Valuing Significance or Signifying Value? Culture in a Global Context

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The UNESCO Memory of the World Program commenced in 1992 as a program for documentary heritage that aimed to 'guard against collective amnesia calling upon the preservation of the valuable archive holdings and library collections all over the world ensuring their wide dissemination'. The Program's threefold agenda, raising awareness, increasing access and ensuring preservation is progressed through the 'Memory of the World Register'. The Australian

Memory of the World Program uses significance assessment methodology to provide an objective framework for decisions relating to registration. This paper argues that while the concept of significance may be a useful tool with which to address issues of access, identification and preservation for the built heritage and for some individual items or collections, it is not useful as a generic construct. Further, the hierarchical and exclusive nature of the framework on which the program rests could, in some circumstances, run counter to its stated aims.

Introduction

The Memory of the World Program is a big program with a big heart and a big vision.

Established in 1992:

> The UNESCO *Memory of the World* Programme is aimed at safeguarding the world's documentary heritage, democratizing access to it, and raising awareness of its significance and of the need to preserve it.[1]
>
> The documentary heritage of the world is a form of collective memory which is fragile and irreplaceable. It records the diversity of the human race, its languages and its method of committing memory to paper, papyrus or stone tablet. It is a record of shifting cultures, the repository of the pinnacle of our achievements in literature, philosophy, law, politics, science and spirituality.[2]

Let us, for the moment, ignore obvious questions that arise from the assumptions expressed above (the privileging of the written form of memory over the oral, exactly who the 'our' is in 'our achievements', the preferencing and reinforcement of the iconic as 'the pinnacle', and obvious biases that are implicit in any program based on veneration). The aims of the program are laudable and optimistic; by highlighting the significance of documentary heritage its value will be acknowledged, celebrated and confirmed and its security and preservation ensured.

The Memory of the World Program operates through the mechanism of listing. There is an international register for iconic documents of 'world significance', regional registers that include 'documentary heritage

approved for inclusion by each regional committee' and which 'may afford opportunity for minorities and sub-cultures to be appropriately represented', and national lists registers that somewhat unsurprisingly 'list documentary heritage of the nation approved for inclusion by the national committee'.[3]

In Australia there are currently two items listed on the international *Memory of the World Register*, the *Mabo Case Manuscripts* and the *Endeavour* Journal of James Cook, both located at the National Library of Australia. The Australian Register holds another thirteen items.[4]

As a UNESCO program, Memory of the World represents the focus of sustained endeavour and financial commitment; and, like other UNESCO programs it channels resources and creates (or diverts) agendas. While UNESCO's cultural programs are multifarious and important they also, and sometimes problematically, signify an ostensibly agreed philosophical position within an international framework. This is often used to drive agendas at local levels. UNESCO identifies 'governments, National Commissions, Parliamentarians, NGO's and associations ... the media, schools, cultural and scientific institutions, private sector partnerships and the United Nations family of institutions' as natural partners in the development and delivery of programs.[5] Little wonder then that these programs are successful when they are seen to have broad take up, and to offer the model of a global strategy that can overcome local impediments in the advancement of a particular cause. At the same time however these programs need to acknowledge diversity, identify competing but equal priorities, enable cross-cultural understanding, develop participatory mechanisms, and balance resources to enable active engagement rather than observer or marginal status at a local level. Operating across professional divides and national and international boundaries, the Memory of the World Program faces a number of challenges. How well it manages conflicting sensitivities will be a test of its relevance and resilience. Much of this will depend on the intellectual rigour of the program.

Bribery and intellectualism: The genealogy of effective engagement

Article I section 2 (c) of UNESCO's constitution commits the organisation to:

> Maintain, increase and diffuse knowledge:
>
> By assuring the conservation and protection of the world's inheritance of books, works of art and monuments of history and science, and recommending to nations concerned the necessary international conventions.[6]

In order to be effective UNESCO must engage, at a program level, with its member states. It does this through a range of mechanisms including the development of intellectual tools that can be used to leverage practical outcomes. The Memory of the World Program is one such tool.

In the international program the concept of significance is employed less as a methodology, and more as a descriptor for those items that would be accepted within a framework of worldwide significance. In Australia significance assessment methodology has been adopted as the tool in the nomination process. On both counts the attraction of significance, as a tool and as a framework, arises from its perceived success as an intellectual construct in protecting built heritage.

As an intellectual construct relevant to culture, significance is very much a product of nineteenth and twentieth-century Europe. Viollet-le-Duc (1814-1879) was an early exponent of the preservation of built heritage, identifying the need to define the history of the building as a critical first step in returning it to its original character.[7] This philosophy formed the basis for conservation (as practiced in museums, galleries and the built environment) as opposed to preservation (as practiced in archives and libraries).

In his article 'Architectural Conservation: The Triumph of an Idea' Stephan Tschudi-Madsen charts the development of iconic significance as a tool in the fight to preserve built heritage, noting that by the end of the nineteenth century conservation, coupled with an 'anthropological interest' and the concept of *Alterswert* (age value), overlapped with nationalist ideals.[8] The destruction of cities during the Second World War (Warsaw, Leningrad, Coventry, Dresden) focused attention on the role of preservation within national reconstruction agendas as a tool

for cultural continuity led by '... a need to establish cultural continuity by preserving the past.[9] The concept of national significance was secured.

When the League of Nations established the International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation (IIIC) in Paris, its bureau the International Office of Museums (IOM) sought to develop internationally recognised and accepted principles. Member states were the 'wardens of civilisation' a responsibility initially embodied in the 1931 agreement known as the Athens Charter.[10]

After WWII UNESCO continued the programs of IIIC actively working to extend its charters and areas of influence, through the regular development of conventions and recommendations aimed at ensuring the protection of cultural property.[11] This intellectual genealogy, focused on the built environment, is reflected in these Charters and Recommendations. Despite UNESCO's more recent focus on documentary and intangible heritage, the tools are familiar, signification by registration and the promise of financial assistance.[12]

But a useful political tool is not the same as a critical intellectual position, and the question remains. Do the latest expressions of significance represent a sustained and critical next step in identifying and critiquing cultural significance? Or rather do they represent an atrophied transplant indicating the politicisation and appropriation of what has been a particularly fruitful, but very specific discourse? Does the concept of significance represent an anachronistic and very specific response to a nineteenth-century philosophical position developed within Europe and fine-tuned in response to very specific threats? Is the concept of significance so culturally loaded as to be, at best, an irrelevant and, at worst, a dangerous tool with which to address issues of local or distributed culture?

Competing professional cultures: Significant document or significant record?

> Significance means the historic, aesthetic, scientific and social values that an object or collection has for past, present and future generations.[13]

Although fluid and contextually dependent, the concept of the significant is not hard to grasp. It is the basic intellectual tool used in

even the most minor decision-making process, and by extension is inherent in any form of cultural transmission. Significance is about hierarchies of choice and about the articulation of those hierarchies. We move easily from 'significant' to 'iconic', as if they are levels on a gradient of value. Given that culture is such a fluid and disputed term, listing by significance provides a hierarchy of the most important, in turn enabling a practical and actionable focus for the requirements of UNESCO's international Conventions and Recommendations.

But because significance has to do with hierarchies of choice it is also about exclusion. In Australia the principle of the *Distributed National Collection*, an intellectual driver in library and museum debate and activity through the last decade, presented a broader philosophical construct from which to examine issues of cultural identity; a construct which, it could be argued, is at times antithetical to the concept of prioritised, hierarchical significance. The Australian Memory of the World Program acknowledges both concepts of distribution and significance, but there are tensions inherent in the two approaches. The intellectual dichotomies inherent in linking the pyramidal hierarchy of significance and the integrated interconnected meaning of distribution are not easily resolved.

While significance assessment earned its stripes in the built environment, in Australia the concept was further developed through the (mainly museum focused) work of the Heritage Collections Council, and published as *(significance) A Guide to Assessing the Significance of Cultural Heritage Objects and Collection.*[14]

Section 6 of the nomination form for the Australian Memory of the World Program requires nominators to ascribe value within three categories of 'Primary criteria - significance value':

- Historic significance
- Aesthetic significance, and
- Community or spiritual significance.[15]

(significance) also includes 'Scientific or research significance' and 'Social or spiritual significance' but these are not a requirement for assessment for the Australian *Memory of the World Register* (although it could be argued that 'social' and 'community' are interchangeable to some extent). Workshops held in Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney in early

2005 had discussed these two criteria with the Final Report from these workshops recommending modification of these criteria for the assessment of documentary heritage.[16]

Sub-section '6.2 Secondary criteria - comparative value' also requires the nominator to:

> demonstrate how rare or representative is the item/collection, and whether its degree of integrity (completeness, sound/original condition) contribute to the significance of the item/collection.

The nominator must also:

> compare it with others of its kind to show why it is of Australian Memory of the World significance.[17]

This process relies heavily on methodology developed for the built environment, modified for the museum sector and outlined in *(significance)*. But is the intellectual construct so readily translatable across sectors, even if the tool is useful? And even if the tool is useful are there potential dangers in its use that we should be thinking about in a proactive way? Does the intellectual genealogy of the built environment make the *Memory of the World Register* a very blunt instrument by which to make sense of the value of documentary heritage, particularly that managed as archives?

Significant records or significant institutions

The term 'documentary heritage', which is used to denote the area of interest covered by the Memory of the World Program, is imprecise, flexible and context dependent. This makes signification an attractive tool, setting parameters which while not necessarily objective, are at least verifiable. But as a tool it cannot provide the intellectual framework required to progress the rigorous debate needed for the Memory of the World Program. In this respect the concept that framed the development of the significance assessment methodology, and that now frames the agendas of the Collection Council of Australia, that of the 'distributed national collection', offers a more complex and richer intellectual base from which to explore making and meaning in collections.

For archives, concepts of distribution and significance have always been key. Many government and business archives are framed within legislative and requisite frameworks which are more exacting than that required for libraries or museums. The significance assessment methodology treats significance as an acquired trait; it is an intellectual patina identified after the event. Art history generally acknowledges that the contribution of an artist is unlikely to be clearly evident contemporaneously. A major part of museum collecting activity aims to 'frame' the past. But archival documents are as much active contemporary readings as they are isolated historical tracings - they require issues of authenticity, integrity, purpose, context, reliability and use to be addressed at the point of creation, and hold a special requirement: they are transactional and must be managed as such.[18]

The regulatory and transactional nature of archives suggests that the Memory of the World Program in its current form, is not particularly useful in addressing archival preservation issues. It could also be argued that a philosophical model that removes the archive, or document, from its context (by listing it as an item of significance in its own right) not only misunderstands, but undermines the standards that make archival preservation effective.

The role of archives in functional societal memory is generally recognised in the stringent standards and legislative requirements that govern their birth and identification, and which are in themselves extremely effective preservation tools.[19] It would be surprising if registration on the *Memory of the World Register* could offer any additional insurance over and above the requirements of the *AS/ISO 15489, Australian Standard Records Management, Part 1 - General, 2002* or legislative initiatives such as the UK's *Freedom of Information Act (2000)* and the *Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Management of Records* issued under Section 46 of the FOI Act.[20]

The stringent requirements that govern archives management indicate a very specific management paradigm which is reflected in approaches to archival preservation. Concepts central to information management preservation such as risk analysis, metadata management and development, and functional analysis are tools that are much more effective than environmental and condition assessments. The latter are articulated in Memory of the World preservation strategies which fit

within a conservation/restoration paradigm, more than a conservation/preservation paradigm.

The local within the global: Competing cultural identities

According to UNESCO cultural diversity faces three challenges:

a) Globalization ... by highlighting the culture of economically powerful nations, has created new forms of inequality, thereby fostering cultural conflict rather than cultural pluralism.

b) States are increasingly unable to handle on their own the cross-border flow of ideas, images and resources that affect cultural development.

c) The growing divide in literacy (digital and conventional) have made the cultural debates and resources an increasingly elitist monopoly, divorced from the capabilities and interests of more than half the world's population who are now in danger of cultural and economical exclusion.[21]

Created in response to global aggression, the UN acts as adviser, watchdog and police to the community of nations that spawned it, providing a global framework in which to engage nation-states and to address issues that matter at a local level. So what is the role of the Memory of the World Program in preserving culture at a local level, or in driving national or international agendas at a global level?

The concept of world heritage, a category of democratised heritage, which is so significant as to transcend local or national boundaries, is not a benign, apolitical construct.[22] Indeed the Memory of the World Program acknowledges the political nature of its own agendas in the discussion papers it has commissioned on lost or missing documentary heritage.[23]

Just as the term 'world-music' has come to represent a blended product of multi-national and multi-cultural engagement and influences, the concept of 'world heritage' is complex and problematic. Is it a geographical concept where world status is ascribed by breadth of impact? Or is it quantitatively measured by its impact on the largest number of people on the globe (status by statistics), or is it an issue of

rarity (the last remaining evidence of the existence of a person, a place, or a thought)? Or is it simply the case that we have not yet sufficiently critiqued the term?

At the national level issues of cultural identity are generally framed within a positivist historical discourse (that which we observe and verify - generally the written word). The Memory of the World Program sits comfortably here. However post-colonial histories, where issues relating to indigenous and settler cultures and multicultural minority histories form part of the national identity make the story less clear. For example for the Hmong communities of Myanmar the rise of the nation-state has directly contributed to the decline of Hmong culture. Across the globe it is brain-numbingly obvious that many nations are only peripherally concerned with the survival of culture, and that national culture is an odd kind of term, most effectively used politically in contests about identity. The recent review of the National Museum is a case in point.[24]

A further challenge (and complication) for programs like Memory of the World is how to engage across the international boundaries created by colonisation. Substantial Bohol diocesan records from the Philippines are held in the Jesuit archives in Madrid. The United Kingdom Colonial Office records provide much information that is peripheral to the interests of the metropole but highly significant within the colony. Even in Australia records such as those of the Christian Mission Society contain information that is important to indigenous communities, and not only to those in Australia. It is possible that such material may be identified within the current Memory of the World program, but such material may not clearly be of world significance or even of national significance, and its dispersed nature provides no regional base from which to describe its value. More to the point, the energy and effort required to get international agreements for the identification, let alone the listing of such material is a severe impediment. The 2002 'Statement on the Value of the Universal Museum' opposing repatriation and signed by museum directors from major institutions across Europe and North America indicates the difficulties faced by dispossessed or minority cultures in accessing their heritage.[25]

The issues of minority cultures are also difficult to address in preservation models predicated on national significance. Cultural value is not an attribute that can be easily or meaningfully bestowed from

beyond the culture; cultural attributes are insider knowledge. There are few cases where we can talk about national culture in a more meaningful way than we can about local cultures, and when we do so we are generally identifying a process that privileges the 'stories' of a particular group. And there many examples where national agendas are best served by the marginalisation or negation of local cultures.

While the National Library was successful in registering the *Mabo Case Manuscripts* on the *Memory of the World Register* it has been argued that in fact the Mabo case made very little difference to the advancement of indigenous land rights in Australia.[26] In Victoria the State's success in *Yorta Yorta v. Victoria* saw Justice Olney proclaiming:

> The tide of history has indeed washed away any real acknowledgement of their traditional laws and any real observance of their traditional customs.[27]

Homo nullius in place of *terra nullius* and this only six years after the Mabo ruling. The loss of traditional indigenous archiving systems and the retention and development of settler and state systems favoured (of course) the state.

There is a danger inherent in the registration of the *Mabo Case Manuscripts* in that it may embed the meaning of the Aboriginal land rights struggle in one pivotal, successful action. Mabo is located within a much richer genealogy including the 1996 Gurindji Wave Hill Station walk off, the 1970 *Milirrpum and Others vs. Nabalco Pty Ltd* and the Commonwealth of Australia, the 1996 Wik case, the 1997 10 Point Plan and the 1998 *Yorta Yorta Aboriginal Community vs. State of Victoria*, to mention only a few. What the *Mabo Case Manuscripts* document is the forced response of the Anglo-Australian judicial system, an impact on a dominant culture, not the mechanisms and key cultural signifiers that enabled Mer culture to continue. It is also worthwhile considering how the significance of these papers and the threat to them, compares with the loss of the last Jiwarli speaker, Mr Jack Butler, who died in April 1986. Jack still speaks (via soundtrack) from the website of the University of Melbourne's Department of Linguistics and Applied Linguistics.[28] Such examples serve to highlight the difficulty in determining the divide between tangible and intangible. The Mabo papers reflect the intangible values held within Mer culture. Was Mr Butler and the speaking of the Jiwarli language really intangible?

The issue of the last language speaker highlights another challenge for Memory of the World Program. What does it mean to be of 'worldwide significance'? Cultural significance is after all a very relative construct. Could the members who make up the Memory of the World assessment panels recognise the real significance of a document proposed by a cultural minority? Is there an inherent numbers game in the concept of significance such that the most significant item in a small community may not be considered of having national significance? How realistic is it that an Aboriginal elder, living traditionally in a remote area, could make a case for the preservation of a highly significant sacred item – yet who else could claim the understanding of that item which would be necessary to articulate its significance?

The tension between national and local, a very real tension, and one characterised often by the power imbalance inherent in such relationship, is often played out within a nation's archiving. How the Memory of the World Program could capture the subtleties and impacts of such tensions is not clear.

Don't mention the war

> The documentary heritage residing in libraries and archives throughout the world constitutes a major portion of the Memory of the World – and much of it is currently at risk.[29]
>
> The loss of archives is as serious as the loss of memory in a human being; societies simply cannot function properly without the collective memory of their archives.[30]

In *Lost Memory – Libraries And Archives Destroyed In The Twentieth Century* Hans van der Hoeven identifies threats to the preservation of archives and lists archive and library loss in the twentieth century. Unfortunately examples that ostensibly show just how much a Memory of the World Program is needed, also serve to highlight how ineffectual any list will be in the face of real disaster or intended destruction.

> Continuing acts of terrorism, ethnic cleansing and related archival cleansing and other acts of barbarism will add many more record groups to the list. Some of the disasters resulted from brutal violence by agents of the dominant political system, others from similar action by their

> opponents ... Continuing attacks by humidity, heat and termites will result in the annihilation of archives in several countries in the tropics in the African, Asian, Pacific and South American regions in the next decades...[31]

The Memory of the World Program focuses on registration as a preservation tool. The program incorporates three mechanisms. Firstly the process of listing in order to engage governments in identifying, acknowledging and acting to preserve significant material. Secondly the profile and status given to the listed material to ensure that, if under local threat, there will be other voices raised and other forums available to advocate for the preservation of the material. Thirdly securing digital access in order to 'democratise' the material. The challenges are obvious. Yet as recent experiences indicate, registering sites on the *World Heritage List* does not provide protection. Whether the threat comes from the Taliban or the US Army, listing on a register or acknowledgment of world-class significance makes little difference in the face of real threat. How could listing on the *Memory of the World Register* make the difference between continued existence and destruction? The real issue is the effectiveness of the UN, and unlikely to be affected by the Memory of the World Program.

Ironically most material listed on the Memory of the World website is already of acknowledged national value, and is housed in premier national institutions. Although the Memory of the World Program embraces the idea of distributed listings, the concept of distributed meaning presents real preservation challenges that remain largely unaddressed in the current model. The bulk of documents, individual records and artwork may be managed by an institution whose key brief is to collect, document and preserve, but key material may reside within a smaller local organisation without such a mission (family records, the local shire, the local football club). This is particularly likely to be the case with records belonging to marginalised or conquered communities. The integrity of the proposed listing may be compromised by not being able to include this other material, but by listing part of the material the rest may be acknowledged and therefore more likely to be preserved.

The fact remains that any real threats are unlikely to be mitigated by listing on the *Memory of the World Register* at national, regional or world level. Certainly if we look at the Australian register none of the

documents could seriously be said to be under 'natural or man-made threats'. Of all the examples of documented heritage in Australia these are among the least likely to be threatened. On the other hand there are very real threats to much material in private hands. When Judge Olney declared that the 'tide of history' had washed away evidence of links to the land he was identifying a very real preservation issue. When members of Tasmanian establishment removed evidence of their families' convict past from journals and ledgers their actions signified the continued relevance of a convict history to a contemporary Tasmanian. Their destruction of a document gave that document additional meaning. Significant actions can be multifarious and context dependent.

How much significance is too much significance?

Significance is a 'gate-keeping' concept, privileging certain material and rejecting the rest. For risk management the process may assist in prioritising the use of precious time and resources. Yet the emphasis on identifying cultural winners is problematic, and the enshrining of significance works against the relative and fluid way in which cultural value is often developed and ascribed.

To engage successfully with its constituents the Memory of the World requires them to have:

- an understanding and agreement of the concept of citizen of the world,
- a politicised position that understands, and agrees with the role of globalised agendas,
- a set of agreed criteria,
- International organisation with carriage of the protocols and standards for judging suitability/significance, and
- cooperative agreements between members that registration is acknowledged and means something .

This results in a culturally determined self-selecting process. How can traditional elder who speaks English as a second or third language articulate cultural significance to an urban, inappropriately gendered,

group of professionals? In such cases the methodology is highly problematic.

I began by noting that the Memory of the World Program has a large vision and ambitious aims. It has been described as 'the collective memory of the peoples in the world; it is of vital importance in preserving cultural identities and plays an essential role in shaping the future'.[32] But whose future, and what shape? What will this universe of selected significances tell us about the world? The program will need to be highly flexible if it is to address some of the challenges it faces.[33]

There is no doubt that the Memory of the World Program advances some important agendas. It may assist with protection and with funding. It may stimulate an environment where needs are understood and resources are made available, and it may proactively address perceived threats.

But there are some inherent difficulties to be addressed. Those who are closest to the process are best positioned to be successful in the process, those on the email list, in the professional body, or the institution. The concept of national is problematic too. Without predetermined national categories the program looks like a scramble past the post. With predetermined categories it looks like agendas waiting to be activated. In addition, with no active identification program in place the assessment committee is dependent of the knowledge, energy and ability of what is probably an already well-resourced and privileged group of professionals who are primarily interested in driving institutional rather than national agendas (although at best the two may correlate). And where do marginalised or minority cultures sit within national agendas, and can such groups be provided for in the current Memory of the World model?

Heritage is by definition local. The concept of world culture is as anachronistic and problematic as any other globalised agenda. With programs that claim a preservation and democratisation role there is a very real need to actively seek out material. As the Yorta Yorta case showed, certain classes of documentary heritage are more likely to be preserved than others; and as the Memory of the World examples show, those documents most likely to be preserved are documents to do with nation building, or those which, housed in our major institutions, are least likely to be at risk.

Memory of the World picks up the most optimistic aspects of cosmopolitanism as a means by which to forge 'possibilities for shaping new transnational frameworks for making links between social movements'.[34] This view however overlooks the impact of cultural hegemony, financial unevenness, the capacity of key centres to thrust forward, and the inability of many communities to actively pursue critical economic or social agendas at a local level, let alone on a global stage, let alone in heavily contested or competing environments.

> Getting reasonably full access to the information value of these communications is largely dependent upon familiarity with the conventions of the particular genre. Sometimes that familiarity with a genre is cultivated through formal instruction - particularly when dealing with highly specialised documentary forms in the context of arcane knowledge and skill such as an accountant's spreadsheets, a doctor's X-rays or an archaeologist's pottery shard. More frequently we come to understand the conventions of a document genre through our cultural immersion in its form.[35]

There is an amusing irony in the fact that national institutions whose mission it is to identify, collect, make accessible and preserve significant documents are submitting key material from their collections for listing within a program that aims to reduce the threat brought about by invisibility, poor management, and poor preservation strategies. In the light of Justice Olney's summation it is worthwhile asking how significant is the threat to the *Mabo Case Manuscripts*, housed as they are in one of the premium institutions.

Or put another way, if the *Mabo Case Manuscripts*, housed in the National Library of Australia, really do need to be listed on the *Memory of the World Register* in order to be acknowledged and preserved, there is indeed a national crisis that needs to be addressed.

Endnotes

1 Jan Lyall, 'Section 1.5' *Memory Of The World Survey Of Current Library Preservation Activities*, Prepared for UNESCO, on behalf of IFLA by Jan Lyall, National Library of Australia General Information Programme and UNISIST United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. <http://

www.unesco.org/webworld/mdm/administ/en/patrimoine.html> [accessed 12 September 2005].

2 Penelope Layland, 'Worldwide Significance: The Memory of the World Register' *National Library of Australia News*, Vol XII, No. 3, December 2001. <http://www.nla.gov.au/pub/nlanews/2001/dec01/article5.html> [accessed 12 September 2005].

3 Alan Howell, *Australian Memory of the World Program: Selection policy, criteria and nomination process for the Australian Register*, 26 May 2002. <http://www.amw.org.au/criteria/amw_cri2.htm> [accessed 9 September 2005].

4 For a complete list see <http://www.amw.org.au/register/amw_reg.htm> [accessed 9 September 2005].

5 *About UNESCO* 'UNESCO Communities'. <http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=3975&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html> [accessed 9 September 2005].

6 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Manual of the General Conference* 2002, UNESCO, Paris, p. 8. <unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001255/125590e.pdf> [accessed 12 September 2005].

7 Hiroshi Daifuku, 'International Assistance for the Conservation of Cultural Property' in Yudhishthir Raj Isar, *The Challenge to Our Cultural Heritage; Why Preserve the Past?* Proceedings of a Conference on Cultural Preservation Washington, D.C., 8 - 10 April 1984, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C. London, UNESCO, Paris. p. 54.

8 Stefan Tschude-Madsen outlines the shift from an emphasis on the restoration of the iconic building (Violette-le-Duc and Cathedral of Vézelay, IC Dahl and the Vang Stave Church, James Wyatt and Salisbury Cathedral) to national legislation which required a responsible body to be in charge of heritage protection work (Italy 1872, Spain 1873, Hungary and Egypt 1877, England 1882, Finland 1883, Turkey 1884, France 1887, and Romania in 1892), in Stefan Tschude-Madsen, 'Architectural Conservation: The Triumph of an Idea', in Yudhishthir Raj Isar, op.cit. pp. 148-9.

9 Stefan Tschude-Madsen, op.cit. p. 150.

10 *The Athens Charter for the Restoration of Historic Monuments.* Adopted at the First International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments, Athens, 1931. <http://www.icomos.org/docs/athens_charter.html> [accessed 12 September 2005].

11 For a list of international Conventions and Recommendations see <http://www.icomos.org/unesco/unesco-nt.html> [accessed 12 September 2005]. While conventions are binding, recommendations provide standards that are 'particularly useful as a basis for the preparation of new national legislation by a number of recently independent states' (Hiroshi Daifuku, op.cit. p. 56). While significance as a national cultural indicator was secured soon after WWII,

it was the 1964 *Venice Charter* that 'accepted a wider definition, than that implied by the term 'monuments', in adopting the concept of 'cultural property' and the crises brought on by the construction of the Aswan Dam and the Florence floods created program models of large scale international assistance with local Government support (Hiroshi Daifuku, op.cit. p. 58). By 1972 UNESCO's 'World Heritage Convention' (concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage) had provided a significant link between cultural heritage and natural heritage, and had firmly established the concept of 'world heritage'.

12 Beyond providing guidelines and an intellectual and semi-regulatory framework for cultural preservation UNESCO also worked to frame an economic base for cultural preservation. This was done through project funding as well as by identifying and developing indicators to foster cultural sustainability. The World Heritage Fund established in 1977 was primarily used 'to aid member states that lacked the personnel required to prepare the documentation needed to submit natural or cultural monuments for placement on the *World Heritage List* ... Since then, however, grants have also been made to train personnel, furnish equipment, and provide consultants to assist states in maintaining cultural or natural property on the *World Heritage List*'. Hiroshi Daifuku, op.cit, p. 63.

13*(significance) A Guide to Assessing the Significance of Cultural Heritage Objects and Collections*, 2001, Heritage Collections Council, Canberra. p. 11.

14 op.cit.

15 Nomination form, *Australia Memory of the World Register* 2006 Australian Memory of the World Program, p.6 point 6.1. <http://www.amw.org.au/information/amw_inf.htm> [accessed on 9 September 2005].

16 Roslyn Russell, and Linda Young, *Report to Australian* Memory of the World *Committee on Significance workshops in Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney March 2005*, 17 April 2005. <http://www.amw.org.au/workshops/significance05.htm> [accessed 12 September 2005].

17 Nomination form, p. 7. op.cit.

18 Barbara Reed, 'Records' in *Archives: Recordkeeping in Society*, (ed.) McKemmish, Piggott, Reed, and Upward, Topics in Australasian Library and Information Studies, Number 24, Centre for Information Studies, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, New South Wales, 2005, p. 102.

19 'If the archival bond is achieved and guaranteed at the point of records creation the decision when or whether to perform a physical act of custodial transfer to an archives becomes a minor administrative consideration, not a matter of central significance' Adrian Cunningham, 'Archival institutions' in McKemmish, Piggott, Reed and Upward, op.cit. p. 45.

20 Julie McLeod, '*ISO 15489*: helpful, hype or just not hot?' *Archives and Manuscripts: The Journal of the Australian Society of Archivists,* Vol. 32, No. 2, November 2004, pp. 90-113.

21 UNESCO, Cultural Diversity in the Era of Globalization, 'Globalization, an opportunity or a threat?' <http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=11605&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html> [accessed 12 September 2005].

22 Ekpo Okpo Eyo writes: '...the democratisation of culture and the accessibility of cultural artefacts to all mankind are among the cardinal principles of Unesco ... such processes [such as the movement of artworks across territorial boundaries] make knowledge about the peoples and cultures of the world available to all, thereby helping to remove mutual suspicion among peoples and replacing it with mutual understanding and respect ... There is, of course, nothing wrong with this argument, as far as it goes, However, it becomes immediately questionable in its application to real situations'. Eyo explores the dangers manifest in international exhibitions increased awareness (for example in the value of Nigerian cultural artefacts) leads to a commensurate increase in trade, with no corresponding attempt to implement strategies to address the problems raised by this trade. Eyo develops a powerful argument for the protection and contextualisation of the local, as opposed to the global, and locates the issue of cultural loss within the post-colonial paradigm where the concepts of 'centre' and 'periphery' dominate. Eyo focuses on repatriation of cultural objects, however his points are relevant to any discussion of a globalizing discourse on culture. Ekpo Okpo Eyo 'A Threat to National Art Treasure: The Illicit Traffic in Stolen Art' in Hiroshi Daifuku, op.cit. 1984, pp. 203-212.

23 See for example, Ross Harvey and Anne Lloyd, 'Australia's Lost or Missing Documentary Heritage', Report, 30 April 2003, <www.amw.org.au/rlmh/reports/rep_0304.pdf> [accessed 12 September 2005], and Hans van der Hoeven (IFLA) and Joan van Albada (ICA) for UNESCO Memory of the World: *Lost Memory - Libraries and Archives destroyed in the Twentieth Century,* (CII-96/WS/1), Paris, UNESCO, 1996. <http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID =2165&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html> [accessed on 12 September 2005].

24 For a discussion of the constructed nature of national identity see Stuart Macintyre and Anna Clark, *The History Wars,* 2003, Melbourne University Press, Carlton; and Dawn Casey, 'Culture Wars, Museums, politics and controversy' *Open Museums Journal,* vol 6., Sept. 2003, <http://amol.org.au/omj/volume6/volume6_ed.asp> [accessed 10 September 2005].

25 The difficulty faced by minority or disposed communities is encapsulated in 'The statement on the value of the universal museum' which was signed by eighteen of the largest and most prestigious museums in the world including

the Louvre, the Hermitage, the Prado, the Metropolitan, Guggenheim, Whitney, Museum of Modern Art, the Rijksmuseum, and the State Museums in Berlin. The statement asserted the dominant and privileged position of the large, metropole institutions and made no attempt to understand or explain the views of communities seeking repatriation of cultural material. The statement is available at: <http://www.eniar.org/news/brimus.html> [accessed 12 September 2005].

26 The outcomes of the Ward (Mirriuwung Gaherrong), Anderson (Western Division Leases) and Yorta Yorta cases are examples of the application of *homo nullius* as a response to the loss of *terra nullius*. For a discussion of impacts of native title beyond Mabo see:

<http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/rsrch/ntru/conf2003/papers/pearson.pdf> [accessed 12 September 2005].

27 On 18 December 1998, Justice Olney determined that native title does not exist in relation to the claimed land and waters that formed the Yorta Yorta claim. <http://www.nntt.gov.au/media/Background_Yorta.html> [accessed 12 September 2005].

28 To listen to Jack Butler speak Jiwarli go to:

<http://www.linguistics.unimelb.edu.au/research/projects/jiwarli/contents.html> and follow the links to Jiwarli Sounds. [accessed 12 September 2005].

29 Foster, Lyall, and Russell, Memory of the World *General Guidelines to Safeguard Documentary Heritage*, UNESCO, Paris, 2005. <http://www.unesco.org/webworld/mdm/administ/en/MOW_index.html> [accessed 12 September 2005].

30 Hans van der Hoeven and Joan van Albada, op.cit.

31 Hans van der Hoeven and Joan van Albada, Part II - Archives, 1 Foreword, op.cit.

32 Foster, Lyall and Russell. op.cit.

33 Some of these issues were addressed in the March workshops, see Roslyn Russell and Linda Young, op.cit.

34 Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen (ed.) *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism: Theory, Context and Practice*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2002. p. 1.

35 Robert Hartland, Sue McKemmish, and Frank Upward 'Document' in McKemmish, Piggott, Reed and Upward, op.cit. p. 78.