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Tolstoy's library nominated to join UNESCO list for documentary collections



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More than 80 unique documentary items and collections from around the world have been [nominated](#) for inscription this year on the Memory of the World Register List run by the United Nations culture agency in an effort to promote and preserve them through digitization.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization ([UNESCO](#)) launched the Memory of the World Register in 1995 to guard against collective amnesia and preserve valuable archives and library collections from all over the world.

The agency's 14 member International Advisory Committee (IAC) of the Memory of the World Programme will review the 80 nominees when it convenes in Manchester, United Kingdom, from 22 to 25 May.

Collections proposed for inscription this year span a gamut of cultural items including the Ben Cao Gang Mu, the most complete compendium of traditional Chinese medicine, Iran's oldest book on mathematics and astrology, and the personal library of Russian writer Leo Tolstoy.

After consideration by the committee, the inscriptions will be submitted to UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova for her endorsement before they can join the other 193 items on the register.

Last year Ms. Bokova emphasized the importance of preserving the world's "collective memory" to ensure its transmission to future generations.

“We must understand the past to shape a common future founded on dialogue and understanding,” she said, cautioning that without the preservation of cultural heritage future generations would forget seminal moments in human history.

Current items on the Memory of the World Register range from the 1927 German expressionist cinema masterpiece *Metropolis* to the 14th-century Korean book *Jikji* – the world’s oldest known book to have been printed using movable metal type.

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