

ARCHIVAL EUROPE POST 1992: THE MAASTRICHT INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM, 2-5 OCTOBER 1991

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This article is an expanded version of a report on the international symposium, 'Archives and Europe without boundaries', held in October 1991 in Maastricht, The Netherlands, and attended officially by the author and Frank Upward. It was given at a departmental seminar run by the Graduate Department of Librarianship, Archives and Records at Monash University on 21 October 1991. Although it is essentially the author's view of the conference, it attempts to place the conference into the context of recent European developments. The European Community (EC) is moving towards greater political, economic and cultural integration in 1992. This development coupled with the greater decentralisation of government power within the nation states of Europe provides for continued diversity at the local levels of archival services with the emphasis on common European archival policies endorsed by the EC in key areas such as access, conservation, compatible computer systems, privacy, copyright, training and recognition of qualifications.

On 9 and 10 December 1991, in the southern Dutch town of Maastricht, capital of the province of Limburg, nestled between Belgium and Germany, European Community leaders met to sign a treaty on economic and political union. The 1957 Treaty of Rome had established the European Economic Community (EEC), better known as the Common Market of six European countries: Belgium, France,

West Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and The Netherlands. The Common Market had sought the economic integration of these member states. The Maastricht meeting of the expanded twelve member states, sought a European political and monetary union, as well as considering a common foreign policy and defence arrangements and to a lesser extent common policies on welfare, immigration, civil rights, health, education and the environment. It was the culmination of several reforms and initiatives within the European Community since the late 1970s.¹

Since the expansion in the number of member states in the 1970s, the EC has moved towards greater political, social and cultural unity. Following the passing of the *Single European Act* of 1986, the European Community has passed laws for a market with no frontiers within member states; standardised business practices; free movement of goods, services and persons with 31 December 1992 as a deadline for the Single Internal Market and thus eventual technical, monetary and fiscal unity between member states. There are nine official EC languages and mechanisms for mutual recognition of professions.²

Despite Great Britain's successful proposal to remove any references to 'federal' from the treaties signed at Maastricht and the addition of an escape clause in the monetary union agreement now extended to 1998, some form of supra-national federalism of institutions and policies over and above the nation states appears to be an inexorable reality. Although the earlier Dutch federal plan which proposed greater powers for the European Parliament was rejected, the view of a three tiered structure whereby as many decisions as possible are made at the regional level, bigger issues at the national level and the biggest at the supra-national level, is widely held in Europe. This structure is also an outcome of shifts of government direction since the 1960s beyond the nation state to international organisations, of which the EC is the main player and below it to regional and local authorities.³

It was therefore not purely fortuitous that Maastricht was selected as the location for the October 1991 international conference on the theme of 'Archives and Europe Without Boundaries'. In addition to its site for the Political Union Treaty two months later, its 'European character' derived from its history of multifarious foreign domination and its geographic proximity to major European cities and European Community institutions including its own European institutes, made it an ideal location. It also boasted world class conference facilities.

The symposium was organised by the Royal Netherlands' Society of Archivists (VAN) to celebrate the centennial of its foundation, on 17 June 1891 at Haarlem. VAN is considered the oldest society of archivists in the world. Although part of the theme 'Archives and Europe Without Boundaries' originated in relation to the opening of the state borders inside the European Community in 1992, the

conference theme also arose from the development of technological innovations regarding the control and the use of archives which could potentially cut across national boundaries. Thus archival integration within the EC would be enhanced by technology. Central to all this was the consideration of the impact of post-1992 Europe on both the historical and cultural identity of regions and nations and on the local and national archival services and their staff and users.

Participants

There were c. 400 participants, mainly public archivists, from Western Europe and North America. Although most participants were European national, regional or parliamentary archivists, there were some well known North American speakers including Terry Eastwood, David Bearman, Francis Blouin, Trudy Huskamp-Peterson and Frank Evans. British speakers included Michael Roper and Michael Cook.

Speakers in the plenary sessions were weighted towards politicians and users, the latter mainly of the academic ilk. The auxiliary sessions featured archivists from the top echelons of their organisations. It therefore followed that we were presented with the perceived notions of the role of their organisations and little about what middle management thought of how policies were implemented by the professional staff.

Structure, theme and coverage of the conference

The central theme was looked at from five different angles. Each perspective was presented in two keynote papers given in a plenary session. Auxiliary papers were delivered by a minimum of two speakers in succeeding parallel sessions, following which questions or comments were addressed to the speakers, by the participants, through the chairperson for that session. Working languages were French, German and English with simultaneous translation for the plenary sessions and for half the parallel sessions.

The five main topics treated were:

1. *The citizen and administration.*
2. *Antiquarianism or information service.*
3. *The image of the archivist, harmonisation of training and international mobility.*
4. *The archivist and archival Europe.*
5. *Archival Europe and the archival world.*

The related auxiliary papers essentially dealt with the above themes from different perspectives which did not allow one to choose a succession of related issues as they were often on at the same time.

Comparative comments on keynote plenary speakers can be made, but it is difficult to judge the auxiliary papers as a whole from having

attended only one-third of the parallel sessions between my colleague and myself. The choice of sessions attended was dictated by what we perceived to be the quality of speakers on the theme, the language to be used, the lack of accessibility of those speakers or their writings in English and our specific professional interests.

Despite the thematic structure of the conference, most speakers expressed views within their respective institutional settings rather than the possible changes after 1992. It was also disappointing that the Dutch made little reference to their own archival development, particularly the famous nineteenth century Dutch treatise on archival management or the history of their professional society.

The key theme of moving towards an archival Europe without boundaries was addressed by the opening speaker, Hedy d'Ancona, the Dutch Minister of Welfare, Health and Cultural Affairs who is responsible for central and provincial government records offices. She was keen to demonstrate European and often Dutch initiatives in regard to a common European archival identity. For example, she spoke of a committee of experts from all EC countries formulating a European public record policy within a cultural policy. Various initiatives of the European Commission and the European Parliament in relation to archival matters were raised by her and in later sessions by Hans Hofmann, Head of the Archives of the Commission of the European Communities and Eric Ketelaar, the National Archivist of The Netherlands.⁴ They spoke of the need for individual national archival legislation to harmonise with the European policy. 'Harmonisation' was the buzz word of the conference.⁵

The key theme was also addressed through the issue of a common European culture.⁶ A thesis of this fundamental but delicate question of a European culture was eloquently put by Ad Van der Woude, a demographic historian from the University of Wageningen, in The Netherlands, who believed that the European Commission had failed to enunciate a common European culture. Without it no European political or economic union would function. He rejected a geographic definition of Europe. He defined culture as a common history, the slowly changing result of an historical process. The elements from which he chose to define this common history were based on Latin Christianity, the world of humanistic learning, Latin as a lingua franca, increased well-being from the late fifteenth century and womens' marriage patterns in European countries. His views were hotly debated over coffee by the participants.

Some other speakers spoke in serious jest about differences within Europe. Specific examples of cooperation between archival institutions arose but these were few. Rather than a common European history most speakers focused on the common profession of the archivist. The general image of the archivist to emerge was that of

someone still preserving the cultural past, but the duty of making citizens aware of their government's actions through better access to public records pervaded all sessions. It was very refreshing to hear erudite politicians in Europe who *do* know what archivists are and what they do!

The sessions

In order to provide an indication of the coverage of the sessions, a resumé of the presentations of all the speakers heard by the author appears below, as much of what was said may be unknown to our Australian colleagues and proceedings may not be published for some time, if at all. (Some papers will appear in *Janus*, the journal of the International Council on Archives.)

The citizen and administration

This topic dealt with access to information for the private citizen within all levels of government through such mechanisms as Freedom of Information and through archival access arrangements, ethical appraisal decisions and minimising information loss threatened by technological erasures.

The two keynote speakers provided different views of archives: one as 'cultural property' and as part of the political agenda of the EC in relation to a European archival policy; the other as the means of providing the citizen with the information needed to participate in government — the 'collective unbiased memory'. The former view was presented by d'Ancona, mentioned above, who summarised The Netherlands archival situation and the European Commission's work on a public record policy. Herman Willink, President of the Upper House of the States General, The Netherlands, provided the latter view, which was a social manifesto for a European information policy in which he believed the archivist had a contribution to make. He pointed out that governments do everything to hinder the process of making the citizen more politically aware, making even Freedom of Information difficult to operate.

The auxiliary session on the ethics of appraisal continued the theme of the 'citizen's rights', and centred the discussion on whether it was ethical for the government to retain records of a highly personal nature and the researchers' rights to such records. Were ethics being used as a means of restricting access to sensitive personal records or alternatively to destroying records of high reference value on the pretext of protecting privacy? The speakers were Alexandra Nicol, Assistant Keeper, Public Record Office, United Kingdom and Paul Klep, Historian, University of Nijmegen, The Netherlands.

Nicol stated that the PRO's role of acting as a watchdog on government accountability was of increasing importance to the

existence and financing of their organisation. Appraisal decisions operate within this accountability ethic. In relation to case files, privacy was not seen as a reason for the destruction of the records; extended closures adequately covered 'endangered' persons, the term used in the United Kingdom in relation to privacy protection. She also clearly differentiated between files containing information about private individuals gathered by government and information on individuals acting in a public capacity. Other matters raised as a result of questions from participants related to the PRO policy of building appraisal requirements into computerised record systems at the design stage. Nicol also spoke of the archivists professional accountability in matters of appraisal and the need not to distort history.

Paul Klep, an economic/social historian, saw archives as the cultural inheritance of the country. He viewed The Netherlands appraisal criteria as based on the needs of government; archives were seen as 'functional instruments' and cultural or wider societal views were being ignored by public archivists in his country. He was particularly concerned about case files. His 'cultural view' was queried by Angelika Menne-Haritz, Director of the School of Archival Studies, Marburg, who saw the administration's needs as the only valid criterion for appraisal. It was perhaps a shame to see this perennial debate being expressed in terms of opposites, rather than composites, although the overall feeling was that there was no conflict.

Antiquarianism or information service

These sessions considered the role of the archivist in facilitating access to archival holdings in the context of national, local, business and collecting archival institutions including the enhancement of access through technology and standardised systems of documentation.

Friedrich Kahlenburg, President of the Federal Archives of Germany (Chairman for the session) and Michael Roper, then Keeper of Public Records, spoke of their own experiences in their respective countries and the changes in the use of archives today and the services provided. The second speaker, Bernard Vogel, a regional German politician, like other German speakers saw archives as a mirror of administrative actions and the archivist as the facilitator for the public user, not a servant of government. This is best understood in the context of the German view of the privacy issue which had been used to restrict access to records on individuals in order to protect the government administration. This is a particularly sensitive issue in relation to the ex-GDR records. Like Willink in the previous plenary session, Vogel saw the right to information as the framework in which archival legislation should be formulated.

The auxiliary session on standardisation and the new technology from the archival point of view was not a very satisfactory one as the topic was defined differently by each speaker. Gérard Naud, from the Archives de France, raised the issue of documenting and storing machine-readable records in a standardised form and discussed the application of technology to information retrieval in archives and standards in relation to this. Michael Cook from the University of Liverpool, on the other hand, provided a resumé of work on the standardisation of descriptive standards — MAD II which could also apply to electronic records and the ICA working paper on levels of arrangement and authorised vocabulary. MARC AMC adopted in the United States of America and Canada was voted against in European archival circles because no large scale database was available. Attempts at adopting full text searches of archival material are being piloted instead. Questions raised on this issue indicted that there were differences between European countries on descriptive standards in documenting the provenance of the records and the records themselves.

The image of the archivist, harmonisation of training and international mobility

The appropriate training for an archivist was the main issue in these sessions. Other issues included accreditation of archival training courses, integrated training with related professions, and a possible future European Institute for the training of professional archivists.

David Vaisey, Librarian of the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, summarised images of the archivist provided by previous speakers. The European and American images were fairly high profile but less so in the United Kingdom. He provided a history of the 'professionalisation' of archives, postgraduate training and the possibility of a European Institute for archival training. In the United Kingdom there is a close cooperation between the Society of Archivists and archival teaching within the universities.

Hans Hofmann, Head of the Archives of the Commission of the European Communities, provided some concrete information on research on archival training in the EC member states and EC policies on common training. A varied picture of training emerged from a 1989 questionnaire of the Commission to EC members. Most training takes place in universities or is attached to the national archives of the country concerned. Harmonisation of training in a European context does not exist. There were different courses for archivists with academic training from those without. The duration of courses varied from one week to four years. The Commission's preferred model was the UK one of a professional body involved in course design and accreditation.

Hofmann's course of action for harmonisation included the following:

- bilateral staff exchanges between member countries, for example, following the lines of the ERASMUS program — a Liverpool and Lisbon Universities' exchange;
- cooperation between EC bodies — opening of their archives on a thirty-year basis; working with the national archives of member states as there is an overlap in the information of the EC bodies and the foreign ministries; and
- an extension of the training course (in French) developed for the Commission's archival staff, which includes records management skills, relevant legislation, classification for multilingual files and conservation techniques together with practical exercises and visits. There are two versions: one of six to eight weeks and one of ten days. Training is carried out by the Commission itself and the National Archives of Belgium.

The barriers Hofmann saw to international mobility for the archivist in the context of the free movement of persons in Europe from 1992 included:

- linguistic (nine official languages);
- the impact of public authority (different legal/administrative structures of member nations); and
- recognition of qualifications.

Approaches Hofmann suggested to these issues were as follows:

- improving linguistic competence through the 'lingua program', devised to improve additional language skills;
- in-service training in relation to working with foreign records, such as the recent exchanges between Germany, France and Italy; and
- applying the EC Council of Ministers' directives on the recognition of professional qualifications. These override national laws.⁷

The auxiliary session on generalist training for archivists was of particular interest to those of us involved in archival education. The first speaker was Jules Verhelst, teacher at the Course of Archives Management, Free University of Brussels, who spoke about the aims of this course. The two-year course, in Flemish, included a compulsory Masters thesis. He believed that 'archivistique' or archives management consisted of more than just administrative and technical components. Archival science, which included appraisal, was not just a set of techniques. It should embrace elements of information science but not be a branch of it. He stressed the importance of practical work which in this particular course included three months in-service training. Most of the example theses he provided centred on preparing inventories for disorganised records and writing a related critique.

However, some included studies on automated records systems and advice on establishing a new recordkeeping system.

The other speaker, Johannes Wagner, a municipal archivist from Bochum, Germany, with a background in federal archives, spoke of training in Germany and how it had served their needs. The two schools, in Munich and Marburg, now include records management and automation issues in their courses. He advocated the generalist archivist, widely educated as the ideal, with the emphasis on continuing education; there was still a role for historical/evaluative work. Municipal archives which are numerous in Europe and very active, are the centres of historical culture for the city. As city archivist, he ran historical workshops with the local museums and libraries.

The archivist and archival Europe

Within the context of a European identity, these sessions focused on preserving the European archival heritage by means of legislative prescription, as well as technological and preservation strategies at all levels of government.

Although some attempt to establish the role of the archivist in a Europe without boundaries had been made in earlier plenary sessions, these sessions attempted to address the main theme of the conference directly. Eric Ketelaar summarised the EC Council of Ministers' European archive policy, covering access, conservation, the use of technology and the compatibility of computer systems. Topics on harmonisation which the EC Council was pursuing included:

- a professional charter and training;
- copyright;
- privacy;
- standards on building and equipment;
- audiovisual archives; and
- protection of private archives.

Ketelaar did not envisage an amalgamation of archival systems but rather closer links within the EC countries and an adaptation of legislation to European directives. The European Commission and its institutions lacked a disposal policy and it was unlikely that a common policy would emerge. His humorous comments on European differences were an indication that the amalgamation of complex systems was unlikely when even simple transactions were made difficult by regional variations.

On the other hand, Ad Van der Woude, the previously mentioned demographic historian from the University of Wageningen, saw the preservation of a common European culture as the unifying force among European archivists. He provided some concrete suggestions

on how this could be achieved which included the establishment of European standards for services for researchers, preservation and selection criteria, regional archival schools and a European Society of Archivists.

The session on the safeguarding of the archival heritage: reflections on the effectiveness of legislation, left one with the distinct view that legislation was only an effective tool if it provided for mandatory transfers of records to archival institutions, coupled with appropriate sanctions for non-compliance. Elizabeth Berry, former country archivist of West Yorkshire, presented a very sorry tale on the history of local archives in the United Kingdom where despite legislation the local government archival entities exist as an optional rather than a mandatory service. In 1966, as counties were abolished, so were their archival services. She was herself a victim of this process. She suggested that national archival legislation should define public records, make local archival services mandatory and provide for a regional network.

Klaus Oldenhage, the Director of the Federal Archives of Germany, Potsdam, placed great importance on archival legislation which was passed only in 1988 for federal German records. The legislation stated that all federal agencies should offer all documents no longer required except for those of Parliament; machine-readable records were to be transferred only if they complied with recognised technological practice. He provided examples of the usefulness of the legislation in record transfers. The legislation had been necessary to override privacy legislation which had prevented the takeover of records containing information of a private nature. The law covered former GDR records, including party and mass organisations, which were considered 'public records' because they had arisen out of public functions. Six out of the sixteen states also had archival legislation and some included local government. He definitely considered legislation as a stick to use.

The discussions which followed included the importance of enforcing legislation. The French, despite having the oldest archival legislation in Europe and one archival law for national and local government, believed persuasion was sufficient. A Kenyan stated that his country had adopted heavy sanctions including fines and imprisonment, which had been successfully enforced.

Archival Europe and the archival world

The past and the future European archival relations with the underdeveloped countries, mainly Africa, were explored, by re-evaluating the ICA programs and proposing suitable training, technological assistance, access to archival research and financial options. The role of professional archival societies within the European archival community was also covered in this last session.

These sessions were about Europe as the developed world and thus implicitly included North America and Australia, and its relationship with underdeveloped countries, sometimes known as the 'North/South' division. The plenary sessions and the auxiliary sessions were of particular pertinence to Australia and our northern neighbours, including ex-colonies such as Indonesia. They also provided an insight into the African situation regarding archives and records programs. These plenary sessions were also the first to link records management to successful archival programs.

Joshua Enwere, former National Archivist of Nigeria, provided a poignant story regarding English-speaking West African nations and a plea for European assistance through the ICA to bear the cost of microfilm copying programs for records pertaining to these countries still held by the metropolitan countries. He pointed out the variations in the cultural values of the colonial masters and the West African countries. In most of these countries, written records did not exist before the colonial era. In the post-colonial era, in the absence of recorded information of their pre-colonial history, indigenous objects of cultural significance were deposited in museums and libraries. In addition, governments failed to see the colonial records as part of their archival heritage. This mentality was extended to modern recordkeeping resulting in a low priority afforded to archives and records management. Strategy options to overcome these views included awareness programs and financial assistance at the national government level. Their own governments preferred to spend on oral history projects rather than preserving colonial records, thus also leading to a neglect of current records. Enwere was concerned that a United Europe would further exclude Africa economically and possibly culturally. The ICA through UNESCO might remain the only financial source for Africa, but since the withdrawal of the United States and Great Britain it has limited funds. He alluded to ICA's position vis-a-vis professional archivists and the lack of acceptance of its role in underdeveloped countries. His plea was for archival Europe to remain conscious of Africa by helping to fund home-grown projects and local archivists rather than apply European views to their problems.

Michael Roper, who replaced the scheduled speaker, spoke in his capacity as Secretary-General of the ICA. He provided a refreshingly strong critique of past assistance to African nations in the context of the origin of the ICA as basically a European body dominated by the post-colonial countries which had failed to provide the necessary infrastructure for indigenous recordkeeping services to operate. He raised many issues in relation to the methods applied in the post-colonial era including the legacy of colonial governments favouring the cultural value of records to the exclusion of current records; the prominence of oral history programs over the preservation of imperial

records; the training provided in the United Kingdom which was originally unsuitable for African conditions; the neglect of the private sector and local administration by only concentrating on the national records; the removal of records of a sensitive nature by colonial powers and the confusion which often existed between records created in colonial offices naturally and those created in the country itself which has complicated the replevin issue. In addition, the colonial record-keeping system was unsuited to the new records created following independence and no adequate tools were provided to establish records management programs.

Roper suggested various strategies to overcome the problems he had enumerated including fostering self-help using as models those countries which had succeeded; promoting the UK special masters course for overseas students with its increased emphasis on records management; promoting Senegal's, Ghana's and East Africa's own courses; improving literature availability, which will be assisted by the database on archival literature currently being prepared by the ICA; providing the technical advice; running an international microfilming program of 'migrated archives' through the support of the European Parliament and running records management workshops. Roper also discussed the resource issue. The ICA could only use members' subscriptions. A possible levy and/or private funds or European community resources would need to be pursued.

The session on archives of the third world and training and development again included Enwere providing a history of archival courses and training in Sub-Saharan Africa. He indicated that there were no suitable indigenous archival training courses and those that did exist were located within library science schools as units of library courses. Originally European education had been provided which had failed to take into account basic skills and cultural differences. Unlike the French who established and continued to administer archival institutions in their African colonies for some years after independence, the British colonial administrators had been ambivalent about establishing archival institutions. In the case of Nigeria there was only a national archives and no local archives. Enwere felt that if an African was trained in Europe he/she needed a special program with a strong practical component and support staff required special training. His preference was for formal education by their own native teachers combining education with practical training.

Elizabeth Danbury, Deputy Director of the Archive Administration Course, University of Liverpool pointed out that training and development were never-ending processes which involved not only university education but also other professional development such as exchanges, membership in professional bodies, visits and debates. A universal course for archivists was unreasonable and differences

should be respected. She spoke of some of the European exchanges in 1989, the Lisbon/Liverpool exchanges and the ICA training courses. Together with the French International Training Course on Archives Management for francophone speakers, the British course for ex-British colonies had been a great success. She believed that archivists required more training in management including fund raising and that the best teachers were archivists who had worked in difficult situations. The debate which followed indicated that it would be better for archivists to train within their country of origin and be provided with assistance in establishing local schools where none existed. Some participants believed that there was a common core of theory valid universally on which all courses should be modelled; others favoured an International Institute.

Reflections on the conference

There was no summing up in relation to the theme, 'Archives and Europe Without Boundaries', at the official closure of the symposium. My own impressions were as follows:

- The concept of a united Europe as a cultural entity, although not universally accepted, was one that archivists could foster through selection criteria applied to records (see Van der Woude's ideas referred to above). The strengthening of regional autonomy in Europe was in harmony with the existing pattern of municipal archival bodies which play a key cultural role in their respective communities. These concepts and the tensions between them were not explored sufficiently.
- The role of the archivist as the impartial provider of information for the citizen which is a true record of government actions was a dominant theme. In general this was not seen to be in conflict with his/her role as a cultural agent. The Public Record Office justified its existence through its ability to provide evidence of government accountability via appropriate appraisal action. From the questions and comments it was also an important issue in the re-emerging Eastern European nations. Some archival programs in our Australian states are completely out of kilter with this European trend.
- The importance of archival legislation in an information framework for both regulating access and controlling the transfer of government records emerged from the sessions attended. In fact a Croatian participant spoke of the Freedom of Information/privacy/archives legislative 'package' his country had drafted in readiness for independence.
- Attempts were proceeding to formulate a common European archival policy on matters such as archival training, access, conservation, storage standards and the compatibility of computer

systems. It was reassuring to hear that the EC executive bodies were taking these matters seriously.

- Records management arose only in reference to the underdeveloped countries, where recordkeeping traditions are not sufficiently deep-rooted, which to a lesser extent also applies to Australia. In much of Europe it is implicit in archival management. Although there was little said directly on this matter during the conference, there was no indication that records management was better handled, than in, for example, North America or Australia.
- One was left with the distinct impression that there were substantial differences in archival documentation, procedures and training among EC member states. Programs of interchange between archival institutions fostered by the EC were likely to overcome some of these problems.
- Archival teaching staff voiced their concern that there be adequate practical training including basic office skills, management skills and computer literacy in their courses. Moves to incorporate these needs were going ahead in several European courses.

Conclusion

The range of topics chosen by the conference organisers addressed issues which confront European archivists both as a result of greater political, social, economic and cultural integration expected after 1992 as well as resulting from technological changes allowing for increased archival information interchange. Apart from these internal issues, the conference also considered Europe's relationship, as a single entity, with other countries, particularly the underdeveloped world.

The challenges faced by European archivists in 1992 are not dissimilar to those faced by their colleagues in other developed countries. The issues arising from the preservation of electronic records, standardising descriptive standards, privacy protection through access restrictions rather than through the destruction of records, promoting the archival heritage, making the public more politically aware of government activities through appropriate archival access arrangements in tandem with Freedom of Information legislation and appropriate penalties for the wilful destruction of records, accrediting and designing appropriate archival courses are all relevant to archivists, particularly in the public sector. Australia, as a federation of states, needs a national records and archives policy which could draw on the EC guidelines for 'harmonising' archival legislation. It was also reassuring to hear that European archivists placed great importance on government accountability through appropriate records appraisal programs alongside their archival heritage obligations. The strength of municipal archives in many European countries together with the increased power of regional governments is

something which has possible applications to Australia. The new dimensions to the 'North/South' dialogue represented a major development of high relevance for us. It was also not surprising that the conference addressed many of the same issues that we are facing in archival education, particularly in the Australian courses that draw on the recordkeeping traditions of Europe which do not sharply distinguish between archives and records management.

ENDNOTES

1. Federal ideas have been present in the EC's political and constitutional development. Attempts at creating a European political community on a federal model emerged as a movement during the First World War. During the Second World War, it continued in European Resistance literature which saw the creation of a 'United States of Europe' as a means of weakening the nation states that had initiated the War. It can be traced further back in European intellectual thought, at least to the Enlightenment. Much of this federalist thought was marginalised in the 1950s and early 1960s but developments in the EC in the decades 1969-1979 gave an added impetus to the growth of a European movement. These included certain reforms to the EC institutions and direct elections to the European Parliament in 1979 which created a direct channel between the central institutions and the European citizenry. There were a number of other initiatives which are too lengthy to summarise. The European Union Treaty of 1984, as amended by the *Single European Act* of 1986, provided 31 December 1992 as the deadline, without legal force, to complete the Internal Market and to transform the EC into a European Union. Franco-German initiatives in creating a common defence force in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet block and Yugoslavia, the growth of membership of the EC by way of the re-emerging Eastern European nations as well as closer economic alignment with the countries of the European Free Trade Area will create a larger economic and political unit than originally anticipated. See Michael Burgess, *Federalism and European Union, Political Ideas Influences and Strategies in the European Community, 1972-1987*. Routledge, London and New York, 1989, Chapters 2, 4-7.
2. For a simple explanation of the purpose of the *Single European Act* of 1986 see Alex Roney, *The European Community Fact Book: a Question and Answer Guide*, published in association with the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry, London, 1990, Chapter 5.
3. Since the mid-1960s there has been a trend towards the decentralisation of politics in many European countries which has strong historic roots in Europe. There are many variations to local diversities in Europe. Regional dimensions can be constitutional, as in Belgium, Italy and Germany; they can also be ethnic, linguistic or cultural, as in France and The Netherlands. The devolution of government powers to regional or local government has increased at the expense of central governments. This development and the separate growth of the EC as a supra-national body provide a shift in government direction both of which are beyond the nation state. They coalesce with a federal European perspective. See Burgess, *op. cit.*, p. 17-18 and David Coombes *et al.*, *European Integration, Regional Devolution and National Parliaments*, Studies in European Politics 3, Policy Studies Institute, European Centre for Political Studies, London, 1978, p. 1-8.
Also see the following:
The Age, Dec. 1991, editorial, 'Super-Europe lumbers into view', Graham Barrett, 'Europe's Crisis of Identity', *The Age*, 9 Dec. 1991, p. 9, and two other Barrett pieces, 'Europe urges Britain to loosen up on federalism', *The Age*, 10 Dec., 1991, p. 8 and 'Britain expected to endorse EC currency', *The Age*, 11 Dec., 1991, p. 9.

4. Stanley Budd and Alan Jones, *The European Community: A Guide through the Maze*, 3rd ed., Kogan Page, London, 1989, Part 11, 'The Way the European Community Works', and Roney, op. cit. Chapter 2, 'The Institutions and the Consultative Bodies of the European Communities', are useful introductions to the purpose, structure and functioning of EC institutions. The European Commission which sits in Brussels is the administrative agency for the EC headed by the 17 commissioners nominated by the member countries. It drafts legislation, plans and administers policies and acts as the think tank for the EC. The Council of Ministers made up from representatives of the governments of member states, makes the decisions for the Community. The European Parliament has the power to dismiss the Commission and to influence the budget and the spending of the EC. Although its powers have increased over the years, it cannot make laws, only suggest amendments. It is composed of political groups, not representatives of member states. Its many committees consider legislative proposals from the Commission.
5. Roney, op. cit. p. 31–33 deals with the harmonisation or the introduction of common standards for products. The term is also used in relation to other areas of EC policy which have the intention of bringing together different standards.
6. Lord Gladwyn, *The European Idea*, Nel Mentor, The New English Library Limited, London, 1967, Chapter 1. Gladwyn's Europe as an identifiable entity forged from the synthesis of the Roman Empire, the Roman Church and the later barbarian invasions has many similarities to Van der Woude's thesis.
7. Directives are legally binding. They lay down the intended results of legislation, leaving it to individual member states as to how these aims are to be achieved. However, if they impose an obligation on a member state, they may be effective before they are implemented. See Roney, op. cit., Chapter 3, 'EC Legislation'.