

UNESCO

**PACIFIC CULTURAL HERITAGE MATERIALS:
A DESK SURVEY OF PRINT & DOCUMENTARY
COLLECTIONS**

**Sin Joan Yee
Deputy University Librarian (Technical Services)
University of the South Pacific
Suva FIJI**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This desk study/survey was initiated by Unesco as a follow-up to the *Expert Meeting "Pacific Pathways: Digital Libraries and Archives in the Pacific"* that was held at the National Library of New Zealand, 12-15 November 2002. Participants had expressed the need to identify collections of Pacific cultural heritage materials in print and documentary format, both within and outside the Pacific region, with a view to preserving them and making them accessible through digitisation.

This desk study/survey aims to:

- Identify collections that have been digitised and those that are available online within and outside the Pacific region, and recommend how these could be best made available to educational and cultural institutes in the Pacific and to the public at large
- Identify collections that have not yet been digitised, and provide advice on the viability and cost of digitising these collections

A search of the online catalogues of relevant libraries was conducted and relevant documents consulted. Websites of various cultural organizations, mainly those outside the Pacific Islands region, also provided relevant information. It was also necessary to conduct a quick survey, initially concentrating on institutions within the Pacific Islands region as very little information on their holdings was available in the literature. The survey was later extended to cultural institutions outside the Pacific Islands region. Follow-up was conducted by email, phone and whenever possible in person. In general, the response within the time frame given was not very good although those who did respond provided valuable information.

Collections of print and documentary collections of Pacific cultural heritage materials are scattered throughout the world including the UK, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, USA and within the Pacific Islands themselves. The task of identifying and listing them is a major one requiring much more time and resources than was available, but an attempt was made to list these collections (not holdings) as comprehensively as possible.

Collections identified include photographs, archival materials such as correspondence, newspapers, out-of-print rare books, postcards, etc. Although paintings, drawings, sound recordings, films and videos were included as part of the study/survey, it was not possible in the short time frame of the project to cover these formats extensively. Some collections (largely those held by institutions outside the Pacific, but also including some collections held by Pacific Island institutions) have been either microfilmed or digitised. A table listing these collections, as well as collections that could be digitised, is provided (See **Table 1**).

The pros and cons of digitisation in the Pacific context are explored. The major arguments against digitisation include: high costs, need for expensive equipment and high level of expertise, other more urgent priorities (e.g. better physical conditions for collections, more trained staff, a better operating budget), copyright issues, and the lack of a reliable ICT infrastructure. The major constraint (i.e. the high costs of

digitisation) is examined in detail: capital costs include high equipment costs; recurrent costs include costs for expertise with specialized skills, communications, electricity, space, etc. It is noted that the alternative option of microfilming has been tried and proven over the years, and is very cost-effective.

However, digitisation does present many advantages over microfilming including better access by remote users, searchability of documents, and ease and cost-effectiveness of making higher quality copies. In the Pacific context, where small populations are scattered over huge geographical distances, digitization can be seen as **the ideal method** for providing better access to Pacific cultural heritage materials if the constraints could be overcome. At the same time, these documents can be preserved as many of them are deteriorating rapidly and in imminent danger of being lost to future generations.

Despite the constraints, a few Pacific cultural institutions have initiated digitization projects, with assistance from aid agencies. These include the main USP Library, the USP Emalus Campus Library and the Belau Museum Research Library together with the Palau Community College. They have shown that digitisation programmes can be viable in the Pacific. Several other Pacific cultural institutions have strongly indicated their desire, willingness and readiness to implement digitization programmes to provide better access to their documents. Currently, there is a general trend to greater use of ICT by libraries and cultural institutions¹ and hence the demand for digital access will increase in the near future.

Taking all these factors into account, this study/survey recommends that:

- Unesco actively supports digitization proposals by Pacific cultural institutions to improve access to the valuable Pacific cultural heritage materials. Support can be given in various forms and in different phases, beginning on a small scale with a simple installation of a PC and scanner and progressing to more sophisticated installations as Pacific cultural institutions gain experience in digitization. Selected documents can be digitised initially on a trial basis.
- Unesco supports initiatives by cultural institutions planning to convert microfilmed documents to which they have copyright into digital documents to improve access to them (e.g. microfilms by USP Library). It is noted that many documents have been microfilmed by agencies such as the PMB who may hold the copyright and who have indicated that conversion is not a priority for them. In such cases, Unesco is urged to work with such agencies.
- Unesco assists Pacific cultural institutions to develop and distribute CD-Rom and DVD products of Pacific cultural heritage materials, and to provide online access whenever feasible. The governments in the region are urged to improve the information infrastructure in their countries and to reduce the high cost of equipment and telecommunications charge to enable greater online access.
- Unesco continues its valuable support in strengthening the capacity of Pacific islands cultural institutions to produce, collect, organize and disseminate information related to their collections.
- Pacific cultural institutions co-operate with and assist each other to improve their coverage of Pacific cultural materials and to improve access to such materials in their collections.

¹ Williams, E. (2002)

• Preface and Acknowledgements

The scope of this desk study/survey turned out to be quite overwhelming as it is very broad, covering countries in the Pacific Island region as well as outside, and including both digitised and non-digitised collections. The subject scope is also very wide, the term “cultural heritage materials” being a very broad and general term, as is also the brief of “print and documentary formats”. After due consideration and consultations, it was decided to keep the definition of “cultural heritage materials” as wide as possible (e.g. legislations and judgments were included as they are relevant to historical and cultural heritage) and to include documents, archival materials, newspapers, out-of-print rare books, paintings, drawings, photographs, post cards, posters, sound recordings, films, and videos. Artifacts, three-dimensional objects and standard published works (especially contemporary ones) will not be specifically included, but flexibility will be maintained if necessary.

Given the short time frame (19 March-26 May 2003, part-time), it was not possible to do an actual listing of the documents as this would have been a mammoth task. This study/survey attempts to broadly identify collections that are held by various cultural institutions, noting that usually collections are digitised rather than individual documents. Greater emphasis was placed on institutions within the Pacific Islands region (resulting in the omission of some major non-Pacific institutions, e.g. the British Library and the Public Records Office – the holdings of these are well documented in the literature) as there is a dearth of materials on their collections, but many problems were encountered, e.g. difficulties in communications as many did not have email/fax facilities, and even phone contact was problematic.

I wish to sincerely thank all those who assisted me in any way in carrying out this desk study/survey. I wish to especially thank the librarians, archivists, museum staff and other information workers who took the time to respond to my telephone calls/emails/faxes and to the questionnaire, or who sent or gave me their project documents and/or comments. Their responses represent a major part of this study.

Thank you to the USP Library staff who assisted me in obtaining the necessary documents for this study. A very big thank you to Sabita Gandhi and Salaseini Naceva (respectively Secretary to the University Librarian and the Deputy University Librarians at USP) who went to great lengths to ensure that the questionnaires reached their destination, even going to the extent of ringing up operators in some of the countries to find out why the fax was not going through after they had tried countless times. When all else failed, they took on the task of posting the questionnaires, hoping for an answer in the not too distant future. Thank you also to Dr. Esther Williams for her support.

Thanks to Ms Tracey Stoks (Programme Officer, NZ National Commission for UNESCO) who forwarded a copy of the report of the *Pacific Pathways Expert Meeting* to me. As I was not a participant at the meeting, the report helped me to understand better the recommendation made by the participants, and also helped to clarify the scope and background to the project.

Last but not least, I wish to thank Unesco and Tarja Virtanen for initiating and sponsoring this project. Their support of library and information development issues in the Pacific does make a difference.

Any errors, omissions and shortcomings in this report are mine, and I would be grateful if any such errors or shortcomings are referred to me.

Sin Joan Yee
June 2003

1. Introduction

The project was initiated by Unesco as a follow up to the *Expert Meeting “Pacific Pathways”: Digital Libraries and Archives in the Pacific* that was held at the National Library of New Zealand, 12-15 November 2002.

Participants at the meeting had expressed the need to identify collections of Pacific cultural heritage materials (print and documentary forms) held in libraries, archives and other institutions within and outside the Pacific, with a view to preserving them and making them accessible through digitisation.

2. Terms of Reference

On 17th March 2003, the University of the South Pacific signed a contract with Unesco with the following terms of reference:

The contractor shall conduct the activity

- (i) within the framework of UNESCO's action V.1.2.1.1 on "Promoting wider access to information in the public domain" which seeks to create awareness and strengthen capacities to promote and access information in the public domain, and
- (ii) as follow up to the "Pacific Pathways" expert consultation of November 2002.
- (iii) Furthermore the contractor shall bear in mind the overall objectives of UNESCO's "Information for All" programme, which seeks to (a) promote international co-operation and partnership; (b) support the development of common strategies, methods and tools for building an "Information Society for All"; as well as (c) bridge digital divide and bring new digital opportunities to all.

The outcome of the activity shall be a report which will provide relevant information on

- the existing "Memory of the World" – type (documentary, photo...) collections² in the Pacific Islands region³;
- the existing "Memory of the World" – type (documentary, photo...) collections outside the Pacific Islands region; and
- which collections have been digitised and which are online within / outside the islands regions; as well as
- an overall expert advice on the viability and cost of digitising the identified collections (those which have not yet been digitised)

The contractor was also required to make "a concrete recommendation on how the existing digitised collections could be best made available to educational and cultural institutes in the Pacific, and to the public at large."

The University of the South Pacific noted the short time frame and expressed the need for a degree of flexibility, but agreed to carry out the above terms of reference through my services.

² I have interpreted this to include formats such as documents, archival materials, newspapers, paintings, drawings, photographs, post cards, posters, sound recordings, films, and videos. Artifacts and three-dimensional objects are not included.

³ I have interpreted the "Pacific Islands region" to include the countries and territories included in the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC).

3. Methodology

The Regional Adviser for Communication and Information, Unesco (Ms Tarja Virtanen) had indicated that a “desk study/survey” was the expected methodology⁴ given the time and resource constraints. Following discussions between Ms Virtanen and myself, I submitted the following methodology on 31 March 2003:

1. Search catalogues of various libraries: e.g. USP, National Library of Australia, University of Hawaii, University of Guam, National Library of New Zealand, Mitchell Library, University of Auckland, University of Canterbury, the British Library. Ask for items on Inter-Library Loan if not held by USP.
2. Review data collected for the project “Digital Community Services at Pacific Libraries and Archives: future prospects and responsibilities”.
3. Send an introductory letter/email to libraries, NGOs, government departments, etc. Follow up with complementary questionnaire. Follow up with phone interviews.
4. Collate data collected using MS Access. Do a narrative report.

Report on the Methodology

Catalogue Searches

A thorough online search of the catalogues of libraries mentioned in the methodology was conducted in early April. It was necessary to use broad terms such as “culture” “history” “tradition” “documentary material” “bibliography” and combine them with the names of each country within the Pacific Islands region and terms such as “Pacific” “Oceania” “Micronesia” “Polynesia” “Melanesia”.

The searches turned up 500+ citations on the broad topic of Pacific cultural and historical sources, but on closer scrutiny of the titles and subject headings of the documents, I found that most of them were not relevant to the objectives of this project as they dealt mainly with broad cultural and historical issues.

Of relevance were several printed bibliographies, catalogues, indexes, and lists relating to the materials held in various institutions. However, the majority were dated as they were published in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Of some relevance were several surveys on Pacific cultural heritage materials although these were mainly concerned with cultural objects such as artifacts and covered institutions outside the Pacific Islands region.

Web Site Searches

In the course of conducting the online catalogue searches, I found relevant information on the web sites of several institutions and therefore widened my methodology to include web site searches. As with the printed publications, the majority of the web sites were for institutions outside the Pacific Islands region. The LAP (Libraries of Asia Pacific Directory) website though slightly out-of-date (it is

⁴ This was confirmed in the *Report of the Expert Meeting “Pacific Pathways”* which I received on 23 April 2003

currently being updated) was a very useful source of information on collections in the Pacific Islands region. Relevant data was extracted from these websites.

Digital Community Services: Pacific Libraries and Archives

In carrying out the survey on *Digital Community Services: Pacific Libraries and Archives*, Dr. Esther Williams had included a section on the digitisation of collections. The results obtained by Dr. Williams were reviewed and relevant responses included in this report⁵.

Questionnaire

After reviewing the published sources, and finding that there was a dearth of data on collections held in institutions within the Pacific Islands region, I found it necessary to carry out a “quick survey” and hence sent a questionnaire to relevant institutions in the Pacific. Ms Virtanen advised me to extend the survey to institutions outside the Pacific as well. (See Appendices 1 & 2). There was insufficient time to send the questionnaire to institutions in the UK and Japan. The questionnaire was modeled on the one used in the IFLA/UNESCO Survey on Digitisation and Preservation 1999⁶.

The questionnaires were sent by email whenever possible and were faxed if no email address was obtained. Follow-ups were done by telephone and in person whenever possible. However, some institutions could not be reached by email, fax and even telephone, and as a last resort, questionnaires to these institutions were posted out. Even with follow up by email, telephone and in person, in general, the response rate was not very good (especially from institutions within the Pacific Islands region) within the short time frame of the project. A few responses promised were not in the end received, despite reminders. Face-to-face discussions and interviews were more effective in obtaining relevant responses. As time was a crucial factor, it was not possible to send repeated reminders. Better results may be obtained if more time was available. However, those who did respond provided valuable information on their unique historical collections.

⁵ Williams (2002) “Table 4: Digitisation of Collections”.

⁶ Gould & Ebdon (1999). Appendix I. pp. 35-40.

4. Identifying the Collections

- 4.1 A table with details of the collections identified is appended (Table 1).

It was decided to present the data simply as a table rather than an MS Access database. The formats covered were documents, archival materials, newspapers, out-of-print rare books, photographs, post cards, posters, paintings, drawings, sound recordings, films, and videos. Most of the collections identified are in the first six formats; it would take much longer to comprehensively identify those in the next seven formats.

- 4.2 Collections of print and documentary materials on the Pacific are widely scattered throughout the world, including the UK, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, USA and within the Pacific Islands themselves. Many of these collections are unique in character, and are valuable historical records that are part of the cultural heritage of the peoples of the Pacific. There are also collections in Asia (especially in Japan) but it was not possible to include these due to the short time frame. Most of these materials are held by public institutions such as national museums, national archives and national, public and university libraries. There are also numerous private collections, but it was not possible to cover NGOs and private collections within the time frame given.
- 4.3 The scattered nature of these collections makes it very difficult to identify them, let alone access them, and there are few published sources of information about them. It was easier to identify collections outside the Pacific Islands regions as compared to collections within the region as they were comparatively well-organized and more documentation was available. Some of the larger institutions such as the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau or PMB (Australian National University), National Library of Australia, and Alexander Turnbull Library (National Library of New Zealand) have initiated microfilming and/or digitisation projects, and at least the inventories of the collections if not the documents themselves can be accessed online.
- 4.4 Within the Pacific Islands region, there is a dearth of information about the collections. Apart from published bibliographies that list published print sources, and several dated inventories or listings of materials in several national archives in the Pacific, very little published materials are available identifying collections of print and documentary Pacific cultural heritage materials. This lack of inventories, etc. reflects the state of many Pacific cultural institutions – many do not have adequate trained staff, suitable premises, or proper procedures (e.g. in some countries, government archives are still held in separate departments)⁷. These sources include:

- *A guide to lists of records held in the Western Pacific Archives in Suva in 1974: with an explanatory note.* By Bruce T. Burne. 1987.
- *Archives of the South Pacific Commission and related papers: a guide to the collections.* Compiled by Margaret Felts. Santa Cruz, Calif.: Centre for South Pacific Studies, University of California, 1971. 58 p.

⁷ Summary of Unesco Consultation of Pacific Cultural Directors, Wellington, NZ, 25-29 March 2001. In Report of the Expert Meeting: "Pacific Pathways" . p. 20

- *Bibliography of lists of GEIC records in the Western Pacific Archives*. Tarawa, Kiribati: Govt. Printing Division, 1979. 9 leaves
- *Central archives of Fiji and the Western Pacific High Commission: preliminary inventory*. Central Archives of Fiji and the Western Pacific High Commission. Suva: The Central Archives, 1960-1961. 4 v.
- *List of contents of archives consignment (Suva to Honiara)*. Solomon Islands. National Archives of the Solomon Islands. 1v. (various pagings)
- *Materials in the National Archives relating to the Southern and Western Pacific areas*. 14 p.; 28 cm.
- *Records control lists of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony. Tuvalu*. National Archives of Tuvalu. Suva, Fiji, 1978. 11v.
- *Records of the Cakobau Government, the Ad-interim Government and Provisional Government June, 1871- September, 1875*. Prepared by S. Tuinaceva. Suva, Fiji : Government Printer, 19?. 1v. (unpaged)
- *Sources of Tongan history: a collection of documents, extracts and contemporary opinions in Tongan political history, 1616-1900*. Compiled by H. G. Cummins. [Nuku'alofa, Tonga : The Author, 1972
- *South Pacific Bibliography*. Suva, Fiji: USP Library, 1982- Lists the holdings of the Pacific Collection, USP Library.

4.5 It is interesting to note that several surveys have been carried out on “Pacific cultural heritage materials” but they largely focused on cultural objects and artifacts, touching on photographs and other documentation as a sub-theme. To avoid duplication, items listed in these surveys are not specifically listed in this study. As noted below, there were intentions to survey photographic and other print collections but it appears that these were never carried out:

- Gathercole & Clarke⁸ surveyed cultural objects and artifacts in museums in the UK and Ireland, but also included a brief section on “their associated documentation and photography”.
- Bolton⁹ carried out the survey in Australian museums also focusing on artifacts, but included a section and recommendations on “important public-owned collections of photographic materials”¹⁰ on Oceanic ethnography. This survey was subsequently followed by another survey¹¹ that listed and described each individual artifact from Polynesia and Micronesia. The authors were not able to extend the survey to Melanesia as the holdings are so vast it would have taken 4 or 5 years to complete.¹² The original proposal included a recommendation to use photography as a major recording technique, with the objective of placing copies of important photographic archives in relevant Pacific island museums but this recommendation was dropped due to the “realities of financing such a scheme”. Phase 3 of the proposal included an independent survey of photographic resources, Pacific prints, drawings and paintings held by Australian public institutions. Unfortunately, due to the high costs, Phase 3 was not carried out.

⁸ Gathercole & Clarke (1979).

⁹ Bolton (1980)

¹⁰ “An important photographic collection was understood to mean a collection of photographic material, both still or moving, taken by one photographer.”

¹¹ Bolton & Specht (1984)

¹² Email from Mr. Jim Specht to Ms. Sin Joan Yee, 24 June 2003

- Neich¹³ carried out a survey of artifacts and cultural objects in New Zealand museums, mentioning that no attempt was made to survey the “extensive collection” of historical and ethonographical photographs at the four metropolitan museums or at the Alexander Turnbull Library, and other small and scattered collections of photographs in other museums in New Zealand, including glass plates of Rarotonga at the Hocken Library in Dunedin, the “large collection” of Samoan glass plate negatives at the National Museum of New Zealand, and the negatives of the photographer J.W. Beattie at the Auckland Institute and Museum Library.
- Kaepler & Stillman¹⁴ carried out a similar survey of collections in the USA and Canada.
- Flores et al¹⁵ carried out a survey on Pacific cultural heritage materials. Originally the survey was to cover published inventories of archives, library and museum collections of Pacific Island art, artifacts, songs, music, dance, drama, literature, oral traditions, and material culture. Subsequent negotiations resulted in the exclusion of catalogues and accessions lists of holdings of Pacific archival documents and literature. A bibliography with brief annotations is provided and it would have been useful to follow-up these notes if time permitted. The draft report as well as the Pro-Cite database was submitted to the Unesco Office for the Pacific States, Apia, Western Samoa. The main compiler is unaware if any further action has since been implemented.

4.6 Other useful publications included the two publications by the Fiji Museum featuring some of the items in its collections. The first¹⁶ featured photographs of a small number of Fijian cultural objects from the 19th Century accompanied by vivid accounts of the use of the objects. These photographs form part of the rich collection of photographs in the Fiji Museum that could be digitised. The second publication¹⁷ featured postcards depicting scenes, people, and events giving a unique historical record of life in Fiji in the past. The postcards included represent the holdings of the Fiji Museum that were acquired through individual donations (including the author’s and the collection donated by Dr. A.H. Ogilvie containing many historically valuable postcards, photographs, documents and pamphlets). Postcards from other private collections are also included.

4.7 Several websites carrying information on collections in various institutions proved to be very useful sources of information. The information obtained are usually of a general nature, although the websites of a few institutions such as the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau and the Auckland University Library Special Collections carried detailed information on Pacific print and documentary sources.

4.8 *Microfilmed Collections*

Microfilmed collections are listed in Column 4 of Table 1.

¹³ Neich (1982).

¹⁴ Kaepler & Stillman (1985).

¹⁵ Flores et al. (1995)

¹⁶ Hill (1980)

¹⁷ Stephenson (1997)

The Pacific Manuscripts Bureau (PMB or Pambu) of the Australian National University has been very active in microfilming documents held in institutions within the Pacific region, and the National Archives of Fiji and USP Library have carried out in-house microfilming of the documents held in their institutions.

The Australian Joint Copying Project (AJCP), the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau (PMB or Pambu) and IDC Publishers have microfilmed many collections housed in institutions outside the Pacific region. These important projects have assisted in the preservation of these valuable documents as well as provided better access to them.

- The AJCP began in 1945 under an agreement between the National Library of Australia and the State Library of NSW to copy material relating to Australia, NZ and the Pacific held in the United Kingdom. It located, described and filmed thousands of Australian, New Zealand and Pacific records and manuscripts held at the Public Records Office (London), the British Library, the National Libraries of Ireland, Scotland and Wales, university libraries, museums, learned societies, business archives, county and city record offices, missionary societies and private homes. Records microfilmed dated from 1560 to 1984, and included those created by British Government departments such as the Colonial Office, Home Office, Treasury, Admiralty, etc. as well as the records of organizations such as the London Missionary Society, and individuals such as Sir Joseph Banks. The State Library of Victoria, the National Library of New Zealand, the National Archives of New Zealand and several university libraries also supported the project from 1988 until the AJCP office was closed in June 1993. These are too numerous to list in this study.
- The Pacific Manuscripts Bureau, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University was established with the aim of locating and preserving archives, manuscripts and other unpublished or semi-published material of historical, literary, or scientific interest to Pacific scholars. It is especially concerned about documents that are “at risk either from adverse climatic conditions, insect infestation, or civil unrest”. It is also interested in preserving material deteriorating as a result of age or poor storage. Recently, it has microfilmed the archives of NGOs, women’s organizations, and recent documents such as the records relating to the Fiji coups, the Bougainville crisis and trade unions. So far, PMB has concentrated on microfilming rather than digitisation. A list of recent microfilm releases and current overseas projects by PMB is appended (Appendices 3 & 4)
- IDC Publishers, Leiden, Netherlands is a major international academic publisher specialising in preserving rare archival materials and primary source documents on microforms. It has microfilmed collections such as the committee minutes, board minutes, correspondence, reports, diaries, drawings, journals, and miscellaneous records and papers relating to the Council for World Mission (covering the period 1795-1950 - originals are housed in the Library of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London; the

minutes, correspondence, reports, finance ledgers, journals, diaries, and papers relating to the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (1791-1948 – originals are housed in the Library of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London); the correspondence, minutes, reports, budgets, statistics, articles, documents, and notes relating to the activities of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society (1822-1947 - originals are housed in the "Maison des Missions", Boulevard Arago, Paris). There is much Pacific content in these collections.

4.9 *Digitised Collections*

Digitised Collections are listed in Column 3 of Table 1.

Within the Pacific Islands region, only two institutions (the USP Library system and the Belau National Museum) have initiated digitisation projects with the help of aid funds. It is hoped that the projects will be sustained even after aid funds are exhausted. The major on-going digitisation programmes within the Pacific Islands region are:

- The Digitisation Project being carried out by USP Library (Laucala campus). Aid funds were provided by AusAid as part of its funding support for the Flexible and Distance Learning project of USP. The major objective is to make publications and information more easily accessible to its users on campus as well as off campus, especially those located in areas where library services may be poor but where there is connectivity (e.g. University Extension centres). The major focus is the digitisation of the Closed Reserve Collection. The collection comprises over 1000 heavily used items and recommended readings. Currently, this part of the project has been hampered by delays in obtaining copyright clearance. The Library has completed the digitisation of USP examination papers, and is currently digitising public domain materials (e.g. Government documents). It is digitising USP theses if permission is given by the author. USP now requires all postgraduate students to submit a digital copy of theses (in addition to a print copy) to the Library. Other works that have been identified for future digitisation include rare heavily-used out-of-print Pacific published works.
- The Emalus Campus Library's programme to digitise current Pacific legislation and judgments. Priority is given to digitising legal documents to allow accessibility by its Law faculty and students; a valuable Vanuatu "heritage" collection consisting largely of newspaper titles will be digitised if further funding becomes available (See Appendix 5).
- The BNM-PCC's (Belau National Museum-Palau Community College) Digitisation & Access Project whereby 20,000 images in the media and objects collections (ethnographic and natural history) will be digitised. This project was funded by a grant from the Institute of Information and Library Services of the US Federal Government.

Outside the Pacific region, the major institutions holding Pacific cultural heritage materials collections have embarked on digitisation programmes, and a lot of the materials are available online through the Internet. For example, from the list of completed, ongoing and planned digitisation

projects by the National Library of Australia provided by Knight¹⁸, about 6 collections or projects relate to the Pacific. He points out that they relate mainly to European experiences in the Pacific, e.g. voyages of exploration, and may be of limited interest to Pacific peoples.

4.10 *Collections for Digitisation*

Collections that could be digitised are listed in Column 4.

As already mentioned above, collections of Pacific cultural heritage materials are scattered all over the globe. These collections comprise unique historical print and documentary records of the heritage of the peoples of the Pacific, including documents, archival materials, photographs and slides, newspapers, rare books, postcards, etc.

Digitising these collections will make them more accessible to users, especially to the Pacific Islanders themselves some of whom now have access to computers and the Internet.

A few cultural institutions in the Pacific are planning digitisation projects, subject to funds and resources being available, but the majority does not have any programmes or plans for digitisation in the future, although there is the “desire ... to participate in the digitisation of collections”¹⁹. As Pacific cultural institutions are generally not well-funded and lack trained staff, not many are able to collect, record and make available materials relating to their own countries, let alone engage in cost and labour intensive programmes such as digitisation. As Dr. Williams pointed out in her report: “They are largely concerned with the physical state of their libraries, lack of staff and equipment and low operating budget.”

A major hurdle that cultural institutions in the Pacific face is the lack of awareness by decision-makers of the important roles of libraries, archives and museums in preserving historic and cultural heritage and in the social and economic development of the country. There is a lack of commitment and political will to provide an adequate budget and support to cultural institutions (e.g. Fiji still does not have a National Library). The danger of losing valuable historic records is imminent in many countries if nothing is done about them.

¹⁸ Knight (2002)

¹⁹ Williams, E. (2002). P. 15

5. The Viability and Cost of Digitising the Identified Collections

Viability

- 5.1 There are pros and cons of digitising the identified collections. The advantages of digitisation are many, including access by remote users, better access as documents can be searched, less handling and damage to original items, copies can be easily made (esp. back-up copies in case of disasters). Most of the responses to the questionnaire (and to Dr. Williams' earlier survey) indicated that digitisation is "desirable" if constraints such as lack of funds, staff & equipment; and copyright issues were overcome.
- 5.2 It should be noted that several major players strongly hold the view that digitisation is not a viable option for the Pacific, including those outlined below:
- Karina Taylor, a New Zealand-based student, investigated whether digitisation technology can help increase access to archives held in Fiji and the Pacific Islands²⁰. She conducted interviews with staff of the National Archives of Fiji, Fiji Museum, Reserve Bank of Fiji, University of the South Pacific Library and the Oceania Marist Province Archives, and concluded that although there are great benefits to digitising archives in Fiji, at present it is not a viable option due to factors such as lack of funding for archives, other more urgent priorities (e.g. trying to keep the collection in a stable environment, and on the national level, health and education priorities), and the lack of a reliable ICT infrastructure in Fiji. The author found that other Pacific Island countries would be placed in a similar situation as Fiji. She suggests that microfilming could continue to provide the Pacific Islands with the answer for increasing access to their archives.
 - PMB, one of the major players, has decided against switching from microfilming to digitisation. PMB is not systematically scanning its microfilms although it has participated in some experimentation of digitisation as part of an RSPAS Digitisation Working Group, mainly aimed at developing standards for digital imaging and metadata. PMB is scanning PMB microfilm titles only when a researcher requires a digital product (at the researcher's expense). The Chair of PMB, Dr. Brij Lal, indicated that the reason for not switching to digitisation was "partly because the project of conversion is expensive and partly because our member libraries do not see that as a matter of priority". He indicated that the PMB will "some day, re-visit the issue, but not anytime soon."²¹
 - The staff of the Manuscripts Collection section of the National Library of Australia also expressed a general reluctance to digitise: "Digitisation is expensive and labour-intensive; the collections have to be in good order, have no copyright issues and be of high research potential. From our experience, a great deal of time has to be spent on metadata to make the images meaningful and searchable. The National Library has a

²⁰ Taylor (2002)

²¹ Email correspondence between Mr. Ewan Maidment, Dr. Brij Lal and Ms Sin Joan Yee.

Digitisation Unit, which is concentrating on high-profile items or collections which are easy to capture and have no copyright problems.”

- 5.3 The alternative to digitisation is microfilming, which is a reliable technology that has been used by cultural institutions for a long time. The disadvantage of microfilming is that the documents are not searchable; expensive reader-printers are required or they can be difficult to read; they must be used on-site. Digitisation offers many advantages over microfilming in that documents can be searched, higher quality copies can be produced from a deteriorating original, outputs can be in various formats, documents can be reformatted and can be accessed from remote locations (ideal for the Pacific) simply through a networked PC rather than an expensive reader/printer.
- 5.4 As has been pointed out, digitisation is cost and labour intensive. However, digitisation can be a viable option for Pacific cultural heritage materials provided constraints can be overcome. There is an urgent need to rescue deteriorating records as well the need to provide access to them. Although many do not regard digitisation as a long-term strategy for preservation, the situation in the Pacific Islands calls for urgent measures to be undertaken, and digitisation is an option that should be at least trialled. As noted above, digitisation provides better access than microfilming and is ideal for the geographically scattered nature of the Pacific Islands.

Funding is a major constraint that has to be addressed. Problems such as lack of expertise for digital imaging and development of metadata and standards, lack of equipment, rapid obsolescence of hardware and software are also problems that will have to be dealt with but are not insurmountable if funds are available. Copyright clearance is an issue that must be dealt with, but this may not be a major issue with regard to the cultural heritage materials since copyright on some of these may have lapsed. The problem of inadequate ICT infrastructure (especially bandwidth problems) is a reality in the Pacific but should not deter efforts in digitisation; access can be provided through alternative products such as CD-Rom, DVDs, etc.

- 5.5 Initially, it would be wise to digitise selected materials only and to prioritise the collections to be digitised²². Prior to undertaking a digitisation project, each institution would need to undertake a detailed “needs assessment”. It would need to address implementation issues and make detailed plans and policies beforehand. Ongoing commitment is necessary to ensure that digital collections are properly maintained.

Costs

- 5.6 Costs for digitization programmes vary and are difficult to assess. The needs of each institution vary, as some already have equipment and staff in place. The costs of equipment and staff also vary from country to country. As with the 1999 IFLA/Unesco Survey on Digitisation and Preservation, most respondents to the questionnaire were unable to give estimates for their projects. The Turnbull Library and the Fiji Ministry of Information gave useful details of the very high costs for digitisation. Costs include costs for

²² The “Harvard model” has been widely used for the selection process. It is described in Hazen, Horrell and Merrill-Oldham (1998).

equipment, staff, space, communication and electricity. There may also be on-going and other hidden costs.

5.7 *Equipment Needs:* Owners or custodians of documents would not usually permit documents to be digitized off-site, so it may be necessary to purchase equipment for each individual site. Capital outlay may be very high initially, depending on the hardware/software needs which may range from a simple PC and scanner configuration to highly specialized and expensive hardware and software. Listed below are some examples of digitization equipment to give an indication of what is available in the market and the costs involved:

- A server with high capacity disk storage to store the digital files (Manning²³ estimates that small one page documents would require approx. 0.1 mb of storage while larger documents will require more than 1 mb per document). This can be a PC or a special server. The cost of Dell Dimension 4550 2.4Ghz Desktop 512 MB Ram 30GB Hard Drive is approx. F\$2,280. Extra hard drive can be purchased at a fairly low cost. For large scale projects, a more sophisticated server may be necessary, e.g. USP Library installed an Alphaserer DS10 at approx. F\$25,166 which has allowed better integration of its digitisation project.
- Standard PCs for accessing the files (F\$1,500-2,000).
- Various types of scanners are required, depending on the format:
 - A basic flat bed scanner for single sheets, photos, etc. is relatively inexpensive. For example, the **Canon 640P Scanner** with optical resolution of 600 by 1200 dpi with selectable resolution up to 9600 costs F\$155.
 - For quality scanning, it may be advisable to purchase a better quality scanner with higher resolution (e.g. 2400 dpi for middle range scanners). A middle range scanner with an automatic document feeder costs up to F\$2,000.



Middle-range versatile scanners. For example, the HP ScanJet 7400c is a 2,400-dpi, 48-bit scanner . It can also scan images from multiple 35 mm slides, negatives and up to 5 x 5-inch transparencies. Has legal-size scanning bed and Multiple-language OCR capability. Cost F\$1,143

²³ Manning (2001)

- An overhead book scanner such as the Minolta PS7000 costs around F\$35,000



Overhead Scanners e.g. Minolta PS 7000: Scans bound volumes in face-up position, so handling is minimized and bindings are protected. Can scan bound volumes (e.g. fragile books), artwork, maps, archival records. Up to 600 dpi resolution and scans a page in less than 4 seconds. However, it does not support greyscale or color scanning. Cost F\$35,000

-Various types of special slide scanners are available, with a wide price range:



Slide Scanners. At least 2500 dpi on a flatbed (or 2700 dpi in a dedicated scanner) is needed to scan slides, Strip films, negatives and transparencies. An average flatbed can produce only 600 dpi, 1000 dpi, or 1200 dpi. So special slide scanners are available. A professional slide scanner costs between \$10,000 and \$54,000.

- Digital photocopiers can also be used in digitisation projects but they can be very pricey. USP Library purchased the scanner interface for its digital photocopier and found that it was very useful as it allowed rapid scanning of loose leaf material (e.g. multiple sheets, double-sided documents, etc.). Prices of digital photocopiers range from around F\$4,500 for a basic copier that can do 15 copies per minute, to around F\$85,000+ for a machine that can do 82 cpm. There are substantial additional costs for optionals such as the scanner interface.

- Microfilmed documents can be converted to digital format to allow greater access. The technology to do this is available in the form of digital microfilm scanners that can scan all types of microform and offer suitable machine interfaces and applications.



Digital Microfilm Scanner: e.g. Canon MS 800 features a high resolution output of up to 600 dpi, has multiple scanning modes including Fine, Photo and Grayscale; does high speed scanning of up to 3 seconds per image at 200dpi; produces four different file formats - TIFF, BMP, JPEG, JBIG. Cost AUD\$15,500

5.8 *Software needs:* Various software will also be required, e.g. imaging software (usually supplied with the hardware), OCR (Optical character recognition) to convert images to text.

5.9 *Staffing requirements:* Various staff are required: staff to select the materials, to do the scanning, to catalogue (create metadata), to mount and maintain the materials on the website, to manage the project. A high level of technical and managerial skills are required as indicated by the responses of those who have carried out digitisation projects. For example, USP Library has a specialist digitisation team in place comprising 4 dedicated staff (2 junior library technicians who scan the documents, an Analyst programmer and the Digital Library Services Manager). In addition, the Library Systems Manager and other staff members carry out tasks in the course of their normal work. Hence, institutions must be prepared to provide appropriate salaries for this level of skills and to train local staff to take over if expatriate staff are initially appointed.

5.10 The table below is from the 1999 IFLA/Unesco Survey on Digitisation and Preservation (p. 16) and is included here to give an indication of costs. Pacific countries in general will pay more for equipment and less for staff, so costings could be based on the “average” given in this table.

	Maximum	Minimum	Average
Per page	US\$15	US\$0.12	US\$7.72
Per book	US\$154	US\$28	US\$70.66
Per serial issue	US\$14	US\$14	US\$14

5.11 A commercial agency in Fiji has quoted a fee of F\$19 for scanning an A4 size paper for digitising the Fiji Ministry of Information’s photo collection (taking the total cost of digitising the photo collection to \$90,000). It is interesting to note that the fee of F\$19 is just slightly higher than the average per page cost (US\$7.72) given by the 1999 IFLA/Unesco Survey.

6. Access to Digitised Collections

- 6.1 There are various means by which digitised collections could be best made available to educational and cultural institutes in the Pacific, and to the public at large, depending on the level of ICT resources available.
- 6.2 The ICT infrastructure in the Pacific is relatively undeveloped, and access to ICT is variable in the Pacific, but Dr. Williams' study has established that many libraries, archives and museums do have access to at least one computer²⁴. Public and government libraries and cultural institutions are not so well equipped and a few do not have computer access at all. Some of the larger institutions such as the USP Library network, National University of Samoa, University of Papua New Guinea have quite sophisticated ICT installations and computers are used by staff for work operations. Internet penetration is also very low, prohibitively expensive, and the bandwidth narrow in many parts of the Pacific. But in general, the trend is towards greater use of ICT in the region, with plans to develop telecentres in Pacific communities.
- 6.3 The World Wide Web is the standard method for accessing digitized documents, through hypertext links in websites (or via web-based library catalogues), but in the Pacific, access will best be provided via CD-Rom or DVD given the current constraints of Internet and ICT use in the region. Currently, many users in the Pacific are not yet able to access the digitized documents that are available online. Most respondents to the questionnaire have indicated that CD-Rom or DVD are the preferred products and means of access. (See Columns 10 & 11 of Table 1).
- 6.4 Access for the purpose of reading the documents should be fee-free to Pacific Island users as most will not be able to afford any payment of fees. However, measures to control copying, printing and downloading should be implemented. In such cases, it may be feasible to charge fees, at least to recover costs. Copyright and intellectual property issues need to be addressed taking into account the rights of the authors/creators as well as the principle of fair use.
- 6.5 Consideration should also be given to the digital file format, e.g. Text documents in plain text, documents in a word-processing format, imaged documents, etc. This is important as the storage, distribution and speed of access of the digital documents will be affected.
- 6.6 It is recommended that metadata is included to enable greater efficiency in the retrieval of digitized documents.

²⁴ Williams, E. (2002) p. 15

7. Recommendations & Conclusion

7.1 This Desk Study/Survey on the digitization of Pacific cultural heritage materials is not exhaustive, though it tries to be as comprehensive as possible (some omissions are acknowledged due to time constraints and communications difficulties). Information on the collections, like the collections themselves, are scattered and this study/survey has attempted to bring together some of this information.

7.2 Digitisation is an ideal method **to provide better access** to Pacific cultural heritage materials given the small populations, geographical scatter and isolation of the region, but there are many constraints. Although none of the cultural institutions in the Pacific Islands region will be able to sustain a digitization project without substantial outside help in terms of finance and expertise, many of them can see the benefits of digitisation. Several institutions have indicated their willingness and readiness to take on such a project (both at the *Pacific Pathways* meeting as well as in response to the questionnaire sent out by the author). A few have already initiated programmes with aid sources of funding, and are planning to move into more intricate areas of digitization such as the installation of more sophisticated specialized equipment, the creation of metadata, etc. They have shown that digitisation programmes can be viable in the Pacific.

Therefore, Unesco is urged to give consideration to this and to actively support digitization initiatives by Pacific cultural institutions so that the valuable cultural heritage documents that they hold can be made accessible to all users, but especially to their own peoples. The preservation and conservation of these documents, many of which are rapidly deteriorating, are also urgent considerations.

Support may be in the form of assistance in planning, development, and implementation of digitization projects as well as in the provision of funds for the recruitment and training of human resources (particularly in specialist areas such as the creation of metadata and ICT areas), equipment, and other resources that are required.

Support can be given in phases, beginning on a small scale with a simple installation of a PC and scanner. Selected documents or collections should be digitised initially on a trial basis. As staff gain more experience, more sophisticated developments such as the creation of metadata and putting the data online can be introduced. This will also provide the opportunity to assess whether or not digitization can really meet the promise of providing better access to the collections held by Pacific cultural institutions.

7.3 Many Pacific cultural heritage documents and collections have been microfilmed over the years. It is recommended that Unesco supports initiatives by cultural institutions planning to convert microfilmed documents to which they have copyright into digital documents to improve access to them (e.g. microfilms by USP Library). It is noted that many documents have been microfilmed by agencies such as the PMB who may hold the copyright and who have indicated that conversion is not a priority for them. In such cases, Unesco is urged to work with such agencies.

- 7.4 Given the relatively undeveloped ICT infrastructure in the Pacific, the most effective means by which digitised collections can be made accessible to educational and cultural institutions are products such as CD-Roms and DVDs. Internet is becoming more prevalent and online access to digitised documents should also be provided whenever feasible. All digital documents should contain metadata to enable efficient information retrieval.

It is recommended that Unesco assists Pacific cultural institutions to develop CD-Rom and DVD products that can be distributed freely or with little cost, and widely in the Pacific Islands region and to provide online access to digitised documents whenever feasible. Further, the governments in the region are urged to improve the information infrastructure in their countries and to reduce the high cost of equipment and telecommunications charge to enable greater online access.

- 7.5 There is a very urgent need to strengthen the capacity of Pacific islands cultural institutions to produce, collect, organize and disseminate information related to their collections. More trained staff, funding, and equipment is required. Unesco is commended for its past support of the development and maintenance of cultural institutions in the Pacific, and is urged to continue with its valuable support. The recommendations by Dr. Esther Williams²⁵ are strongly supported.

- 7.6 In order to improve their coverage of Pacific cultural materials and to improve access to such materials in their collections, Pacific cultural institutions are urged to co-operate with and assist each other.

In summary, it is recommended that:

- Unesco actively supports digitization proposals by Pacific cultural institutions to improve access to the valuable Pacific cultural heritage materials. Support can be given in various forms and in different phases, beginning on a small scale with a simple installation of a PC and scanner and progressing to more sophisticated installations as Pacific cultural institutions gain experience in digitization. Selected documents can be digitised initially on a trial basis.
- Unesco supports initiatives by cultural institutions planning to convert microfilmed documents to which they have copyright into digital documents to improve access to them (e.g. microfilms by USP Library). It is noted that many documents have been microfilmed by agencies such as the PMB who may hold the copyright and who have indicated that conversion is not a priority for them. In such cases, Unesco is urged to work with such agencies.
- Unesco assists Pacific cultural institutions to develop and distribute CD-Rom and DVD products of Pacific cultural heritage materials, and to provide online access whenever feasible. The governments in the region are urged to improve the information infrastructure in their countries and to reduce the high cost of equipment and telecommunications charge to enable greater online access.
- Unesco continues its valuable support in strengthening the capacity of Pacific islands cultural institutions to produce, collect, organize and disseminate information related to their collections.
- Pacific cultural institutions co-operate with and assist each other to improve their coverage of Pacific cultural materials and to improve access to such materials in their collections.

²⁵ Williams, E. (2002) pp. 24-25

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- Australian National University Library <http://library.anu.edu.au/>
- Bernheim Library <http://www.bernheim.nc/>
- Bishop Museum <http://www.bishopmuseum.org/>
- Libraries of Asia Pacific Directory (LAP) <http://www.nla.gov.au/lap/liblist.html>
- National Archives of Australia <http://www.naa.gov.au/>
- National Archives of New Zealand <http://www.archives.govt.nz/>
- National Library of Australia, Manuscript Collection www.nla.gov.au/ms
- New Zealand Micrographic Services <http://www.micrographics.co.nz/>
- Niupepa: Maori newspapers* website (<http://www.nzdl.org/fast-cgi-bin/library>)
- Pacific Manuscripts Bureau <http://rspas.anu.edu.au/pambu/>
- Papers past* (<http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/>)
- Ranfurly Collection <http://ranfurly.natlib.govt.nz>
- State Library of New South Wales <http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/>
- Te Waimano website <http://tewaimano.govt.nz>
- United Kingdom. Foreign & Commonwealth Office www.fco.gov.uk
- University of Auckland Library http://www2.auckland.ac.nz/lbr/library_name.htm
- University of California, San Diego <http://sshl.ucsd.edu/melanesia>
- University of Canterbury. Macmillan Brown Library <http://library.canterbury.ac.nz>
- University of Hawaii at Manoa <http://www.hawaii.edu/lib>
- University of Otago. Hocken Library <http://www.library.otago.ac.nz>
- University of Waikato <http://www.waikato.ac.nz>
- Vanuatu Cultural Centre (Vanuatu Kaljoral Senta) (maintained by ANU) <http://arts.anu.edu.au/arcworld/vks/vks.htm>