

Interim Performance Report  
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**Cataloging and Microfilming Foreign  
Newspapers in United States Repositories**

Institutional Grant Administrator: Bernard F. Reilly  
Project Coordinator: Melissa Roser  
Center for Research Libraries

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**International Coalition on Newspapers (ICON)**  
*A project supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities for*  
**“Cataloging and Microfilming Foreign Newspapers in United States Repositories”**

**Narrative Description—PA-50754-04**

The following report presents the accomplishments to date and ongoing work of the International Coalition on Newspapers. For the reviewer’s ease, activities have been grouped according to broad project goals as stated in the proposal.

PRESERVATION MICROFILMING OF IMPORTANT AND UNDERREPRESENTED TITLES

ICON has continued the collaborative program of preservation microfilming of selected international newspapers held in U.S. institutions. During this first year of the grant, production planning and preparation—including exact collations and page counts for reel programming, bibliographic searching to locate gap-fillers, and target creation—was done for the titles for which the Center for Research Libraries (CRL) holds the bulk of the run. These include *Anadolu* (Izmir, Turkey), 1950-1954; *Dünya* (Istanbul, Turkey), 1952-1962; *Eritrean Daily News* (Asmara, Ethiopia), 1941-1947, and its Italian edition, *Il Quotidiano Eritreo*, 1944-1950; *Národní Listy* (Prague, Czech Republic), 1918-1934; *New Hungary* (Budapest, Hungary), 1946-1947; and *El Universal* (Caracas, Venezuela), 1911-1945. Virtually all of the titles involve holdings coming from at least two different institutions for filming, which requires more extensive bibliographic searching and coordination with lending institutions. As supplemental issues arrive from partner libraries, the full runs will be sent to the microfilm vendor for filming.

Following the prospective cataloging procedure that ICON has instituted for all preservation microfilming, the intent to film was added to the bibliographic utilities early this year for all fourteen titles to be filmed during the grant. This procedure helps eliminate duplication of effort from other institutions intending to preserve foreign news titles.

COORDINATED CATALOGING OF PARTNER INSTITUTIONS’ INTERNATIONAL NEWSPAPER HOLDINGS

The focus for the cataloging component of this grant is on the distributive cataloging initiative. ICON has moved forward to develop a plan of work, identify appropriate partners, and negotiate terms with those institutions.

Partners selected for collaboration at this time include the University of Illinois, University of Connecticut, and University of North Carolina. The University of Illinois has identified a large body of material stored separately from their main collection and is ready to move forward with cataloging. The University of Connecticut—a new member of CRL but a longtime participant in other preservation projects—also expressed a need for enhanced bibliographic access to their collection of important Latin American newspapers. Negotiations are currently underway with the University of North Carolina to clarify the state of their newspaper cataloging and their ability to take part in the project. The University of Washington had initially been identified as a collaborator, but upon further analysis of their collection and catalog, it was decided that the institution had nearly full bibliographic control of their foreign newspapers, thanks in part to previous phases of ICON work.

As a pilot project for the cooperative cataloging of newspapers, the primary emphasis for ICON staff and collaborating participants has been to articulate needs and goals and develop clear procedures. A Memorandum of Agreement (appendix 1) was created that addresses these and spells out expectations for both ICON and the participating library. The University of Illinois is already deep into a preliminary inventory of titles, recording place of publication and summary holdings, which will allow us to set priorities and flag potential problems. ICON has proposed innovative capture and transmission methods for surrogates and collation, utilizing advanced collaborative software to store and transmit data back and forth between the partners. The ICON project and cataloging coordinators will engage in site visits to the partners to survey collections, train student workers, and establish an initial workflow, based on the results of a search for cataloging copy. On-site evaluation is particularly important at this stage to identify local practices, adapt plans to accommodate schedules and priorities, and determine which of several options for surrogate capture and collation methods (including flatbed scanner, digital camera, and editable PDF) are preferable.

#### ENHANCEMENTS TO THE DATABASE OF INTERNATIONAL NEWSPAPERS

The ICON Database of International Newspapers has been online since 2002. The project's database consultant, the Moyer Group, has continued to improve the functionality of the database and its new administrative interface, based on feedback and testing. Recent work included adding earlier and later title fields to the database, providing the ability to add a single record via a Web-based submission form, and resolving issues arising from ANSI versus Unicode encoding for record files. Final tests are currently being run to ensure the uploading of batches of bibliographic and holdings records functions properly. Upon completion, ICON will reload a full set of records from the Cooperative Online Serials program (CONSER, based at the Library of Congress) database. A complete reload will update the existing bibliographic records and include any new records since the original load in 2002.

Another area that has received substantial, though unforeseen, attention of late is server maintenance and backup plans. The Apache server used for the ICON database and Web site crashed in late May; while this caused a delay in work on the data-load process, it also allowed the Center to reinforce server security and backup procedures, and measures were taken to ensure that the site will remain live despite any database interruptions.

#### DISSEMINATION AND COORDINATION OF SUBSTANTIVE INFORMATION ABOUT INTERNATIONAL NEWSPAPERS

ICON has been engaged in dissemination of information through its Web site, NEWSPAPERS listserv, and presentations to and discussions with its stakeholder community. ICON's advisory board meeting, held in April in Chicago, brought together newspaper and preservation specialists from the Library of Congress, British Library, Library and Archives Canada, New York Public Library, University of Illinois, and University of Washington. As a way to strengthen ties to commercial entities in the news arena and consider issues of digital preservation of newspaper content, the group met with Debra Bade (Editor, News Research and Archives, Chicago Tribune) and Deborah Harmer (Vice President, NewsBank Media Services).

Progress was also made on the cooperative film-queue database, which will provide a simple Access-based interface on the ICON Web site to register basic information about filming intents and completion (appendix 2). The ICON Web site itself is currently receiving an upgrade, with an aim to broaden categories to encompass more newspaper-related content.

James Simon presented an update to the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) Newspaper Section meetings in Buenos Aires in August, and ICON contributed a report for the section's business meeting in Canberra in February. The project coordinator also attended the Newspaper Users Discussion Group at ALA's midwinter and annual meetings, and provided information about the ICON database and the intention to add institutions' newspaper holdings in the coming year.

#### CREATION OF A LONG-RANGE, SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS MODEL AND OPERATING PLAN FOR ICON

At the ICON advisory meeting in April, participants reviewed the ongoing mission of ICON and its prospects for sustainability. Several themes were discussed, including prospective activities, governance, and funding strategies. There was broad consensus among participants that ICON can serve a greater advocacy function for preservation and access of news resources. Among the activities that ICON and its participants will pursue are:

- Developing principles for establishing agreements with publishers and vendors. A number of institutions have been approached by distributors and commercial vendors regarding sale and/or digitization of their newspaper collections. There is little transparency in these agreements, and often the content is then "locked up" in proprietary, costly arrangements—in effect, forcing the library community to rely on commercial providers for access to material they no longer control. Some common (ideal) language would create consistency from one institution to the next and help ensure a good return on the institution's investment in the process. It might also enable institutions to leverage more concessions in practice to make these resources persistent and address long-term preservation concerns (standard conversion, persistent access).
- Developing a revised filming contract that secures from publishers limited specific rights for digital delivery of news content. As digitization and digital delivery become more widely adopted, and expected, it has become clear that previous arrangements with news publishers and copyright holders are no longer adequate. ICON will recommend language to be adopted in new or revised contracts with publishers that will allow for digital distribution of material. This will need to be developed in cooperation with the publishers so that activities by ICON or research libraries do not cut into the market share of the publishers. These arrangements should also extend to commercial micropublishers to allow for limited, specific digital uses of news content currently in microfilm.
- Pursuing the long-term development goals of ICON to ensure sustainability. ICON has been very successful in pursuing its goals, and plans are underway to expand and enhance the effectiveness of the consortium. ICON's sustainability will depend on the ability of the organization to continue to address the needs for preservation and access as the news environment increasingly shifts towards a digital presence. ICON will strive to stay on the forefront of developments and provide services valued by its stakeholder community (including current activities such as print and microform preservation and aggregation of information about holdings, to prospective activities such as digital delivery, electronic preservation, and certifying digital archives).

The ICON advisory board agreed on the need to expand participation in ICON to institutions that would support the objectives through financial contributions and/or in-kind activity. Continuing discussions over the next several months will produce a development plan and sustainability model for the future of ICON.