



## **Working Group on Ethnographic Collections Coordinator: Renata Peters**

### **Report of the second survey of name-change consultation**

As you are probably aware, the Working Group on Ethnographic Collections is conducting a consultation with the membership to decide whether the group should change its name, and if so, what the new name should be.

The consultation is being steered by a special committee coordinated by Carole Dignard. The committee is formed by Tharron Bloomfield, Ellen Carrlee, Sherry Doyal, Farideh Fekrsanati, Monika Harter, Ann Howatt, Marian Kaminitz, Emily Kaplan, Janet Mason, John Moses, Luba Nurse, Ellen Pearlstein, Renata Peters, and Catherine Smith.

You can see a report on the 2<sup>nd</sup> survey of this consultation below.

Renata Peters

23 June 2012

**Results on the Second Consultation  
Concerning the Possibility of Changing the Name of the  
ICOM-CC Working Group on Ethnographic Collections**  
- June 21, 2012 –

Carole Dignard, Chair, ICOM-CC-WGEC Name Committee

**Method:**

- SurveyMonkey web addresses were emailed to ICOM-CC WG Members (including Friends of ICOM-CC, Students and Student Friends, and designated representatives of an ICOM-CC Institutional Membership) and to Non-Members (WG Participants or Interested Parties).
- The Second Consultation text provided background information, the WG Aims and Vision, Broader Context, and Criteria in Selecting the Name (as presented above), as well as Descriptions and Justifications for the 3 proposed Names (including descriptions of terms).
- The Consultation took place June 13-19.
- SurveyMonkey data is received by the Name Chair only, and remains confidential (the collector cannot identify who responded).

**Results:**

**Response rate:**

MEMBERS: 43 members responded out of 104, or 41%.

NON-MEMBERS: 37 interested parties responded out of 190, or 19%

**Question 1:** Please rate the suitability of the following WG Names:

**MEMBERS**

Names	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable	Undecided
WG on Objects from Indigenous and World Cultures	31 (72%)	7 (16%)	5 (12%)	0 (0%)
WG on Indigenous and Local Material Culture	5 (12%)	16 (37%)	16 (37%)	4 (9%)
WG on Indigenous and Traditional Material Culture	14 (33%)	18 (42%)	8 (19%)	2 (5%)

**NON-MEMBERS**

Names	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable	Undecided
WG on Objects from Indigenous and World Cultures	21 (58%)	10 (27%)	4 (11%)	1 (3%)
WG on Indigenous and Local Material Culture	3 (8%)	17 (46%)	10 (27%)	6 (16%)
WG on Indigenous and Traditional Material Culture	13 (35%)	9 (24%)	10 (27%)	4 (11%)

Comments: Members

1. Hard to choose...however the first one will be quickly shortened to 'objects' thus will loose in meaning compared to previous one.
2. I can not identify with the terms local and traditional in the other two options, they seem to me two narrow and potentially misleading or limiting.
3. Unacceptable because of "local". Unacceptable because of "Traditional Material Culture" - every WG includes some form of this. On the other hand, one might think that it's only Indigenous traditional material culture that's considered here.
4. Local does not apply to our Museum, we are in Europe and our collection sofar is strictly non-European
5. I think the first group name provides the most general and all encompassing terminology.
6. I think the name "Objects from WG on Indigenous and World Cultures" is the most obvious of all. The terms are clear and appropriate. I'm still undecided about the other options, because I fear that the terms "local" and "traditional" can be anthropologically and historiographically questionable.
7. Really dislike the term 'Local' in this context

8. The term "Local" is too limited
9. "WG on Indigenous and Local Material Culture" is in my opinion too restrictive

**Comments: Non-Members**

1. I find 'local' difficult as many members of any particular cultural tradition have been displaced for any number of reasons but may continue to produce traditional cultural expressions in a v different environment. All names give scope to include cultural minorities even in Western Europe, e.g. Breton, Basque etc.
2. I do not believe that changing the name from one term (ethnographic) to another (indigenous) with different combinations will settle this issue. We need to think larger than this.
3. The use of the words "local material" and "traditional material" culture is very limiting since it does not allow for the inclusion of material culture made in modern contemporary times. What I mean to say is that contemporary "ethnographic" or indigenous artists/peoples may incorporate items in their work that may not be local (due to trade) or traditional (because of changes or modifications an artists makes). It seems by changing the names to included loaded terms like "local" and "traditional" you are excluding certain types of cultural material that may still fit the "indigenous" or "ethnographic" criteria but be left out of this category because of semantics.
4. I prefer to use local or traditional rather than world.
5. Preference remains for cultural materials over material culture
6. Re the last option - I don't believe that the name is "clear and simple to understand", particularly when viewed without the thorough explanation we have been provided with. I suspect that some communities might find the word "traditional" as limiting as the previous "ethnographic", when it's seen or heard in isolation from the references given. In other words, at first glance, it's not clear that it includes "new modern, living creations".
7. I like the inclusive and flexible meaning of the word 'local'. It fits the preservation of material culture of various social groups defined by their locality, for example, diasporas. Diasporas are connected to their original historic location and their new home. The meaning of 'local' incorporates 'traditional' and 'new' forms of material culture.
8. The term "traditional" is problematic, since collections we work with can be contemporary and indigenous and not considered "traditional" by the makers. The term "local" is also problematic; for example when a Cree person is now living in Santa Fe NM and creating contemporary interpretations, "local" has little meaning.
9. I understand the rationale given for the term "local", however, it seems ambiguous and could cause confusion, especially as these objects are often collected, studied, and conserved far from where they originated. I think there may be a future of constant explanation and clarification if we choose this option.
10. I find that "world cultures" is more all encompassing and less ambiguous. While "traditional material culture" is also a good word, it is less clear and may require futher clarification as to what is considered 'traditional' and to whom/which group this is referring.
11. Local could mean only cultures near indigenous ones; I agree with "traditional" but this could leave out evolving cultures both traditional and of other time periods.

**Question 2: Please rank the following 3 possible names:**

**MEMBERS**

Names	First choice	Second choice	Third choice
WG on Objects from Indigenous and World Cultures	27 (63%)	11 (26%)	4 (9%)
WG on Indigenous and Local Material Culture	3 (7%)	11 (26%)	26 (61%)
WG on Indigenous and Traditional Material Culture	13 (30%)	19 (44%)	9 (21%)
(abstention)	0	2 (5%)	4 (9%)

**NON-MEMBERS**

Names	First choice	Second choice	Third choice
WG on Objects from Indigenous and World Cultures	22 (59%)	7 (19%)	7 (19%)
WG on Indigenous and Local Material Culture	3 (8%)	14 (38%)	18 (49%)
WG on Indigenous and Traditional Material Culture	11 (30%)	14 (38%)	10 (27%)
(abstention)	1 (3%)	2 (5%)	2 (5%)

**Comments: Members**

1. Reason for choice: i think it is better to define by broader type than by geography; the accent is on the social and spiritual value more than the geographical belonging. both names are good though
2. I think all are viable alternatives. I believe number three is the most generalized, which is preferable. I also think it is essential to have "material culture" in the name.
3. Have no other choices, for reasons above, in 1 (Unacceptable because of "local". Unacceptable because of "Traditional Material Culture" - every WG includes some form of this. On the other hand, one might think that it's only Indigenous traditional material culture that's considered here.)

4. After all of the comments back and forth, I think that my first choice is open to the least interpretation. I also like the work objects - it is clean and simple , without the material culture, cultural materials debate.

5. WG on Indigenous and Traditional Objects, a fusion of my first choices would have convinced me even better.

**Comments: Non-Members**

1. I find 'local' difficult as many members of any particular cultural tradition have been displaced for any number of reasons but may continue to produce traditional cultural expressions in a v different environment. All names give scope to include cultural minorities even in Western Europe, e.g. Breton, Basque etc.

2. There was no alternative where I could choose "None of the above named choices." Therefore I had to choose first, second and third choice although I don't prefer either of them. (NOTE from Dignard: this person's vote were therefore counnted as: Abstention.)

3. Is too difficult to chose between local and traditional. quetly the sama. But I prefer local. since local more spesific and unique to describe indigenus.

4. Recognizing how difficult it is to come up with a name that encompasses the broad nature of what this group does, my first choice reflects the broad nature of the work that is done by this group. I feel the other two are confusing.

5. I think the arguments put forward for all 3 options are sound, finding it hard to choose between them. But I do think it makes sense to focus on the objects conservation specialisation rather than eg works on paper etc, hence my first choice. Thank you for the work put in by the Committee.

6. Traditional material culture best encompasses objects and cultural material produced by groups no longer living in their original homeland

7. "World culture" seems to indicate a world-wide culture.

**Question 3:** After an Alternative Name is identified, a Third Consultation will ask whether, yes or no, the current Name of the WG should change to this Alternative Name. Are you satisfied with the proposed way this Name Change issue shall be resolved?

**MEMBERS:**

Yes	40 (93%)
No	0 (0%)
Undecided	3 (7%)

**NON-MEMBERS:**

Yes	33 (89%)
No	1 (3%) (see*)
Undecided	3 (8%)

**Comments: Members**

1. En terme de pédagogie et d'identité, les 3 noms proposés seront dans tous les cas plus explicites que l'ancienne dénomination du groupe de travail.

2. long but fair.

3. I think you are doing a great job.

4. I think the members of the Working group have already decided in their majority that the name should change. So I am not sure about the third consultation. It would be really sad if after this remarkable effort, all ends where it started. But I am sure you have good reasons to proceed the way you decided

**Comments: Non-Members**

\*1. Why is it that we, instead of discussing the broader issue that was the original thought for this discussion, settle with only a name change? In the discussions referenced to there is obviously a range of different opinions whether we should change name at all, and I think it is not settled that easily. Ethnographic is not a bad name, but is symbolises a much bigger issue that needs to be discussed rather than rationalised away by a simple name change.

2. Excellent and thorough

3. I have been very impressed with the entire process of this name change. I think that this survey too has been extremely well presented.

4. Although the WG name "Indigenous and world cultures" is a great alternative, I am still of the mind that "Ethnographic Collections" is clear and understandable to all. It defines the collections we work on and I don't feel it needs to be a sensitive issue (just as changing 'french fries' to 'freedom fries' seemed wholly unnecessary).

5. Sadly, in view of the diligent and difficult work of the committee, I don't think we are quite there yet. for example, what kinds of things would be excluded or included for each option? what about "folk art"? is this individual art? a cultural tradition? this varies. what about "hobo art" in the US? this is not traditional nor indigenous, and was specific to a time and place. It would be excluded from "mainstream art" or "culture". the definitions should allow us to know whether a specific/group of objects IS or IS NOT included. And when does "traditional" stop? When artists copyright derived prints? Would these definitions describe the education

and training required for a conservator or others to decide whether a particular conservator was qualified to work on a specific object or group of objects?

**Question 4: Comments on this Second Consultation? Other Comments?**

Members:

1. *I appreciate your thorough statements regarding definitions of each proposed name changes.*
2. *The way this name change (and the consultation) has been studied and handled is very professional and well done.*
3. *Excellent work! Very clearly and thoroughly conducted. Thank you, Carole.*
4. *Personally I am in awe and disbelief of all of the work that the committee and its members have put into this name change project.*
5. *No! Great work, good effort of transparency and explanations*
6. *I'm very impressed with the thoroughness and inclusiveness of this process. Congratulations to all of those involved.*

Non-Members

1. *I am pro democratic consultations like these, but not for the name change.*
2. *Nope.*
3. *The summary in the Survey Monkey was concise and useful. Thank you for all the thoughtful consideration and obvious effort during this process.*
4. *Thank you and all the working group for all this work.*
5. *I think this a fair and thorough process.*
6. *I have been very impressed with the thoughtful, careful and well-researched way this name change process has been carried out. Kudos to you all.*
7. *Congratulations to the group for taking on this daunting task.*

**Question 5: Are you a current ICOM member? If so please provide the code you were sent, or your ICOM card number. (NOTE: This allowed to catch those which current available information listed in the non-members category, but who were actually paid current members. After verification, there were 9 such members. The data from these was transferred in the Members section.)**

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