to catalogue collections in Albania and Sudan. A pilot project for preservation is scheduled to start in Nigeria this year. The Foundation has initiated training courses for librarians and archivists, and holds conferences on subjects in the field of Islamic manuscripts. The Foundation's library houses over 8,500 volumes in various fields and a large collection of printed catalogues (ca. 700 titles) classified by country. All materials are recorded in a bi-alphabetic automated catalogue.

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Technical Treatment and Preservation of the Photographic Collection of the Brazilian National Library

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which should be connected to the database that is presently being generated.

Aspects of Mass Conservation

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Abstract: During the 19th century, increasing demand for paper and advances in science and technology transformed paper making from a craft to an industrial manufacturing process. Different raw materials and new processes have produced paper that is chemically unstable. The increase in atmospheric pollution has accelerated the chemical degradation of paper, while the growth in library use has increased mechanical breakdown. The "brittle book problem" is one which concerns all libraries. It is of such magnitude that conventional hand treatments are no longer sufficient. A number of mass conservation treatments are available, others are still in an experimental stage. They can be divided into processes that preserve the information content through re-formatting and those that preserve the format as well as the content. Among the former are microfilming (microfiche production) and digitizing, while the latter include mass-deacidification and paper strengthening.

Microfilming is by far the most widely used and best tested method. However, it is both costly and slow. The most recent re-formatting method is by digitizing texts, either directly or from microform. A number of experiments have shown that digital preservation depends on copying, not on the survival of the physical media. New media formats themselves constitute a preservation problem.

Three mass-deacidification processes are currently in use; a further three claim both to deacidify and to strengthen the paper. The basic principles of these processes have been briefly described and their effectiveness and their pros and cons discussed. Notwithstanding the fact that not all these processes have been properly verified and that the results of comparative studies to analyze and evaluate them have not yet been published, the following observations can be made:

- 1. No existing treatment can be applied to all kinds of paper and to all constituents of the bound book.*
- 2. There are doubts about the homogeneity and effectiveness of some of these treatments.*
- 3. Some of these processes have an adverse impact on the environment.*
- 4. None of these processes sufficiently strengthens highly degraded paper.*

Consequently, libraries must first of all assess their deacidification needs, they must decide which processes are most appropriate for the diversity of their collections, they must assess the impact of mass treatments on their day-to-day management of the collections and they must assess the financial and staffing resources to meet their present and future conservation needs. They then must try and address those needs in cooperation with other libraries in order to have at least a chance of preserving knowledge recorded on brittle paper worldwide.

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Abstract: The developments in the world of information technology are bringing together librarians and archivists working in paper-based materials with those working with sound and image recordings. The article is not an attempt to explain the intricacies of the wide range of new technological developments. This task is performed by the many technical magazines and

journals that cover this field. What this article tries to do is to explore the potential of "New Technology" to be a help or a hindrance to a text library - a Friend or Foe. Many librarians are considering using these new systems for the storage of traditional printed materials and a number of questions are discussed. Underlying the article is the clear perception that the sheer quantity of decaying material in storage makes a full examination of the benefits and drawbacks of new technology by all custodians of collections imperative.

Copyright Issues in Legal Deposit and Preservation

by Graham P. Cornish.....341

Abstract: Legal deposit is an essential element in preservation programmes but is quite separate from copyright legislation in most countries. The ability to copy something for preservation is determined by such factors as the age of the material, its format and the reasons for making the copies. The different processes - photocopying, microfilming and electronic conversion - all pose specific legal questions and also create difficulties. The end-product of preservation programmes can themselves be copyright works which need to be protected. As the use of electronic media grows so the legal issues surrounding preservation need to be studied with care.

UNESCO General Information Programme.

Memory of the World Programme.....350

Abstract: The "Memory of the World" Programme is a new UNESCO initiative to safeguard endangered documentary heritage, democratic access to it and distribute, on a large scale, products derived from it. There follows an outline of the main features of the Programme. It is important to stress that this is a new approach which is not intended to replace UNESCO's traditional activities in the field of preservation and conservation of archive and library holdings, but to complement them with vigorous action to raise awareness, stimulate initiatives and develop partnerships to carry out projects under the emblem "Memory of the World". The criteria used to select projects are set out, together with a brief account of the Programme's technical, legal and financial framework.

Lastly, five pilot projects at various stages of completion are briefly described. They are a CD-ROM featuring a selection of manuscripts from the National Library in Prague, another CD-ROM concerning the symbolic figure Saint Sophia, patron saint of the capital of Bulgaria, an inventory of nineteenth century Latin American newspapers and their state of preservation, a disc on the Radziwill Chronicle in Saint Petersburg and another disc on Yemenite manuscripts including the Koranic fragments at Sana'a.

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