



# INTERNATIONAL PRESERVATION

A Newsletter of the IFLA Core Programme on Preservation and Conservation

# NEWS

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INTERNATIONAL  
PRESERVATION

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editorial

Though this last issue of IPN is published at the turn of the Millenium it should not convey any nostalgic message nor announce a major earthquake in the field of preservation. In fact, changes have started to occur for many years or decades when libraries implemented collecting non-traditional documents, thanks to the development of new technologies. New specific conservation treatments had then to be applied. There have also been other changes due to the arrival of a new kind of readers, always more numerous, always more demanding, and in any case more concerned by the information itself than by the carrier that conveyed it, and finally less conscious, most of the time, of the respect due to printed heritage in general.

Another noteworthy change concerns the setting of priorities in preservation issues : preventive preservation has progressively become the best strategy and has become synonymous with proper library management. At the same time, mass treatments have been considered as part of an efficient preservation policy. The time when conservation exclusively dealt with restoration by the unit is over.

This being acknowledged, I wish, at the dawn of the new Millenium, preservation to play a still more important role within the global management of libraries. Taking into consideration that prevention is better than cure I would like to insist more particularly on two essential issues : the long term preservation of electronic documents and the necessity for all libraries to establish a written emergency plan together with preventive measures in order to face natural disasters or in the event of armed conflicts.

Electronic documents, or the information they convey, are right now number one in librarians' minds. The keen interest they rise should in no way hide the problems linked to their conservation and access by future generations. We have already lost too many key information because of the rapid obsolescence of hardware and software or of the mere decay of the carriers themselves. The whistle has been blown, it is now our duty to react.

As to emergency situations, let us not minimize their importance and recurrence : disasters do not only strike at our neighbor's door. If universal peace remains a vain wish when you consider what has been happening throughout History, it is fanciful to believe that a mere Convention\* will keep parties at war from destroying the symbols of their cultural heritage. It is essential that each preservation professional advocates, works and contributes to the assessment of risks and the mitigation of disasters.

A regular and increasing watchfulness, a stronger and more active co-operation linked with a willful and unfailing solidarity, such are the three wishes I make for our libraries when stepping into the third Millenium. ■

\* The Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Heritage in the Event of Armed Conflict.



Marie-Thérèse VARLAMOFF  
PAC Director

## éditorial

*Bien que ce vingtième numéro d'IPN soit le dernier de ce millénaire, je ne voudrais pas qu'il reflète une quelconque nostalgie ni qu'il soit annonciateur de grands chambardements dans le domaine de la conservation. En fait, si changement il y a, il faut revenir plusieurs années en arrière, à l'époque où les bibliothèques ont commencé à engranger, à côté des documents traditionnels, des documents issus du développement de nouvelles technologies, documents spécifiques induisant de nouveaux modes de conservation. Changement dû également à l'émergence de nouveaux publics, toujours plus nombreux, toujours plus exigeants, davantage concernés par l'information elle-même que par le support qui la contient et parfois bien moins conscients que leurs aînés du respect dû au patrimoine écrit.*

*A cela, ajoutons un changement notable dans le choix des priorités en matière de conservation : la conservation préventive s'est imposée progressivement comme la meilleure des stratégies et son utilisation est devenue synonyme de bonne gestion ; parallèlement les traitements de masse font désormais partie d'une politique de conservation efficace. Les temps semblent désormais révolus où conservation rimait exclusivement avec restauration à l'unité d'ouvrages exceptionnels.*

*Ce constat étant fait, je forme des vœux pour que ce nouveau millénaire voit se consolider la place sans cesse croissante occupée par la conservation dans la gestion globale d'une bibliothèque. Partant du principe qu'il vaut mieux prévenir que guérir je souhaiterais insister tout particulièrement sur deux points essentiels : la conservation à long terme des documents électroniques et la nécessité pour toute bibliothèque d'établir un plan d'urgence assorti de mesures préventives en cas de catastrophe naturelle ou de conflit armé.*

*Les documents électroniques, ou plutôt l'information qu'ils véhiculent, sont actuellement l'objet de toutes les convoitises. L'engouement qu'ils suscitent ne doit en aucun cas occulter les difficultés qu'il y a à les préserver et à en conserver l'accès pour les générations futures. Trop nombreuses ont déjà été les informations essentielles qui ont disparu du fait de l'obsolescence des appareils de lecture et des logiciels ou tout simplement par suite de la destruction matérielle et progressive du support. La sonnette d'alarme est tirée, à nous tous maintenant de réagir.*

*Quant aux situations d'urgence, ne les minimisons pas davantage. Les catastrophes n'arrivent pas uniquement chez les autres. Si la paix universelle, un vœu pieux quand on lit l'Histoire, n'existe pas et s'il est illusoire de croire que l'on pourra, par une simple convention\* empêcher des belligérants de détruire les symboles mêmes de la culture d'un peuple ennemi, il est essentiel que tous les professionnels de la conservation militent, oeuvrent et s'unissent pour évaluer les facteurs de risques et en minimiser les conséquences.*

*Une vigilance régulière et accrue, une coopération plus étroite et active, ainsi qu'une solidarité volontariste et sans faille, tels sont les trois vœux que je forme pour nos bibliothèques au seuil de ce troisième millénaire. ■*

\*Convention pour la protection des biens culturels en cas de conflit armé (La Haye, 1954).

# SATELLITE MEETING IN KHON KAEN

## Collecting and Safeguarding the Oral Traditions, 16-19 August 1999



*Visiting the Academic Resource Center, Mahasarakham University.*

The conference organised by IFLA Professional Board, ALP and PAC Core Programmes, and Thai Research Institute of the North-eastern Art and Culture of the Mahasarakham University, thanks to a generous support from UNESCO, took place in the city of Khon Kaen in the North-Eastern part of Thailand, also known as the Isan Region.

The main purpose of the meeting was to bring together the specialists in library and information sciences from all over the world (regardless the stage of development of their libraries and archives back home), and especially from the developing countries and the countries with prevailing oral tradition, and to give them a chance to share their experience in collecting and safeguarding oral

heritage. The meeting was focused on the issues of collecting, recording and preserving oral traditions for immediate and long-term access, dealing with such different forms as ancient traditions, rituals, sayings, songs, cults, wisdom, religious beliefs as well as with cultural, legal, ethic and technical problems.

Attended by 68 participants from 36 different countries and chaired by Ralph Manning, Chair of the Section on Preservation and Conservation, the meeting was characterised by a remarkable diversity – both geographical and cultural. Countries such as Trinidad, Fiji, Nepal, Singapore, Namibia, Cayman Islands, Thailand, Uruguay, Argentina and many more were represented. The Chairman opened the meeting with a notable keynote speech *Safeguarding Papua New Guinean Culture in the Next Millennium: Educatio -*

*nal Reforms and Preservation of Cultural Traditions* by Dr. John Waiko, Papua New Guinea Minister for Education. Dr. Waiko related his experience of collecting the oral heritage of his own people – the Binandere, and pointed out the difficulties of working with vernacular material and of having it judged both by illiterate “elders” and by literate scholars, who do not know the Binandere language. The author posited an interesting paradox: although many scholars conduct their research among the natives whose heritage and culture are the center of interest, still nothing is being returned to the people who are the subject of the research. Dr. Waiko has written his study on traditions of the Binandere in Binandere, so that his people may also know and judge what is being written about them, thus making possible an interchange of information.

All the fifteen papers were rich with information and approached the subject from different angles according to national, ethnic or geographical specificity; the papers are now available on the IFLANET at <http://www.ifla.org>

Raphael Ndiaye from Senegal delivered a paper entitled *Oral Tradition: From Collection to Digitisation* in which oral traditions are viewed as a multidimensional phenomenon which includes such categories as reason, human intelligence and spiritual experience and testifies to the importance that should be given to their collecting and safeguard. In his paper the author relies upon ethnographical, anthropological and library and information studies and links old methods of collecting and preserving with the modern ones, particularly digitisation.

Considerable attention was given to the role of the national and public libraries in the collecting and safeguarding of oral traditions. Joelle Garcia from the Bibliothèque nationale de France delivered a paper on the role of the BnF Audio-Visual Department in preserving oral heritage.

The experience of South American libraries was revealed in the presentation by Haydee Seijas *Libraries and Oral Traditions in South America: two case from Venezuela and Peru* which largely illustrated the importance of the conference’s topic – preserving oral traditions. In Latin America, for instance, 11 million Indians form 556 ethnic groups speak approximately 70 different languages, some of which are spoken by fewer than 100 people, some of those languages are dying off along with the wisdom they carry and it is important to preserve them for future generations before it is too late.

Other significant issues of the meeting were optimal equipment for field recording and the problems of safeguarding records under the strain of the technological revolution and emergence of the new media and carriers; digitisation; preservation and criteria for storage conditions and standards. These last aspects were largely covered by



Maharakham University (students studying at the library). Behind them: a shelf representing a traditional bullock cart or an ox-drawn cart «kian».



An original «reading area» - traditionally called «tup», meaning «a hut» or «a temporary shelter».

the brilliant and very technical presentation by Dietrich Schüller, Director of Phonogrammarchiv, Vienna and Kevin Bradley, Manager, Sound Preservation and Technological Services at the National Library of Australia. Among the most important recommendations regarding technical aspects, care and preservation of audio-visual materials are the following:

-To transfer continually the information onto a new medium

- To use digital format (CD-R) for recordings and long-term preservation and analogue tapes for working copies
- Not to use mini disks for long-term preservation
- To control temperature and humidity simultaneously (do not cool without dehumidifying)

Throughout the meeting, numerous case studies emphasising the necessity to safeguard oral heritage such as examples from Vanuatu (*The Oral Traditions programme of the Vanuatu Cultural Center*) or from Fiji Islands (*The Role of the Fiji National Museum in Collecting Oral Traditions*) were presented. Each speaker underlined the importance of co-operation between specialists in borderline fields such as ethnologists, librarians, archivists, technicians and curators...

Our Thai hosts had organised a cultural programme which included the visit of the Research Institute of North-Eastern Art and Culture of the Mahasarakham University. The institute was created in 1970 to conduct research, provide services to different types of communities and promote and preserve Isan culture. The Institute's library holds a rich collection of books, articles, photographs, microfilms and audio-visual materials dealing with local traditions, it also has very original shelvings – all the shelves represent an artefact or a traditional craftsman's tool (a container for glutinous rice, peasant's cart, a musical instrument, a weaving machine; see the pictures on page 5). Such an uncommon library setting seems to have a double virtue – it reminds young people of their traditions and crafts and creates the atmosphere of human-like cosiness and serenity essential for reading.

The visit was followed by a dinner reception and traditional Thai dances which dazzled us by their magic and gracious movements and the colours of traditional costumes. Fascinated by the beauty of the performance all participants joined the dance.

Another essential reason of the meeting's success was the very high level of the organisation and astonishing hospitality of the Thai colleagues.

In his concluding remarks Ralph Manning suggested the creation of a discussion list on the web, we are looking forward to continue the discussion of this vital problem. ■

Ania Zalenskaia  
PAC Officer



## The W on Pres

The Section is concerned with the preservation of the world's documentary heritage. It provides an international forum for all types of libraries to exchange, develop and disseminate knowledge and experience dealing with theories, policies and practices for the preservation of all recorded knowledge, regardless of the storage medium.

Currently the Section is one of 6 in Division VI of IFLA, the "Division of Management and Technology" together with other Sections such as Audio-visual and Multimedia, Information Technology, Management and Marketing and Library Buildings and Equipment. As well as working with the other Sections in its Division, the Section naturally maintains a close working relationship with the IFLA PAC Core Programme. Like all IFLA Sections it also seeks to develop and maintain links and if possible joint activities with other professional organizations active in the field of preservation management, such as the European Commission on Preservation and Access, the Conservation Committee of LIBER (Ligue des Bibliothèques européennes de Recherche), the Council on Library and Information Resources Commission on Preservation and Access, the Preservation Committee of the International Council on Archives and similar bodies.

The work of the Section is directed by its Standing Committee, which currently has 18 members representing Canada, France, Greece, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Russia, the United Kingdom and the USA. It is a matter of concern to the Committee that there are no representatives from Africa or Latin America and only one from an Asian country, and the Committee is working on establishing closer relations with the three Regional Sections of IFLA which represent Africa, Asia & Oceania and Latin America. At meetings of the Committee the Director of the IFLA PAC Programme is always invited as an observer, as are the Directors of the IFLA PAC Regional Offices.

# Work of the IFLA Section on Preservation and Conservation

## The 65th IFLA General Conference, Bangkok, August 1999

At the annual IFLA Conference, the Section as its custom held both an Open Session, attended by over 80 participants including Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn and a Workshop in which there were some 50 participants.

**OPEN SESSION: "Collection preservation management: an approach to complement item by item treatment"** organized by Sonja Jordan (University of Notre Dame, USA)

The following papers were presented:

*The role of the joint IFLA/ICA Committee on Preservation on the preservation and conservation of library and archival materials in Africa* by Gabriel Alegbeleye (University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria) read by Ania Zalenskaia (IFLA PAC Core Programme)

*Matching preservation decisions with collection development policy* by Galina Kislovskaya (IFLA PAC Programme, Eastern Europe and the CIS, M.I. Rudomino All-Russia State Library for Foreign Literature, Moscow, Russian Federation)

*Collections care in Southeast Asia: conservation and the need for the creation of micro-environments* by John Dean (Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, USA)

**WORKSHOP: "Tactics for preservation"**, organized by Olga Perminova (Russian State Library, Moscow, Russian Federation).

The following papers were presented:

*Fitness for purpose: the role of stabilization in a collections conservation program* by Debra McKern (Library of Congress, Washington DC, USA)

*Macro and microenvironments at the British Library* by Helen Shenton (British Library, London, UK)

*Conditions of storing documents as the chief means of preserving the library holdings (As shown by the experience of the Russian State Library)* by Olga Perminova and Tatjana Stepanova (Russian State Library, Moscow, Russian Federation), presented by Olga Perminova.



IFLA General Conference provided a chance to visit the National Library of Thailand. Here: students copying the drawings on ancient Thai bookcases, some of which date back to the 15th century.

*Mass disinfection of documents affected by micro-organisms: one practical experience* by Svetlana Dobrusina and Tatiana Velikova (National Library of Russia, Russian Federation), not presented but available to participants.

An account of the content of the papers at both Open Session and Workshop and of the discussions has been compiled by Jean Whiffin, Standing Committee Member, and will be published in the forthcoming Issue 10 of the Section's *Newsletter* (see below for details of availability)

## Current and future work of the Section

Although the Section's draft Action Plan for 1999-2001 has still to be approved by the Professional Board it is possible to give an outline of its plans for the future.

### Future conferences

At Bangkok, emphasis in both the Open Session and the Workshop of the Section was very much on the conservation of paper documents and the preservation management implications. In Jerusalem at the 66th IFLA General Conference in 2000, the Section will be turning its attention in the Open Session to the problems of conserving electronic data. The provisional title is "Preserving the web" and this will be looking at the particular issues involved in attempting to create an electronic archive of data originally posted on web sites. Speakers from different countries who have addressed this problem will be speaking on their experiences: Denmark, Sweden, Australia and the United States are among nations identified who may provide speakers. Following on from this, when the 67th IFLA General Conference is held in Boston in 2001 the Section hopes to hold an Open Session or Workshop on the theme of "Managing digital preservation", looking at the issues involved in digitising not only paper documents but also film and audio materials.

Not all our concerns will be with electronic activity of course: at Jerusalem, as a complement to our Open Session on "Preserving the Web" we will be holding a workshop jointly with the IFLA Section on Rare Books and Manuscripts, looking specifically at the problems of conserving non-paper materials: for example manuscripts on papyrus, parchment, and palm-leaf, and hoping to see and hear something of the work that is being done in this area in conservation laboratories in Israeli institutions.

Immediately following the Jerusalem Conference there will be held in Paris in August 2000 an International Symposium "Managing preservation of periodicals and newspapers". This is being jointly organised by the Section together with the IFLA PAC Core Programme, the IFLA Section on Serial Publications and the IFLA Round Table on Newspapers

### Information dissemination

A number of the Section's Goals for 1998-2001 (as approved at the 64th IFLA General Conference in Amsterdam in 1998) emphasize the Section's role in "facilitating the exchange of information" (Goal 1); "promoting... an awareness of preservation in library management" (Goal 2) and "promoting "best practices" and standardisation in library preservation activities" (Goal 4)

Discussion at conferences, both the annual IFLA General Conferences, and special conferences on particular topics such as the Khon Kaen Conference on Collecting and Safeguarding the Oral Traditions, 1999 (see report p. 4-6) and the forthcoming Symposium on "Managing Preservation of Serials and Newspapers" noted above, is of course one way of disseminating information and raising awareness. Another is through publications. The Section has two recent pamphlets, both deliberately kept down to less than a dozen pages in order to facilitate both accessibility and mass distribution. The first is *Library disaster planning (1)*, prepared by Maria Skepastianu with the assistance of Jean I. Whiffin (1995) and this has so far been translated into French, Spanish, Russian, Japanese, Hungarian, Portuguese and Greek. The second is *Preserving our documentary heritage: the case for permanent paper (2)* prepared by Robert W. Frase with the assistance of Jean I. Whiffin (1996) which has so far been translated into Polish, French, Japanese, Russian and Greek. The Section is currently making plans to have free distribution of all remaining stocks of the English language versions, and is looking at the possibility of producing updated new editions. It would also be very happy to receive suggestions for other preservation management issues that could be appropriately treated in this way.

These two booklets form part of the Section's contribution to an ever growing range of standards, codes of practice, recommended guidelines and similar works which have been issued over the last twenty or more years in the field of preservation and conservation by bodies such as UNESCO (especially in the RAMP series), IFLA PAC itself, the International Council on Archives, the Council on Library and Information Resources Commission on Preservation and Access, the European Commission on Preservation and Access, the National Preservation Offices in the U.K. and Australia, and the Library of Congress, not to mention ISO and many national standards agencies and more specialised bodies such as the Fédération internationale des Archives du film. With proliferation has come the problem of retrieval, especially of appropriate translations, electronic versions and so forth. In Bangkok it was decided that the Section should compile a directory of such works, in collaboration with the IFLA PAC Core Programme, and concentrating on titles issued since 1990. It is hoped that this will be completed during 2000 and when complete it will be made available, probably in electronic form so that it will be possible to keep the directory updated. Suggestions of titles to be included will be welcomed by the Chairman

Another way of disseminating information is through the Section's *Newsletter*, whose first issue was in 1994 and

(1) Published in IPN N° 13, p. 14-16

(2) Published in IPN N° 15, p. 4-17



Writing on palm-leaf

which is currently published twice a year. This is now edited by Sonja Jordan, Chief Librarian, Special Collections and Preservation Division, Chicago Public Library (<sjordan@chipublib.org>). As noted above the next issue (no. 10) will contain a detailed account of the presentations and meetings at the Bangkok Conference by Jean Whiffin, who together with Olga Perminova of the Russian State Library completes the editorial team. The *Newsletter* is circulated to the IFLA members of the Section (currently 138) and to any other interested organisations or individuals: requests to be included on the mailing list should be addressed to the Editor.

#### Other activities

Following the success of the Satellite Meeting on “Collecting and Safeguarding the Oral traditions” held in Khon Kaen, Thailand during the week before the 65th IFLA General Conference, the Officers of the Section put forward a Professional Resolution for consideration by the IFLA Council:

“Whereas oral tradition is a fundamental element in preserving the self-identity, traditional community knowledge and culture of the world’s peoples, it is resolved that IFLA strongly supports and encourages the collection and safeguarding of the world’s oral tradition and will take measures to ensure awareness of the importance of oral tradition as an integral component of the world’s intellectual and cultural heritage”. (1)

A project currently under consideration is the publication of a “Multilingual dictionary of book and paper conservation” based upon a text originally compiled by the Technical Association of the Paper and Printing Industry in Hungary. Currently the text contains sequences in Hungarian, German, English, French and Italian. A Russian version has been completed and a Spanish one is in preparation.

The Section played an active role in the development and promotion of the *UNESCO resolution on permanent paper* which was eventually adopted by UNESCO at its General Conference in November 1997. In 1998, the Section succeeded in getting the General Council of IFLA to adopt the following resolution “IFLA strongly supports the 1997 UNESCO resolution on Permanent Paper and should take action at the highest level to urge its members to intensify efforts among paper producers to provide local supplies of permanent paper meeting the requirements of ISO 9706, and to promote the use of permanent papers in publications and other documents of lasting value”. Taking up one of the suggestions for action incorporated in the UNESCO Resolution, Ralph Manning, then Chairman of the Section, successfully negotiated with UNESCO during 1998 for the inclusion of questions on the availability and use of permanent paper in the annual questionnaire distributed by UNESCO to each country requesting statistics on the booktrade as a basis for their *Statistical yearbook*.

In a further initiative aimed at the wider availability of information relevant to preservation, the Section and the PAC Programme are currently holding discussions with the IFLA Division on Bibliographic Control and the IFLA Core Programme on UBCIM regarding the possibility of libraries being able formally to include preservation information within the UNIMARC record.

Suggestions for future projects for consideration by the Section will be very welcome and should be made to the Chairman: John McIlwaine, School of Library, Archive and Information Studies, University College London WC1E 6BT, U.K. <j.mcilwaine@ucl.ac.uk> or to the Secretary, Maria Skepastianu, 13 Alexandru Mihailidi Str., 552 36 Panorama, Thessaloniki, Greece <mskepast@unionion.uion.edu.gr >, <mskepast@alpha.it.teithe.gr> ■

(1) It has been decided to edit and publish the papers of the Khon Kaen Conference and this should appear sometime in 2000.

# Collection Care and Preservation of Southeast Asian Materials

For a variety of reasons, collection care in Southeast Asian, especially in the northern regions, is fraught with many difficult challenges. Climates that are unfriendly to paper-based materials, poor economies, war, and civil unrest, are just a few of the reasons that librarians and archivists find it extremely difficult to ensure the survival of cultural property. The rate of deterioration can be slowed and, in some cases, reversed, through actions that are relatively low-cost and uncomplicated.

The paper will discuss some of the strategies employed by the Cornell University Department of Preservation and Conservation to preserve materials in Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Viet Nam, and Thailand in projects conducted over the last ten years. The need for careful needs assessments and clear articulation of them will be discussed in the context of competing for the necessary resources from international funding agencies, along with descriptions of stabilization operations.

In the recent IFLA Conferences, substantial portions of the program were devoted to the discussion and demonstration of advanced electronic technology, mostly designed to improve bibliographic access to library and archive materials. However, given the substantial presence at IFLA of librarians from countries facing grave difficulties in fulfilling the promise of bibliographic access with continued physical access, it seems appropriate to consider some rather more basic preservation challenges.

Since 1987, Cornell University Department of Preservation and Conservation has been actively involved in the preservation of collections in the upper regions of Southeast Asia, primarily Burma, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. Although there have been some basic improvements in recent years, the environment for books and manuscripts in these countries still remains unsatisfactory and contributes substantially to their deterioration. All of Cornell preservation programs in the region have tried to address environmental problems as an integral

part of projects designed to establish conservation and reformatting programs. At the same time, Cornell preservation internship program, which brings librarians and archivists from Southeast Asia to Cornell for six-months training periods, emphasizes achievable solutions to preservation problems and the development of programs to acquire resources.

Most of the common problems affecting the longevity of library materials in many libraries in the region are correctable, and they fall into five broad problem areas as follows:

**1** The building fabric of many structures is often very deficient, with un-insulated walls, windows that are sometimes without glass and almost always without insect screening, poorly maintained roofing that leaks during heavy rain, with down-spouts that pour rainwater over external walls, and often non-existent air movement. These conditions allow birds and insects free rein within the structure and the periodic growth of mold on interior walls and shelves. Walls, roofs and floors that are not maintained encourage a variety of pests to find homes, including rats, mice, and insects. Security is often lax, placing collections at risk from theft or deliberate mutilation, and buildings are often vulnerable to fire because of faulty and outdated electrical wiring and uncontrolled smoking in virtually every part of the building.

**2** Shelving systems are often deficient, constructed from wood that provides homes for wood-eating insects, inflexible with un-adjustable shelves, precarious because of uneven book distribution and insufficient anchoring, and badly oriented. The insects generally most responsible for eating books in libraries are the larvae of several different types of wood-eating beetles, thus wooden shelving is to be avoided if possible. One important research library in Vietnam that I have worked with for a number of years actually transferred all its wooden shelves from an old insect-infested building to a



*Library staff working on the construction of protective enclosures for palm-leaf manuscripts at the Royal Palace in Phnom-Penh, Cambodia.*

new building, with predictable results. The library has since replaced these with aluminium shelves which has much improved the situation. A great deal of damage results from book structure distortion caused by trying to cram books onto too small, un-adjustable shelves, and often the shelf ranges are poorly oriented, blocking the circulation of air and allowing light damage from direct sunlight. Loose unsupported books are damaged by lack of compression which allows book structure distortion especially in conditions of high humidity, as the slumping books settle almost permanently into curved shapes.

**3** Housekeeping is lacking in most libraries, in that the books are carelessly shelved, the floors are frequently dirty and covered with debris, and food is cooked and eaten in the library. Many of the most important libraries are in large polluted cities, with increasingly heavy traffic producing large amounts of harmful particulates in the form of fine dust, grit, and soot. Because of the open windows, this is regularly deposited on books and shelves, which is in turn transferred to inner texts when the books

are used, and which form nutrients for mold and insects in conditions of high humidity.

**4** Handling is especially hazardous for library materials, as many have lain untouched for several years but in just a few minutes can become soiled, smudged, torn, and disfigured with only one careless use. Texts are often soiled because of unwashed hands and dirty work surfaces, and even vulnerable formats, such as valuable photographs, are handled carelessly and without protective gloves.

**5** Storage of non-paper materials, such as photographic negatives and microfilm, is sadly deficient in most libraries in the region. This is especially troubling for the archival negatives of microfilm, which should be stored with consistently maintained low levels of temperature and relative humidity and in a separate location from the other generations of film. While the temperature should be as low as possible, preferably no higher than 20 degrees Celsius, it is more important that the relative humidity not be higher than 30 percent.

Although the standard Western approach to some of these problems would be to install air-conditioning, embark on building renovation projects, and construct new storage facilities, these options are rarely available to librarians in countries lacking in resources. What then are the solutions?

### Conservation Strategy

While the Cornell internship program is designed to expose interns to all aspects of preservation, including complex conservation treatment, digital imaging, micro-filming, and various managerial functions, there is no doubt that without some resources, training alone will not achieve speedy results. Many of the problems manifest in libraries in Southeast Asia require substantial investment to be fully resolved, but they can be significantly ameliorated by a more systematic approach to environmental control and housing, which can be achieved at modest cost. Wooden shelving can gradually be replaced with metal, windows can be covered with insect screening to prevent the ingress of insects, a higher standard of cleanliness can be established and maintained, the consumption of food and drink can be more tightly controlled, smoking banned in the library, more responsible handling procedures can be established, protective housing can be applied or improved, and the cooperative storage of film materials developed.

It is undeniably very expensive to alter a large environment, such as an entire building or a large stack space, but a measure of control can be obtained by creating micro-environments. Protective enclosures, such as boxes, portfolios, and map cases, not only add an insulating layer to reduce the effects of varying levels of temperature and humidity, but also can provide other opportunities for control. As most of the libraries operate with closed stacks, protective enclosures are particularly appropriate. For example, in a facility with serious insect problems, the large-scale fumigation systems employed by many libraries and archives are harmful to books, staff and readers, and are only temporarily effective. But a well-made box can contain and retain a mild insect repellent that will deter insects, and has the added advantage of being effective even when the material is transported to another location. If the box is constructed from alkaline and chemically stable products, the object can be substantially stabilized within the enclosure. A steel map cabinet with a base can be treated through placing a desiccant and insect repellent in the hollow base creating a stable environment to help safeguard the contents of the cabinet from mold and

insects. Protective enclosures can be made quite easily from models that are readily available and generally do not require complex and expensive equipment or even extensive skills. While it is extremely risky to entrust a valuable book or manuscript for treatment to an untrained technician, there is little risk in having the same technician construct a protective enclosure. However, an important *caveat* is the need to ensure that adhesives are not made from starch or protein, and that any bookcloth or cover board is as unpalatable to insects as possible.

A systematic survey of library and archive collections will reveal numerous instances where protective enclosures can produce more stable environments as well as immediate protection. The survey can also provide the basic data from which a long-term preservation strategy can be developed, which in turn can help to articulate preservation objectives that can be achieved through sensible funding proposals to international funding agencies. The latter point is extremely important as, ultimately, corrective preservation programs cannot be developed and sustained without resources and, in most cases in the poorer Southeast Asian nations, these resources must of necessity come from outside the country.

### Conclusion

The body of preservation knowledge and practice on which Western preservation systems are built is the result of a long and tortuous evolution from the wholly craft/trade-based bookbinding tradition, to the present level of quite sophisticated and highly technical programs. The libraries and archives of Southeast Asia have operated to a very different time-frame, and set of cultural and historical circumstances. The industrialization that revolutionized the West in the nineteenth century was barely known to parts of Southeast Asia until the modern military conflicts of the second half of the twentieth century. Solutions to preservation problems are not entirely the same in the East as in the West, and the few attempts to inflict Western standards and practice, unaltered by locale, have been unsuccessful. For example, the stock response to high levels of temperature and relative humidity by Westerners is to call for air conditioning systems to be installed. Experience has shown that this can be a costly mistake in tropical regions, especially when books and manuscripts are removed from the library for study, or when untrustworthy electrical supplies fail. In these circumstances, the drastic increase in temperature and relative humidity causes moisture condensation on



John Dean at his office in Cornell University

the colder materials and interior walls and the consequent rapid development of mold. In Southeast Asia, it is important to recognize that preservation priorities are probably not the same as in the West, that short-term teaching and training alone will not result in viable programs without sustained financial support, preferably secured by librarians *in situ*, and that the Western response to deteriorating materials and adverse conditions must be learned from experience with the advice and support of the people of the region. Preservation projects should build towards the achievement of some coherent plan, and all projects originating in the West, whether for training or preservation production, should be seen as merely transitional to the time when the nations of Southeast Asia are able to mount and support their own preservation programs to begin to stem the tide of deterioration sweeping over their collections.

Before concluding, it is important to acknowledge the tireless efforts of three individuals to establish preservation programs likely to have a widespread and long-term effect. U Thaw Kuang, the recently retired director of the Universities Central Library in Rangoon, continues in his efforts to organize a national preservation program for Burma. Ms. Chu Tuyet Lan, director of the library at the Sino-Nom Institute in Hanoi, whose intelligent persistence is beginning to bear fruit with the completion of a long-term preservation strategic plan, the securing of substantial preservation grant funding for her institution, and the consequent gradual development of a model preservation and conservation program. Dr M.R. Rujaya Abhakorn of

## La conservation des collections dans le Sud-Est asiatique

La conservation des collections en Asie du Sud-Est se heurte à de nombreuses difficultés liées à un climat hostile, à une économie chancelante et aux situations de guerre. Mais ce ne sont là que quelques uns des nombreux problèmes auxquels sont confrontés bibliothécaires et archivistes qui doivent utiliser des méthodes simples et peu onéreuses pour éviter ou retarder la dégradation des collections.

L'article décrit les stratégies développées par le Département de Conservation de l'Université Cornell (USA) et expérimentées au cours des dix dernières années à Burma, au Cambodge, au Laos, au Viêt Nam et en Thaïlande.

*Les problèmes le plus souvent rencontrés dans ces régions sont dus à des défauts de structure des bâtiments (fenêtres sans vitres et sans moustiquaires, toitures en mauvais état, absence de système de contrôle pour la sécurité, installations électriques obsolètes), à un système de stockage défectueux (étagères en mauvais état, ouvrages mal rangés, insuffisance de place, absence de système de contrôle de l'environnement), à de mauvaises conditions sanitaires (sauté des locaux, infestation par les champignons et les insectes) ainsi qu'à de mauvaises conditions de conservation des documents non-traditionnels.*

*Les stages proposés par l'Université Cornell sont organisés de manière à couvrir tout le champ des traitements de conservation (y compris le microfilmage et la numérisation). Pourtant l'efficacité et la rapidité de leurs résultats sont liés aux investissements qui devraient normalement les accompagner. Cependant, comme il n'est pas possible, pour des raisons économiques, de modifier en profondeur les structures de la plupart des bibliothèques, on peut toutefois essayer de respecter les conditions requises d'environnement par la création d'un micro climat en utilisant des pochettes ou d'autres types de conditionnement qui, recouverts d'un produit isolant, vont permettre de réguler les variations de température et d'hygrométrie. On peut également préférer utiliser des boîtes en carton non acide contenant des insecticides plutôt que d'avoir recours à la fumigation, nocive à la fois pour la santé et pour les documents. On peut aussi remplacer progressivement les étagères en bois par des étagères en métal.*

*La conduite d'une enquête systématique sur l'état des collections sera utile pour connaître les sections qui nécessitent une intervention immédiate ou préventive. La base de données établie au cours de l'enquête fournira les renseignements nécessaires à l'établissement d'un programme de conservation à long terme. Ce programme, dont les objectifs devront être nettement définis, sera à son tour très utile pour étayer les demandes de bourses ou de subventions auprès des organismes internationaux.*

*Les solutions aux problèmes de conservation étant, pour des raisons économiques et historico-culturelles, très différentes en Occident et en Asie, il est important, lors de l'établissement de programmes conduits par des occidentaux, de prendre en compte les spécificités du pays et de s'appuyer*

Chiang Mai University in Thailand, has made outstanding contributions through his successful projects to microfilm and stabilize northern Thai palm leaf manuscripts, but perhaps more important, the leadership he has shown in organizing the nations of the northern region of Southeast Asia. In 1990, Dr Rujaya was awarded a grant from the government of the Netherlands to bring together librarians, archivists, and scholars from Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam, to initiate discussions on the founding of an international preservation centre for this region. Although progress in developing the centre into a functioning reality is slow, the planning process and objectives strongly influenced Cornell University preservation internship program. Perhaps fittingly, the first interns to complete the six months concentrated program were Junchay Praphamphod of the National Library of Thailand, and Chu Tuyet Lan, the Sino-Nom Institute, Hanoi. The other interns involved in the internship thus far are: Wantana Kitisrivoraphan of Burapha University, Thailand; Emma Rey, the House of Representatives Archives, the Philippines; So Soe Sein, University Historical Research Centre, Burma; Y. Dari, the National Archives of Cambodia; U Pe Thein, University Historical Research Center, Burma; Francisco Altea, Peoples Archives, the Philippines. The current interns are Nguyen Thi Bac, the General Science Library, Ho Chi Minh City; Noriyah Md. Nor, of the University of Malaya. The next interns for the session January to June 2000 will be from Cambodia and Indonesia.

A vital part of the internship process is the strong emphasis on strategic planning and its implementation. There are compelling cultural reasons for preservation priorities to be defined in terms of traditional manuscripts, and as these are of incalculable value, they are often accorded the most stable and secure available storage and are rarely used on a regular basis. However, more general collections that are heavily used, carelessly handled, and poorly stored, are often completely ignored, even though collectively they represent the real research and teaching core of the library. Long-term planning that reviews the whole breadth of the collection and its levels of use in order to define preservation priorities is vital if meaningful solutions are to be found and sustained. ■

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Bangkok, 24th of August, 1999

John Dean  
Cornell University

## Conservación de colecciones en el sudeste asiático

La conservación de las colecciones en el sudeste asiático enfrenta numerosas dificultades vinculadas al clima hostil, una economía insegura y situaciones de guerra. Pero éstos son sólo algunos de los numerosos problemas a los que deben enfrentarse los bibliotecarios y archivistas, quienes deben utilizar métodos sencillos y poco onerosos para evitar o retardar la degradación de las colecciones. El artículo describe las estrategias desarrolladas por el Departamento de Conservación de la Universidad Cornell (EE.UU.) y experimentadas a lo largo de diez años en Burma, Camboya, Laos Vietnam y Tailandia.

Los problemas más frecuentes en esas regiones se deben a las fallas de la estructura de los edificios (ventanas sin cristales y sin mosquiteros, techos en mal estado, ausencia de un sistema de control de seguridad, instalaciones eléctricas obsoletas), a un sistema de almacenamiento defectuoso (estantes en mal estado, obras desordenadas, insuficiencia de espacio, ausencia de un sistema de control ambiental), a las malas condiciones sanitarias (suciedad de los locales, infestación por hongos e insectos) así como a las malas condiciones de conservación de documentos no tradicionales.

Los cursos de capacitación propuestos por la Universidad Cornell están organizados de manera de cubrir los tratamientos de conservación (incluida la microfilmación y la digitalización). Sin embargo, su eficacia y la rapidez de sus resultados dependen de las inversiones que normalmente deberían acompañarlos. No obstante, como no es posible, por razones de económicas, modificar profundamente las estructuras de la mayoría de las bibliotecas, se puede tratar de cumplir con las condiciones ambientales requeridas para la creación de un microclima utilizando fundas u otros tipos de acondicionamientos que, recubiertos de un producto aislante, permiten regular las variaciones de temperatura e higrometría. También se puede optar por utilizar cajas de cartón libre de ácido con contenido de insecticidas en lugar de recurrir a la fumigación, nociva tanto para la salud como para los documentos. Se puede igualmente reemplazar progresivamente los estantes de madera por estantes de metal.

La realización de una encuesta sistemática sobre el estado de las colecciones es útil para conocer las secciones que requieren una intervención inmediata o preventiva. La base de datos establecida en el transcurso de la encuesta aportará la información necesaria para establecer un programa de conservación a largo plazo. Este programa, cuyos objetivos deben estar claramente definidos, será a su vez muy útil para dar fundamento a las solicitudes de becas o subvenciones ante organismos internacionales.

Ya que las soluciones a los problemas de conservación son muy distintos en Occidente y en Asia, debido a razones económicas e histórico-culturales, es importante tomar en cuenta las particularidades del país y apoyarse en la experiencia de los habitantes de la región para establecer programas dirigidos por occidentales.

# Méthode douce de lutte contre les insectes : l'expérience de la Bibliothèque Nationale de Venise

Dans l'histoire des institutions culturelles les dégâts causés par les insectes, les rongeurs et les micro-organismes sont bien connus et malgré les mesures de conservation et de prévention - dépoussiérage des livres et des étagères, hygiène des locaux, bonne ventilation et contrôle et amélioration des conditions climatiques - les risques de dégradation demeurent constants.

Etant donné que les insectes utilisent l'air pour vivre et que leurs œufs peuvent éclore après un long temps de latence, ils représentent un danger réel pour les collections. Dans ces conditions, il est donc nécessaire d'inspecter régulièrement les magasins, de contrôler les étagères et les livres, d'observer les cas d'altération. Si l'on découvre une infestation, il est indispensable de pouvoir agir rapidement selon un plan d'intervention à la fois efficace et non toxique. Ce dernier point me paraît capital d'autant plus que de nos jours une nouvelle culture prônant le respect et la protection de l'environnement gagne les pratiques de conservation. En tant que responsables d'institutions, nous devons être conscients des risques que peuvent encourir le personnel, les lecteurs et même les fonds patrimoniaux en utilisant des pesticides. Aussi quand nous nous sommes trouvés confrontés à une infestation massive des collections de la BN de San Marco de Venise, nous avons immédiatement écarté tout traitement à l'aide de produits chimiques. Cette infestation est survenue dans un grand dépôt composé de plusieurs locaux de l'ancien palais de la Zecca - Hôtel de la Monnaie de la République de Venise, où sont conservés plus de 200.000 livres imprimés des XV<sup>e</sup> et XIX<sup>e</sup>. Tout d'abord, nous avons procédé au nettoyage d'une grande partie des ouvrages à l'aide d'un aspirateur à filtre, ce qui a permis de voir si l'infestation était récente ou ancienne, des analyses entomologiques ont été faites et ont révélé qu'il s'agissait d'*Anobiidae*.

A la suite de contacts avec M. Carlo Federici de l'Institut de Pathologie du Livre et avec le soutien de la Direction de la Bibliothèque, nous avons opté pour un traitement écologique d'éradication des insectes par anoxie.



Byzantine icon belonging to the Library treated with *Velox*.

Par chance, à Gênes une société d'ingénierie, la *Resource Group Integrator* a mis au point une méthode innovante de traitement en utilisant un générateur électro-mécanique (*Velox*) marchant sans l'intermédiaire de bouteilles de gaz, ce qui simplifie beaucoup les manipulations et a permis de réaliser le traitement *in situ*. Le générateur a la propriété de scinder l'air : l'oxygène est pro-



Treatment with Veloxly

gressivement supprimé pour ne conserver que l'azote qui est un gaz inerte. Ce traitement doit être réalisé dans un espace clos. Pour ce faire, il a fallu préparer des "bulles en plastique" sur mesure pour les livres (notamment pour les manuscrits avec ais), les étagères et parfois une partie des locaux. Le protocole de fabrication des bulles en plastique est le suivant : découpe sur mesure du plastique imperméable au gaz, fermeture partielle avec une pince à souder, introduction dans le sac des ouvrages à traiter et préalablement dépoussiérés, fermeture totale de la bulle. Débute alors le traitement par anoxie. Chaque bulle en plastique est purgée de son oxygène par la machine *Veloxly* jusqu'à ne laisser qu'un résidu de 0.3% d'oxygène. Après trois semaines, cette atmosphère modifiée tue toutes les familles d'insectes quel que soit le stade de leur vie. Du premier jour jusqu'à la fin du traitement, la quantité d'oxygène et le taux d'humidité relative doivent être contrôlés fréquemment dans les bulles.

Cette opération de désinsectisation menée avec la collaboration du personnel de l'Institut a été possible car depuis quelques années l'équipe est très investie dans les projets de conservation et a été spécialement formée par le Bureau de la conservation de la Bibliothèque Nationale de San Marco. Grâce à cela, nous n'avons pas fait appel à des prestataires extérieurs et nous nous sommes contentés de louer le générateur *Veloxly* et d'acheter le plastique imperméable au gaz. Ce ne sont pas seulement ces critères d'économie qui ont guidé notre choix mais aussi le fait que l'on évitait ainsi le déménagement des collections avec tous les risques de mauvaises manipulations que cela comporte. De plus nos équipes, habituées à manipuler des livres anciens, ont pu utiliser toute leur compétence. Cette expérience nouvelle a été une gageure mais nous a

## Clean method to fight pest invasion

The risk of a biological invasion by insect pests or micro-organisms is common to all libraries, archives and museum Institutes. Every conservation site shows, in general, partial or extensive damages due to infestations.

*Till now, insect pests have been dealt with by means of insecticides and pesticides that imply potential risks to the operators and public. In fact the residues of compounds are absorbed by the historical-cultural artefacts and slowly emitted into indoor environment.*

*Nowadays, because of the growing attention towards environment and health safeguard, the adoption of "cleaner" methods to disinfect and preserve the Cultural Heritage is becoming more and more urgent.*

*The undergoing work at the Marciana National Library is driven from the previous considerations. Recently, the Marciana has experienced a serious invasion of Anobidi (the insects commonly known as woodworms) in several store-rooms housing a large amount of antique books, among which is the Aldine collection. This has given rise to an integrated intervention, at different levels, to stop the biological attack. This project has been carried out by a specialised staff under the supervision of the Marciana Library's Conservation Department, and in addition to parasites eradication, it aims at three other objectives: to train and make staff aware of book care and conservation, to preserve the environment and to lower the management costs. In accordance with the stores characteristics and with library stacks, the project has brought to the wide-scale application of the very low oxygen atmosphere to eradicate the biological degradation agents. This technique is not completely new in the field of historic/artistic artefacts disinfection. Literature reports experiments of this kind carried out in Spain, Sweden and the USA. They were performed at a laboratory with compressed gases, using bulky equipment and large amount of cylinders to be stored in suitable areas. At the Marciana Library for the first time in the world, it has been possible to apply this method on a large scale (about 200.000 books) with light equipment operated on the site. The present project involves the skills of the Marciana's staff related to the conservation of books and those of a company that has in fact developed the innovative electro-mechanical system *Veloxly* that can selectively separate oxygen from the air; the gas mixture we commonly breath, to create a virtually anoxic environment. During the work, the Marciana's team has sealed all the threatened books inside bags properly assembled with plastic gas barrier films in accordance with the size of books and of stacks; then using *Veloxly* the oxygen was purged from the air to reach concentration below 0,5 %. Such a modified atmosphere eradicates any insect, at any stage of life, from books or objects within fifteen days. In other words it has shown that it is possible to work without pollutant/toxic gases that damage paper, parchment and leather, affect people's health and pollute the environment.*



Treatment with Veloxly

finalment beaucoup enrichis. A fur et à mesure de l'opération, la dextérité du personnel s'est accrue et après avoir traité le grand dépôt de 200.000 livres, nous avons poursuivi l'intervention dans d'autres dépôts de fonds anciens afin d'éradiquer tout risque d'infestation. 500.000 ouvrages ont donc été traités, cette opération de grande ampleur s'apparente à un traitement de masse sans pour autant en avoir les désagréments : manipulation intensive des ouvrages, éloignement, transport, changement de conditions climatiques, stockage, autant de dérangements qui parfois peuvent aggraver une situation déjà délicate.

A la fin de ce grand projet de désinsectisation par voie anoxique nous pouvons faire le bilan suivant :

- l'hétérogénéité des matériaux traités (papier chiffon ou à base de pâte de bois, parchemin, parchemin enluminé, reliures sur plats en cuir, en parchemin, en

*Further on, before sealing the infested books inside the enclosures, the Marciana's staff accurately cleaned all of them to eliminate dirty and fine dust, the ideal environment for spore and insect eggs. The sheets of most damaged books were vacuum cleaned one by one to eliminate traces due to the biological attack: at the same time all the rooms of the library were disinfested with very low toxic products, such as aerosol, fumigants and wood protection paints; their use was tailored to the stores' characteristics and the housed books. The Entomology Department of the University of Bologna was in charge of the laboratory analysis carried out both on insects, eggs, cocoons and larvae to exactly identify the biological agents, and on books to verify the efficiency of treatment. The result is an efficient integrated pest management.*

*The project has been carried out with the co-operation of*

- R.G.I. Resource Group Integrator of Genova for the system Veloxly
- Phase Prodotti per il Restauro of Florence for the ambient's treatment.

## Riesgo de invasión biológica por plagas o microorganismos

El riesgo de daño de una invasión biológica por plagas o microorganismos es común para todas las bibliotecas, archivos y museos. Todo depósito de colección muestra, en general, daños parciales o extensos causados por infestaciones.

Hasta ahora las plagas han sido atacadas con insecticidas y pesticidas que implican riesgos potenciales a los operadores y al público; de hecho, los residuos de compuestos son absorbidos por objetos con valor histórico-cultural y emitidos lentamente al ambiente interior.

Actualmente, debido a la creciente atención hacia la salvaguarda del ambiente y la salud, la adopción de métodos "más limpios" para desinfectar y preservar el Patrimonio Cultural es cada vez más urgente.

El trabajo que se está realizando en la Biblioteca Nacional Marciana está basado en las consideraciones anteriores. Recientemente, dicha biblioteca experimentó una invasión grave de *Anobidi* (los insectos comúnmente conocidos como carcomas) en varias salas de depósito que albergan una gran cantidad de libros antiguos, entre los cuales se encuentra la colección Aldine. Ello ocasionó una intervención interdisciplinaria, a distintos niveles, para detener el ataque biológico. Este proyecto ha sido llevado a cabo por un equipo especializado bajo la supervisión del Departamento de Conservación de la Biblioteca Marciana, el cual además de la erradicación de los parásitos, tiene otros tres objetivos: adiestrar y crear conciencia en el personal sobre el cuidado y conservación de los libros, preservar el



Veloxy machine

carton, en tissu, en papier marbré) nous a permis de voir son applicabilité à différents supports et sa totale innocuité, puisqu'aucun résidu ne demeure,

- la "reproductibilité" du traitement –les matériaux ne ressortent pas affaiblis,
- l'absence de toxicité pour les hommes et leur environnement,
- la rapidité du traitement évite l'éloignement forcé des livres ou des biens culturels,
- la réduction du prix du traitement,
- la facilité de la mise en place du traitement par les équipes en place.

En outre, l'utilisation de bulles à atmosphère modifiée peut être très efficace pour conserver les documents et peut leur éviter bien des dégradations, elle entrouvre de nouvelles perspectives pour notre métier de conservateur.

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ambiente y reducir los costos de gestión. De acuerdo con las características de los depósitos y de los libros de la biblioteca, el proyecto ha implicado la aplicación a gran escala de una atmósfera muy baja en oxígeno para erradicar los agentes de degradación biológica. Esta técnica no es completamente nueva en el campo de la desinfección de objetos históricos y artísticos, ya que la literatura reporta experimentos de este tipo en España, Suecia y los Estados Unidos. Los mismos fueron realizados en un laboratorio con gases comprimidos, usando equipos de gran tamaño y una gran cantidad de cilindros para ser almacenados en áreas adecuadas. Por primera vez en el mundo, en la Biblioteca Marciana, ha sido posible aplicar este método a gran escala (cerca de 200.000 libros) con un equipo liviano operado en el sitio. Este proyecto involucra las destrezas del personal de la Biblioteca Marciana relacionado con la conservación de libros y las destrezas de la compañía que creó el innovador sistema electromecánico Veloxy, que puede separar selectivamente el oxígeno del aire, mezcla de gases que comúnmente respiramos, para crear un ambiente virtualmente anóxico. Durante el trabajo, el equipo de la Marciana selló todos los libros que se encontraban en peligro dentro de bolsas, adecuadamente unidas con películas plásticas de barrera antigases de acuerdo con el tamaño de los libros y estantes; luego mediante el uso de Veloxy se purgó el oxígeno del aire hasta alcanzar una concentración de 0,5%. Dicha atmósfera modificada erradica cualquier insecto, en cualquier etapa de su desarrollo, de libros u objetos en un lapso de quince días. En otras palabras, quedó demostrado que es posible trabajar sin gases tóxicos ni contaminantes que dañan el papel, pergamino y piel, afectan la salud de las personas y contaminan el ambiente.

Además, antes de sellar los libros infestados dentro de los envoltorios, el personal de la Marciana limpió cuidadosamente cada uno de ellos para eliminar suciedad y polvo fino, los cuales constituyen el ambiente ideal para las esporas y los huevos de insectos. Las hojas de los libros más dañados fueron aspiradas una por una para eliminar los vestigios del ataque biológico. Al mismo tiempo, todas las salas de la biblioteca fueron desinfectadas con productos de baja toxicidad, tales como aerosoles, fumigantes y pinturas protectoras para madera. Su uso fue adaptado a las características de los depósitos y los libros almacenados. El Departamento de Entomología de la Universidad de Bolonia estuvo a cargo de los análisis de laboratorio realizados tanto en los insectos, huevos, capullos y larvas para identificar exactamente los agentes biológicos, como en los libros para verificar la eficacia del tratamiento. El resultado es un eficiente manejo multidisciplinario de plagas.

El proyecto fue realizado con la cooperación de:

- R.G.I.Resource Group Integrator de Génova para el sistema Veloxy
- Phase prodotti per il Restauro de Florencia para el tratamiento del ambiente.

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# Learning from disasters: a decade of experience at the National Library of Australia

The paper addresses a range of issues on the practical experience of disaster planning and its approach at the National Library of Australia. Lydia Preiss, Collection Disaster Co-ordinator focuses on the collection management and disaster preparedness as well as on prevention aspects of disaster planning and the way it fits with overall counter emergency planning.

## Background to Disaster Planning at the National Library of Australia

The National Library of Australia fire occurred on a Friday night in March 1985. Asbestos removal was in progress, the smoke detectors were off and the smell of smoke was the first indication of fire and the events that followed. The Library was totally unprepared for this emergency, we had no counter emergency plan for staff, the building or the collections. The Fire Department had no detailed knowledge of the building and had to be accompanied by staff, it was a Friday night and relevant staff were difficult to contact, we were in trouble!

With the help of the Fire Brigade the situation was saved by a combination of good luck, staff dedication, and the common sense of the building architect in sand-bagging and directing the flow of water down the stair wells.

The Library had a very lucky escape with smoke damage to the building and collections, and water damage to a large amount of material. It took a year of hard work to clean up and recover.



*Drying Asian collection material; June 1998*

## Issues raised during and after the emergency

Some interesting issues were raised during the fire and there were so many aspects that needed to be considered and resolved:

- The difficulty of getting around in a dark building at night.

- The plant and building plans were inaccessible inside the restricted building and this information was required by the Fire Brigade.
- What were the priorities for collection salvage apart from the obvious treasures?
- What resources people, materials and services were required to deal with the situation efficiently and effectively?
- How do we get the computer and reading room services back into operation as quickly as possible?
- How do we best deal with the media and public relations issues?

### Lessons learned

So what lessons did we learn? We learned that the Library was almost totally unprepared for dealing with an emergency situation affecting staff, the building, the collections, and the Library's services. We learned the importance of being prepared and how much time could be saved and anxiety avoided through forward planning and preparation.

In the *post mortem* of events after the fire the Library determined to be ready for any future disaster incidents. A disaster planning committee was established with representative senior managers from key areas of the Library and work on disaster planning started. The disaster was a major turning point in the operations of Preservation Services in the Library as we worked to recover soot and water damaged material and to develop the collection disaster plan. Previously our work programs had been mainly collection treatment oriented and fairly insulated from day to day Library activities.

### The Library's First Disaster Plan

Over the next year the committee worked hard on developing the plan taking account of known risk factors and our past experience of the fire. We also took account of other incidents caused by inadequate building maintenance, plant and equipment failure, environmental causes such as storm and flood and human error. The Library's first disaster plan was completed in 1986. It was a combined manual including fire and evacuation procedures and focusing on collection disaster recovery techniques with a large section on detailed treatments for damaged collection materials. The disaster plan was in a ring binder for-

mat designed for ease of updating. It was a good first effort but was out of date before it was completed, though we didn't know this at the time. We were to discover that the plan was difficult to use in a hurry as the index was inadequate and the layout and content did not provide the clear, concise and easy to follow response sequence and actions required to deal with in emergency situation. The content layout and page numbering proved difficult to update in practice and required redesign. The plan's focus on treatment information was useless in the initial response and action stage of disasters. Another limitation was that it did not list the resources and expertise required for effective response and action.

However the Library now had a disaster plan and the fire detection and suppression system was upgraded over the next few years. We held fire drills and emergency evacuations and for a time we made good progress. But progress on developing a register of significant materials and priorities for salvage was slow and the co-ordinating emergency committee met irregularly.

After the initial enthusiasm there now seemed to be a lack of drive required to further develop and maintain the disaster planning process. As we got on with our routine work and the memory of the disaster faded so to some extent did our attention to keeping the plan current and ourselves prepared. We had failed to recognise the ongoing resources and process's that disaster planning required, and the importance of capturing the active commitment of all Library staff to the ongoing disaster planning process. In hindsight this failure wasn't a total surprise in that we had a new discipline to absorb and maintain that was foreign to the library profession and its priorities.



Drying Asian collection material at



1998 incident

### Review of the Disaster Plan

In the early nineties the prospect of further extended building works prompted us to take action. We knew from past experience of minor incidents that building works are accompanied by inherent and increased risks and the emergency planning committee set about reviewing the diverse needs of disaster planning. This would have to include a rewrite of the disaster plan and development of strategies for promotion and practice of disaster prevention, preparedness and response actions.

Counter emergency planning has to consider many issues including:

- Risk analysis
- Management of people and their safety
- Building management and site restoration
- Communications, public relations and the media

- The Disaster Plan: prevention, preparedness, response and recovery
- Library wide awareness of and commitment to the disaster planning process
- Disaster training at all levels within the Library
- Resources for the disaster planning process
- Maintaining operations and services

### The Register of Nationally Significant Materials and Disaster Planning

The experience of the Library fire had highlighted the need for collection priorities for salvage and although each collection area had developed an initial listing of treasures and important collections for salvage, there was an overall lack of consistency in approach between collection areas. Over the next several years Collection Managers and Preservation Services worked together on refining the list, assigning collection priorities, and describing the size and location of collections.

Material on the Register is assigned a priority rating between one and four by the collection managers, with priority one items comprising the Library's Treasures. The priority rating takes into account factors such as uniqueness, rarity, monetary value, associated value with other collection material held by the Library, and historical and heritage significance to Australia. The Register identifies item type and number, assigned priority rating, collection size and location, section of origin and exhibition and loan status. It's a confidential document maintained on an Access data base which is updated by collection managers every three months. Hard copy and disk are also kept off site in case of emergency.

Apart from its usefulness for disaster management, the Register is also proving to be an important collection management tool providing a sound basis for considering and deciding issues such as security, housing and storage, preservation and access reformatting requirements, and priorities for preservation treatment programs. When the Library's air conditioning system had to be shut down some years ago due to the presence of asbestos in air conditioning ducts, the Register proved invaluable. It helped Collection Managers and Preservation Services to plan and manage the removal of at risk priority collection items to more stable environments within the building. And more recently it has been very useful in focusing the valuation process for the Library's collections.

## The Library's Revised Emergency Procedures Manual

The Library's Emergency Planning Committee (EPC) co-ordinated the redevelopment of the overall Library Emergency Procedures Manual, with Preservation Services focusing on the Collection Disaster Plan. The Collection Disaster Plan is structured in two parts: *Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Policy* and *Disaster Actions*.

### The Collection Disaster Plan

Part 1: Is used by Preservation staff as a work manual that guides routine disaster preparedness and prevention activities and it contains:

- Information on monitoring collection areas for potential disaster.
- Policy and actions to assist in the management of the Library's collection disaster strategies.
- Disaster preparedness and response personnel, their role, function and responsibilities, including staff disaster training strategies.
- Emergency supply inventories and maintenance lists for in house supplies.

Part 2: Provides a guide to progressively deal with collection related disasters and it is intended for use by those responsible for managing disasters which affect collection materials. This section outlines the overriding principles in all disaster situations. It emphasises that human safety has precedence over protection and/or removal of the collections, including Library Treasures.

It covers the range of possible incidents which may affect the collections and basic principles and procedures designed to help managers to deal with such incidents are presented. General disaster actions and procedures: immediate, short and long term are outlined. Detailed disaster action procedures provide comprehensive immediate, short and long term actions for identified high, medium and low risk disaster incidents.

Special handling instructions provide relevant handling information for the range of material held by the Library. Appendices include a list of key personnel and emergency contacts in house and outside the Library as well as contacts for expert assistance. A listing of equipment and supplies held by the Library and available elsewhere is also included (1).

(1) Collection Disaster Plan is available on the Library's Home Page at: [www.nla.gov.au/policy/disaster.html](http://www.nla.gov.au/policy/disaster.html)



Preparing protective boxes. June 1998 incident

### Disaster prevention

Disaster prevention is all about knowing the risks, taking steps to minimise the risks and detecting and dealing with problems when they occur. A program of regular building monitoring and maintenance is required. So is an integrated pest management strategy with regular inspections. Library staff need to be aware of the risks from water, fire and insects particularly in collection areas. Staff should always be on the alert for evidence of water, high humidity, damp musty smells, mould, fire hazards, and any evidence of pests. Checks for water leaks in storage areas during and after rain should be a part of any collection disaster prevention program.

We have also learned from experience that regular monitoring of collection areas during building works is

critical and we have found it necessary to develop a set of procedures to be followed before and during building works. Before any building work can commence potential risks are identified and strategies devised to deal with the risks. Building contractors are given an orientation session about the nature of the collections, the care required and any special protective requirements. A forward works program provides timing details, and regular monitoring of progress and potential problems is undertaken. Although this might seem like a lot of extra work we have shown time and again that it is very much worth the effort.

### Disaster preparedness

The principle objectives of disaster preparedness are to ensure that equipment, materials and services are available to deal with any likely emergency and to ensure that Library staff are trained and prepared to take an appropriate role in disaster reaction response and recovery. A disaster response structure with identified key personnel and responsibilities is required. The Library's Emergency Planning Committee (EPC) has overall responsibility for disaster planning and review. In the event of a major disaster it may also be necessary to call for volunteers to work in salvage teams under the direction of Preservation staff and Collection Managers. It is also worthwhile having arrangements in place with commercial building and collection recovery service providers for timely action if the emergency is too large to handle alone.

### Emergency supplies and maintenance

It is important to have access to emergency stores in close proximity to collection areas. At the Library, each floor has a yellow cabinet and backup wheelie bin stocked with equipment and supplies to help staff stabilise minor emergencies affecting collection and work areas. To be easy to find the local emergency store cabinets are placed in the staff lift foyer of each floor and backup wheelie bins are located in known leak sites. The cabinets contain many useful items including plastic sheeting, tape, scissors, power board and leads, torch and batteries, mop and buckets etc, and we have found that they had to be locked with a breakable seal if they were to remain stocked and ready for an emergency. A concise one page instruction sheet, What To do When You Disco-

## Prevención de siniestros en bibliotecas

El artículo de Lydia Preiss examina el conjunto de medidas de prevención de siniestros en bibliotecas. La autora, responsable de la coordinación en caso de siniestro, nos hace partícipes de sus diez años de experiencia en esta materia en la Biblioteca Nacional de Australia y subraya la importancia de las medidas preventivas y de la implantación de un plan de emergencia en caso de siniestro.

Durante el incendio de marzo de 1995, el equipo de la Biblioteca Nacional de Australia no pudo más que constatar la magnitud de los daños, que habrían podido evitarse, y aprender las lecciones del desastre: la biblioteca no estaba suficientemente preparada para enfrentar una catástrofe (las alarmas estaban dañadas, no había un plan de emergencia, los bomberos no disponían de un plano del edificio).

Después del incendio se hizo evidente la imperiosa necesidad de:

- Conocer el plano de los distintos niveles del edificio;
- Elaborar los inventarios de las colecciones, indicando las prioridades de salvamento
- Disponer de los nombres y direcciones de los responsables en caso de emergencia, etc.

Durante el año posterior al incendio, el equipo de la Biblioteca Nacional de Australia trabajó por establecer un plan de emergencia que tomara en cuenta los factores de riesgo. El comité para el plan de emergencia se reunió regularmente a fin de desarrollar medidas preventivas, actualizar un plan de emergencia y recuperación y promover una estrategia de prevención. Se creó el Registro de documentos de importancia nacional, en el cual se definen las colecciones prioritarias (según su carácter raro y valor), tipo, amplitud, ubicación. La actualización de este registro es realizada por los conservadores de las colecciones cada tres meses.

El personal de la Biblioteca igualmente redactó un Manual de procedimientos en caso de emergencia en dos partes: la prevención de siniestros y la estrategia preventiva, por una parte, y la intervención en caso de siniestro, por la otra. La primera parte del manual se ocupa de la vigilancia de las colecciones en las zonas de riesgo, la política y las estrategias de prevención de siniestros, la formación del personal y su papel en caso de emergencia. La segunda parte propone una guía práctica de las medidas a tomar frente a un siniestro y está dirigida a los responsables del plan de emergencia.

El artículo enumera los problemas básicos relacionados con la prevención de siniestros en bibliotecas, ofrece numerosos ejemplos y consejos prácticos que son el fruto de ricos años de experiencia de la Biblioteca Nacional de Australia. La autora nos da a conocer los defectos de funcionamiento dentro del sistema de las medidas preventivas, en el Plan de emergencia y en las intervenciones efectuadas en la Biblioteca luego de accidentes más o menos graves.

ver A Threat To Collection Material has been designed for immediate response action and is on each cabinet door and wheelie bin lid.

Preservation Services staff ensure that the cabinets are correctly stocked and maintained on a regular basis. Cabinets and bins are also checked and restocked after an incident. We also have a Central Emergency Store, which holds reserve stock of equipment and supplies, and larger equipment such as dehumidifiers, fans, and freezer paper and crates. A materials stocktake is carried out every six months and supplies are replenished, it's particularly important to renew batteries and to ensure that CO2 fire extinguishers are checked every 12 months.

### Staff training

Collection, service and processing areas of the Library are targeted for annual Care and Handling and Disaster Prevention training. The training is given by all Preservation Services staff with responsibility for specific areas, and these Preservation staff are called Contact Conservators. Contact Conservators as the name implies are the first point of contact for queries relating to the preservation of the collections and this has been a very effective program over the past ten years. A series of training sessions is also given to general areas including; Security, Building Management, Exhibitions, Cleaners and building maintenance contractors and Systems Branch. Issues covered in the sessions include; common types of disasters than can affect collections such as water, dust, and physical damage from poor handling and storage practices. We stress what to look out for, the procedures to prevent disasters, and what to do when you discover a threat to collection material including access to and use of the disaster cabinets and bins.

Appropriately focused training therefore needs to include Library senior management; the Collection and Program Managers, the Corporate Management Group, the Emergency Planning Committee as well as all Preservation Services Staff. Preservation Services has designed and presented specially tailored sessions for these groups and we have found it very useful to include disaster scenario training sessions to provide an opportunity to work through disaster response decisions and actions.

We are also working on co-operative disaster activities such as joint training and resource sharing with other cultural agencies in the ACT and this has potential to share the disaster planning workload and cost. As with

the Register updating and refining the Disaster Plan is scheduled every three months.

### Promotion of disaster awareness

Preservation Services staff have written a series of easy to read articles for the Library's Staff Bulletin on the care and handling of collections and disaster prevention, preparedness and response. The articles, which appeared monthly over a year, were successful in raising awareness because they had the added appeal of illustrating how this information could be applied at home as well as at work (2). Judith Doig's book, "Disaster Recovery for Archives, Libraries and Records Management Systems in Australia and New Zealand" is a comprehensive source of information for anyone involved in disaster planning.

### Evaluation of the revised Collection Disaster Plan 1997 Flooding incident

We had our first real opportunity to evaluate the revised plan during the flooding incident in November 97. A fire sprinkler head was damaged by contractors during building works providing us with an opportunity to test the plan in action. Lessons learned and actions required were discussed at the post incident debriefing session, and refinements were included in the next disaster plan update.

The incident highlighted the need for improved communications during disaster response activities. We found the need for two way radio communication with the Building Services staff as we both went about our separate but connected response actions that took us all over the building. We found the need for additional security arrangements in the affected areas as the doors had to be open for the Fire Brigade, Security, Contractors and Library disaster response staff to go about their activities. We also identified the need for additional equipment and stores including; emergency lighting, tarpaulins and more power boards and leads. We found that it is important to use waterproof pens for labelling as label inks on boxed material ran and was washed off creating additional work

(2) These articles are available on the Library's Home Page at:  
< <http://www.nla.gov.au/pres/conver> >

in re-labelling. Space for drying material was a problem as there was a conflict between ongoing reading room operations and drying activities in the area. We also learned of the importance and urgency of getting out a statement to Library users and the public clarifying the situation.

This was the first significant incident since the Library fire and since we had rewritten the counter emergency procedures, and having the procedures in place made all the difference in the world. We were prepared and ready to respond and there was a sense of calm and purpose as we got on with the response and recovery. It was very different to the anxiety we had experienced during the 1985 fire response and recovery activities. Another bonus was finding that phase boxing had saved a storage bay of Pictorial albums from serious water damage. This reinforced that appropriate preservation housing has a major role in disaster prevention and preparedness, particularly where fire suppression is by sprinklers.

### Air conditioning malfunction

Later in November an incident involving an air conditioning plant malfunction resulted in water condensing in ducts and dripping onto book stacks. This incident, was identified by vigilant stack staff who promptly alerted Building and Preservation Services of the problem. They then accessed emergency cabinets for plastic sheeting and helped to cover affected collections. Their awareness and prompt action in knowing what to do limited the amount of water damage.

After these two incidents the Library commissioned a risk assessment consultancy to examine and report on Fluid Spill Mitigation within the Library. This report examined all water sources and use within the Library; sanitary and stormwater drainage, building construction and possible sources of water entry, building siting and external stormwater and sub soil drainage and the possible flooding of Lake Burley Griffin. The consultancy examined the location of priority collections and previous water spill history and the failure modes and consequences of failure. The water flow paths within the building were also investigated. All of this information was then used in developing a risk management plan that identifies the risk rating for the Library's collections. It also identified the priority for increased surveillance works, and for refurbishment, replacement and mitigation work within a 1, 2, and a 5 year framework which the Library is now working on.

## Tirer la leçon des catastrophes: dix ans d'expérience à la Bibliothèque Nationale d'Australie

*L'article de Lydia Preiss examine l'ensemble des mesures de prévention des sinistres dans les bibliothèques. L'auteur, responsable de la coordination en cas de sinistre, nous fait part de ses dix ans d'expérience en la matière à la Bibliothèque Nationale d'Australie et souligne l'importance des mesures préventives et de la mise en place d'un plan d'urgence en cas de sinistre.*

*Lors de l'incendie de mars 95, l'équipe de la Bibliothèque Nationale d'Australie n'a pu que constater l'ampleur des dégâts, qui auraient pu être évités, et tirer les leçons du désastre : la bibliothèque n'était pas suffisamment préparée pour faire face à une catastrophe (alarmes hors usage, pas de plan d'urgence, les pompiers ne possédant pas de plan du bâtiment).*

*A la suite de cet incendie il est apparu évident qu'il fallait impérativement :*

- Connaître le plan des différents niveaux du bâtiment ;
- Elaborer les inventaires des collections, en indiquant les priorités de sauvetage ;
- Disposer des noms et des adresses des responsables en cas d'urgence, etc.

*Pendant toute l'année suivant l'incendie, l'équipe de la Bibliothèque Nationale d'Australie a travaillé pour établir un plan d'urgence prenant en compte les facteurs de risques. Le comité pour le plan d'urgence s'est réuni régulièrement afin de développer des mesures préventives, de mettre à jour un plan d'urgence et de remise en état et promouvoir une stratégie de prévention. Un registre des documents d'importance nationale a été créé, définissant les collections prioritaires (selon leur rareté et leur valeur), leur type, leur ampleur, leur localisation ; ce registre est mis à jour par les conservateurs des collections tous les trois mois.*

*Le personnel de la Bibliothèque a également rédigé un Manuel des procédures en cas d'urgence en deux parties : la prévention des sinistres et la stratégie préventive, d'une part, et l'intervention en cas de sinistre, d'autre part. La première partie du manuel porte sur la surveillance des collections dans des zones à risque, la politique et les stratégies de prévention des sinistres, la formation du personnel, son rôle en cas d'urgence. La deuxième partie propose un guide pratique des mesures à prendre face à un sinistre et s'adresse aux responsables du Plan d'urgence.*

*L'article recense les problèmes essentiels liés à la prévention des sinistres dans les bibliothèques, donne de nombreux exemples et conseils pratiques qui sont le fruit des riches années d'expérience de la Bibliothèque Nationale d'Australie. L'auteur nous fait part des défauts de fonctionnement dans le système des mesures préventives, dans le Plan d'urgence et dans les interventions survenues à la Bibliothèque lors d'accidents plus au moins graves.*

### Water leak incident of 22 June 1998

The fluid mitigation works had commenced earlier this year before the heavy and extended rains that we experienced over winter. Work was being done to reseal expansion joints on the podium and once again we had a water incident on our hands as building contractors failed to adequately cover their work before a weekend of heavy rain. Because it was over a weekend the leak was not identified until Monday morning when collection area staff were back at work. The water had penetrated the lower ground floor work area and had found its way through an expansion joint onto lower ground floor two compactus stacks. By Monday the material was sodden and we soon realised that the task was bigger than Preservation Services staff could handle alone. As the material was so wet, and contained large amounts of clay coated paper which would stick together, it was decided to pack and freeze the material at a local deep freeze company.

In the meantime costs were obtained for vacuum freeze drying the material, the Library also had to determine whether it was worth salvaging this material since vacuum freeze drying is an expensive process costing around \$300 per milk crate of books. It was decided to go ahead in this case as the material was covered by building contractor insurance and the material was not readily replaceable. Vacuum freeze drying was carried out by BMS Catastrophe Australia who are based in Sydney and Melbourne and the process took about three weeks to complete for 600 items. The results were good and with far less distortion than if we had tried to air dry the sodden material. We had caught the clay coated paper in time, it had stuck but not permanently and pages could be separated using a thin spatular. This part of the recovery process was undertaken by four volunteers from the Technical Services area of the Library who each spent an hour a day for 11/2 weeks on the process.

We are now calculating the final costs of recovery for the insurance claim and it really does highlight the labour intensive nature and high cost of collection recovery. Everything that is possible should be done to prevent and be prepared for disasters, and this is essential for libraries that are not insured or covered by government indemnity. If a disaster does happen you also need to think very

carefully about the costs of recovery and whether the material warrants these costs.

### More disaster lessons

Each disaster incident is different and something new is to be learned every time. On this occasion we learned about the difficulties of response and recovery in compacted book stacks with stacks having to be moved to deal with each stack. It was difficult to dehumidify the area with closed compacted stacks and we found that slightly damp material left to dry *in situ* grew mould whereas material in a similar situation in open shelving did not. Another point worth mentioning is that where possible book stacks should have a top shelf covering as this made a significant difference in the degree of wetness of exposed material.

Finally a very important lesson that we have learned through our recent experience is that there is no need to rush into recovery action. Once the situation has been stabilised there is time to consider the situation and to plan how best to proceed, and although this approach is counter intuitive it's the correct way to proceed. Stepping back and planning how to proceed is not only calming but also ensures a logical and systematic approach to the recovery process and this important lesson was driven home to me as we struggled to get crates of heavy wet books to the freezer before closing time. We had been so engrossed in our recovery activities that we had forgotten to organise help in transporting the wet books to the freezer. To make matters worse it was a cold wet afternoon and many staff had already left for home, so finding help was an added last moment difficulty that we didn't need. ■

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# News from PAC Regional Center in Russia

## Training Seminar at the National Library of Russia

The National Library of Russia, St. Petersburg, was founded in 1795 and it counts among its collections over 32 million documents. In 1998 the library was enlarged and the new building with comfortable reading rooms and modern equipment was inaugurated.

On 19-21 October, 1999 the NLR and its Federal Center for Conservation held its third training seminar entitled "Non-traditional carriers of information in the libraries". It was planned to be national, but eventually turned out to be international (Republic of Kazakhstan and France). The seminar was a success and was attended by fifty one conservators and archivists from all over the CIS (national, regional, technical, scientific, university, public, school and other type of libraries and archives were represented). The theme of the seminar is obviously very relevant of this time, especially for those librarians who do not have an easy access to an overflow of existing information concerning the non-traditional carriers (its exploitation and particularities of the storage of information on such carriers) but nevertheless have to deal with them. New technologies develop so rapidly that library staff can not always keep up with them, and some of the carriers become obsolete before the librarians can even use them.

The problems of working with documents produced on non-traditional carriers are numerous; such relatively new issues as transfer to a new carrier, treatment, conservation and use have not been sufficiently dealt with in publications. Nevertheless some people have had experience in this subject, and the seminar gave the specialists from the Russian National Library an opportunity to share it with their colleagues.

I. B. Tsvetkova, Deputy Director of the NLR accompanied all the participants on the guided visit and gave an overview of the new technologies used at the National Library.



*Leaf-casting  
system invented by  
the Center for  
Conservation  
Laboratory*



*Radio-frequency electricity cupboard for disinfection.*

The information conserved on non-traditional carriers should be carefully cared for, the problem of document preservation for thus posing. Complex research work is planned and should be conducted in the field, but already the specialists from the Center for Conservation possess precious information on non-traditional carriers and their interaction and reaction to the environment alterations (temperature, relative humidity, biological damage and its

## Training in Preservation Management

IFLA PAC Regional Center in Moscow organized two seminars on Preservation Management in September and October, 1999.

Rostov-on-Don Regional Public Library hosted a seminar for librarians, archivists and employees of museums from a number of regional cities in South Russia. Among them there were representatives from Dagestan, North Osetia, Ingushetia, Kabardino-Balkaria, i.e. North Caucasian Republics.

The second seminar was held near Tashkent as a part of a training program for Uzbek librarians.

The subject matter of both seminars – preservation management – has been chosen due to almost general lack of information in the field of managing preservation programs and projects. The agenda included an overview of the Russian National Preservation Program and more detailed information on its component parts, presentations on different aspects of preservation (including training), reports on case studies, economics of preservation, papers and discussions on conducting surveys of physical condition of materials, on assessment of storage conditions and on methodology of creating an overall institutional preservation program. Within the framework of the seminars several videofilms on preservation were demonstrated. "Into the Future" was highly assessed by everybody present for its philosophical content and dramatic description of losses of digital information.

The aim of the two events was not just to show the necessity of formulating preservation programs even under severe economic conditions, but also explain how such low cost preservation programs might be constructed with a view of more complex and expensive preservation treatments. ■

Galina Kislovskaya,  
Director, IFLA PAC Regional Center For Eastern Europe and CIS.



*S. A. Dobrusina, Director of the Federal Center for Conservation with her colleagues and guests.*

prevention. The lectures were read by S. A. Dobrusina (Director of the Center), T.D. Velikova, V.I. Kobayakova.

The lectures also reviewed such non-traditional carriers as optic discs, magnetic tapes, microfilms and microfiches, focusing on their essential characteristics and proper way of their care and handling.

A paper delivered by V.M. Zoritch (laboratory for conservation of the Central Archives of Photo-Film Documents of Russia) raised a particular interest among the participants of the seminar. Unique techniques of restoration were described in detail and the results shown.

The specialists of the Center for Conservation of the Russian State Library showed their colleague-participants different aspects of work carried out by the Center, including a visit of the biochemical laboratory, restoration and bookbinding departments. The visitors were shown the machines performing different functions, such as a leaf-casting system, lamination, experiments with artificial aging, disinfection and so on.

The seminar terminated with a round table discussion which helped to designate future developments and directions of the future collaboration of the Federal Center for Conservation with the libraries of the CIS. Proceedings of the seminar will be published later.

The closing session was followed by an informal reception organised by colleagues from the library's Center for conservation. ■

E.S. Tchernina, S.A. Dobrusina, A. Zalenskaia

## Official Opening of the PAC Regional Centre, Moscow



*IFLA-PAC Director, Marie-Thérèse Varlamoff and IFLA Professional Coordinator, Sjoerd Koopman in Moscow.*

IFLA Core Programme for Preservation and Conservation, PAC, is coordinated by the PAC Focal Point at the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris, and is supported by a number of PAC regional centres: in Canberra, Caracas, Moscow, Paris, Tokyo, and Washington.

The PAC Regional Centre for Eastern Europe and the «Commonwealth of Independent States» (CIS), the former Soviet Union, was opened

officially in Moscow on the 28<sup>th</sup> of June, 1999.

The selection of a PAC Regional Centre for Eastern Europe and the CIS was decided on last year. Selected was the Library for Foreign Literature in Moscow, a forceful institution, rich in personnel resources, know-how and technical experiences.

The opening on 28 June 1999 was a festive happening, to which the staff of the Library for Foreign Literature was invited, as well as representatives of the Russian Ministry of Culture and a number of regional libraries.

Sjoerd Koopman (IFLA/HQ) and Marie-Thérèse Varlamoff (IFLA/PAC, Paris) conveyed greetings on behalf of IFLA's President and Secretary-General and congratulated the Library for now being officially the PAC Regional Centre for Eastern Europe and the CIS.

The Director of the Regional Centre, Galina Kislovskaya, then made a speech. She underlined the necessity of preservation of all kinds of library materials. This can only be accomplished in a setting of cooperation of many institutions and colleagues. This makes coordination necessary, which the Library for Foreign Literature hopes



*Galina Kislovskaya, Director of the PAC Regional Center in Moscow with Sjoerd Koopman*



*Marie-Thérèse Varlamoff's greeting speech at the opening of the Pac Regional Center in Moscow.*

to provide. This institution has a lot of international contacts and has a wealth of know-how available, but of course cannot do without the contributions of many libraries in the enormous region.

Several representatives of regional libraries made short speeches with congratulations. They said that libraries in the whole region are willing to cooperate as much as they can; the position of the Library for Foreign Literature is unrivaled and one is happy to accept its coordinating role.

A very animated reception followed the opening. ■

Sjoerd Koopman, IFLA Professional Coordinator

# book review

Washington D.C. - The Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) has published *The Future of the Past: Preservation in American Research Libraries*, a report by Abby Smith, Director of Programs at CLIR.

The report provides a summation of the challenges and accomplishments of the library preservation community and is targeted particularly at educators, university administrators, and scholars in order to apprise them of the issues being confronted to ensure continued access to research materials in the future. Dr. Smith encourages a collaboration between scholars, who can advise about the intellectual value of collection items, and librarians, who can make judgments about the physical risks that threaten collections.

The paper gives an overview of the preservation and management of research collections and describes the context in which the decisions are made by researchers and librarians about what to preserve and how. By examining how the protagonists grappled with the first great crisis in the preservation of library materials - the pandemic loss of information printed on embrittled acid paper - it traces the development of the current consensus on who to manage large collections recorded on many media of varying stability. And the paper addresses the problem that, despite striking progress made in preservation technology and management, the difficulties of preserving original library materials have scarcely diminished over time and demand the same thoughtful cooperation between scholars and the librarians as they enter the twenty-first century as the brittle-book problem received in the 1980s. The use of new technology to digitize materials is often proposed as the obvious solution to range of preservation problems. But the author asserts that this is not necessarily the best alternative and in fact may be more problematic than traditional preservation methods using microfilm; Digitization greatly increases access to research material, but there is as yet no reliable and cost-effective means to preserve digital files of a complex nature. Research libraries should continue to devote resources to preserving their collections through the variety of tested methods available to them.

*The Future of the Past* is available for 15 dollars, including postage and handling, from The Council on Library and Information Resources. Orders must be prepaid. Checks should be made payable to CLIR and mailed to CLIR Publication Orders, 1755 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20036-2124. Credit card orders made by calling CLIR at 1-202-939-4750, sending fax to 1-202-939-4765, or sending email to [info@clir.org](mailto:info@clir.org). A complete list of publications may be found at CLIR's Web site, [www.clir.org](http://www.clir.org)

LING, Ted. *Solid, Safe, Secure / Building Archives Repositories in Australia*. - Canberra: National Archives of Australia, 1998. - 143 p. ISBN 0 642 34403 5



According to Ted Ling, the author of *Solid, Safe, Secure* it is a "how to" book - a manual which synthesises recent experiences and deals with all aspects of the building and management of archival facilities.

Logical structure of the book helps to better assimilate its complex subject - construction and management of library and archival repositories. The chapters follow the actual steps of the construction: from the choice of the future site to the building's fabric, passing storage areas, conservation labs, shelving and the implementation of the right environmental conditions: air-conditioning, lights, fire safety and security measures. Other issues are also dealt with, such as construction process, maintenance to the pest management and disaster preparedness. All the chapters are accompanied with, exhaustive recommendations and examples. Another point making this book a reference guide is that it gives a graphic account of the most important issues and a full bibliography at the end of each chapter. *Solid, Safe, Secure* states major common errors not to be repeated and points out important things to be done.

The author, Ted Ling is an archivist who has been working for the National Archives' Facilities Programme for six years and although the book is based on the Australian experience, this experience certainly can be applied to other geographical areas and cultural institutions such as libraries.

Through studying the problems of archival buildings and repositories and following the phases of their construction, *Solid, Safe, Secure* also addresses all the essential themes of preservation practice.

Thanks to its clear language, carefully selected illustrations, the advice guided by common sense and the assessment of needs *Solid, Safe, Secure* can be easily understood and appreciated not only by specialists from archives and libraries, but it may also be useful to information science students and anyone expected to deal with the problem.

Ania Zalenskaia

*Risk Preparedness for Cultural Properties - Development of Guidelines for Emergency Response*, Proceedings of the 1997 Kobe/Tokyo International Symposium, Development of Guidelines for Emergency Response, Ed. by Hidetoshi Saito. - Tokyo: Chuo-Koron Bijutsu Shuppan, 1999. - 499 p. - ISBN 4-8055-0370-X

The publication in the form of proceedings is a record of presentations and discussions of the 1997 Kobe/Tokyo International Symposium "Risk Preparedness for Cultural Properties - Development of Guidelines for Emergency Response". This symposium was held in commemoration of the 1995 Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake and was supported and attended by many specialists from regional, national and international organisations all over the world, among the last-named were representatives of UNESCO, ICOMOS, and ICCROM. The publication focuses on the fundamental importance of protecting cultural heritage in the event of natural (earthquake, fire etc) or man-made disasters (armed conflict) and of elaborating emergency plans and protective measures.

Many presentations were made by the Japanese experts who shared their sad experience of the terrible 1995 earthquake which killed many people and ruined or damaged outstanding and irreplaceable items.

*Risk Preparedness for Cultural Properties - Development of Guidelines for Emergency Response* includes the text of the Kobe/Tokyo Declaration on Risk Preparedness for Cultural Heritage, various reports on disaster prevention, restoration of cultural property, action plans, as well as a lecture on the International Committee of the Blue Shield, initiated by UNESCO and founded by ICA, ICOM, ICOMOS and IFLA to organise risk preparedness and co-ordinate action in emergency situations at an international level in the event of armed conflict or natural disaster.

A special section of the publication is devoted to current conditions and problems of risk preparedness, where specialists presented not only global strategies and action plans to be undertaken by organisations world-wide but also concrete situations as experienced in Sarajevo, Angkor, Kobe and Sri-Lanka. (risk assessment and preparedness and so on)

The next two sections treat the problem of Immovable Property (buildings, cities and sites) and Movable Property (fine arts, folk-cultural materials and historic materials)

*Risk Preparedness for Cultural Properties - Development of Guidelines for Emergency Response* also contains case studies (cultural heritage management in Korea, protection of cultural heritage in seismic-prone regions - Macedonia, risk preparedness in Nepal), all of which are accompanied by tables and schemas which are of great help in understanding the problem. There is an appendix with the symposium programme and a list of speakers and organising committee members.

Unfortunately, it lacks illustrations and not all the presentation papers in the book have a bibliography, but those which do represent useful supplementary information.

This publication comprises comprehensive and well selected documents on risk preparedness for cultural properties.

Ania Zalenskaia

# a n n o u n c e m e n t s

## The Center for Photographic Conservation

- ◆ The Center for Photographic Conservation responding to the needs of fellow professionals will offer the following programme of professional development training courses, including five new courses, in the spring and summer of 2000 on aspects of photographic preservation and conservation. These courses offer conservators and other heritage professionals, specialist training in this challenging field, allows them to polish their skills and upgrade their knowledge of current developments and techniques. Course tutors are Ian Moor and Angela Moor who communicate their knowledge and expertise in such a way as to bring alive the history and diversity of photography whilst still fully addressing the 21 st century problems of preserving and conserving this evocative medium.
- ◆ Rediscovering Historic Photographic Processes. Ref: Prog 100/7  
A five day course providing the opportunity to catch the excitement experienced by the pioneers of photography. Using materials and equipment contemporary to the historic processes participants are able to develop an aesthetic appreciation of, understanding of and the manipulative skills needed to produce historic photographic processes including the photogenic drawing, calotype, salted paper print, direct positive, cyanotype and the albumen print.  
Course dates 7th-11th February 2000 or 1st-5th May 2000
- ◆ The Preservation and Conservation of Photographic Materials. Ref: Prog 100/1  
A seven week Certificated professional development course for experienced conservators and conservation students seeking to increase and develop their knowledge and experience in the preservation and conservation of photographic images. The main emphasis of the course is the development of practical hands-on skills, blended with photographic history and photo-chemistry which will stimulate a deeper understanding and professional growth in this demanding discipline. Throughout the course participants will produce reference images and study materials which compliment the course handbook, notes and documentation.  
Course dates 1st May- 16th June 2000
- ◆ The Preservation and Conservation of Photographic Materials (Theory). Ref: Prog 100/2  
An intensive three day course covering the identification, causes of degradation, conservation treatment options, handling and storage of photographic materials aimed specifically for those with the care and responsibility for photographic collections: Keepers, Curators, Librarians, Archivists et al.  
Course dates 15th –17th May 2000
- ◆ Preservation of Color Photographic Materials Ref: Prog 100/10  
This user friendly two day course for curators, conservators, slide librarians and photographers, will look at all the factors affecting the stability, preservation, treatment, storage, use and choice of these extremely problematic materials. The course handbook and other visual stimuli

coupled with informed, clear teaching make this a very informative down-to-earth course.

Course dates 11th-12th May 2000

- ◆ The Identification of Photographic Processes Ref: Prog 100/4  
An in-depth examination of the process and visual, material and degradation characteristics necessary for the identification of historic photographic processes. A unique opportunity to undertake a comparative study of a wealth of original historic images, from the Center's collection, from the history of photography 1795 to the present day  
Course dates 8th- 10th May 2000
- ◆ Preservation of Photographic Negatives: Glass, Nitrate, Acetate and other sheet and roll film systems Ref: Prog 100/11  
This two day course for curators, conservators, slide librarians and photographers, will focus upon the identification of photographic negative materials and the specific care, conservation treatment options and storage needs of this diverse problematic material  
Course dates 18th –19th May 2000
- ◆ Conserving photographs 2 Ref: Prog 100/5  
An intensive four weeks workshop for experienced conservators introducing advanced practical skills and current knowledge and developments in the preservation and conservation of paper based photographic images. It is assumed that participants have a high level of hands-on skills and also photographic process identification skills.

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# a n n o u n c e m e n t s

## Managing Preservation: A Coordinated Series of Five workshops Presented by the Northeast Document Conservation Center

- ▶ Emergency Preparedness January 10-12, 2000
- ▶ Collections Maintenance April 5-7, 2000
- ▶ Section for Preservation June 1-2, 2000
- ▶ Preservation Administration September 21-22, 2000

The cycle of workshops is designed to provide systematic preservation training to staff of small to mid-sized museum, historical organizations, archives, libraries and records repositories. As a series, the workshop will provide the information needed to design, implement and maintain an effective preservation programme for documents, books, photographs and other paper-based materials. The programme is designed for full time professionals with part-time preservation responsibilities.

All sessions will be held at NEDCC's faculty in Andover, Massachusetts

The cost of the full series is \$ 500. Lunch will be provided. Transportation, lodging and other meals are the responsibility of participants.

The Managing Preservation series is limited to 20 participants selected based on their applications. A flier with application information and a more detailed agenda and an application form is now posted on NEDCC's web site at [www.nedcc.org/coord.htm](http://www.nedcc.org/coord.htm)

For more information contact Karen Brown, [kebrown@nedcc.org](mailto:kebrown@nedcc.org) at the Northeast Document Conservation Center, 100 Brickstone Square, Andover, MA 01810; tel +1 978 470 1010

## ACURIL XXX

### Association of Caribbean University, Research and Institutional Libraries

- ▶ Dates June 4-10, 2000, Nassau, Bahamas

This regional conference of the Association of Caribbean University, Research and Institutional Libraries is being hosted by the College of the Bahamas, the Bahamas Ministry of Education and the Bahamas Library Association. It is intended to bring together library and information (those from archives, and museums included) professionals from the Caribbean, North America to discuss issues related to service provision in the new millennium.

Contact: Ms. Willamae M. Johnson  
 Coordinator, Local Organizing Committee ACURIL XXX  
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We are glad to announce that the IFLA Principles for Care and Handling of Library Material, compiled and edited by Edward Adcock, with the assistance of Marie-Thérèse Varlamoff and Virginie Kremp, IFLA-PAC, Paris, 1998 were translated into Russian by E.A. Azarova and published by the Library for Foreign Literature in Moscow.

You can obtain a copy of the *IFLA Principles* in Russian from the PAC Regional Center in Moscow: Library for Foreign Literature, Nikolo-Yamskaya Street 1, 1009 189 Moscow,

Tel. + 7 095 975 36 21

E-mail: [gkisllov@libfl.msk.su](mailto:gkisllov@libfl.msk.su)



The Polish translation of the IFLA Principles is now also available from Boleslaw Reck, Uniwersytet Wroclawski, Biblioteka Uniwersytecka, ul. Karola Szajnochy 10 50-076 Wroclow,  
 Tel. 44 20 18, 44 34 32  
 e-mail: [rek@bu.uni.wroc.pl](mailto:rek@bu.uni.wroc.pl)

The IFLA Principles were translated by Boleslaw Reck and published by Warsow University Library.

The French translation of the IFLA Principles for Care and Handling of Library Material is underway and will be published in the beginning of the year 2000.

# PAC CORE PROGRAMME

## USA and CANADA

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## WESTERN EUROPE, AFRICA, MIDDLE EAST

INTERNATIONAL FOCAL POINT  
BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE DE FRANCE  
2, rue Vivienne  
75084 Paris Cedex 02 FRANCE

**Director:** Marie-Thérèse VARLAMOFF  
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marie-therese.varlamoff@bnf.fr

## EASTERN EUROPE and THE CIS

LIBRARY FOR FOREIGN LITERATURE

Nikolo-Jamskaya Street 1  
109 189 Moscow RUSSIA

**Director:** Galina KISLOVSKAYA  
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## LATIN AMERICA and THE CARIBBEAN

BIBLIOTECA NACIONAL DE VENEZUELA  
Centro Nacional  
de Conservación Documental  
Edificio Rogi, Piso 1, Calle Soledad  
Zona Industrial la Trinidad  
Caracas, VENEZUELA

**Director:** Aurelio ALVAREZ  
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## ASIA

NATIONAL DIET LIBRARY  
Preservation Planning Office  
10-1 Nagatacho 1-chome  
Chiyoda ku, Tokyo  
JAPAN

**Director:** Ryuji YONEMURA  
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## SOUTH-EAST ASIA and OCEANIA

NATIONAL LIBRARY  
OF AUSTRALIA  
Coordination Support Branch  
Canberra Act 2600  
AUSTRALIA

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