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Final Paper:

Creating and Sustaining and Platform for Discourse and Cooperation

The History, Development and Future Direction of CCAAA

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The Co-ordinating Council of Audiovisual Archives Associations (CCAAA) has for twelve years become a shared strategic platform for the audiovisual archiving associations around the world and consequently has influenced the development of public policy and coordinated cooperative endeavors that has one way or another shaped the field. The environment which this *emergent profession*¹ exists in has been rapidly changing for the last decade, and as individuals, institutions and associations strive to adjust and keep up, CCAAA reassesses itself as how to sustain this forum for discourse and cooperation.

This paper aims to track the development of CCAAA from its founding and throughout its first decade. Primarily through the review of minutes of the council meetings, analysis of its statements and policies, and assessment of its projects and endeavors, the paper attempts to illustrate from an external perspective looking in how this body of leading archivists and organizations has created, developed and sustained this platform vis-a-vis its current issues and future directions and its consequent implications to the field.

History

Though the first association of audiovisual archives, the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF), was founded as early as 1938, it was only during the early 1980s that the creation of a shared platform between such associations was explored. The momentum began with UNESCO's (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) landmark *Recommendation for the Safeguarding and Preservation of Moving Images* in 1980. The Recommendation formally

acknowledged in an international political platform between nation states that moving images is a part of cultural heritage and recognized the urgent need for it to be saved. Furthermore, UNESCO stresses in this Recommendation the value of collective action and urges that cooperation “be stimulated by competent international governmental and non-governmental organizations.”²⁷

Following the Recommendation, in 1981 during the annual congress of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), representatives between different associations concerned with audiovisual archiving met and discussed the possibility of creating a forum for discussion and possible joint actions. Together with IFLA and FIAF, the then International Association of Sound Archives (IASA), the International Council on Archives (ICA) and the International Federation of Television Archives (FIAT/IFTA) founded the Roundtable of Audiovisual Records a year after in 1982. UNESCO acknowledged the Roundtable and began joining the meetings that year.

The Roundtable served as a forum for discussions and joint projects primarily concentrating, it seemed, on technical issues in the field. Composed of representatives from member associations, the Roundtable is known for the establishment of the Joint Technical Symposium (JTS) in 1983 and for contributing to UNESCO's RAMP (Records and Archives Management Programme) Studies on audiovisual archiving. JTS became a key event in the profession where issues and trends in technology and methods in audiovisual archiving were shared and discussed. The RAMP studies on the other hand created the first set of technical literature for the profession. In support of this focus, a Technical Coordination Committee (TCC), a subcommittee of the Roundtable, was formed in 1987.

Successful as these two concentrations were, the Roundtable by 1999 felt that there was a great need to move further and actively participate in shaping the rapidly changing environment of the field. This entailed being a coordinating body for joint policies and activities and a platform for discussion, advocacy and lobbying in the international arena. These were goals that were beyond the initial concentrations of the Roundtable. And so in 1999 at Brussels, the Roundtable held its last meeting and

began reshaping itself as the CCAAA.

As the successor of the Roundtable, CCAAA continued the former's endeavors and primarily kept its operational structure. The vision, goals and terms of reference however were articulated more clearly as CCAAA strived to amass further visibility, recognition and political clout.

Today, CCAAA sees itself as a representative body of worldwide professional organizations with interests in audiovisual archiving across the fields of media, arts, heritage, education and information. It aims to further represent various stakeholders in the field both institutional and individual which it considers its constituents. Following this, CCAA states that their aim is to voice collective opinions and exercise influence at international level regarding policies and activities that affect and shape the field.

Organization

CCAAA adopted the same structure of its predecessor, being composed of representatives from member associations which constitutes the Council. A Bureau, composed of an elected Convenor and Rapporteur leads and oversees the operations of the Council together with a Chairman that is assigned on a rotating basis annually between member associations. UNESCO, particularly its Communication and Information sector/programme, acts as an official observer.

Members

The founding members of the Roundtable (IASA, ICA, IFLA, FIAF, FIAT) continued to be part of CCAAA, though FIAT briefly left during the Council's first year due to some differences that were cleared out by the following year. Membership expanded to include younger regional associations with the Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) and the Southeast Asia-Pacific Audiovisual Archive Association (SEAPAVAA) officially joining in 2002, and the Association of Recorded Sound Collections (ARSC) in 2007. This expansion affirms the growth of the profession across different parts of the globe and acknowledges the diversity of realities and needs in different regions. With these eight member associations, CCAAA gathers further influence and clout in the field and in the international

political level.

To understand the dynamics of the Council, member associations can be classified into three. General associations, which include ICA and IFLA, are associations that have agendas more general than audiovisual archiving. ICA and IFLA engagement with audiovisual materials are in relation to their overall agenda on archives and libraries respectively. Unlike the other associations, they are represented in the Council by the heads of their subcommittee/arm on audiovisual/media. As such they come from quite a different larger paradigm.

There are also the specialist organizations made up of FIAF, FIAT and IASA, whose concerns are focused on film, television and sound respectively on an international scope. Being in specific fields, their agendas and focus may at times not coincide with each other, given the differences between the mediums they work with (IASA however as of late has expanded to fully embrace the range of audiovisual materials). FIAF for example has a manifesto against the throwing of films and has remained indecisive with digital technology in contrast to IASA which advocates and has set standards for digitization of audio materials. Paradigms are relatively different as well as FIAF is composed primarily of non-profit institutions while FIAT has a number of corporate broadcast archives.

Then there are the new regional associations AMIA, SEAPAVAA and ARSC which bring different perspectives specific to the realities of their geographical scope. Though all three associations have members beyond North America and the Southeast Asia-Pacific, they still often bring to the Council's table this regional specificity which ultimately enriches discussions. The realities between these two regions of course are undeniable, though finding a common theoretical ground may be easy, establishing practical ones are not.

The composition of CCAA reflects the diversity in the field and its relation to other professions. It also problematizes, as much as it enriches discussions, the ability of the Council to make truly representative and inclusive statements and actions. Finding a middle ground, however convenient, is more often than not ineffective and weak when it comes to advocacy and lobbying. The same can be

said for an unfocused collective voice.

Operations

Council operations are overseen by the Bureau. The Convenor and Rapporteur are named by the Council and are mandated to function for three (3) years. Acting as an executive coordinator, the Convenor guides internal communications and the direction of the Council, while also being its official representative externally whenever necessary. As CCAAA's participant to forums and congresses, the Convenor then performs the actual lobbying. The Rapporteur on the other hand handles the administrative matters of the Council, primarily managing records and documents and assisting in communications. Kurt Degeller has served as the Council's Convenor since its inception with a brief hiatus when he had to step down to be IASA's president and was replaced by Crispin Jewitt for a while. Catherine Lacken has also been the Council's Rapporteur since its founding.

Though the chairmanship changes annually and the representatives to the council shifts from year to year as the associations elect their new officials, the stable composition of the Bureau has greatly assisted in lessening transitory fall outs. To add to this, Joie Springer has remained UNESCO's official observer to the proceedings of the Council throughout the years.

The Council meets once annually unless urgent matters arise then additional meetings can be called. Meetings are usually held around March in Paris, though at times it's scheduled and held at a member's annual congress or during the JTS. Members are asked to send at least one representative. The agenda is set before hand by the Convenor and Chairman and documents for review for the meeting are released in advanced as well. The meeting follows typical procedures with the Chairman leading the meeting. Consensus is the basis for decision making, if it is difficult to reach one a simple majority vote of represented associations are called.

Participation in CCAAA is voluntary. Without any considerable resources, the Council does not have an actual office left alone funds to hire people or give compensation to the Bureau and Council members for their work. Council members usually attend the annual meeting through their own means

or through the support from their respective associations or home institutions. The same goes for the Convenor and Rapporteur who depend on their home institutions to cover directly and indirectly the expenses of their participation to CCAAA and to a certain extent CCAAA's actual operations as well.

Though it is admirable that the Council currently operates through such volunteerism and with bare expenses, the lack of funds and support hinders its projects and endeavors to be truly effective and to extend its reach. Furthermore, such workings may prove to be detrimental to the sustainability of CCAAA in the long run.

The Council is currently reviewing its finances and recommendations have been made regarding members providing financial support to CCAAA. Though it has been done in recent years, the Council would like to review and formalize this financial contribution which serves as a tangible commitment to CCAAA and an investment in its endeavors. Additional funding streams are also being looked into.

There is a great need for CCAAA to expand its operations to further support its current endeavors and realize its ideal goals.

Actions

Continuing the Roundtable's projects, pursuing new endeavors aligned with its new goals, and working with the resources it has, CCAAA for twelve years has made considerable progress amidst the limitations of its operations. Besides from providing a forum for exchange of information between associations, CCAAA's actions and roles can be classified into three: (1) a platform for discourse on relevant matters in the field resulting to the creation and dissemination of stances and statements, (2) a vehicle for political influence and lobbying through representation in key international organizations, and (3) a body that coordinates joint projects for professional development and advocacy.

Platform

CCAAA serves as a platform where leading audiovisual archivists representing various paradigms come to discuss issues and concerns of the field. This platform is considered the highest tier

and as such any findings and resolutions coming from such discourses is deemed authoritative. And with such influence and given the diversity of its constituency, CCAAA deliberates with much care before actual statements or instruments are released.

While the Roundtable focused primarily on technical issues, CCAAA has to certain extent delegated that responsibility to the working body behind JTS. This enabled the Council to focus on non-technical matters that have been given less attention to in the past. For the past twelve years, there are certain issues that CCAAA has concentrated on. The body of statements they have released, though few, reflects these priority issues.

One of this issues is repatriation, initially brought up by SEAPAVAA given the colonial history of most of its members. After discussions and several drafts, in 2007, CCAAA released a policy statement on *Sharing of Heritage*. It was a statement on repatriation of audiovisual heritage that does not even mention the word “repatriation.” The statement was able to clearly articulate the value of audiovisual materials as cultural objects and yet differentiate it from the physicality of tangible heritage which is mired in problematic repatriation arguments. It was a direct call that laid out concrete adaptable policies in sharing audiovisual heritage.

Professional development in terms of training and education was also a key subject matter. Given the emergence of the profession that entails high technical skills and yet the limited availability of opportunities for learning, CCAAA felt the need to articulate this reality, establish a policy framework and lobby for support for training and development from funding agencies. This resulted to CCAAA's *Strategic Framework for Professional Training and Development* that was initially released in 2003 and revised in 2006.

CCAAA has also consistently made statements in behalf of audiovisual archives regarding *Copyright & Neighboring Rights* during the 9th, 10th and 13th sessions of the Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). The Council strongly supports “the general principle of reasonable exemptions to all areas of copyright and related

rights to permit access by researchers and other users to sound and moving image documents held in publicly funded archival and library repositories.³⁷

Given the specializations of its member associations, CCAAA also recognizes selected policies and standards adopted by its members. Though with the specificity and limited scope of these standards, CCAAA does not endorse them to all of its other member associations but supports that they be guided by such in crafting ones that are appropriate to them. These include IASA's *Policy on Copyright* and *Policy on Legal Deposit*, as well as the FIAF *Code of Ethics*. When needed and appropriate, CCAAA also provides statements of support to advocacies of its individual member associations. Such is the case of the CCAAA *World Call for the Preservation of Broadcast Archives* in support of FIAT.

CCAAA closely works with UNESCO as well. Together they worked on the revised version of the *Philosophy of Audiovisual Archiving* that was written by Ray Edmondson and was initially published in 1998. This revised document reflects the changes that have occurred in the field during the intervening period, considering matters such as the challenges of digitization and technological progress. CCAAA is also working on an issue paper calling for *A New UNESCO Instrument for the Safeguarding and Preservation of the Audiovisual Heritage* in replacement of the outdated 1980 UNESCO Recommendation. Asserting the vast technological and structural change in the profession and the field and the broad recognition of sound and digital born media content as part of audiovisual heritage, CCAAA hopes to lobby for this new instrument that will signal another landmark in the history of audiovisual archiving much like what the 1980 Recommendation did.

Vehicle

A natural progression from creating such statements is to lobby and advocate such stances. This constitutes another major role of CCAAA as a vehicle to influence international level decisions concerning the field. The Council does this by placing itself and working with other convergent organizations while representing the profession whenever needed in discourses and debates with

external elements and stakeholders.

Besides from the already mentioned participation of CCAAA in WIPO, the Council has also positioned itself as a member and/or consultant to a variety of organizations.

To be able to assist the in the literature of and deliver training on audiovisual preservation, CCAAA works with the International Center for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCRROM). In particular CCAAA assists in ICCROM's Sound and Image Collections Conservation (SOIMA) Programme. The programme itself has three main focus that CCAAA participates in: training, awareness raising, and research.

CCAAA continues its advocacy of affirming the value of audiovisual collections as cultural artifacts that exist in various settings and conditions and are in equal threat of destruction. By being a member of the *International Committee of the Blue Shield* (Blue Shield) CCAAA places audiovisual materials in equal footing and priority with other cultural objects in times of natural disasters and armed threats. CCAAA is also represented in *LAMMAS (Libraries, Archives, Museums, Monuments and Sites)* which is considered the highest cultural international organization. This situates the profession in the larger agenda of cultural heritage and asserts its relationship and importance to the other fields.

Seeking further engagements with UNESCO, CCAA A also secured working relationships with two UNESCO endeavors: the *Information for All Programme* (IFAP) and the *Memory of the World Programme* (MOW). IFAP in an intergovernmental programme created in 2000 aiming to assist governments to harness information technology to create equitable societies by securing better access to information. Audiovisual materials being a rich source of information today plays a huge part in this programme. The MOW on the other hand was launched to guard against collective amnesia through the preservation of valuable documentary collections all over the world and ensuring their wide access. CCAAA advocates the consideration of audiovisual materials as part of this documentary heritage.

Matters concerning these organizations and their relation to CCAAA are discussed during the

annual meetings. The convenor serves as the representative to these organizations assisted by council members whenever possible. Without currently any real mechanisms for direct lobbying, being part of these organizations allow CCAAA to internally advocate and push for its agendas.

Coordinating Body

CCAAA also serves as a coordinating body for joint endeavors between its members. As it can not by itself currently mount actual projects due to its limited operations, it relies on its members to cooperate and run activities accordingly. There are a number of joint activities that members pursue, but CCAAA in general has two flagship projects under its name the ongoing Joint Technical Symposium and the World Day for Audiovisual Heritage.

Exploration and ideas for joint ventures are usually drawn during the annual meetings. This has resulted to several joint congresses / sessions throughout the years such as the FIAF-SEAPAVAA Congress of 2004 and the AMIA-IASA Conference of 2010. Joint projects like the Jim Linder Prize is administered jointly by AMIA, IASA and SEAPAVAA. Joint training courses, technical missions and publications have also been done in recent years.

The most successful and well known cooperative endeavor heralded by CCAAA would be the Joint Technical Symposium (JTS) which traces its roots all the way to the days of the Roundtable. Under the auspices of CCAAA all eight associations come together to organize this tri-annual international gathering of technical specialists on audiovisual archiving and preservation. The JTS provides the foremost opportunity for technical colleagues and those interested in the field to meet and share knowledge. Panel discussions, presentations and screenings describe, examine and critique the most important technologies and methods for the long-term conservation and restoration of the world's audio-visual heritage. Attendees traditionally include film, video and audio archivists, asset managers, laboratory technicians, engineers and other preservation specialists from a broad cross-section of institutions. It is known to be a vibrant and dynamic affair that people in the field look forward to.

Since its founding, CCAAA has organized three JTS two of which were hosted by AMIA (2004,

2007) and one by FIAF (2010). The Roundtable's Technical Coordinating Committee which was originally responsible for organizing the JTS was disbanded as CCAAA was formed. In lieu of this representatives from member associations constitute the JTS working group that is coordinated and managed by the host association.

Given the continuous success and relevance of JTS, CCAAA has been working on the possibility of creating a Joint Management Symposium (JMS) as a counterpart. A need for training and development in sound administration and strategic management has been identified, but CCAAA has yet to actually get the first JMS off the ground partly due to resources and partly because of arguments on the design of the program.

Another flagship project of CCAAA is the Worlds Day for Audiovisual Heritage (WDAVH). Through the lobbying of the Council and its members, UNESCO officially recognized and declared the event in 2005 during the General Conference. The event is held to acknowledge the value of audiovisual documents as part of cultural heritage and to consequently raise awareness of the need for urgent measures to be taken to preserve them.

Celebrations, events and projects surrounding the WDAVH has slowly been picking up in the past years around world. CCAAA functions as the central coordinating body of the event, leading the advocacy and encouraging nations and institutions to recognize the day. But with limited operations, CCAAA has admitted that it has not yet fully maximized and engaged the possibilities offered by such mechanism.

As seen, CCAAA projects coincide with their statements and lobbying activities. There is a concentration on professional development and on advocacy. These are two core areas that influence the internal and external environment that the field operates in.

The effectiveness of CCAAA as a platform, vehicle and coordinating body is reliant upon its operations. And though progress has been made through and amidst the current dynamics, CCAAA can push forward by dealing with the current issues that hold it back.

Current Issues and Future Directions

Current Issues

How effective are the statements? How appropriate and adaptable are they? Are the associations and their member archives and archivists actually prescribe to such stances? And with regards to lobbying and advocacy how much impact does CCAAA really has? Are the benefits from the projects it heralds trickle down to its diverse constituency?

CCAAA's relevance is questioned at times, not because of its ideals and set goals, but rather because of the effectiveness of its endeavors. Without a doubt a coordinating council is needed given the importance of international cooperation, political lobbying and advocacy work at a high tier level. But these demanding needs require a good deal of resources and a strategic stable operations that quite frankly CCAAA greatly lacks. And without the ability to improve its communication lines and develop its projects, it would be difficult to continue to justify its existence to its constituents when they are not able to see any direct or indirect benefits from their association's participation in the Council.

As the The Council enters its second decade, it is aware of these issues and has in recent years been working on documents such as *A Mission for CCAAA* and *Next Steps in the Development of CCAAA*. The focus is to come up with strategic plans grounded in an expanded operations duly supported and funded for growth and sustainability. The reality is, for CCAAA to further make an impact and to remain relevant, it needs to fully establish itself internally by securing financial stability and consequently increasing actual capacity for action.

Future Directions

Once the Council has developed internally creating a sustainable operation with actual capabilities for wide action, it can pursue the following suggested three focus points.

COMMUNICATION PLAN. There is a need to improve internal and external communications. A better communication structure can be put in place for better flow of information between associations. Currently, internal dynamics is not that efficient but with the availability of the internet and online

office tools this can be greatly improved. To add to this, communication lines need to go beyond the top tier and must trickle down and reach the most primary level of constituency. Online access points and various networking mechanisms can easily accomplish this.

In line with this, external communications geared towards information dissemination and advocacy can be improved as well. Currently, despite CCAAA's perceived political clout and influence, it actually remains relatively unknown to people in the field left alone to stakeholders outside the profession. The only current tool it has is the website and it remains mostly inactive and outdated. Advocacy work and information dissemination have the most impact and remains the most affordable way of influencing and shaping the field and the elements around it. There are various communication streams and mechanisms that can be utilized for this end.

STRATEGIC LOBBYING. Changes are happening rapidly and decisions that impact the field are being made. CCAAA is in the position to steer discussions and weigh decisions effectively. It needs however to be more strategic, aggressive and proactive in doing so. Being reactive and catching up will never be enough in this ever changing environment, and CCAAA can and needs to set the tone in these discourses and claim the profession's stake on matters that concerns it.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT. With limited resources, CCAAA should focus on and develop projects that are of high impact with wide reach. The JTS and WDAVH, and perhaps the JMS, should be given more focus by perhaps assigning actual working committees to handle the projects. JTS in particular has proven in the past that it can not only be an effective project but also one that actually generates income. While much potential can be seen with the WDAVH and JMS. These projects need to be fully developed and utilized.

Implications

CCAAA is admittedly a young organization born at a time of great change and uncertainty. Decisions made during the past and the coming decade will most likely set the tone of how the field will operate for this generation. Its constituency is ever growing and the stakeholders, including an ever hungry public seeking for access, are all figuring out how to exist in this environment.

CCAAA has the capacity to influence how this environment will develop. And how this environment will turn out has direct influence on how archives, archivists and the public at larger will engage each other.

¹ Edmondson, Ray. (2001). *Philosophy of Audiovisual Archiving*. UNESCO/CCAAA. Sec A.4.8, p.11

² UNESCO. (1980). *Recommendation for the Safeguarding and Preservation of Moving Images*. IV.20

³ *CCAAA Statement at the 13th session of the Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights, WIPO, Geneva, 21st-23rd November 2005*