

What if Documentary Heritage Attracted Tourists? Thoughts on the Potential for Tourism of Historical Libraries and Archives

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Abstract:

Socially speaking, historical libraries and archives above all are linked to scientific research. Only rarely are they regarded as venues for leisure and tourism. Unlike monuments and museums, historical libraries and archives are usually perceived as repositories of written documents from the past. They are typically deemed of interest only to those looking for materials to support their interests in history. However, some of those institutions have met with success in society by developing programmes and activities that do not cater only for their usual patrons, but to other user groups too, targeting both formal and non-formal educational contexts. The motivation for the latter is also rooted in entertainment.

This paper offers some reflections on the potential of documentary heritage for tourism. It singles out the values ascribed to historical documents by contemporary societies throughout the process of classifying those documents as heritage; it highlights the procedures employed by the institutions responsible for preserving documentary heritage, so as to make the collections in their custody more visible; lastly, it underlines UNESCO's role in defining documentary heritage policies and the value ascribed to documents as cultural assets. The paper will mostly draw from examples in the Lusosphere.

Keywords: Documentary Heritage; Historical Libraries and Archives; Cultural Tourism; UNESCO

Resumo:

Nas representações sociais, as bibliotecas e arquivos históricos estão primordialmente associados à investigação científica. Estes equipamentos culturais só excepcionalmente são vistos como lugares privilegiados de visita em contexto de lazer e turismo. Ao contrário daquilo que

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sucedem em relação aos monumentos e aos museus, as bibliotecas e arquivos históricos tendem a ser percebidos como repositórios de documentos escritos do passado, que interessam fundamentalmente a investigadores em busca de materiais capazes de satisfazer o seu interesse historiográfico. Há, no entanto, casos que revelam o sucesso social destas instituições, quando investem no desenvolvimento de programas e atividades destinados não apenas aos seus utentes habituais, como a públicos alternativos, quer estes se situem em âmbitos escolares, quer em contextos educativos não formais, motivados, também, por razões de ordem recreativa.

Neste texto, reflete-se acerca das potencialidades do uso turístico do património documental. Serão identificados os valores que as sociedades contemporâneas têm vindo a atribuir ao documento histórico no decurso do seu processo de patrimonialização; destacar-se-ão os mecanismos adotados pelas instituições responsáveis pela salvaguarda da herança documental com vista à difusão social das coleções que têm à sua guarda; sublinhar-se-á, finalmente, o papel da UNESCO na definição de políticas e na visibilidade concedida a este tipo de bem cultural à escala global. O mundo lusófono constituirá, nesta perspetiva, o espaço de observação privilegiado.

Palavras-chave: Património Documental; Bibliotecas e Arquivos Históricos; Turismo Cultural; UNESCO

Resumen:

En las representaciones sociales, las bibliotecas y los archivos están asociados principalmente con la investigación científica. Estas instalaciones culturales sólo excepcionalmente son vistas como el privilegio de visitar lugares en el contexto del ocio y el turismo. Al contrario de lo que ocurre en relación a los monumentos y museos, bibliotecas y archivos históricos tienden a ser percibidas como repositorios de documentos escritos del pasado con fundamental interés para los investigadores que buscan materiales capaces de satisfacer su interés historiográfico. Existen casos que revelan el éxito social de estas instituciones cuando invierten en el desarrollo de programas y actividades, - no sólo para sus visitantes regulares sino también para el público alternativo-, si éstos se encuentran en zonas escolares o en los centros educativos no formales, motivados, también, por razones de orden recreativo.

Este texto refleja el potencial del uso turístico del patrimonio documental. Los valores que las sociedades contemporâneas han sido atribuidos al documento histórico en el curso del proceso de patrimonialización serán identificados; se destacan los mecanismos adoptados por las instituciones responsables de la salvaguarda del patrimonio documental para la difusión social de las colecciones que tienen bajo su custodia; señalado en última instancia, el papel de la

UNESCO en la elaboración de políticas y la visibilidad dada a este tipo de bienes culturales a escala mundial. El mundo de habla portuguesa será, en esta perspectiva, el punto de vista.

Palabras Clave: Patrimonio Documental; Bibliotecas y Archivos Históricos; Turismo Cultural; UNESCO

1. Introduction

Among material heritage, documentary heritage may very well be the least eye-catching in terms of the general public. In Portuguese-speaking countries, searching the webpages of official bodies linked to tourism proves as much. Historical libraries and archives are seldom presented as attractions for cultural tourists. There are exceptions, of course, but even those are typically more valued for their architectural quality than for the documents harboured inside. However, other forms of heritage have deserved closer attention from public administration and agents in the tourism industry. Museums, monuments, archaeological sites and even events that celebrate intangible cultural heritage have all been used as a means to attract visitors. This prompts a question: why are historical libraries and archives overlooked in such a way by both public and private agents? It is beyond the scope of this paper to provide an answer to this highly complex issue. Rather, the paper will hypothesise that a deeply-rooted social and cultural framework has confined historical archives and libraries to a preservation role, making them appealing mainly to those with an interest in history.

Public institutions entrusted with cultural heritage mostly work individually, restricting themselves to familiar activities. They have struggled to apply principles of cooperation and policy coordination (Nabais, 2004: 102-105 and 110). This results from how the institutions responsible for heritage have developed, as well as from the factors modelling the cultural heritage management system as a result of that evolution. Since their own creation, the institutions involved in the preservation of heritage have gone down the path of scientific specialization. This has led to institutional individualism and to a conceptional break-up of heritage in its several facets. Eventually, this has left an indelible mark on societies, as these became aware of the division between cultural assets according to the criteria defined by successive public policies as part of a classification process. The consequences of this approach can be seen, for instance, in the way agents from the tourism industry usually perceive these institutions by ignoring them. In spite of the continuous restructuring over the last decades of public administration concerning heritage, the tendency to impose internal boundaries has remained unchanged. Institutions in charge of architecture, archaeology, museums and

immaterial heritage were kept separate from those responsible for archives and books.²²³ This division has had an impact on the types of approach taken by such agencies to the consumer public, in particular that seeking cultural heritage in a context of leisure travel. The first group of institutions is able to engage their public naturally and to expand its audience. Libraries and archives, however, seem to continue to cater almost exclusively to their traditional audience (researchers, above all), much like the first group did in the past.²²⁴

Social demand for institutions responsible for the preservation of documentary heritage reveals the same type of segmentation. From the viewpoint of what might be termed the "educational and recreational approach from the general public", priority is given to architectural and artistic forms of heritage. Such preference is similar to the long-standing supremacy of material and scholarly heritage – inextricably linked to the elites – over immaterial heritage of popular origins, such as oral tradition.²²⁵ There is a good reason to examine this issue in the context of tourism, especially considering the principles of cultural democratisation and universal access to cultural assets (Nabais, 2004: 88-99). Another factor to consider is the broadening of resources and products for the social and cultural enrichment of societies and, as a consequence, improvements in the quality of tourist sites in a sustainable fashion.

This paper will argue for the potential of documentary heritage in the tourism industry. It will single out the values which contemporary societies have ascribed to historical documents over the years; it will highlight the institutional procedures taken to preserve and improve the visibility of the documentary heritage in their custody; and it will underline the role of UNESCO in policy–definition regarding documentary heritage at a global scale.

²²³ In the United Kingdom, museums and archives are supervised by the same organisation, the *Museums, Libraries and Archives Council*. In Portugal, however, the approach to heritage management is quite different: the main museums, monuments and archaeological sites are supervised by the *Direção-Geral do Património Cultural* (DGPC) (Directorate-General for Cultural Heritage), while libraries and archives are managed by a different entity: the *Direção-Geral do Livro, dos Arquivos e das Bibliotecas* (Directorate-General for Books, Archives and Libraries). Both these agencies are part of the Ministry of Culture. In Brazil, the functions of the *Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico* (Institute for Historical and Artistic Heritage) are similar to those of the DGPC (its Portuguese counterpart); bibliographical and documentary heritage are managed by the *Biblioteca Nacional* (National Library) foundation, both of which work under the Ministry of Culture; the same does not apply, however, to documentary heritage, which is overseen by the Ministry of Justice, via *Arquivo Nacional* (National Archive).

²²⁴ These assumptions should, however, be put into context. They are mainly supported on a general perception, and exceptions do occur, singular institutions belonging to one group or the other which go against the norm, as will be explored henceforth.

²²⁵ Over the last few years, the introduction of political measures has contributed to changing this paradigm. An effort has been made at a global scale to reinforce local identities. See Anico and Peralta (2004), Anico (2005), Peralta and Anico (2006).

2. Documentary heritage: concept and value

The concept of “heritage” has evolved over time. It is a social, geographic and historical construct, dependent on context. As such, objects now regarded as “heritage”, “legacy” or a “cultural asset” did not always belong to the same semantic group. The most direct links to the current concept of heritage come from the 17th and 18th centuries, and the scientific revolution in particular. As they lasted until the 19th century, earlier traces are not to be ignored, despite their lack of widespread social recognition.

An offshoot of 15th and 16th centuries humanism, the transformation of Man’s understanding of Nature in the 17th and 18th centuries has influenced the understanding of artifacts from the past greatly, as well as the methods employed by early historians. Such “antiquarians” (Choay 2000: 55-84) believed that documentary value of material culture was higher than that of narrative texts, so they carried out research on material remains from Classical Antiquity, as well as on national (Christian) antiquities, narrative record, undertook research of material remains from Classical Antiquity, as well as national (Christian) antiquities. They strove to catalogue, collect, compare and classify, especialising their research interests. For Ketelaar (2007), it was within this historical context that archives were first regarded as privileged containers of memory and culture. It was in the 17th century that the concept of administrative archive – as a living, utilitarian instrument – was replaced for that of the historical archive. Emphasis was then placed on the olden nature of records. This type of archive was placed within a new conceptual and behavioural perspective: the notions of “treasure”, “relic” and “testimony” or “evidence”, which must be preserved, bequeathed and promoted. The latter need was met by the publishing of documents supporting the historical foundations of Ancien Régime institutions: monarchy, aristocracy, religious and ecclesiastical institutes, cities and universities.

The trend stayed on during the enlightenment as an attempt to modernise society as a whole and later had an influence on both liberal and absolutist regimes. New forms of political, economic, social and cultural reasoning, which shared a common vision of progress, would infuse in antiquities a fresh significance, connected to the archetypes of “sublime”, “beautiful” and a “product of intelligence”. In addition to their traditional historical value, the enlightenment credited antiquities with artistic value. They began to be enjoyed for the aesthetic pleasure produced, each object being considered to be a unique, irreplaceable object. In consequence of

this approach, national museums were opened and made available to the audience.²²⁶ They were intended to educate, democratise culture and, soon enough, to provide leisure opportunities (Choay, 2000: 69-73). Those days of significant transformation also witnessed the advancement of two other institutions focused on the study of the past: libraries and archives (Malheiro da Silva, Ribeiro, Ramos and Real, 2002:100; Hedstrom and King, 2003). The two had much in common in terms of goals and the materials they were concerned with. On the emergence of national archives and libraries,²²⁷ an immediate separation (based on now scientifically questionable criteria) became clear: archives were given the custody of unpublished work, mainly manuscripts, while libraries provided access to published material. In spite of their distinct goals – cultural interest and everyday use – both archives and libraries would come to house archival collections (Hedstrom and King, 2003).

There was more than promoting science and education in the agenda behind the opening of countless national and regional cultural centres. Political and social concerns were also at stake. The ideals of liberalism, buttressed on the enlightenment and spawned by revolution, were infused with nationalistic and romantic influences that held the cultural assets of the past as material and symbolic instruments. These were integrated in the development of national identities and stimulated intellectual and material development. Industrialization and the notion of progress, so dear to liberals, deeply enhanced distance in time from such objects. The romantic movement was, at the heart of this project, glorifying those historical periods closest to the origins and greatness of nations. Surviving documents from those ages were therefore highlighted. The whole process resulted in the concept of heritage as it is understood to our day (Choay, 2000: 85-127).

Acquisitions of documentary collections were carried out by the liberals continuously. Archives were bought, donated or confiscated to be nationalised. From then on, the most

²²⁶ Examples include the British Museum, inaugurated in London, in 1753, the Musée du Louvre, Paris (1793), the Smithsonian Institution, Washington (1846) and the collections giving birth, from the 1830s onwards, to some of the museums located in the Museumsinsel, in Berlin, starting with the completion of the Altes Museum. In Portugal, the most notable museums include the Museu Nacional Soares dos Reis (Soares dos Reis National Museum), in Oporto (1836), the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga (National Museum of Ancient Art) in 1884, and the Museu Nacional de Arqueologia (National Archaeology Museum), in 1893, both in Lisbon. In Brazil, the Museu Nacional de Belas Artes (National Museum of Fine Arts), in Rio de Janeiro (1837), and the Museu Paulista (Paulista Museum), in S. Paulo (1895).

²²⁷ Other international examples include the Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales de France (French National Library and Archives), in Paris (1789), the Library of Congress, in Washington (1800), and the Public Record Office, in London (1838). In Portugal, the Torre do Tombo National Archive, which served as the ancient royal archive, was transferred in 1755 from the Castelo de S. Jorge (St George Castle) to the Mosteiro de S. Bento (Monastery of St Benedict), where it stood until 1990, at which time it was relocated to the Cidade Universitária area, in Lisbon. The Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal (Portuguese National Library) was founded in 1796 as the Real Biblioteca Pública da Corte (Royal Public Library of the Court). In Brazil, the Arquivo Nacional do Brasil (National Archive of Brazil), in Rio de Janeiro, was inaugurated in 1838, while the Biblioteca Nacional (National Library) had been installed in the same city in 1810.

important public archives and libraries became responsible for incorporating, organising and preserving archival and published documents. Additionally, they were intended to promote public access. According to information scientists, the labour of historians would eventually lead to the current paradigm for custody and heritage (Ribeiro, 2001). These depositories of written documents became true laboratories of historical investigation. Deeply influenced by the romantic, historicist and positivist ideals, research required materials made available by the state and under its supervision, while also catering for the public administration's needs. Such archives had previously been preserved by institutions that had been producing records since the Middle Ages, sometimes continuously. Records were obtained from both public and private domains, including then-extinct religious institutions and noblemen persecuted by the new regime.

As observed from that cultural framework, from that moment onwards, national heritage came under the supervision of historical libraries and archives. Materials were organised into funds and collections recognised with historic, aesthetic, emotional and financial value. Like what happened with museums, objects preserved by librarians and archivists were perceived as cultural traits, an achievement of civilization on behalf of historical knowledge. According to Malheiro da Silva, documentary heritage was infused with new meanings and roles in a context that was both technical (sorting out the materials) and conservationist, focusing on material preservation and legal protection. This came as an attempt to (re)create, (re)enact and (re)present the past (Malheiro da Silva 2006: 37-41). Yet another distinction between historical records emerged, the way in which records were presented to the users. They were split in two groups: documents and monuments (Le Goff 2000: 103-106). Assets in the first group were selected by historians as their sources, that is pieces of evidence used for purposes of historiographical work. Those in the second group were perceived as signs of a past legacy, materialised in media and memory. While documents tend to present themselves as indisputable, objective facts, monuments are intended to commemorate something, and therefore aimed at enhancing social memory. During the 19th century, historical records consisted of these two layers: document and monument. Ancient texts were exalted not only for their documentary value, but also for their ability to overcome the passing of time. They reached closer to those who had produced and left their imprint on them – not as phantoms, but as proof of an actual act of communication between human beings (Malheiro da Silva, 2006: 50-51; Taylor, 1982-83: 122-123). The value(s) placed by contemporary societies on documentary heritage can be found in this web of meaning.

The axiomatic approach to heritage of our day is clear from national legislations. In tandem with the law itself, the criteria applied to inventorying and classifying cultural assets can be discerned. A sign of the inability of governments to preserve, manage and provide access to their entire heritage, legislation reflects the dominant meanings, attributes and values within society. The existing legislation mentions "archival and bibliographic heritage", instead of "documentary heritage". Still, Law 107/2001, setting out the framework for the preservation and valuation of cultural heritage policy,²²⁸ determined the following:

All culturally relevant archives created by Portuguese entities (are the object of this Law). An archive is defined as an organic set of documents, regardless of date, form and material support, whether produced or received by an individual or collective entity, public or private, in the course of their activity. These documents are preserved as sources of evidence or information. The category also includes inorganic document sets, such as factitious collections – sets of records artificially compiled according to various criteria, such as the mode of acquisition, their subject matter, psysical support or document type (art. 8o).

This law further determined that "bibliographical specimens, collections and funds in the ownership of public collective entities, regardless of their production or collection date, such as all literary collections" are to be considered bibliographical heritage (art. 85). Bibliographical heritage owned by private entities was not excluded from this bill. For classification purposes, it singles out manuscripts of outstanding importance, rare prints, autographs and documents showcasing the work of important figures in literature, art and science. The same applies to collections compiled by authors as well as third parties.

The diversity of objects that can fall in the category of "documentary heritage" is important, first of all in view of the value ascribed to them. Indeed, such value is the same of modern societies regarding all other forms of cultural heritage. Once again, law has systematised this distinction. Article 17 of the Portuguese Cultural Heritage Law sets down the criteria for the inventory and classification of cultural assets. Among those, the following are most adequate for the type of heritage that concerns us: the matrix nature of the asset; the genius of its creator; the relevance of the asset as a symbol or religious testimony; its interest as remarkable evidence of past experiences or facts; its intrinsic aesthetic, technical or material value; and its importance from a historical or scientific standpoint. Such criteria result from cultural, artistic, evidential,

²²⁸ This bill is also known as the Portuguese Cultural Heritage Law.

educational and scientific valuation. Still, an analysis of the bill lays further attributes of heritage assets, which bear relation to those mentioned. They include the following: memory value, age, authenticity, originality, rarity, singularity and exemplarity (art. 2). From the legislation also stands out the idea of a "shared cultural identity of the nation and its regional and local communities", which is intended to strengthen awareness of a people's historical participation in transnational cultural phenomena (art. 12). National identity as a value – not to be mistaken with nationalism – when integrated in a global framework of humanism, gives rise to a final value. This is of an economic nature and is directly connected to development. It should not be taken as strictly financial – as sometimes happens in politics – but as pertaining to the development of society as a whole. Libraries and historical archives are resources that would otherwise be wasted, and their role should not be discarded.²²⁹

3. Between culture and economy: horizons for cooperation

The values aforementioned are not exclusive to Portuguese law, nor even to the laws of western societies. They have been applied increasingly on a global scale. Appreciation for documental heritage may only occur given this understanding. Historical libraries and archives, on one hand, and public and private tour operators, on the other, cannot but consider this broader valuation approach. It provides an opportunity for accomplishing their missions through common platforms of understanding and taking better advantage of such global values.

Scotland is a recent yet perfect example of this potential partnership. *VisitScotland* directed a cultural tourism project called *Ancestral Tourism Initiative*. This involved several institutions with the goal of encouraging people of Scottish descent, most of them living in the USA, to return to their "homeland". Public as well as private institutions were involved, requiring the cooperation of national, regional and local archives, the assistance of a genealogy centre and the services of consultants specialised in library and archive research.²³⁰ The notion of "homecoming" was key for the project. On one hand, the campaign capitalised on the nationalism forged during the 19th century.²³¹ Its deepest roots lay in the highlander culture and its key symbol, the kilt,

²²⁹ For more information on the values ascribed to documental heritage, see Ivo Castro (1999-2000), Françoise Choay (2000), Josep Ballart (2002), Nascimento (2004-2005) and the essay by Elaine S. M. Penn (2014) on the axiology of archives in the context of archival theory and practice.

²³⁰ The project, which started in 2002, is still part of *VisitScotland's* strategy for the promotion of the country as a travel destination, as per their official website *VisitScotland – Scotland's National Tourist Organisation* (<https://www.visitscotland.com/see-do/research-your-ancestry/>) (accessed January 2016). The website includes a link to *Ancestry*, which provides users with a vast array of information, helping them to research their genealogy.

²³¹ On the development of Scottish traditions, see Trevor-Roper (2008).

associated the individual to a given clan. On the other hand, the campaign fed upon the sense of a dispersed community's diaspora. This focus on heritage encouraged strewn Scottish descendants to reunite with their origins. This they did by engaging, first-hand, with the historical landscapes of old Scotland, its ancient castles, musical traditions and, last but definitely not least, the attire of the old clans, thus completing the historical imagery. Archives played a major role in this, supporting visitors in their discovery. Documents proved ancestry provided a legitimate experience and combined physical document with the reader's perception and anticipation of it (Little 2007).

The Anglo-Saxon world, particularly the United Kingdom, has been much more effective than Portuguese-speaking countries at acknowledging the relevance of archives for social and economic development. In the United Kingdom, the entity which oversees museums, libraries and archives has promoted a number of studies in order to assess the impact of those institutions. The following is based on those studies and aims to establish the potential of historical libraries and archives for tourism.²³²

Every report analysed reveals an attempt to understand the impact of "memory institutions" from social and economic viewpoints. The social viewpoint comes in hand with the development of skills by school-age children as well as adults, in both formal and non-formal learning scenarios (Hooper-Greenhill, 2004). The economic viewpoint relates to the tourism system. Nevertheless, the two approaches intersect. Likewise, all reports confirm the scarcity of studies on the economic dimension of libraries and historical archives, while acknowledging the seminal role of the Scottish project, considered to be an excellent starting point for similar undertakings.

Norgrove and Mirchandani (2007) state that archival collections appear in three types of tourism: ancestral tourism; the promotion of "people, places and events"; and more generically in the framework of heritage-related tourism, contextualising both rural and urban destinations. Archival institutions never rely upon their own initiative, rather they depend on tourism industry agents (national and regional travel agencies and operators), combined as public-private partnerships. Projects currently underway show that the entities in charge of documental heritage do not – and will not likely – actively drive heritage tourism. However, given proper planning and professional support, there is significant promise in terms of developing markets with growth potential. From the cases analysed, there is a capacity to attract international

²³² Compiled between 2002 and 2009, these reports had a regional (East Midlands, South East, North East and Yorkshire) and nationwide focus and were commissioned to several firms and universities. They are freely available at The National Archives website (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/research-reports.htm) (accessed January 2016). See Horton and Spence (2006), Norgrove and Mirchandani (2007), Tim *et al.* (2008), Taylor, Harrower, Mirchandani and Norgrove (2009) and *Tourism Strategy Scoping Project* (2009).

tourists, beyond the domestic market. This is particularly the case with visitors from countries that share a historical, linguistic and cultural relation.

These reports also foresee the possibility of archives providing textual and visual materials from their collections for marketing purposes. These would be aimed at a wide range of consumers interested not only in their own family history, but also in the history of important people in politics, science, literature, the arts, economics or religion. Such things as book collections, personal libraries, tools for intellectual labour and letter exchanges would thus be made relevant in that sense. In a similar way, documents can lay bare earlier stages of development of locations, landscapes, historical events, institutions or languages and dialects. Products more likely to be developed in this context include tourist routes, circuits and itineraries, as well as guided and self-guided themed visits, often as part of a travel package.

Authors have acknowledged that the institutions in charge of documentary heritage are underrepresented in travel packages for tourists at all levels, from onsite to online. Online resources could be developed in the way of reproducing digital copies of documents, hosting exhibitions and selling merchandise articles adapted to several customer groups.

Libraries and archives in Portuguese-speaking countries already employ some of these strategies. This can be seen on their websites. However, those websites are not designed to attract casual and local visitors, even less calling attention of tourists from abroad. This much can be inferred from the communication channels of national and regional travel agencies and travel operators, including local cultural agendas. These often miss out certain activities promoted by libraries and archives. The information directly communicated by such institutions regards essentially temporary displays, virtual exhibits and visits, conferences, the publication of catalogues, document reproductions in various media and support services for genealogy researchers.²³³

4. From local to global: the heritage of nations in the *Memory of the World*

Nations protect their heritage by resorting to the appropriate legal tools. Most often, they record cultural assets by identifying, characterising and registering them systematically. Assets in turn can be classified as being of particular cultural relevance, according to a hierarchy of

²³³ On the valuation strategies recommended for custodians of family archives, whose numbers have increased dramatically in Portugal over the last few years, see Sousa (2014).

importance.²³⁴ Much like what happens at a national level, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) enforce internationally adopted legal mechanisms of protection. Examples include the establishment of a *World Heritage* list (1972) and more recently – with the goal of identifying and safekeeping documentary heritage of global relevance – the *Memory of the World*. The programme was created in 1992 out of concerns with the damage inflicted upon historical documents, whether natural or man-made. It aims to preserve documentary heritage of global relevance by resorting to the best available practices. Its goals are to provide easier access to heritage, specially via modern technology, and to raise awareness worldwide of its importance, using the adequate means for promotion and valuation. The criteria defined for the inclusion of this type of documentary heritage in the UNESCO register include: authenticity, singularity, rarity, value in the context of world history – considering the time and place of production, the peoples and theme represented – as well as the risk of loss and the existence of an adequated management plan for conservation (Edmondson 2002). The documentary heritage registered in the *Memory of the World* list, effectively initiated in 1997, already includes 347 items. Between 1997 and 2015, new registers have now come to an average of 18, yearly. However, the decisions made by the committee responsible are published only every two years.²³⁵

It is worth looking at the Portuguese language assets in this list (see Table 1). The following numbers do not correspond to the actual number of registered assets, since some stand for registrations filed by more than one country, sometimes from different continents. The roots of this lay in the processes of colonisation, so the same cultural asset may well appear twice in different regions of the globe, or perhaps as a duplicate in the same zone.²³⁶ For example, the Treaty of Tordesillas, signed by Portugal and Spain, is included twice in the region “Europe and North America”. The Ndembu Archives are shared by Portugal and Angola and thus included in “Europe and North America” as well as “Africa”.

²³⁴ Portuguese Cultural Heritage Law, arts 16, 18 and 19.

²³⁵ According to data on the *Memory of the World* website (<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/flagship-project-activities/memory-of-the-world/register/>) (accessed January 2016).

²³⁶ The concept and scope of the geographical regions identified in the following table are as in the UNESCO programme.

Region	Total	Lusosphere
Africa	19	1
Arab States	9	----
Asia and the Pacific	91	1
Europe and North America	213	7
Latin America and the Caribbean	74	6
	406	15

Table 1. Portuguese-speaking records in Memory of the World

Source: UNESCO – Memory of the World

The *Memory of the World* register includes but a few documentary heritage assets in the Portuguese language.²³⁷ These are mostly examples of the Portuguese-speaking peoples' contributions to an intercontinental linguistic community. They also emphasise the innovative character of technical and political achievements. Worth mentioning are indications of diplomatic relations and cultural exchanges between peoples for Europe, Africa, Asia and South America from the 15th century onwards. Included are documents portraying Iberian medieval culture, as well as everyday affairs, political culture, military conflicts, dictatorial regimes, autonomist movements and architecture from the 19th and 20th centuries (see Table 2).

Year	Title	Countries
2003	Photographic collection left to the National Library of Brazil by Emperor Pedro II, in 1891	Brazil
2005	Letter from Pêro Vaz de Caminha to King Manuel I about the discovery of Brazil, in 1500	Portugal
2007	Treaty of Tordesillas (1497)	Portugal and Spain
2007	Chronological Corpus, diplomatic collection, 15th to the 17th century	Portugal
2011	Ndembu Archives, 17th to the 20th century	Angola and Portugal
2011	Dutch West India Company Archives, 17th century	Brazil, Netherlands and others
2011	Information and counter-information during the military dictatorship in Brazil, 1964-1985	Brazil
2011	Reports from the first flight across the South Atlantic Ocean (Lisbon - Rio de Janeiro) made by Gago Coutinho and Sacadura Cabral, 1922	Portugal
2013	Max Stahl's audiovisual collection on the inception of East Timor	East Timor

²³⁷ About 4 per cent, including the quantification issues aforementioned.

2013	Report on Vasco da Gama's voyage to India, 1497-1499	Portugal
2013	The Oscar Niemeyer's archive	Brazil
2013	Documentation on the Pedro II's journeys, Emperor of Brazil, 1876	Brazil
2015	Medieval illuminated manuscripts and handwritten fragments representing the textual transmission of the <i>Commentary to the Apocalypse</i> , attr. the monk Beatus of Liébana, second half of the 8th century	Portugal and Spain
2015	Iconographic and cartographic representations of the River Plata during the War of the Triple Alliance, 1864-1870	Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay and Argentina

Table 2. Memory of the World contributions from the Lusosphere

Source: UNESCO – Memory of the World

The inclusion of archival and bibliographical heritage in this list may be compared to the *World Heritage* list, whose contents include archaeological sites, urban landscapes, architectural monuments and intangible assets. It can be supposed that the documentary heritage listed as *Memory of the World* – whose reach is much narrower, given its comparatively recent start date – may reach greater visibility at both national and global levels. On their part, the libraries and archives having the custody of these documental sets may become of greater interest for certain tourists. This will require the development of an adequate cultural offer, as described earlier.

5. Conclusions and prospects

Looking back at the development of the concept of documentary heritage and the different values ascribed to it; considering the example of public-private enterprises as developed in Scotland addressing this type of heritage; and in view of the growing international concern for documentary assets, stimulated by UNESCO since the mid-20th century, it is inevitable to conclude that such cultural assets – at national, regional and local scales – have the potential to overcome national boundaries to attain global recognition. The examples quoted show that the essential conditions have been met for states to promote their historical contributions to the development of mankind through documentary heritage.

Tangible and intangible assets capable of both displaying and enhancing the dynamic nature of culture cannot be limited to traditionally conceived heritage institutions. The need arises for new products to be created around particular resources, in this case documental heritage. Aside schools and the educational community, such products should target the broader spectrum of non-formal education and leisure. The development of such an approach ascribes an important role to the entities responsible for preserving historical documents. Some of them are already

providing a variety of services targeting various audiences, but a systemic approach, integrated with market logic, is needed. This would enable entities to tap into new sources of funding, to properly promote assets and value them in social, cultural, and economic terms.

Still, it is not reasonable to expect memory institutions to be the sole drivers. That is not their “core business”. It is mostly with public entities that responsibility for the management and execution of economic and cultural activities should lay. These agencies should cooperate between themselves as well as with private companies active in the tourism and culture industries. Such actions should be based on know-how and involve the production of interdisciplinary studies, which, as previously mentioned, remain quite scarce.

It is necessary from the start to obtain minute knowledge of the heritage assets available and to assess their potential for information, in terms of both learning and leisure. In the same way, it is essential knowing in detail the educational services currently provided by historical libraries and archives, as well as the opinions of heritage professionals. This will ensure a better understanding of the latter contribution to the knowledge economy and simultaneously broaden and deepen their educational mission. This data will allow the evaluation of the present situation and to reflect upon the need for convergence between the practices of current educational services and a way of thinking more in line with Heritage Interpretation. A line of approach closer to the Anglo-Saxon praxis would allow more space for interpretive services. These are better able to respond to the leisure-education approach aforementioned. Besides, it is necessary to assess how the roles associated to these institutions are perceived by political, economic, social and cultural agents. This would raise awareness of their value and contribution to a fuller development of civilizations. It is essential also to survey consumers of cultural assets – current and potential – about their identity, motivations and expectations regarding documentary assets. Heritage tourism projects of a documentary nature will then follow.

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