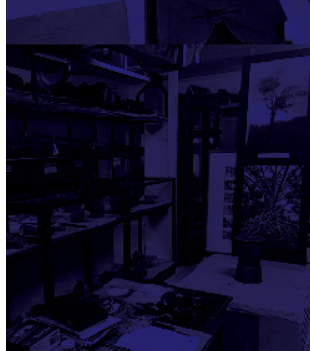
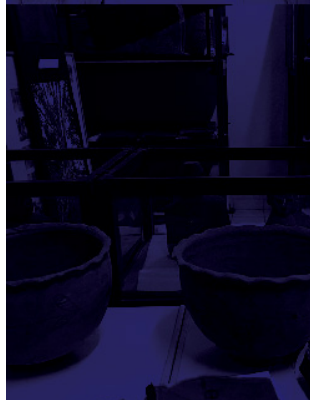




The Documentary Heritage of

TIMOR LESTE

Survey of Selected
Memory Institutions



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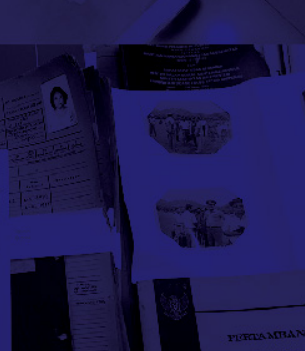
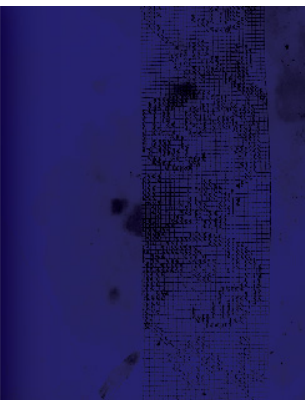


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BACKGROUND

METHODOLOGY

The survey was developed as part of the project 'Safeguarding the Documentary Heritage of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in Southeast Asia through the UNESCO Memory of the World (MoW) Programme' funded by the Government of Malaysia through the Malaysia - UNESCO Cooperation Programme (MUCP). It contains the report of the survey of documentary heritage held in seven memory institutions in Timor-Leste.



From September to November 2017, Dr. Nuno Vasco Oliveira (Ph.D) an archaeologist and cultural heritage consultant visited several memory institutions in Timor-Leste to identify and record documentary heritage kept in these institutions. The current report is based on the survey from seven memory institutions even though other institutions such as the Church Diocese in Dili were also visited. The result from the survey was presented in workshop organized by UNESCO Office in Jakarta on 4 – 5 December 2017 in Dili, Timor-Leste. The two-day workshop aimed to develop specific nominations for a potential national register in Timor-Leste and was participated by representatives from the seven memory institutions surveyed:

- National Archives of Timor-Leste
- National Library of Timor-Leste
- National Museum of Timor-Leste
- Chega! CAVR National Centre
- Max Stahl Audiovisual Archive (CAMSTL)
- Archive and Museum of Timor-Leste Resistance
- Timor Aid

RESULTS

The survey confirmed the existence of documentary heritage in Timor-Leste that are currently located in different institutions. It also revealed that many of the documentary heritage are facing threats ranging from lack of proper storage and preservation methods to protect them from environmental degradation to lack of human capacity to properly preserve and provide access to documentary heritage currently available in the country. The assessment also revealed that the need to improve or in some cases create databases including digitalization of the documentary heritage. In summary, much is needed in the area of documentary heritage preservation as well as in terms of supporting access to the documentary heritage in Timor-Leste.

Ultimately, this survey of documentary heritage in Timor-Leste aims to support the national authorities in identifying their key collections and current condition as a baseline for their preservation and improved access. It is clear that there is still a lot of work that must be done in terms of identification and proper preservation method, including digitizing the documentary heritage, in line with the UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Preservation of, and Access to, Documentary Heritage, Including in Digital Form.

STUDY CASE 1

National Archives of Timor-Leste

Description of the institution

The National Archives is organized under the Minister of State Administration and is responsible for promoting the recovery and reconstitution of documents by establishing and developing the historical archive of the country; proposing and developing relevant norms and instructions for the classification, processing, restoration and archival of documentation; securing access to researchers, scholars and general public, of documentation in archive that is not covered by the secrecy provisions of the State; and to promote the modernization of services and the professional specialization of the employees of the historical archive of Timor-Leste.¹

Collection

The National Archives of Timor-Leste currently holds the following collections: the Historic Archives; the archives of the Portuguese Administration from 1700-1975 (of which the most important part is that from 1945-75); the archives of the Indonesian Administration, from 1976 to 1999; the UNTAET (United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor) archives, from 1999-2002; and the Government of Timor-Leste's archives.



(1) National Archives of Timor-Leste

¹ Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste Government Decree No. 2/2003, 23 July 2003. Source: <http://mj.gov.tl/jornal/lawsTL/RDTL-Law/RDTL-Gov-Decrees/Gov-Decree-2003-02.pdf>

Icons

Documents from the World War II period, Reconstruction of 1945-1955, photographs of forced labour during Portuguese times.

Accessibility

Only the Portuguese Administration archive is accessible for consultation; the remaining archives are currently being cleaned, organized and described and cannot be viewed. No reading room or a facility that allows for research; however, access may be granted to one or two researchers at a time in the main deposit where documents are stored. Only 20% of the Portuguese Administration archives have so far been digitized, but without a database to manage the existing information.

Preservation

The National Archives currently store material in cardboard boxes that are not archival quality.

Threats

The National Archives' collections face several threats, of which the lack of an adequate facility is probably the most significant. The existing space was adapted for archiving purposes but its current condition poses serious threats to materials: it has wooden doors, windows and ceilings; it has a very old electrical system that was never audited; and it does not allow for monitoring of environmental and safety conditions.

The lack of computer resources and of a database to manage the archives and disseminate it to the public results in a lack of knowledge of the existing documentary heritage held by the National Archives, as well as in a significant lack of investment in this sector. A significant number of materials in the National Archives are still in boxes and have never been classified or described.



(2) National Archives of Timor-Leste

**STUDY
CASE 2**

National Library of Timor-Leste

Description of the institution

The Department of National Libraries, the body within government responsible for the establishment of the future National Library of Timor-Leste.

Collection

Collection of about 8000 books in Portuguese, Indonesian, Tetum and some of the country's national dialects. Some books were offered by institutions in Timor-Leste and abroad, while others were directly acquired from publishers. There is a plan to collect community handwritten records but that has not yet started.



(1) National-Library of Timor-Leste

Icons

Dictionaries of local dialects, books produced by the National University, and documents about tais.

Accessibility

Access by the public is currently not possible and none of the collection materials has been digitized.

Preservation

There is no appropriate preservation methods being used by the library.

Threats

Existing storage facilities are under threat from water spilling from the AC units and significant humidity levels. Existing computers are old with limited access to Internet, which limits the use of free ware resources. The lack of trained library staff to manage the collection is also a major challenge.

Website

<http://timor-leste.gov.tl/?p=18626&lang=en>



(2) National-Library of Timor-Leste



Book collections of National-Library of Timor-Leste



**STUDY
CASE 3**

Museum and Cultural Centre of Timor-Leste

Description of the institution

The Department of National Museums, the body within government is responsible for the establishment of the Museum and Cultural Centre of Timor-Leste which is due to be the future National Museum of Timor-Leste. It currently manages a small collection of books from the old Dili Provincial Museum, which was created during Indonesian times in 1995, but was destroyed in 1999. The future National Museum of Timor-Leste will be developed alongside the future National Library, in one single project and building.

Collection

The small collection is housed in a container at the Department of National Museums' office but has never been shelved or organized. Many of the museum cultural materials disappeared in 1999 fire, and the surviving annual inventory books are the sole information on the missing objects.

Icons

The Museum is collecting information and documents from former municipalities in the Portuguese time.

Accessibility

The material cannot be accessed by the public and they are not digitized.

Preservation

The small collection is housed in a container at the Department National Museums' office but it is not shelved or organized.

Threats

As the collection is stored in a container that is not designed for long-term storage, it faces threat environmental threats including water and insects.

Website

<https://www.cultura.gov.tl/en/institution/projects/museum-and-cultural-centre-of-timor-leste>



(1) Book Collections National Museum of Timor-Leste



(2) Collections of National Museum of Timor-Leste

STUDY
CASE 4

Chega! CAVR

(Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation in East Timor) National Centre



(1) Chega-CAVR

Description of the institution

Chega! CAVR holds a rich documentary heritage relating to the period of Indonesian occupation (1974-1999). The Chega! Report covers the CAVR's creation, activities, victim support, community reconciliation work, truth-seeking about human rights violations, findings and recommendations. The building where Chega! CAVR is located, the Balide Gaol, is an old prison from Portuguese and then Indonesian times.

Collection

The original archives contain testimonies of victims, testimonies from perpetrators of small crimes, interviews with famous individuals, reports from organisations, documents from other nations on Timor-Leste, original documents from former Indonesian military, tapes with original interviews and their transcriptions, videos of public hearings, the Chega! Report and many more relevant information on that historical period.



(2) Chega-CAVR

(3) Chega-CAVR



(4) Chega-CAVR

(5) Chega-CAVR



(6) Chega-CAVR

Icons

The proceedings of the independent truth commission established in East Timor in 2001 under the UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). The Chega! CAVR archives contain original materials from a unique historical period of Timor-Leste. If well-kept and managed, they can serve as reference for research on the history, culture, politics and human rights issues of that period.

Accessibility

Today, some of the old cells of the Balide Gaol have been transformed into a library, archive and working spaces, while others form part of a local museum and still maintain original graffiti from those days. Public can visit the centre that contains a small library but most of the CAVR documents cannot be accessed by the public.

Preservation

Most materials are kept in storage boxes and shelves within the facility, and some were sent to the British Library, in the United Kingdom. A few recordings from victims were copied from their original tape format to MP3 but most still await similar treatment.

Threats

As the collection is stored in a container that is not designed for long-term storage, it faces threat environmental threats including water and insects.

Website

<http://www.cavr-timorleste.org/en/chegaReport.htm>

STUDY
CASE 5

Max Stahl Audiovisual Archive Center for Timor-Leste (CAMSTL)

Description of the institution

The Max Stahl Audiovisual Archive Center for Timor-Leste collects, preserves, archives and enables access to the valuable existing audio-visual documentation of key moments and aspects in the history of Timor-Leste.



(1) Max Stahl Audiovisual Archive Center for Timor-Leste

Collection

The CAMSTL currently holds more than 13.000 hours of video images, some 1000 hours of sound, ca. 1000 photographs and more than 2000 hours of transcribed materials.

Icons

The Birth of A Nation: Turning Points collection (inscribed on the UNESCO Memory of the World International Register).



(1) Max Stahl Audiovisual Archive Center for Timor-Leste

Accessibility

Some 30 hours of materials are transcribed weekly and the available materials can be accessed at CAMSTL through a computer connected to the main server. Materials can also be requested through Facebook and sessions for university students are regularly held at the Centre's headquarters. The most significant materials in CAMSTL include the materials already registered as Memory of the World with UNESCO (2013), and those stored in France with INA, from 1991 onwards, which are historically more relevant (approx. 450 hours of materials).

Preservation

Preservation is a continual challenge, and it is difficult to raise sufficient funds. One of the means of preserving the collection is to share the archival resources with a university in Portugal, creating a complete mirror archive. There is still material in VHS format that needs to be migrated to digital files. There is also footage of people talking in dialect, which is of high value.

(2) Max Stahl Audiovisual Archive Center for Timor-Leste



(1) Collections of CAMSTL

(2) Collections of CAMSTL



Threats

Major threats to the collection include changes in format (the most common problem affecting all audio-visual archives); physical conditions of the archive space (e.g. temperature, humidity, salinity); lack of appropriate financial and human resources; and the general lack of institutional sustainability in Timor-Leste.

Website

<https://www.facebook.com/audiovisualarchivetimorleste/>



**STUDY
CASE 6**

Archive and Museum of Timorese Resistance (AMRT)

Description of the institution

The Archive and Museum of Timorese Resistance (AMRT) was established in 2005, aiming at preserving the memory and the historical heritage of the resistance and struggle for independence of the people of Timor-Leste, as well as to disseminate the values of such struggle to the younger generations.

Collection

The collection contains correspondence, press clippings, photos, delivery notes, flags, weapons, clothes, banners and other materials that were collected or offered to the museum by leaders of the Armed Front, the Clandestine Front, the Diplomatic Front, the Youth Resistance, the Church, International Organisations, Solidarity Movements and other individuals and organisations.

Icons

Some of the most relevant materials kept in AMRT's collection include original letters and international appeals, meeting minutes, photographs, objects and other materials found in underground shelters such as original weapons and uniforms.

Potential nominations to a national register include Proclamation Text of 1975; photographs taken at the Government Palace; a guerrilla map; and the radio broadcast of the proclamation of independence.

Accessibility

The physical materials in Portugal are not available to the public. However, some original materials are available at the museum in Dili, Timor-Leste. Materials that have been treated, sanitized, described and classified are digitized and made available at the Museum in Dili, on computer terminals in the reading room, and through AMRT's website. The Museum coordinates with the National Archives on decisions as to whether the documents can be accessed by the public or not. About 16,000 documents can be accessed online.

Preservation

The Museum of the Resistance preserves items relating to the Resistance period, and collects documents from those who want to donate their material. These items are conserved, their provenance is recorded, and they are given control numbers. Digitisation is another way of saving documents. Large format documents are photographed.

Threats

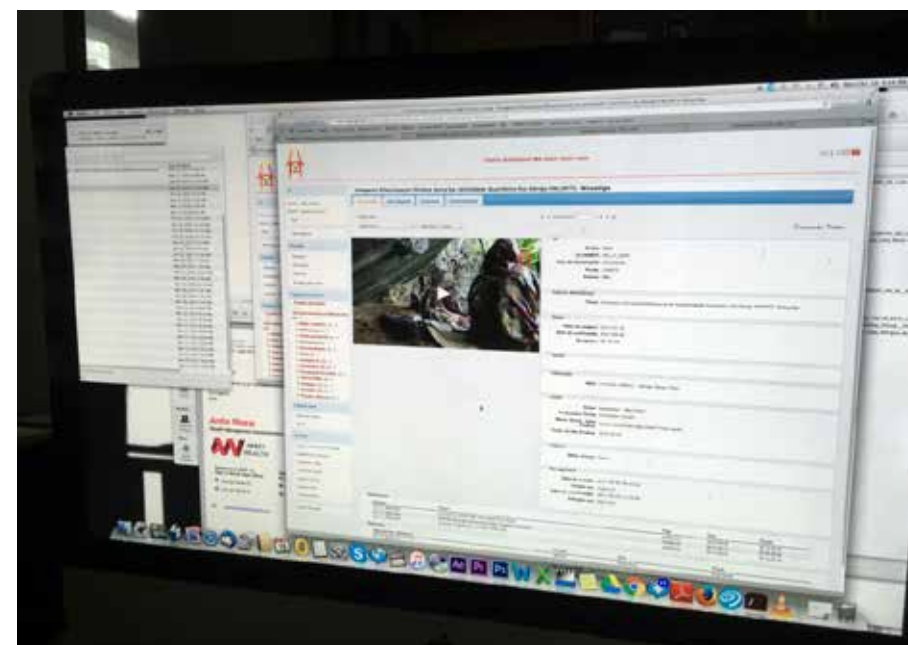
Many of the original documents were transported to Portugal because they were damaged and required conservation. Even though the Government of Timor-Leste has been working towards securing appropriate storage and conservation facilities in Dili, AMRT still lacks enough qualified staff to provide the required standards of conservation. A public and outreach program to help disseminating the AMRT's collections is also to be established soon.

Website

http://amrtimor.org/drt/drt_docs.php?lingua=pt



Archive and Museum of Timorese Resistance (AMRT)



Preview of AMRT's website

**STUDY
CASE 7**

Timor Aid

Description of the institution

Established in 1998, Timor Aid is a non-government organisation dedicated to increasing the quality of life in Timor-Leste. Through its cultural program, Timor Aid has been active in documenting, preserving and promoting culture and language in the country, including the well-known and iconic process of producing "tais", Timor-Leste's traditional hand-woven cloth.

Collection

Timor Aid possesses probably the most comprehensive collection of tais in the country. Timor Aid's tais collection includes hand-woven materials from both Timor-Leste and Western Indonesia, books, catalogues, films, recordings and photographs related to the process of making tais. It also contains looms and weaving equipment, a catalogue of plants used in dyeing, as well as information on traditional music and dances associated to weaving. Some of the tais in the collection contain words woven into the original fabric and are quite old.

Timor Aid has also identified traditional drawings that transmit community knowledge. These are no longer made and are only found in traditional houses. The challenge is to preserve these valuable records in private hands.



[1] Collections of Timor Aid



(2) Collections of Timor Aid



(3) Collections of Timor Aid



(4) Collections of Timor Aid

Icons

Some of the most iconic materials in the collection include old tais with words and sayings that were hand-woven into to the original fabric, as well as old photographs documenting different aspects of the traditional hand weaving process in Timor-Leste.

Accessibility

At Timor Aid there is no library or a dedicated space for public consultation of the collection. Parts of the collection may be accessed through exhibitions and the publications available. Information on the collection, including some photographs, recordings and videos have been digitized and can be found on Timor Aid's website. However, most of the information is stored in the institution's computers, with no existing back up or appropriate technical staff to look after it.

Preservation

The collection is stored at Timor Aid's office in Dili.

Threats

There is a lack of appropriate storage, limited working space and no conservation room for tais. There is also no generator in the office, with frequent power cuts and high temperatures causing stress to the collection.

Website

<http://www.timoraid.org>



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Memory of the World