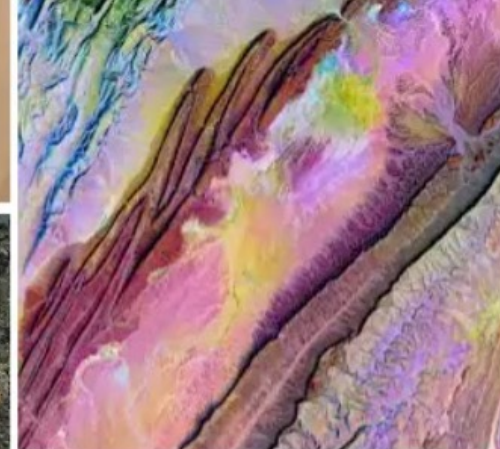




Google Arts & Culture



# UNESCO's Memory of the World Programme: A Global Treasure Trove for Future Generations

in association with



sixredmarbles

MoW collage screenshot, UNESCO  
Memory of the World



## How to Make the Most of This Lesson

This lesson serves as a **road map** for your journey through a rich and exciting collection of online content made available by **Google Arts & Culture's partners**. You will explore photographs, slideshows, voice recordings, and more. The images in this lesson are just a sample of what's available to you via the **Google Arts & Culture** website.

You can complete this lesson independently or with fellow students, a teacher, or another adult. The content is accessible to a wide range of ages, but it's especially geared toward students ages 14 to 18.

## Your journey in this lesson will take you through two major topics:

Chapter 1: What Is Memory of the World?

Chapter 2: A Sampling of Our Collective History

## You'll see some helpful signs along the way:



Estimated time for completing the chapter



Audio recording or video



Link to more online content



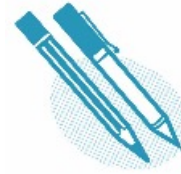
Learning activity

## Tools for Learning

Below are tools for learning that you may need for Digital Discovery lessons:



A device that connects to the Internet (a computer or tablet)



A tool for writing your responses and big ideas (pen, pencil, computer, etc.)



Art supplies (markers, crayons, paint)



Scissors



A notebook



Scrap paper

**Explore!** Google Arts & Culture pictures are **big**. If you want to explore a picture in greater detail, click on the magnifying glass symbol and zoom in with the zoom slider. By dragging the white box around, you can see even **tiny** details.

## Welcome to *UNESCO's Memory of the World Programme: A Global Treasure Trove for Future Generations*

In this lesson, you'll learn about Memory of the World (MoW), a programme of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The programme aims to preserve some of the world's most significant items of our **documentary heritage**. What makes them significant? They reflect key aspects of societies around the world—their culture, traditions, history, technology, or science. Preserving these items provides us and future generations with an understanding of our origins and how they've shaped us and how we must work to shape our future. After reading this lesson, you'll create your own "memory artifact" that tells future generations who you are and what is important to you.

### What Will You Do?

1. Learn about MoW and the International Register.
2. Understand what makes up our documentary heritage.
3. See items of the MoW programme up close.



## What's in this lesson?

1. Learn about what kinds of documents can be found in the International Register.
2. Explain what is meant by the term *collective history*.
3. Understand how items are chosen for the MoW International Register.

## By participating in this lesson, you will be able to:

1. Explain the significance of writing as part of the historical record.
2. Identify the themes of the International Register.
3. Understand the importance of preserving items that reflect our collective past.

### Vocabulary

documentary heritage, register, human rights, civil rights, Middle Ages, codex, apostle, tsunami, collective, illuminated manuscript, technology, innovation, literature, neuroscience

*Need help with some of these terms? See the glossary at the end of this lesson.*





Atlas Blaeu, Laurens Van der Hem 17th century, UNESCO Memory of the World

# What Is Memory of the World?



*What is this chapter about?*

The content that makes up our documentary heritage



*How long with this chapter take?*

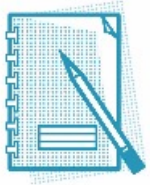
1 hour

# Chapter 1: Warming Up

Before you explore, answer the questions below in your notebook.

## Consider

1. You have probably already had at least one history course in your time at school. What kinds of topics are covered in a history course? Why do you think historians emphasize these topics?



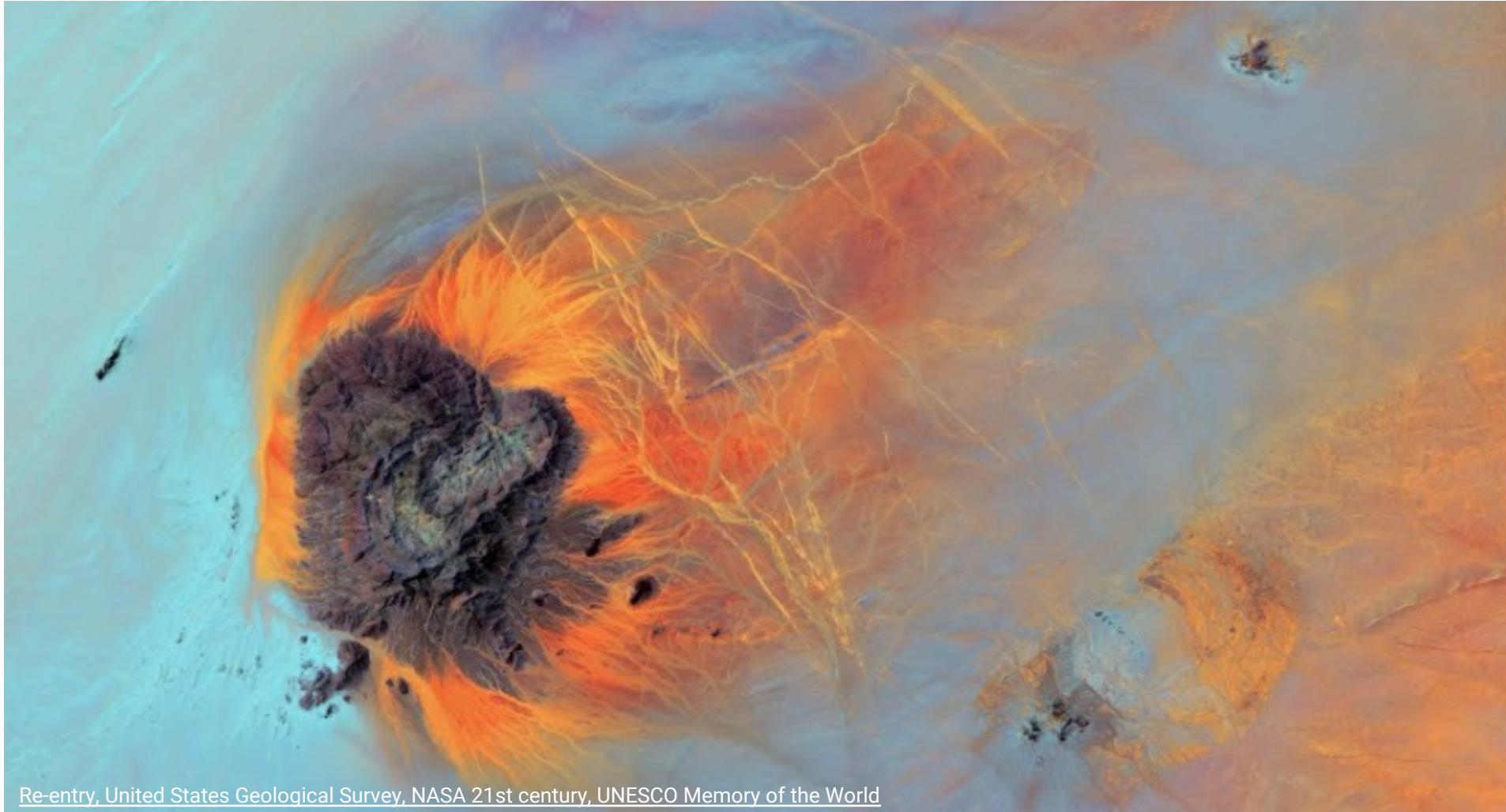
## Discover

2. What is a document? What kinds of items can be considered documents?



# What Makes Up Our Documentary Heritage?

When you hear the words *documentary heritage*, you may think of old books, aging sheets of paper, or carved symbols on stone tablets. While these things *are* part of the world's documentary heritage, "documents" aren't just books or papers. They include other records of our time on Earth, such as photographs, paintings, oral traditions, music, films, television programs, digital files, and audiovisual media. In other words, our shared past is both ancient and modern.



Re-entry, United States Geological Survey, NASA 21st century, UNESCO Memory of the World

This is an image from the Landsat program. How are satellite images part of our documentary heritage? They are the only accurate image record of Earth's land surfaces, coastlines, and reefs. The images show both natural and human-made changes over a period of some 40 years.



Read more about how we learn from both our near and distant past in [this story](#).

See more images from Landsat [here](#) and [here](#).



# About Memory of the World

UNESCO's MoW programme was established in 1992. Historians, scientists, world leaders, and others recognized that preserving the records of the world's past was critical. Many of these items are fragile and easily lost to damage, decay, neglect, or intentional destruction.

In 1995 UNESCO created the MoW International Register. A [register](#) is a list made for record keeping. Countries can apply to have their items added to the list for protection. At this point, more than 400 records of "world significance" have been added to the list. The registered items represent several key themes, including [human rights](#) and [civil rights](#), inscribed stone and tablets, technology, and world literature.



Learn more about the International Register and its wide range of records [here](#).

Learn about the people who made this tablet [here](#).

This record is a stone tablet inside a stone envelope. It dates to more than 4,000 years ago. It is one of more than 23,000 tablets documenting the history of an Old Assyrian trading community in what is now Turkey.



Tablet within an envelope, 2nd Millennium/Middle Bronze Age, UNESCO Memory of the World



# Handwritten History

With the development of written language came humans' ability to record their history for future generations. As you saw on the previous slide, some ancient peoples wrote their histories on stone tablets. Others used palm leaves. Later, people created various forms of paper to write on.



Read more about the document shown here in [this story](#).

Explore palm leaf manuscripts from South and Southeast Asia in [this story](#).

View a handwritten medical textbook from the **Middle Ages** in [this story](#).

See stone shrines inscribed with Buddhist scripture in Myanmar [here](#).

This document describes the conditions for Christopher Columbus's first voyage from Spain in search of the Indies. Instead of reaching the Indies in 1492, Columbus arrived in the Americas. The document gives historians an understanding of how government worked in 1400s Spain.

...mano lo Indistina se desmbrata lo panara en las dygas mares o rean  
...re su vida y despues del muerro a sus herederos (e sucesores e por cerro  
...es al tal offino e segund q don alonso enriquez q almyrante ma  
...elos otros sus predereiores enel dno offino lo tenyan en sus dygas  
...as alrezas Johan de coloma 2

...ras al faze al dno don xponal su vubrey egomador qnal en toda  
...as tierras firmes (e yslas que como dno es el d estubriere o ganare en  
...res (e que para el regimiero de cada una equalquiere dellas fago el electo  
...onias pa cada ofino e que tras al tome y pjan vno el que mas fiere  
...e asy seran mejor regidas las tierras q mo genal le dexara fallar  
...mo de tras al Plaze a sus alrezas Johan de coloma 2

...todas equalesquiere mercaurias siquiere sean por las piedras p no  
...spenena (e otras qualesquiere rofas e mercaurias de qualquiere p  
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...os del dno almyrante q dende agora tras alrezas faze mro  
...on xponal equiere q haya el rene para si la dezero para de to  
...adas las rofas todas q se fziere en ello por mana q delo q quedare  
...elibre haya elome. La dno de mro para po sumismo e fago dello  
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...Johan de coloma 2

...e si anusa de los mercaurias quel nasero de las dygas y yslas y tierras  
...to dno es segund o desmbrere o delos q entneque de agnellas  
...agua de otros mercaures nanere pleyto algimo enel lugar dand el dno  
...enado se verna y faga q lo por lo prehemena de la dno de  
...ra honore del tal pleyto pleyto a tras alrezas q el o h r





Many early documents are religious in nature. The one shown here is a **codex**—an ancient book manuscript. It is made up of five books believed to have been created by Pope Callixtus II in the 1100s. It tells the story of the **apostle** Saint James.



Learn more about the Codex Calixtinus in [this story](#).



# Modern History

Today, we can record the events that shape our times through not only text but also photographs and digital media. Modern technology allows us to understand an event such as a natural disaster in a much more up-close way. This increases our understanding of the event's consequences. The photograph below shows the aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean [tsunami](#).



[Residence that was swept away by the tsunami, 21st century, UNESCO Memory of the World](#)



Learn more about this disaster [here](#).

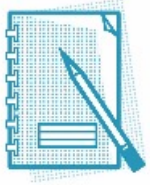


Read about the effects of the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear power plant disaster in [this story](#).



# Chapter 1: Wrapping Up

Now that you've read the chapter, reflect on what you've learned by answering the questions below.



- What are some of the items that make up the world's collective history?
- What items reflect your own history? Make a list of these items. You'll use the list in a later activity.



Peace on Earth, op. 13, Arnold Schoenberg, 20th century, UNESCO Memory of the World

# Chapter 2:

## A Sampling of Our Collective History



*What is this chapter about?*

A few of the items in the International Register



*How long will this chapter take?*

1 hour

This piece of music was written by Arnold Schönberg, one of the most influential composers of the 20th century.



# Chapter 2: Warming Up

Before you explore, answer the questions in your notebook.

## Consider

1. Why is learning about the past important? What can world history tell us about ourselves today?

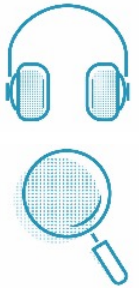


## Discover

2. What role do new inventions and new ideas play in what and how we learn about history?

# Why Preserve the Past?

As you've read, much of our present relates to what happened in our past. As humans in a **collective** world, we need to remember and reflect on the past so that we understand our present and can better predict our future.



Watch [this video](#) to learn about the importance of our collective memory.

See more of the work of the pioneering photographer who took this photo [here](#).



"The Daydreaming" (El ensueño), Manuel Álvarez Bravo, 1931, UNESCO Memory of the World



# Human Rights and Civil Rights

As you saw in the last chapter, one of the themes of Memory of the World is human rights and civil rights. Human rights are those one naturally has as a living person. Civil rights are those given to members of a particular political state.

As you likely already know, world history is characterized by turning points in the struggle for rights for many of the world's people. Governments around the world have both limited and expanded the rights of their people throughout history. In many places, these decisions have impacted the development of the nation's history and culture.



Read about some of the major turning points in rights struggles [here](#).

See some political documents representing key moments in history in [this story](#).

Between 1788 and 1868, some 165,000 British prisoners were forced to migrate to Australia. Historians believe that the British government had several goals: to decrease the prison population, to settle a strategic location, and to economically exploit a new area.



Gee Dee Prisoner Number 6780, Public Record Office Victoria1863-11-10, Public Record Office Victoria



# Illuminated Manuscripts

This is a detail from a page of an **illuminated manuscript**. The MoW International Register lists many illuminated manuscripts. Illuminated manuscripts get their name from the fact that their pages were accented with gold or silver, which “illuminated”—or lit up—the page. In Europe, illuminated manuscripts reached their height during the Middle Ages. Some Islamic societies also created illuminated manuscripts.



Learn more about the document shown here in [this story](#).



See a Jewish illuminated manuscript that dates to the 1300s [here](#).

Read about an illuminated manuscript from the 5th–6th centuries [here](#).

This page comes from the Utrecht Psalter. A psalter is a book containing the psalms of the Christian Bible. A psalm is a sacred song or prayer. The illustrations in the Utrecht Psalter reflect the violence and warfare of the historical period in which they were created. The psalter is a key manuscript of Christian art.



33r PSALM-58, 9th century, UNESCO Memory of the World



# Maps

Maps are one of the most important human inventions. Early maps show us how people viewed the world during their time. They also show us how mapmaking has changed over time. Maps allowed people in different countries to explore the world.



This map comes from a 50-volume atlas created during the 1600s. Learn about the atlas in [this story](#).



River Senegal, Laurens Van der Hem, 1662, UNESCO Memory of the World





The map shown here is part of a series that tells the story of the Great Siege of Malta in 1565. The maps tell the stories of the siege as they happened from May to September. The maps were circulated around Europe. This map is about the end of the siege.



Learn more about these maps in [this story](#).

See other important historical maps [here](#).



# Politics

The MoW International Register contains many examples of items of great political significance. The one shown here is a trade proposal sent from the king of Burma to the king of England in 1756. The letter was engraved on pure gold and is decorated with rubies.



Read more about this golden letter in [this exhibit](#).

See political documents of the ancient Hittite Empire—carved on clay tablets—[here](#).

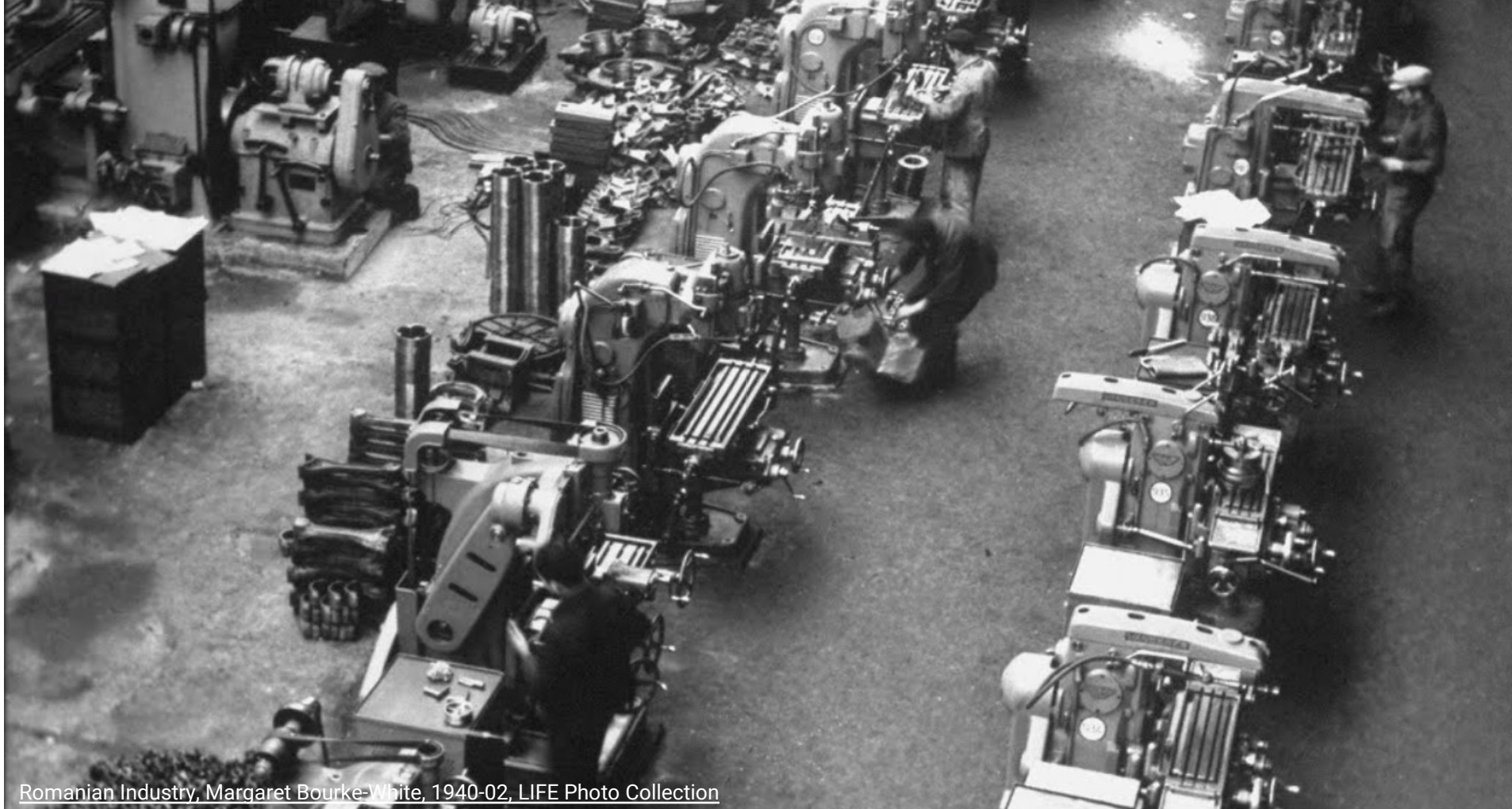


The Golden Letter of the Burmese King Alaungphaya to King George II of Great , view 1, King Alaungphaya, 18th century, UNESCO Memory of the World



# Technology

**Technology** is the application of scientific knowledge for practical purposes. **Innovations** in technology include tools and systems that transform society and its environments. Technology can lead to economic growth and societal change. The MoW International Register includes remarkable stories of technological innovation and scientific achievements, from railway construction to silk production to monitoring changes to Earth's surface.



Romanian Industry, Margaret Bourke-White, 1940-02, LIFE Photo Collection

This huge machine shop in Bucharest, Romania, is making parts for weapon shells in 1940. Industrialization—the movement of society from mostly farming to manufacturing—began during the mid- to late 1700s. It led to major economic and social change around the world.



View [this story](#) to see other ways technology has changed the world.



# World Literature

**Literature** is defined as written works with lasting significance. Reading the literature of a particular culture or nation helps us to understand and appreciate the lives and histories of different people around the world. It also helps us develop our worldview—our internal collection of stories, values, and attitudes that inform our thinking about the world around us.



Read about some important works of literature from around the world in [this story](#).



Panji Tales (Hikayat Kisah Panji), 18th - 19th centuries, UNESCO Memory of the World



# See More of the World's Collective Memories

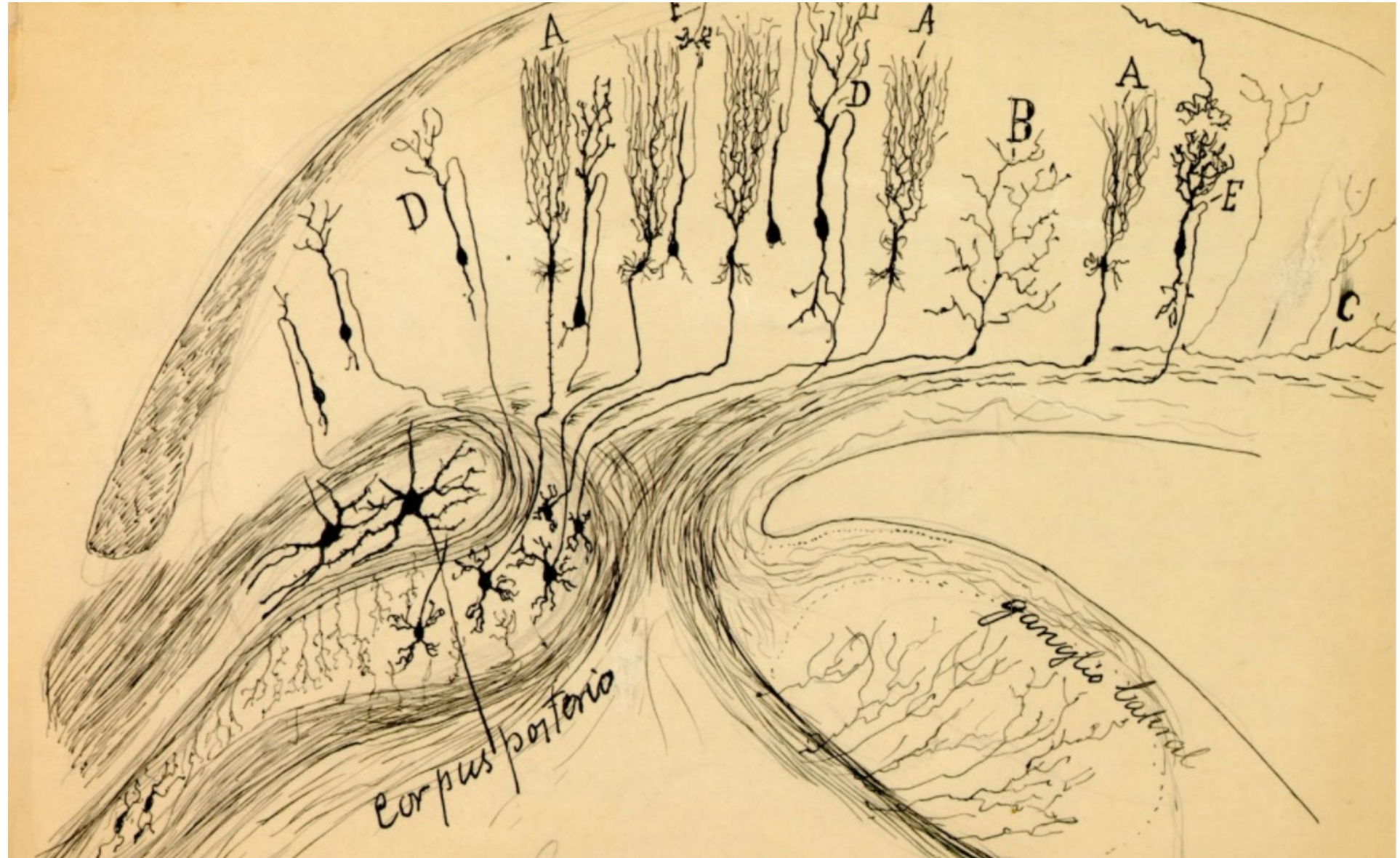
The documents you've seen in this lesson are only a fraction of the historical treasure trove found in the International Register. Visit the Memory of the World site page to see more of this fascinating collection.



[Visit the Memory of the World site page.](#)



The studies of Santiago Ramón y Cajal form the basis of neuroscience today. Learn more about him and his students [here](#).

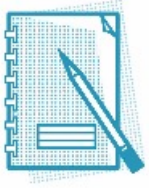


Pedro Ramon y Cajal drawing, The Cajal Legacy Group, 20th century, UNESCO Memory of the World



# Chapter 2: Wrapping Up

Now that you've read the chapter, reflect on what you've learned by answering the question below.



Which of the items in this chapter were most innovative, in your opinion? Explain your answer.

# Digital Learning in Action

So, what did you learn? Read the questions and complete the learning activities below to extend your learning based on what you just experienced.



**Reflect** Answer these questions:

- Why were the MoW programme and the International Register created?
- What modern items did you see on the International Register? Are there any items that you didn't see that you think should be on the list? Explain your answer.



**Summarize:** Think about some of the themes of MoW. Is there one that you think is most significant to human history? Explain your answer.



**Create:** You saw many different types of documents in this lesson, including photographs, satellite images, inscribed stone tablets, illuminated manuscripts, and drawings. Think about your own history. Use the list you created earlier to create an item of your choosing that reflects your personal history. Be sure it shows future generations who you are and what's important to you.



# Glossary

- **apostle:** in the Christian faith, one of the 12 original disciples, or followers, of Jesus Christ
- **civil rights:** rights given to members of a particular political state
- **collective:** related to a group of people who are considered part of one whole group
- **codex:** manuscript book
- **documentary heritage:** recorded history in any format
- **human rights:** rights that belong to all people
- **illuminated manuscript:** book or document adorned with gold or silver leaf
- **innovation:** a new idea, device, or system
- **literature:** writings with excellent form that have universal interest
- **Middle Ages:** European historical period from about AD 500 to around 1500
- **neuroscience:** the study of the structure and function of the brain and nervous system
- **register:** a written record or list
- **technology:** the use of science to create useful things or processes
- **tsunami:** a huge sea wave most often caused by an earthquake or volcanic eruption