

The title might suggest that this survey is about archives only. This is not entirely true. Many other institutions face the same or similar problems, in particular libraries and museums. Archives, together with libraries and museums, all take on the onerous task protecting and preserving a particular part of our common cultural heritage. They are both specific yet complementary institutions. Each approaches preservation differently. It is not so much the physical characteristics of the objects preserved as the method of preservation of their informational content which distinguishes archives, libraries and museums (Gauye, 1984). One specific reason for the development and preservation of archives, as formulated in modern development terminology, is its contribution to *good governance* as sound record keeping. This is essential to an effective and efficient system of public administration. The holdings of museums in developing countries also have particular characteristics as some art historians assume the absence of a willingness to control or prevent the physical deterioration of cultural property in non-western societies. Still, there are ample examples where the opposite holds good (Nicklin, 1983b).

It is also recognised that museums, especially in the developing world, play an essential role in educating the people. As for the libraries, UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) had already realised by the 1960s that the development of a global literacy campaign would fail if the development of national and regional library networks was left behind. It was imperative that attention be given to the preparation of reading materials, especially vernacular literature, for the newly literate adults (Milburn, 1959). One way or another archives, libraries and museums are the *sine qua non* for the enhancement of the national and cultural identity of a nation. The identity, as well as economic recovery, is seen in many ways to be linked with the survival of the cultural heritage (Dean et al., 2001).

Clearly they all confront the same basic difficulties in safeguarding their holdings under severe climatic conditions. That is why the preservation literature of library and museum organisations has been considered as well, although the main concern of this bibliography remains with the preservation of archives.