

F.I.A.F.

FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE
DES ARCHIVES DU FILM

MINUTES OF THE 2d EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
VARNA, 1 June 1977

CONFIDENTIAL

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE 2d EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING IN VARNA
(1 June 1977)

All members of the newly elected Executive Committee were present, except Mr Privato, Mr Kuiper and Mr Buache. The two attending reserve members therefore had the right to vote.

1. Election of the new Officers

Mr Pogacic having proposed to elect Mr Privato, Mr Klaue and Mrs Bowser as Vice-Presidents, this was unanimously agreed. Mr Borde was appointed Deputy Secretary-General and Mr Stenklev, Deputy Treasurer.

Regarding the appointment of Vice-Presidents in general, Mr Ledoux wondered whether one should not in future have a more formal election, perhaps by secret ballot. On the other hand, he agreed that, considering the importance of having a 'balanced' Board on the Executive Committee, it could be dangerous to have a blind vote. Finally, the E.C. decided to keep to the system always used until now, which had proven a system of good sense and of practical use.

2. Appointment of the Commission for film archives in developing countries

All the members had now received a copy of the report which Mr Perry had read to the General-Meeting and which contained some proposals for the future activity of the Commission (annex 1).

Mr Pogacic felt that the new Commission should be composed of only a few (3) members ready to work on these proposals. With the experience she had acquired as head of the Documentation Commission, Mrs Bowser agreed that 3 really working members were enough and she proposed to appoint Mr Pogacic, Mr Perry and another member from a developing country. Mr Pogacic proposed Mr Mbaloula. Mr Ledoux however thought that, with 3 members only, the Commission would not be representative enough and proposed to have a Commission of 5 members, one from each continent. Referring to Mr Perry's document, he said he found these proposals interesting and practical but somewhat frightening by their amplexness. He proposed to examine them one by one here at the meeting.

Mr Daudelin said there must be a chronology in the order of the points submitted and that several of them were based on proposal 1 : "A thorough review of the actual state of film collecting and storing in developing countries". He suggested that the first year of the Commission's work be dedicated solely to making this survey.

Mrs Bowser, Mr Francis and Mr Stenklev agreed on this. They felt that without a basic survey, all the other proposals were premature and unrealistic. The survey itself already needed a lot of work and a lot of knowledge.

Mr Klaue also agreed and suggested that the Commission make use, for this survey, of all the enquiries already existing in this field, including the survey done by Peter Morris, on behalf of FIAF, for UNESCO even if it was now outdated, and an enquiry done last year by Mr Roads for IFTC. He also suggested to ask for the help of UCAL and to appoint in the Commission a representative of the Cuban archive to replace Saul Yelin.

Mr Andreykov then proposed to appoint Mr Perry, Mr Pogacic, Mr Garcia-Mesa, Mr Mbaloula and a member from Asia or another delegate from Latin-America. Mr Ledoux said he thought Mr Garcia-Mesa would not accept but he agreed with the principle of having one delegate from each Continent. Mr Volkmann underlined the necessity for the Commission to be composed of experts on the problems of developing countries.

Finally, a vote was taken to decide whether the Commission should be composed of three or five members. By 6 votes against 5, it was decided that there should be only 3 members.

As 3d member of the Commission, Mr Pogacic again proposed to appoint Mr Mbaloula from Brazzaville. He felt it was not necessary to have a member from Latin-America as we were already well informed on the problems of film archives in this continent while Africa remained much more unexplored in this field and would certainly raise the biggest problems in the years to come.

Mr de Vaal and Mrs Bowser agreed with him.

Mr Borde having proposed as a compromise solution to appoint a Commission of 4 members, he was told that the vote which had just been taken could not be reversed.

The vote regarding the appointment of Mr Mbaloula as member of the Commission gave the following results :

7 Yes
3 No
1 Abstention

Mr Pogacic was appointed President of the Commission.

3. Next Congress in Brighton

Mr Francis had distributed a document in which the organisation of FIAF's next Congress was described in details.

He added that for the first Symposium : 'The cinema between 1900-1906', the number of experts would be reduced to a maximum of 8 and that the 16 hours of Symposium (4 sessions) would have to include both screenings and talks which would be interspersed.

Mr Ledoux suggested that FIAF offer some grants to students or scholars who could display a solid interest in that field, to come to the Symposium. The Committee agreed to dedicate 1000 dollars (5 x 200 dollars) to this aim.

It also decided to pay for the costs of one delegate from an archive in a developing country to attend the General Meeting.

It was also decided that the General Meeting would have only 3 sessions :

28 May, a.m. : administrative matters

28 May, p.m. : Open Forum, including the introduction by Clive Coultass
to the evening film showings (20')

29 May, a.m. : Open Forum and elections.

The afternoon of June 2 would be reserved for the meeting of the new Executive Committee.

Finally, Mr Francis was given the task to decide on all the other points of organization of the Symposium with the help, if needed, of the Secretary-General and of the Treasurer.

The question of FIAF next Congresses in Lausanne and Prague and of the choice of a theme for these Congresses was postponed until next E.C. meeting.

4. Suomen Elokuva-Arkisto (Helsinki)

Mr Huhtala, director of the Finnish Film Archive, had handed over to Mr Ledoux here in Varna a letter which the Secretary-General now read out to the Executive Committee and in which he explained that his archive (until now a private organisation) was on the verge of being taken over by the State, as a result of a governmental recommendation made in 1975. While the Board of the Archive strongly supported this move which would give them much better financial means, they were afraid that a new working group appointed by the Ministry of Education to study the new administrative structures of Suomen Elokuva-Arkisto, would come up with a decision to make the archive a subdivision of some larger institute or foundation, which in turn would bring about loss of independence. Accordingly, Suomen Elokuva-Arkisto now requested the help of FIAF in defending the present autonomy of the archive, by a statement to the Minister of Education confirming the importance and necessity of the autonomy of FIAF members.

Mr Huhtala was asked to join the meeting at this point and he simply explained in other words the contents of his letter. He added that time pressed because the decision in Helsinki was to be taken in a fortnight.

The Executive Committee agreed on writing the requested letter and, after some discussion regarding the person to whom it should be addressed, it was decided that Mr Huhtala would arrange this point with Mr Ledoux in the afternoon.

5. Unesco

It was decided that Mr Pogacic, Mr Klaue and Mr Ledoux would, before leaving Varna, draft together a letter to Mr Bolla, deputy-director of Unesco.

6. New association of television archives

Following the decision of the General-Meeting, Mr Klaus agreed to draft a questionnaire for the enquiry to be made on television archives and the way TV production is preserved in all FIAF members' countries.

As regarded contacts to be taken with the new association of television archives, Mr Francis underlined that, to him, the formation of this new association was vitally important and that we should at least write them an official letter asking them for their intentions.

Mr Daudelin thought we should first put ourselves a principle question : "Are we, in FIAF, in favour of this new association or do we rather want to induce, some way or another, the television archives to join FIAF ?" It seemed we were not quite clear on this fundamental point.

Mr Ledoux said that he personally had always been against the acceptance of TV archives as members of FIAF, which should welcome them as associates.

Mr Francis, supported by Mr Stenklev, said that if we did not establish some kind of links with the television archives, we would lose access to all the important films that were made for television and this he would not accept. Another solution would be of course to let the interested FIAF members join the other association.

Mr Pogacic felt that this problem should be resolved nationally by each individual archive.

Finally, Mr Francis suggested to write the new association an official letter from FIAF asking them for their intentions and encouraging them to collect and preserve television films in more or less the same perspective as we did, with the same aims and the same kind of rules. It was agreed that he would draft this letter and that Mr Ledoux would sign it.

7. Appointment of a small committee to study the status of Associates

Considering the absence of Mr Kuiper who had been the initiator of this idea, this question was postponed until the next E.C. meeting.

8. Reconfirmation of Ceskoslovensky Filmovy Ustav - Filmovy Archiv (Prague)

Mrs Bowser first complained that someone from the Executive had reported to Mr Ondroucek what was said during the discussion on the Czech Film Archive in the first E.C. meeting here in Varna. She reminded the members that discussions in the Executive Committee were absolutely confidential.

Mr Ledoux then reported on the conversation which, following the decision of the former Executive Committee, Mr Klaue and himself had had with Mr Ondroucek the day before. From this conversation resulted that, for Mr Ondroucek, the main problem was a problem of linguistics and that the word 'Ustav' - in the name of Ceskoslovensky Filmovy Ustav - did not mean 'Institute' but had been translated that way for reasons of facility. Mr Klaue added that Mr Ondroucek had now accepted to use only the Czech wording in all the archive's letterheads and other official papers, and that Mr Ledoux and himself had agreed that this was perhaps a satisfactory solution, which should be recalled in our letter of reconfirmation to Prague.

However, Mr Ledoux still thought there was not much difference between the situation which we had to face at the B.F.I. and that of Prague.

He said that the concept of reconfirmation obviously implied that of non-reconfirmation. If we are not ready in certain cases to refuse the reconfirmation of members who are too far from the autonomy mentioned in the statutes and rules, then it would be better to give up completely the whole idea of a reconfirmation which would be a mere ceremony devoid of meaning and which would, anyway, lead us to make contradictory decisions, in each case. So he proposed abandoning the whole procedure of reconfirmation of the members and limiting ourselves to solving difficult cases when they arose.

Mr Klaue and Mr Francis did not agree with Mr Ledoux's suggestion. They said it would give the impression that the Executive Committee was playing with the members. At least eight of them were now expecting an answer from the Executive regarding their reconfirmation and we could not just drop this.

Mrs Bowser, Mr Pogacic, then Mr Daudelin and Mr Stenklev also said that we must continue with the process of reconfirmation. They felt that the Secretary-General was perhaps interpreting article 9 too vigorously. The intention behind it was not to lose periodically some members but perhaps to obtain some small or even big changes for the benefit of the archives in question.

As nobody seemed to share his opinion, Mr Ledoux left the decision to the majority who decided that all 8 members should be considered reconfirmed.

9. New applications for Observership

The Secretary-General had received here in Varna two applications for the status of Observer from archives in Latin-America, one in Caracas (Venezuela) and one in La Paz (Bolivia). As the documents joined to both candidatures were uncomplete, he proposed to postpone their examination until next E.C. meeting. This was agreed.

10. Next Executive Committee meeting

Mr Borde invited the E.C. to hold its next meeting in Perpignan. The invitation was gratefully accepted and the dates chosen were 27 to 30 January 1978, with arrival on the 26th and departure on the 31st.

Mr Ledoux then proposed to invite Mr Dimitriev to the E.C. meetings where Mr Privato could not be present. This was agreed but the question should be reconsidered for each meeting separately.

There being no time left for other questions to discuss, Mr Pogacic then closed the meeting.

Varna, May 27, 1977

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

At the XXXII FIAF Congress in Mexico City, an "ad hoc" Commission was created to study the problems of archives in developing countries and to make a report at this Congress. Mr Pogacic, Mr Yelin and Mr Perry were named as members of this Commission.

With the untimely death of Mr Yelin, the work of the Commission has been weakened, since it was he who had much direct knowledge about the work of archives in some developing countries. Nevertheless, the remaining members of the Commission, feeling that the subject was of great importance, determined to make a report to this Assembly.

The report is in the form of a specific proposal, namely that FIAF create a permanent Commission to deal with the problems of archives in developing countries. We further propose that this Commission consider, but in no way feel restricted to, the following areas of study, concern, and activity :

1. A thorough review of the actual state of film collecting and storing in developing countries, i.e., how, if, and where films are being kept. Such a survey might immediately indicate certain areas where assistance was needed, what kind of assistance, etc. It might also indicate an immediate need for some FIAF archives to undertake temporarily the collecting and storing of films in those countries where there is no such program. In any case, it would seem absolutely necessary that the Commission begin its work with some thorough understanding of the actual state of the cultural and educational use of film, and the collecting and storing of film, within and without archives in the developing countries.

2. The development of the practical, specific, and goal-oriented program whereby the resources of FIAF can be made available to the developing countries, e.g.,

a) the dissemination of the FIAF leaflet being prepared by Mr Buache and the FIAF manual for new archives being prepared by Mrs Bowser and Mr Kuiper,

b) the sharing of human resources, in the form of experts who would travel to the archives, and in the form of members of the Executive Committee, or those designated by them, who would be asked to travel to such developing countries in order to try and persuade the governments as to the importance of collecting and storing films for their history,

c) a program of support and guidelines for research in the archives of these countries and for film education programs -exhibition, courses, lectures, publications, etc.- which would assist the archives in helping to develop film literacy in their countries,

d) a program whereby more people from such developing countries could participate, free of charge, in the FIAF summer schools and an additional program whereby some archives would agree to accept trainees, or interns, from these developing countries,

e) the preparation by FIAF and its member archives of more circulating film programs.

f) the preparation and the dissemination of a film which would visualize the importance, and the methods, for collecting and storing films,

g) a concerted effort to invite more representatives of more developing countries, and/or their archives, to attend FIAF Congresses, and

h) a planned attempt to integrate the work of this new Commission with the attempts of UNESCO to formulate policy and practice regarding the preservation and presentation of the cultural heritage of mankind.

3. A complete investigation into the legal, technical, financial and political problems of archives in developing countries, e.g.

a) the problems of film storage in areas of high humidity and/or high temperature,

b) legal deposit of all film materials prepared and screened in the country,

c) the simplification of importing and exporting films for cultural and educational purposes,

d) the possibility of financial support for the archives coming directly from the government and/or being derived from a percentage of box office receipts.

It is important to repeat that the recommendation of the "ad hoc" Commission is the establishment of a permanent FIAF Commission and that the preceding examples were given not as restrictions upon the activities of the newly proposed Commission but as indications of the many concerns with which such a Commission might be concerned. Moreover, the various examples should provide some direction for the initial work of the Commission. Finally, the various examples as to the possible workings of such a Commission should indicate how important is its work, and that such work is not foreign and abstract, dealing only with countries and archives about which we know very little, but that such a Commission is integral to the work of the present membership of FIAF, to those in the more developed countries.