

Mining & Onlining Memory: The Foundation, Organization, Preservation, Access, and Control of Unfettered Cultural Records for All

By Toni Samek and Gustavo Navarro

Abstract

Using the institutional frame of librarianship, this paper explores the application of communications technologies to the foundation, organization, preservation, access, and control of unfettered cultural records for all peoples. The paper begins with a brief orientation to critical issues arising from library-based knowledge practices; raises theoretical questions in light of historical inequities; identifies practices that contribute to the rethinking of social problems from critical and pluralist perspectives in the context of global interconnectivity; and, provides suggestions for future inquiry. Special emphasis is placed on forms of creativity and technological empowerment that complement persuasion and consensus building for social action in the context of the free information movement and cognitive capitalism and its resistance.¹

Where they have burned books, they will end in burning human beings. Heinrich Heine.

1. Issues and Human Rights

Using the institutional frame of librarianship, this paper explores the application of communications technologies to the foundation, organization, preservation, access, and control of unfettered cultural records for all peoples. The use of communications technologies involves ethical and related issues, and raises implications for social change and the development of human rights. The significance of this work is to explore ethical understanding in the context of a knowledge society, to help understand historical inequities in the development of cultural and civic identities, and to support the extraction of voice and agency from the knowledge society in the context of global interconnectivity. Structurally, the paper begins with a brief orientation to critical issues arising from library-based knowledge practices; raises theoretical questions in light of historical inequities; identifies practices that contribute to the rethinking of social problems from critical and pluralist perspectives in the context of global interconnectivity; and, provides suggestions for future inquiry. Special emphasis is placed on forms of creativity and technological empowerment that complement persuasion and consensus building for social action in the context of the free information movement and cognitive capitalism and its resistance.

Examining relationships in society among people, information, recorded knowledge, and the cultural record exposes local, national, and international issues² related to the “production, collection, interpretation, organization, preservation, storage, retrieval, dissemination, transformation and use of information” and ideas.³ Contemporary examples include: biometrics, intellectual property; global tightening of information and

border controls; and public access to government information. But historical antecedents to the present context are equally important to recognize. In light of “the pillage and burning of Iraq’s National Library in Spring 2003,” the 2005 library seminar “Libraries in Times of War, Revolution & Social Change” examines “urgent historical issues” such as: “books and libraries as agents of cultural memory to be protected, appropriated or obliterated; library collections and services as instruments of political power in providing, restricting or withholding access to information; libraries as places of refuge, solace and practical help in times of social disruption; libraries and their contents as cultural heritage and as booty; the nature of the revolutionary cultural and political regimes in which libraries are situated with regard to literacy and learning; [and,] the responsibilities of the international community in creating and enforcing policies and procedures of protection, reconstitution and restitution of cultural artifacts, including books and libraries.”⁴

The inherent connection between human rights and freedom of expression is underscored in the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions’ (IFLA) Statement on Libraries and Intellectual Freedom, which references Article 19 of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (“Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”)⁵ Through its Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression Committee (FAIFE), IFLA “monitors the state of intellectual freedom within the library community worldwide, supports IFLA policy development, co-operates with other international human rights organisations, and responds to violations of free access to information and freedom of expression.” In recent years, this has had a heavy emphasis on technology and the information society. Furthermore, Shiraz Durani noted that “the rules developed at the World Trade Organisation, especially in the context of TRIPS (trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights” prompted IFLA to express concerns over threats to “not for profit libraries”, intellectual property, and cultural diversity.”⁶

FAIFE “helped advocate the role of libraries in the information society and the inclusion of Article 19 as a core value of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) declaration.” Two key FAIFE policy statements (*Glasgow Declaration on Libraries, Information Services and Intellectual Freedom* and *Internet Manifesto*) are referred to in IFLA’s WSIS contributions underlining the federation’s commitment to intellectual freedom.⁷ These efforts reinforce the IFLA/UNESCO *Public Library Manifesto*⁸ and UNESCO’s statement *Human Rights Research*. The latter emphasizes “the promotion and protection of economic, social and cultural rights, especially the right to education, the right to take part in cultural life and the right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications.”⁹

By extension, and in light of contemporary library core values (e.g., Access, Confidentiality/Privacy, Democracy, Diversity, Education and Lifelong Learning, Intellectual Freedom, Preservation, The Public Good, Professionalism, Service, Social Responsibility¹⁰), it is librarianship’s responsibility to promote and defend numerous articles (extending beyond #19) of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* of particular relevance to information work, including respect for the dignity of human

beings (Art. 1); confidentiality (Art. 1, 2, 3, 6); equality of opportunity (Art. 2, 7); privacy (Art. 3, 12); right to participate in the cultural life of the community (Art. 27); and, right to the protection of the moral and material interests concerning any scientific, literary or artistic production (Art. 27).¹¹

Rhetoric and policy development on librarianship and human rights is of great value to librarians in their opposition to threats to intellectual freedom and their commitment to the protection of civil liberties and civic identities. It opens doors for them to: (1) take a stand in the enduring dilemma about what constitutes library work; (2) use the concept of intellectual freedom as a viable means to taking a professional interest in social and political issues such as war and peace, torture, destruction of cultural resources, and government intimidation¹²; and, (3) conceive the library as a point of resistance.¹³ At present, these points are coming into sharp focus as issues of human rights violations have received increased attention in the 21st century and the events of September 11, 2001, which “triggered the adoption of legislation, policies, and practices in the United States and around the world. . . . The consequences of such initiatives are relevant not only to individuals and institutions in those countries but have broader and more far-reaching impacts as well. In particular, such legislation, policies, and practices have tremendous implications for such issues as access to information, privacy, civil liberties, and intellectual freedom.”¹⁴

Through a network base in such nations as Africa, Argentina (Grupo de Estudios Sociales en Bibliotecología y Documentación), Austria, Canada (librarianActivist.org), a movement of librarians are urging information society to be mindful of the interrelated contexts (e.g., historical, epistemological, political, social, ideological, legal, economic) of information, recorded texts, cultural records, and ideas used both formally and informally, both consciously and unconsciously, in institutions of civil society such as libraries, schools, archives, and media centers. These librarians deal with threats to intellectual freedom, push for unfettered cultural records, and call for international action on an ever-expanding set of issue that read like a catalogue: post 9-11 surveillance; library disaster relief; cultural destruction; censorship; imposed technologies; public access to government information; privatization; media conglomeration; information rights; right to read anonymously; academic freedom; freedom of expression on professional and policy issues, systemic racism; international relations; impermanent access to purchased electronic records; bibliocide; GATS and TRIPS; cutting of teacher librarian positions; intellectual property; serving the poor, homeless, and people living on fixed income; anonymity, privacy, and confidentiality; humane library space; human security; national security policies; the global tightening of information and border controls; transborder data flow; censorship powers of national customs departments; and so on.

But while the subject of library ethics is on the rise, most librarians around the world engage in work that carries no sanctions. A recent study by Pnina Shachaf indicates that only three library associations (Portugal, Sri Lanka, and the U.K.) have formal sanctions for those who violate their code of professional ethics.¹⁵ Shirley Wiegand’s legal analysis of the U.S. Library Bill of Rights bluntly concluded: “the ALA has no authority

over library administrations.”¹⁶ Thus action, coalition, and alliance take special importance. As Martha Smith observed, “although UNESCO seeks to influence members states, it does not exert governing or enforcement authority. Therefore persuasion and consensus building are its primary tools.”¹⁷ Like UNESCO,¹⁸ IFLA is a leader, not an enforcer. Accordingly, in the 2004 IFLA conference opening address, President Kay Raseroka stated: “The first experiences of IFLA in worldwide advocacy, within the framework of the World Summit of the Information Society, have demonstrated the need and power of cooperation; with other international organizations, and amongst ourselves as national member associations. These are only the first steps to influence governments to establish and maintain democratic information services, and to live up to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.”¹⁹

2 Historical Inequities and Questions

Around the world, critical librarians are engaged in persuasion and consensus through petitions, manifestos²⁰, resolutions, rallies, boycotts, alternative conference programs, publishing, lobbying, and daily information exchange. A key initiative emerging in translation around the world is the August 28, 2004 manifesto *Declaration from Buenos Aires On Information, Documentation and Libraries*, which recognizes that “information, knowledge, documentation, archives, and libraries are communal cultural goods and resources. They are based upon and promoted by democratic values, such as: freedom, equality, and social justice, as well as tolerance, respect, equity, solidarity, communities, society, and the dignity of individuals.”²¹ Yet historically, it has been argued, marginalized populations, such as indigenous peoples, women, oral communities, and political radicals (i.e., “the least socially and politically favored”²²) have not been “represented” by the world’s cultural and civic identities. In this critical view, cultural workers, such as educators, publishers, librarians, archivists, and documentalists have both consciously and unconsciously participated in tasks and policy elaborations that have resulted in concessions, absences, omissions, biases, negations (e.g., misrepresentation of racialized and immigrant cultures), broken cultural protocols, and disconnects “between the way peoples are presented in mainstream” culture, “including library materials” and the way people “present themselves and their own culture.”²³

These records are not (until very recently in some cases) well apparent in the cultural and literary canons, the subject headings of the Library of Congress or the Dewey Decimal Classification systems [less so with the Universal Decimal Classification] (which critical library and information workers worldwide acknowledge continue to discriminate by “sex, race, ethnicity, ideology, economic status, social class, disabilities, migration, sexual orientation, religion, and language”²⁴), the mostly middle-class library systems worldwide that organize their collections by these knowledge systems, the epistemological foundations of these knowledge systems, global information policies informed by the discourses of capital, community value/family value based school curricula, propagandistic textbooks of political regimes, or the ashes of cultural destruction brought about by violence. Also important to consider are the “complicated and sometimes conflictive relationships among nation, regime, recorded expression, and

national bibliography ... Legal deposit, in particular, is shadowed by historical overtones of state censorship and control.”²⁵

In February 2005, the Progressive African Library & Information Activists' Group (PALIACT) published *The PALIACT Stand*, which “recognises the right to relevant information as a basic human right,” yet reports how many people’s “experiences, their cultures, their very language” remain “outside the walls of impressive library buildings.”²⁶ The *Stand* reinforces the essence of the UNESCO statement on *Human Rights Research* and begs the startling question posed by Rafael Capurro: “What is information science for?”²⁷ Capurro warned: “an information economy that seeks to reduce ‘information’ to an exchange value without taking into account the different ‘forms of life’ in which it is grounded is no less dangerous than a blind exploitation of nature. In designing tools, we are designing ... ways of being. ... Information science ... must accomplish a self-reflection in a formal-interpretive as well as in a cultural-historical way. It has to resist the temptation to become a purely technical heuristics or a meta-discipline embracing ethics and politics.”²⁸ And Shiraz Durani observed: “What librarians do - and don't do - is not merely an academic question. It affects our understanding of our natural and social environment, which, taken in its totality, affects our world outlook, affects what we think and what we do ... British libraries are in danger of using a commercial version of a "global library" much like McDonald restaurant outlets which serve the same product in every part of the world. While this approach may be a useful one in ensuring a standard level of service, and a useful model for maximizing profits for the McDonald chain, it is disastrous for libraries if they want to root themselves in their local communities. It is essential that a new model of needs-based library service is developed at policy level and implemented.”²⁹

These emphatic words evoke the following questions as a subtext for this work: What are the implications of forgotten, buried, and contaminated memories of individuals, societies, and institutions ... of a flattened cultural record? How can opportunities provided by communications technologies, interconnectivity, and the global digital network be applied to improve upon discriminatory knowledge practices to make them for everybody, not just for some? To what extent can improved practices redress the failed promotion of cultural distinctiveness, cultural literacy, cultural democracy, and democratic education? How can people working in the information and communication technologies fields (and sharing the principal that knowledge and information access is free, open, and egalitarian for everybody³⁰), consciously improve knowledge practices to facilitate human rights conditions such as the democratization of information and knowledge and the prerequisite promotion of literacy (in all its forms³¹)?

3 Forms of Creative Practice & Technological Empowerment

A 2005 U.K. call for participation in the “Making Global Civil Society” conference emphasized the need for “grassroots movements cooperating to create a global civil society based on human rights and mutual aid, and to restore the (intellectual) commons,

in the street, on the land, and in cyberspace.”³² A key question is: “how might network technologies support or counter-act this process?”³³ In the case of Argentina and Latin America, since the 1990s, projects have emerged that place special emphasis on the appropriation of Internet technology to create communication networks, using open source technologies in the generation, creation, utilization, storage, and transfer of information. For example, Red Académica Electrónica (RAEC), an initiative of the Latin American Council of Social Sciences (CLACSO) under the UNESCO umbrella, is a project involving writing, open publication, database, radio, video, bibliography and *raecpedia* under wiki.³⁴ RAEC is remarkable because it modifies “the parameters of the production of knowledge through its wiki,” draws “out a new content carrying pattern through collective contribution,” and eliminates “the role of the traditional author (social scientist).”³⁵

This and in kind projects cast light on the deep debate about how knowledge will be handled in Argentina (and elsewhere in Latin America) in the future, because they take into account the values and typical styles of the country, how they relate to the use of digital technology, and how open source technology is used in the agro-alimentary industries and the State. They have grown out of a particular history – the 1990s privatizing and mercantilist pattern that reflected industries aimed at controlling use of information (and knowledge) and the accompanying pressure to control its spread by a mix of technical and legal tools. For example, as computer “programs began to sell as commercial items,” the new software industry found support in copyright legislation.³⁶ Ultimately, the Unix world fragmented into several privatized versions, ever gradually incompatible among each other and what was once a habitual practice became a crime, i.e., “the hacker that shared the code and cooperated with other individuals became regarded as a “pirate”.”³⁷ Thus, “the business of proprietary software” awakened in Latin America and elsewhere.³⁸ Given the implications, the knowledge practices highlighted below represent forms of creativity and technological empowerment that support persuasion and consensus building for social action in the context of the free information movement and cognitive capitalism and its resistance.³⁹

3.1 Social Software

Social software “applications allow people to interact in virtual reality, connecting or collaborating by use of a computer network.”⁴⁰ Of import to librarianship, social software can allow for direct collective scholarship based on the creation of free electronic databases, multimedia encyclopedias, and other resources to support diverse, critical, pluralistic, and egalitarian knowledge and inquiry.

Wikis

Like other forms of social software (e.g., e-mail, blogs or weblogs, social bookmarks, photo sharing, groups, taste sharing, instant messaging, instant relay chat, Internet forum,

social networking, real time social networking, collaborative real-time editing), wikis value communities.⁴¹ The premier example, *Wikipedia* (an international project managed by volunteers, with the scope of creating a free and gratuitous encyclopedia), has the political goal “to pursue freedom over content and information.” The political significance of *Wikipedia* is in its: large-scale collaboration; free content; internationalization; bridging of the global divide; removal of property and contract as the organizing principles of collaboration; and, ridding “of subjectivity by showing the discussion around an article and the way it constructs itself through time and the various contributions of Wikipedians.”⁴² Smaller scale similarly styled projects (e.g. *Raecpedia*) also contribute to the rethinking of social problems (e.g. governance, sustainable development, women and gender, multicultural and multi-ethnic issues) from critical and pluralist perspectives in the context of global interconnectivity.

These new resources interplay with the growing international interest in open access and open content. For example, open access journals and open access online archives that “can be read by anyone free of charge and without restrictions on the internet.”⁴³ Open access, it has been articulated, “is not just a protocol, but a philosophy of sharing and building an infrastructure of local and independent data and service providers.”⁴⁴ Emergent technical and social strategies are carrying out some (or all) of the collaborative principles of the free software movement. The web, for example, is a favorable open space for the development of “effective possibilities for collaboration and reciprocal enrichment, not only between the development teams and the users but between the users themselves, as well.”⁴⁵ Web forums such as weblogs are “rich in the productive traffic of knowledge.” In this exchange of experiences is invention, which, undoubtedly, contributes to technological development and new possibilities for software use. “But above all, it allows the constitution and broadcasting of know-how among users,” and makes cyberspace “the unlimited area where this fantastic collective intelligence is displayed.”⁴⁶ In hacker philosophy, for example, work takes on the discussion of, and the development pattern for, free software as an “alternative model”⁴⁷ and the hackers themselves hold a duty to share information and work.⁴⁸

But there are significant challenges, including the European Union attempt to enforce the 1992 directive to tax libraries to lend books⁴⁹ and the development of standards for metadata, ontologies, annotation, and curation; middleware for data collection, sharing and integration; and tools for data mining, visualisation, analysis, modeling.⁵⁰ Also, especially outside the software's domain, open source projects remain relatively marginal. This is partly explained by the relative novelty of the approach and, above all, its reliance on complex collaborative processes, in which social bonds, gratuitousness and self-organization are conditions. Only a few could have predicted the success of *Wikipedia*. And RAEC Coordinator Gustavo Navarro has already expressed concern for how projects like *Wikipedia* and *RAEC* will be maintained and sustained and to what extent the present generosity that is inherent in the domain of these networks will become wealth in the future?⁵¹ Navarro's words prompt important questions for the library community: Will it move into open access “publishing” and shift from merely “hosting and providing related support services?”⁵² Will it nurture an alternative culture worried

less about the library as a keeper of the cultural record, and more about the library as an active agent for change?⁵³ Will it “counteract censorship by distribution of information” as a “move towards intellectual freedom”?⁵⁴ What other aspects of knowledge organization and related practices give librarians reason to pause?

Folksonomy and Social Bookmarking

University of Alberta’s digital initiatives librarian Peter Binkley recently observed in a conference presentation, “wikis are ... an open-community–based milieu that support versioning, history and roll-back.” While librarians concerned with authority and authority control may shudder, they “have to take this seriously ... this is the users leading us ... this is metadata for the masses ... this is diversity!”⁵⁵ According to *Wikipedia*, folksonomy or “people’s classification management” is “a practice of collaborative categorization using freely chosen keywords,” in which “a group of people” cooperate “spontaneously to organize information into categories.” Folksonomy “is almost completely *unlike* traditional formal methods of facted classification. This phenomenon typically only arises in non-hierarchical communities, such as public websites ... Folksonomy is currently understood somewhat narrowly as “tagging.”⁵⁶

Social bookmarking services like del.icio.us are online services that let people save and categorize bookmarks and make them viewable by others. Librarians Kenton Good and Geoff Harder see potential in this form of folksonomy, loosely termed people’s metadata. As such, they advocate tagging within social bookmarking as an “enhancement” to traditional and elitist cataloguing practice and structure.⁵⁷ For example, “traditional library cataloguing and classification requires specialized knowledge and training to effectively use it, is (for the most part) not in the public domain (OCLC owns Dewey right?), and, as a whole, is not accessible by the majority of web users.”⁵⁸ Social bookmarking, services, they assert, allow for user context and control; browsing hot topics; serendipitous discovery; organic organizational structure; and alternatives. These global alternatives can accommodate non-Western perspectives and internationalization.⁵⁹ Not incidentally, “the very premise underpinning Indigenous Knowledge is that it must be shared; otherwise, it is no longer knowledge.”⁶⁰

3.2 Naming and Subject Access

Soraj Hongladarom and Charles Ess noted, “there is an urgent need for investigations into what the non-Western intellectual traditions have to say on the various issues in information ethics.”⁶¹ In line with this, and now receiving attention (e.g. Edgardo Civalero’s model proposal for indigenous libraries in Argentina⁶²), is the question of how “globalization is providing indigenous peoples and indigenous knowledge and ways of being with new challenges” (e.g., commodification).⁶³ In her discussion of the

Inuvialuit of Sachs Harbour in Canada's Western Arctic, Rosemarie Kuptana noted, "Inuit Indigenous is an oral culture and cannot be written. To remove it from this oral context is to remove its meaning."⁶⁴ This culturally loaded terrain raises direct implications for 21st century library-based knowledge practices, especially given that "tracking in a library catalogue is very different than tracking in a digital world,"⁶⁵ and that collective memory represents more than "recorded texts" and "static" knowledge.

The International Center for Information Ethics cautions: "Classification systems, thesauri, search engines and the like are not neutral. This non-neutrality concerns not just the fact that they are necessarily biased but that specific unethical prejudices are not recognized as such. Problems of this kind arise in the Internet because of the massive amount of information and different kinds of search methods and search engines."⁶⁶ Internationally recognized feminist library scholar Hope Olson, author of the book *The Power to Name: Locating the Limits of Subject Representation in Libraries* concurs.⁶⁷ She observed: "bias in subject access, whether subject headings, thesauri, or classification, is not just about the concepts that are represented or the terms used for them or even how things are grouped. It is even more culturally specific than that. The very structure of our systems is based on western logic ingrained in our culture since at least Aristotle. So when we export our systems (even with the best intentions) we are imposing our cultural model. It fits some cultures, but the primacy of hierarchy in our structures is a mismatch for other cultures. This frequently is the case with indigenous cultures among others. [Furthermore,] the current dominance of a single model for library cataloguing is a misunderstanding of the idea of standardization. When the idea of standardization is linked to the idea of sharing we end up with a homogenized product. With cataloguing, this product ends up being based in western culture, distributed through the efficiency of American corporate culture (e.g. OCLC)"⁶⁸

Olson also noted that, "subject access standards are what we use when naming information (e.g. subject headings, thesauri, how we connect concepts and the terms that represent them, and how we group and juxtapose concepts in classification). Because naming is a way of wielding power – whether intentionally or not – it is also an opportunity for fostering social change. Libraries in general are what Homi Bhabha calls the Third Space. It's a space in between where culture is shaped and constructed. Bhabha suggests that the Third Space is where change happens so it is where direction is defined. So if we control the language of naming we influence change in this space between information and people."⁶⁹ While Olson predicts, "we will never have bias-free subject access and that isn't necessarily a bad thing. What is important is that we are aware of our biases (some of which ARE inappropriate anywhere) and of the power we're exercising."⁷⁰ She suggests "we can use standards (like controlled vocabularies) without locking ourselves into some monolithic view ... and [echoing Good and Harder on social bookmarking] use options and adaptations."⁷¹ Finally, borrowing from Ursula Franklin, Olson asserts, "technology can facilitate the viability of local options or adaptations for particular sectors."⁷² In kind, U.S. librarian Sanford Berman has been improving upon cumbersome, impractical, outdated, and inhumane subject headings of the Library of Congress since the 1960s.⁷³ His ground-breaking treatment of demographic differences in subject headings and classification in Hennepin County (Minnesota, U.S.A.) Library's

online catalogue is widely used as an alternative to the subject headings of the Library of Congress.⁷⁴

3.3 Memory, Heritage, Culture, Identity, and Recovery

California-based Internet search engine Google's massive digitization project has prompted contentious debate about the company's for-profit status, the need for democratic access to the Information Commons, Anglo-American cultural dominance, and copyright. Led by the protest of Jean-Noël Jeanneney, President of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, a counter "European digital library" is now under discussion in what is termed the "future geography of knowledge." By June 1, 2005, approximately 23 national libraries in the European Union's 25 member states expressed the desire for a European search engine.⁷⁵ In this context it is fitting to consider how cultural workers participate in "the conscious and unconscious cultural biases that silence alternative viewpoints and erase the experiences of ethnic and cultural groups from the historical record, so that inconvenient, or embarrassing or terrible events can be glossed over, denied or forgotten."⁷⁶ As observed by Nobel Peace Prize winner [Adolfo Pérez Esquivel](#), "freedom of the press is being threatened, as is the heritage of the peoples and their cultures which are being subdued by the prevailing globalization. Social and cultural resistance is fundamental for the sake of freedom and the rights of individuals and peoples ... you [librarians], who are the ones in charge of preserving memory ... can contribute ... [and resist] an "only way of thinking" ... that leads to the destruction of identity and culture."⁷⁷

The development and sustaining of virtual libraries, archives, and depositories has great potential for the preservation and recovery of memory. UNESCO's Memory of the World Programme, for example, was created "in 1992 in an international effort to safeguard endangered documentary heritage of humankind, democratize access, ensure that people become aware of its significance and disseminate widely its derived products."⁷⁸ A second example is found in Spain, where, "after Franco's death in 1975, an official policy of silence about the past became part of a blueprint for Spain's transition to democracy, and neither socialist nor conservative governments were inclined to change it. However, many say the silence left a hole in the nation's memory. The nonprofit archives project is the brainchild of a group called the Association for the Recovery of Historical Memory. It uses volunteers, has no government funding, and has gathered more than 100 hours of videotaped interviews in the past year and will give them to universities and libraries. "It will be a vaccine against oblivion," says its founder, Emilio Silva."⁷⁹ A third example, is the Congreso de Lengua, organized by the Spanish and Argentine governments, for "the recovery and valorization of cultural identities, spirituality, and the roots and the memory of native peoples."⁸⁰ A fourth example is that of national bibliographies.

National bibliographies, "like all other human creations, embody assumptions that are neither universal nor immutable. Whether examined in terms of their historical trajectory, totalizing classificatory ambitions, subordination to nationalist agendas, or role vis-a-vis

the commodification of information, national bibliographies are heavily implicated in the efforts to *construct* – not just passively reflect – particular areas of experience and expression. Electronic information and the Internet set all these issues into sharp relief as the break boundaries and transcend categories. The moment is perhaps best perceived as one of immense opportunity in the face of new and almost limitless possibilities to redefine both our operational categories and perhaps, our ways of knowing.”⁸¹ In the case of Latin America, for example, its history “embodies an enduring struggle between purportedly universalistic world-views originating in Europe and the often constraining visions of the conquered and enslaved. The region’s understandings of national heritage and national memory have always been sharply contested.”⁸²

4 Future Inquiry

Durani observed, “manipulation of information, whether conscious or unconscious, is an important matter, not only in local life, but in international relations as well. Librarians can become tools in the hands of those seeking to manipulate whole populations to think along their lines - or stand firm to support the democratic rights of the people manipulated. There is no third way here.”⁸³ Or as articulated by Mikael Book, “what we badly need today is a universal library, i.e. a library which is not controlled by the national states and governments and which is also economically self-sufficient, that is, independent from the banks and corporations which dominate world finance ... The universal or global public library is technically possible ...[and] is economically viable.”⁸⁴

Along the way, it will be instructive to monitor UNESCO, IFLA, national libraries, library associations, and their relationship to the critical library movement in its push for: unfettered cultural records for all; the ability to publicly finance library work; freedom of expression within library ranks; respect for cultural distinctiveness, cultural literacy (in all its forms), and cultural democracy; desire to redress concessions, omissions, absences, and negations in collective memory; and, progress in opposing commodification of information, “corporate globalization, privatization of social services, monopolization of information resources, profit-driven destruction (or private appropriation and control) of cultural artifacts and the human record.”⁸⁵ A condition is that “librarians and information workers become *cultural warriors* capable of defending the professional integrity of the industry amid profiteers of information technology, while simultaneously creating cooperative efforts between the technological productions of technologists and the public service unique to librarianship.”⁸⁶ Borrowing from Richard Volkman’s work on digital culture: as with “the Open software movement, the free market in goods and services, and the scientific community at large ... the core [library] value is freedom.”⁸⁷

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Stephen Carney for inspiring section 3.1 of this work. Thanks to Geoff Harder, Kenton Good, and Peter Binkley for sharing their knowledge of wikis, social bookmarking, and folksonomy. Special thanks to Hope Olson for her generous intellectual contribution to section 3.2 of this work.

References

¹ Listserv posting. From: zapopanmuela@yahoo.com. Progressive Library International Coalition lib-plic@yahogroups.com. Date: 6 Jun 2005. Subject: Theory-Action: Lancaster Knowledge Laboratory from Below Call, England, Nov 4-6, 2005.

² School of Library and Information Studies, University of Alberta, May 2005 draft of vision and mission.

³ Capurro, Rafael and Hjørland, Birger (2003), The Concept of Information, *Annual Review of Information Science and Technology* 37, 389.

⁴ 2005 Library History Seminar XI: Libraries in Times of War, Revolution & Social Change. Sponsored by the Library History Round Table of the American Library Association (ALA). <http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/conferences/LHS.XI/papers.pdf>

⁵ The General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 1948. For the full text, see: <http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>

⁶ Shiraz Durani (2004), Submission to Culture, Media and Sport Committee (Session 2003-04. 26 October 2004. New Inquiry: Public Libraries. 19 November 2004), 1.

⁷ **IFLA Committee on Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression (FAIFE), *Annual Report 2003*, 12.** www.ifla.org/faife/faife/ar2003.htm

⁸ IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto. 1994. <http://www.ifla.org/VII/s8/unesco/eng.htm>

⁹ UNESCO. Human Rights Research. http://portal.unesco.org/shs/en/ev.php-URL_ID=3515&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

¹⁰ ALA Core Values Task Force II Report (Summer 2004). <http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/statementspols/corevaluesstatement/social>

¹¹ Flagged by the International Center for Information Ethics. See: "The Field" (Last update May 18, 2005). <http://icie.zkm.de/research>

¹² Rosenzweig, Mark (2001), What Progressive Librarians Believe: An International Perspective, *INNOVATION* 22 (June), 5.

¹³ Rosenzweig, What Progressive Librarians Believe, 1.

¹⁴ Dr. Nadia Caidi, Faculty of Information Studies, University of Toronto. Call for Papers: Special Issue of *Government Information Quarterly* on “National Security Policies and Implications for Information Flow”.

¹⁵ Shachaf, Pnina (2005), A Global Perspective on Library Association Codes of Ethics, Presented at the Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE) 2005 Annual Conference: Boundary Crossings, Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A, January 13, 2005. See: <http://ella.slis.indiana.edu/~shachaf/ALISE%202005.ppt>

¹⁶ Wiegand, Shirley (1996), Reality Bites: The Collision of Rhetoric, Rights, and Reality and the Library Bill of Rights in *Library Trends* 45(1), 83.

¹⁷ Smith, Martha (2001), Global Information Justice: Rights, Responsibilities, and Caring Connections, *Library Trends* 49(3) (Winter), 534.

¹⁸ Resolution on IFLA, Human Rights and Freedom of Expression (July 2, 1997), <http://www.ala.org/ala/iro/awardsactivities/resolutionifla.htm>

¹⁹ Raseroka, Kay (2004), World Library and Information Congress opening address, 70th IFLA General Conference and Council - 22-27 August 2004 - Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2.

²⁰ The online *WIPO Manifesto for Transparency, Participation, Balance and Access* warns: “WIPO is locking NGOs out of its negotiations, using tactics to isolate those governments who stand up for you, and hiding the evidence by deleting it from their website. ... If you are a computer programmer or politician; if you are ill, if you have an audio/visual or motor impairment, if you are a student, academic, information or knowledge worker, librarian, or citizen concerned about access to information and knowledge and the absence of balance between rightsholders and the public interest within developed countries and mainly in developing/least developed countries, please take a moment to read this and consider signing into it. ... I strongly invite you to endorse it and promote it too, since WIPO's policies also have devastating effects for users and workers of libraries and other public repositories of information and knowledge, for the public domain and the cultural commons. Sincerely, Zapopan Martín Muela Meza, Mexican librarian.” Listserv posting. From: zapopanmuela@yahoo.com. To: Progressive Library International Coalition lib-plic@yahoogroups.com. Date: 10 Mar 2005. Subject: Request for endorsement: Open Letter to the United Nation's (U.N.) World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

²¹ *Declaration from Buenos Aires On Information, Documentation and Libraries*. August 28, 2004. The attendees at the First Social Forum on Information, Documentation and Libraries: alternative action programs from Latin America for the information society, held in Buenos Aires from August 26-28, 2004, was called by the Social Studies Group on Library Science and Documentation (Argentina) and the Study Circle on Political and Social Librarianship (Mexico).

²² Ibid.

²³ Listserv posting. From: kellypw@umich.edu. To: pam@jeffersoncountylibrary.org. Date: 31 May 2005. Subject: FW: IFRT New Orleans Program 2006.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Hazen, National Bibliography in a Globalized World: the Latin American Case, 4.

²⁶ Listserv posting. From: shiraz.durrani@blueyonder.co.uk. To: eddyobp2000@yahoo.co.uk. Date: 19 Feb 2005. Subject: RE: AFRICA LIBERATION LIBRARY PROJECT - EXPRESSION OF INTEREST. Appeared in PLGNET-L Digest 2056.

²⁷ Capurro, Rafael (1992), What is information science for? A philosophical reflection, In *Conceptions of Library and Information Science: Historical, empirical and theoretical perspectives*, edited by Peter Vakkari and Blaise Cronin (London: Taylor Graham), 84.

²⁸ Ibid, 90-93.

²⁹ Durani, Submission to Culture, Media and Sport Committee, 1.

³⁰ *Declaration from Buenos Aires On Information, Documentation and Libraries. August 28, 2004.*

³¹ Ibid.

³² Listserv posting. Sender: zapopanmuela@yahoo.com. To: Progressive Library International Coalition lib-plic@yahogroups.com. Date: 6 Jun 2005. Subject: Theory-Action: Lancaster Knowledge Laboratory from Below Call, England, Nov 4-6, 2005.

³³ Listserv posting. From: zapopanmuela@yahoo.com. To: Progressive Library International Coalition lib-plic@yahogroups.com. Date: 22 Feb 2005. Subject: New Journal, Issue No. 2: Economies of Knowledge: Production and Distribution of Knowledge in the Network Society. February 2005.

³⁴ Red Académica Electrónica (RAEC), an initiative of the Latin American Council of Social Sciences (CLACSO). www.raec.clacso.edu.ar

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Navarro, Gustavo (2004), Self-organization in Open Source Communication Networks: Red Académica Electrónica de CLACSO -RAEC- (CLACSO's Electronic Academic Network -EANC-) case. *IJIE* 2(11), p. 5.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Sonderberg, (2002), Copyleft vs. Copyright: A Marxist Critique, 1.

⁴⁰ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_software

⁴¹ Kenton Good, Geoff Harder, and Peter Binkley (University of Alberta Libraries). "Social Bookmarking and Wikis." NEOS mini-conference. Edmonton, Alberta. June 3, 2005. <http://www.neoslibraries.ca/content.aspx?p=592>

⁴² Listserv posting. From: zapopanmuela@yahoo.com. To: Progressive Library International Coalition lib-plic@yahoogroups.com. Date: 31 Mar 2005. Subject: The political importance of the Wikipedia Project : the only true Encyclopedia of our days. Wikipedia : towards a new electronic Enlightenment Era? Tuesday 16th November 2004. by Jean-Baptiste Soufron. http://soufron.free.fr/soufron-spip/article.php3?id_article=71

⁴³ Listserv posting. From: zapopanmuela@yahoo.com. To: Progressive Library International Coalition lib-plic@yahoogroups.com. Date: 22 Mar 2005. Subject: Finnish government endorses Open Access scientific publishing.

⁴⁴ From: peters@earlham.edu. To: Biblio-Info-Sociedad@yahoogrupos.com.mx. Date: 30 March 2005. Subject: Invitation to speak at Wikimania Conference, August 5-7, 2005, Frankfurt, Germany.

⁴⁵ Navarro, Self-organization in Open Source Communication Networks, p. 4.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 5.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ <http://www.fesabid.org/federacion/gtrabajo/bpi/publiclending.pdf>

⁵⁰ Listserv posting. From: rafael@capurro.de. To: icie@zkm.de. Date: 18 May 2005. Subject: [icie] First International Conference on e-Social Science. Forum of the IFLA Social Science Libraries section.

⁵¹ Navarro, Self-organization in Open Source Communication Networks, p. 7.

⁵² Listserv Posting. From: zapopanmuela@yahoo.com. To: Progressive Library International Coalition lib-plic@yahoogroups.com. Date: 21 Mar 2005. Subject: Changing roles of librarians in an open access world.

⁵³ See Samek, Toni (2003), Pioneering Progressive Library Discourse, In *Revolting Librarians Redux: Radical Librarians Speak Out* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc.) 137-142.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Kenton Good, Geoff Harder, and Peter Binkley (University of Alberta Libraries). “Social Bookmarking and Wikis.” NEOS mini-conference. Edmonton, Alberta. June 3, 2005. <http://www.neoslibraries.ca/content.aspx?p=592>

⁵⁶ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Folksonomy>

⁵⁷ Kenton Good, Geoff Harder, and Peter Binkley (University of Alberta Libraries). “Social Bookmarking and Wikis.” NEOS mini-conference. Edmonton, Alberta. June 3, 2005. <http://www.neoslibraries.ca/content.aspx?p=592>

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Kuptana, Rosemarie (2005), Relationship Between Traditional Knowledge and Intellectual Cultural Properties; An Inuit Perspective, *Discussion Paper, National Gatherings on Indigenous Knowledge*, Canadian Heritage, Government of Canada. 3.

⁶¹ Call for Papers. *Information Technology Ethics: Cultural Perspectives*. A book edited by Dr. Soraj Hongladarom, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand and Prof. Charles Ess, Drury University, USA. <http://www.stc.arts.chula.ac.th/call.html>

⁶² **Civallero, Edgardo (2004), Indigenous libraries, utopia and reality : proposing an Argentine model, In *Proceedings 70th IFLA General Conference and Council, Buenos Aires (Argentina)*. <http://eprints.rclis.org/archive/00003104/>**

⁶³ Listserv posting. From: makere@ualberta.ca. To: edfaculty@mailman.srv.ualberta.ca. Date: 9 May 2005. Subject: Fall grad course. EDPS 601. Indigenous Ontologies in the Global Context.

⁶⁴ Kuptana, Rosemarie (2005), Relationship Between Traditional Knowledge and Intellectual Cultural Properties; An Inuit Perspective, *Discussion Paper, National Gatherings on Indigenous Knowledge*, Canadian Heritage, Government of Canada. 2.

⁶⁵ Kenton Good, Geoff Harder, and Peter Binkley (University of Alberta Libraries). “Social Bookmarking and Wikis.” NEOS mini-conference. Edmonton, Alberta. June 3, 2005. <http://www.neoslibraries.ca/content.aspx?p=592>

⁶⁶ International Center for Information Ethics. “The Field” (Last update May 18, 2005). <http://icie.zkm.de/research>

⁶⁷ Olson, Hope A. (2002) *The power to name: locating the limits of subject representation in libraries* (Dordrecht: Kluwer), 261p.

⁶⁸ In personal e-mail communication with colleague Hope Olson (Professor, School of Information Studies, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee). Two further examples of Olson's leading work include: (1) Olson, Hope A., and Rose Schlegl (2001). Critiques of subject access bias: A meta-analysis. *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 32(2): 61-80. (2) Olson, Hope A. (2000). Difference, culture, and change: The untapped potential of LCSH, *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 29(1/2); special issue The LCSH Century: One Hundred Years with the Library of Congress Subject Headings. (3) Olson, Hope A. (2001), Sameness and difference: A cultural foundation of classification. *Library Resources & Technical Services* 45(3) 115-122.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ See: Olson, Hope A., and Dennis B. Ward (2003), Mundane McIlwaine (ed.), Subject retrieval in a networked environment, Proceedings of the IFLA Satellite Meeting held in Dublin, OH, 14-16 August 2001 and sponsored by the IFLA Classification and Indexing Section, the IFLA Information Technology Section and OCLC (pp. 50-58). München: KG Saur.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ See: (1) Berman, Sanford (1971), *Prejudices and Antipathies: A Tract on the LC Subject Heads Concerning People* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press). (2) Berman, Sanford (1981), *The Joy of Cataloging : Essays, Letters, Reviews and Other Explosions*. (Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press).

⁷⁴ Sanford Berman website. See <http://www.sanfordberman.org/>

⁷⁵ Listserv posting. From: lib-plic@yahoogroups.com. To: lib-plic@yahoogroups.com. Date: 11 May 2005. Subject: Europe vs Google: EU proposes Digital Library to counter Google-US/UK-centric version. from the LATimes business section, 5-10-05 <http://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-google10may10,1,325341.story?coll=la-headlines-business>

⁷⁶ Listserv posting. From: kellypw@umich.edu. To: pam@jeffersoncountylibrary.org. Date: 31 May 2005. Subject: FW: IFRT New Orleans Program 2006.

⁷⁷ **Esquivel, Adolfo Pérez (2004), Between the Walls of Information and Freedom, Keynote Speaker at the Plenary Session, Monday 23, August 2004, 12:45-13:45, IFLA World Library and Information Congress: 70th Annual IFLA General Conference and Council, In *Proceedings 70th IFLA General Conference and Council, Buenos Aires (Argentina)*. http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla70/ps-Perez_Esquivel-e.htm**

⁷⁸ Vannini, Margarita (2004), [El programa memoria del mundo en Amrica Latina y el Caribe](#), World Library and Information Congress: 70th IFLA General Conference and Council.

⁷⁹ Listserv posting. From: iskra@earthlink.net. To: plgnet-l@listproc.sjsu.edu. Date: 12 Dec 2004. Subject: Archives , Memory and the Spanish Civil war. Europe – AP. By MAR ROMAN, Associated Press Writer. Appeared in PLGNET-L Digest 1997.

⁸⁰ **Esquivel, Adolfo Pérez (2004), *Between the Walls of Information and Freedom, Keynote Speaker at the Plenary Session, Monday 23, August 2004, 12:45-13:45, IFLA World Library and Information Congress: 70th Annual IFLA General Conference and Council, In *Proceedings 70th IFLA General Conference and Council, Buenos Aires (Argentina)*. http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla70/ps-Perez_Esquivel-e.htm.***

⁸¹ Hazen, National Bibliography in a Globalized World: the Latin American Case, 4 or 6.

⁸² Ibid, 10.

⁸³ Durani, Submission to Culture, Media and Sport Committee.

⁸⁴ Listserv posting. From: book@kaapeli.fi. To: lib-plic@yahoogroups.com. Date: 22 Apr 2005. Subject: The Cooperative Library.

⁸⁵ Rosenzweig, “What Progressive Librarians Believe,” page 5.

⁸⁶ Save Library and Information Studies: Research and Rescue.
<http://www.savelibinfostudies.org/index2.htm>

⁸⁷ Volkman, Richard (2002), Digital Culture: Liberation that was not meant to be.” From abstract posted at
<http://www.ccsr.cse.dmu.ac.uk/conferences/ethicomp/ethicomp2002/abstracts/48.html>.
Accessed: 14 March 2005.