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Recognising the Budj Bim cultural landscape as World Heritage: How a socio-material approach bridged the tangible-intangible heritage gap

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In 2019 the Budj Bim cultural landscape in south western Victoria was listed on the World Heritage Register. It is significant firstly for the Gunditjmara people as a culmination of regaining control over their traditional lands and international recognition of their unbroken connection with the land extending back tens of thousands of years. It undermines a longstanding distinction made in heritage assessment between tangible (material) and intangible (immaterial) categories by instead seeing these as interdependent and 'constitutive entanglements' of everyday life. The corresponding distinction too often made between the built and the natural environment has resulted in a disproportionate acceptance that associates built environment heritage with European or Western societies and identifies natural environmental heritage with Indigenous landscapes. Introducing a socio-material perspective where these formerly separate categories are seen as interdependent enables a new mode of understanding cultural connection to the land that is potentially transforming. Finally, it is significant as an exemplar of Indigenous led heritage work that brings together political struggle and advocacy, history work, and

in the process creates new knowledge.

Keywords: Budj Bim, indigenous knowledge, Eumeralla wars, world heritage register

Introduction

UNESCO's decision in 2019 to give World Heritage listing to the Budj Bim cultural landscape in Victoria was of historic importance becoming the first Indigenous Australian landscape to be gazetted solely for its cultural values. Other more famous listings such as Uluru-Kata Tjuta (registered in 1987) and Kakadu National Parks (registered in three stages in 1981, 1987 and 1992), had previously been listed for a combination of natural and cultural values (Smith C, Jackson & Ralph 2019)

Its listing is significant because it acknowledged the specific thousands-years old history of Indigenous practices in that land, but also because it was a breakthrough in recognising 'cultural landscapes' as a significant criterion for Indigenous living heritage. Recognition undermined the usefulness of the divide between 'tangible' and 'intangible' categories in examining and understanding Indigenous heritage.[1] which has historically led to an under-recognition of Indigenous culture and practice. In addition, the listing culminated decades of systematic and sustained effort by the Gunditjmara Traditional Owners, which first began with the struggle to regain ownership of their lands.

Budj Bim falls within the country of the Gunditjmara Traditional Owners and the 59 clans of the nation. *gundij* means 'belonging to' and refers to the whole of the environment including nature and culture, and material and spiritual components (Commonwealth of Australia 2017, XVIII).

The account that follows addresses four areas. Firstly, it describes Budj Bim and its historic heritage significance. It outlines the different elements of tangible and intangible heritage and culture that include

1 A caveat is needed here. This paper relies entirely on secondary sources, and my assessment and interpretation of accounts and documents. As a non-Indigenous man I am 'external' to Indigenous experience, heritage and knowledge. Therefore, what follows is not drawn from personal knowledge or contact.

the material - pre-colonial engineering and settlement, eel harvesting and weaving; and the intangible – Indigenous knowledge, practices and traditions. This informs a discussion of the usefulness of the distinction made between tangible and intangible used in heritage categorisation, arguing instead that these aspects are interdependent and inseparable. The third section discusses the history of dispossession and gradual reclaiming of land rights that were the pre-condition for returning the land to traditional practices, and eventual national heritage recognition and native title. The final section discusses the World Heritage nomination and listing.

Underlying this history is the self-direction and active agency of the Traditional Owners as they devised plans and strategies to win back their country and the official recognition that comes with National and World listings. Learning how to work within these national and international frameworks was a critical factor in the Gunditjmara's success. Understanding how the heritage systems worked; the various criteria; and documentation requirements; gathering detailed historical, geographical and cultural recordings; and then recruiting heritage experts to collaborate with while retaining the final say in strategy direction were all critical elements in achieving recognition.

The paper concludes by suggesting that the significance of the Budj Bim listing goes beyond the Gunditjmara achieving global recognition, in that the course they set out provides an important public education role about Indigenous and post-settlement Australia, as well as a guide and inspiration for others to make claims for recognition of their cultural landscapes.

What is Budj Bim?

The Gunditjmara have lived in south-west Victoria for up to 50,000 years, and Budj Bim has existed for over 30,000 years. The aquaculture infrastructure system, which was the foundation of the World Heritage claim, was created around 7,000 years ago (Jones 2011, 131).

Budj Bim is Victoria's youngest volcano and the site of an ancestral creation being of Gunditjmara country. It is a deep-time story, and the ancestral being *budj bim* is integral to the environmental creation. The

rocky outcrop, formerly known as Mt Eccles[2], is Budj Bim's forehead and as the head erupted lava flowed out the *tung att* (teeth). The resultant Tyrendarra lava flow spread for 30 kilometres west and south to the coast and extended another 20 kilometres beneath the sea to the island of Deen Mar (Lady Julia Percy Island). The Gunditjmara witnessed the eruptions and the changed physical conditions that the lava flow created, which provided the tangible and intangible foundation of the cultural landscape. The new terrain of waterways, undulating volcanic plains and native grasslands were cultivated by the Gunditjmara peoples to engineer one of the world's oldest freshwater aquaculture systems to farm and harvest Kooyang (short-finned eels) and other fish (McNiven et al 2012; Jones, 2011, 136).

They created ponds and wetlands linked by channels containing weirs, which were engineered to bring water and young eels from Darlots Creek to low lying areas. Woven fibre baskets were placed in the weir to harvest mature eels. Traps up to 350 metres long, with a sink hole for eel storage were developed, and the eels were then smoked and stored for food and trade and for large gatherings such as marriages, corroborees or to settle disputes (Wettenhall & Gunditjmara 2010, Jordan 2012; see also Tyson Lovett Murray's drone photography of the Kooyang Weir Murray 2017)).

In addition to engineering the water flows and eel traps that ensured a year-round supply, the Gunditjmara clans established villages by building clusters of stone huts using stones from the Tyrendarra lava flow, growing vegetation, processing and storing food, and sharing and trading with other nations. The interaction of land and people created the material and immaterial conditions of the Gunditjmara.

The aquaculture system transformed the society providing a permanent food supply, permanent settlement, food exchange, building and construction and cultural practices to support this. It is an illustration of Henri Lefebvre's idea that every society, every mode of production, produces a certain space, its own space, and its own spatial practices (Lefebvre 1991).

Bruce Pascoe in his survey of the journals and diaries of early European settlers came across 'repeated references to (Aboriginal) people

2 Mt Eccles was named after a British aristocrat William Eeles, but a transcription error meant it became Mt Eccles in 1845. On the tenth anniversary of the Gunditjmara's Native Title victory, Mt Eccles National Park was officially renamed Budj Bim National Park (Mena Report 2017)

building dams and wells; planting; irrigating and harvesting seeds ... and manipulating the landscape' (Pascoe 2018, 2). Peter Beveridge's diary account of his journey to the Murray River in 1843 recorded that 'substantial weirs (had already been) built all through the river systems' (Pascoe 2018, 6). The Brewarrina Aboriginal Fish Traps (*Baiames Ngunnhu*), also listed on the National Heritage Register, is another example and is thought to be one of the oldest human constructions in the world (DoPE).

The archaeological, oral accounts, continuing practices and diaries of white settlers combine to provide rich evidence that engineering and hydraulic engineering existed in Australia long before European settlement.

The Tangible, Intangible and socio-material practices

Budj Bim's successful World Heritage listing recognises both tangible and intangible heritage. However, the intimate link that exists between the two, indeed it is more than a link as they are inseparable, demonstrates that the distinction between the two, in this case, is redundant. It is both together, not either/or.

Foucault's insights in the 1970s exposing the modern/scientific method of categorising, classifying, presenting and ordering objects served an important and necessary political purpose. He argued that these methods rested on a set of false binaries, which privileged one type of knowledge to the exclusion of others and became self-perpetuating (Foucault 2002/1970). Weiss makes a similar claim that at the same time 'heritage discourse enables one mode of conceiving of and potentially celebrating historical persons and events, it also disables other forms and modes' (Weiss 2007, 413). This has particularly been the case in recognising Indigenous practices.

It has been the tangible - buildings and nature - that has dominated heritage recognition. A higher status to the tangible meant that many Indigenous and non-Western heritage values were being overlooked. It was not until the second half of the twentieth century, and in particular with the development of the Burra Charter (ICOMOS Australia 1979 and revised in 1981, 1988 and 1999), that the 'social value of heritage became an explicit component of conservation policy and practice' (Jones 2017, 23). The Charter put the assessment of cultural significance

at the heart of the conservation process on the basis that: 'places of cultural significance enrich people's lives, often providing a deep and inspirational sense of connection to community and landscape and to lived experiences' (ICOMOS Australia 1999, 1). Cultural significance is 'embodied in the place – in its fabric, setting, use, associations and meanings' (Australia ICOMOS, 2013, 4).

The Charter acknowledges that for Indigenous peoples 'natural and cultural values may be indivisible', ... as they are 'frequently interdependent' (Australia ICOMOS, 2013, 2-3). The accompanying Practice Note explains that Social and Spiritual Value refer to associations that a place has for a particular community, forming part of that community's identity, through meanings developed from long use. The intangible values and meanings, expressed through cultural practices, contribute to spiritual identity, create and maintain repositories of knowledge, traditions and lore and emerge from the community's relationship with the spiritual realm, in Budj Bim's case the creation story (Australia ICOMOS 2013, 4).

UNESCO responded by adding 'cultural landscapes' at its World Heritage Convention in 1992. Its categorising of tangible and intangible heritage was an attempt to redress the imbalance of tangible over intangible by 'bringing in' through official acknowledgement those practices, traditions and knowledges that have historically been ignored, not understood, or under-valued. It also 'marked the new assertiveness of actors from post-settler states in North America and Oceania' (Gfeller, 2013 483).

However, establishing this new distinction between tangible/intangible relies on replicating a methodology of identifying, classifying, listing and installing a new binary of material/immaterial; tangible/intangible that Foucault and others aimed to dispense with. Karen Barad challenges the simple distinction between material and immaterial suggesting that some 'intangibles' are material. 'Hauntings are not immaterial, and they are not mere recollections or reverberations of what was. Hauntings are an integral part of existing material conditions' (Barad 2017, 107). Greer too questions the idea that Indigenous heritage is exclusively (my emphasis) intangible noting that archaeological remains are material elements of people/spirits (Greer 2010, 53).

These two values, the tangible and intangible, are created by the

social relations and the social practices that sustain them. Heritage is more than an object, or a place, rather, it is a social construct, one in which a material artefact, a monument, a site, or a cultural practice is endowed with meaning (Gfeller 2013, 484, see Smith 2007, 2). And social practices are more than nature, buildings and artefacts. A way of understanding how this divide may be broached is through a socio-material approach which recognises the interdependence of the tangible and intangible as it attempts to understand 'the constitutive entanglement of the social and the material in everyday organisational life' [Orlikowski 2007, 1435). It examines how humans, spatial arrangements, objects and technologies are intertwined with language, culture and social practices (Leonardi & Barley 2010). Knowledge emerges out of this interaction of material elements, practices and the environment, and 'an either/or perspective is transformed into a both/also point of view' (Zeichner (2010, 92).

While some critique the UNESCO process as a project of cultural legitimisation, through its power to recognise, authorise and validate certain cultural expressions as 'heritage' (Smith and Akagawa 2008, 4) the Gunditjmara identified it as a process to use for their interests deliberately and strategically.

Winning back Country

Dispossession and White occupation.

First contact was made with sealers and whalers around Portland and later pastoralists spread out from Melbourne in search of new land. Skirmishes and guerrilla raids followed, and 28 massacres of Aboriginal people were recorded between 1833 and 1859 (Clark 1995, 135–139). The conflict became known as the Eumeralla Wars. Eventually, the Indigenous people were dispossessed and many forcibly dispersed. Reserves were set up for those who refused to leave most notably the Lake Condah Mission in 1867, which was close to the eel traps and within sight of Budj Bim. The Mission housed the Indigenous people who remained on country, but it also separated 'half-caste' children from their parents becoming part of the Stolen Generations (see also Partland 2013).[3]

3 Deb Rosa, a Senior Ranger on Gunditjmara land for the Windamara Aboriginal Corporation, and her mother, Thelma Rose-Edwards, a Gunditjmara Elder, describe growing up on Lake Condah Mission ABC Radio - http://mpegmedia.abc.net.au/local/southwestvic/201305/r1115468_13601969.mp3

The following century of white settlement, pastoral development and grazing stock, uncontrolled fire and significant alterations to the water drainage of the Lakes, including re-directing water flows away from Lake Condah, meant that the Gunditjmara's aquaculture systems were damaged, and the landscape altered.

The Mission was closed in 1919 and a parcel of the land returned in 1984 (see Weir 2009, Gunditj Mirring 2020). In 1987 the Victorian state government attempted to legislate the transfer of Lake Condah to the Gunditjmara people but was unable to pass the bill through its Upper House. The Commonwealth intervened using its constitutional powers arising from the 1967 Referendum to vest land to an Aboriginal community and enacted the Aboriginal Land (Lake Condah and Framlingham Forest) Act 1987, returning 457 hectares to the Traditional Owners. Using the 1967 Referendum powers in this way had never occurred before and this unique process was recognised as 'outstanding heritage' in 2004 (Jones 2011, 134). During the 1990s the Gunditjmara set out to return water to Lake Condah and a first sustainable development management plan was prepared in 1993 (Bell and Johnston 2008).

National Heritage Listing

In 2004 a new Australian Heritage system was introduced, and the Budj Bim National Heritage Landscape was one of the initial three listings approved for the National Register. Budj Bim was declared under four of the nine criteria for outstanding national values. Those criteria considered both tangible and intangible features:

- Indigenous tradition in which ancestral beings revealed themselves in the landscape, through the creation story
- The extensive aquaculture systems that enabled Gunditjmara society to develop
- The organised resistance to European expansion known as the Eumeralla Wars
- The continuity of connection of the Gunditjmara with their country (Bell and Johnston 2010, 3-4)

Since then, other Indigenous landscapes have been added including

the Brewarrina Aboriginal Fish Traps (*Baiames Ngunnhu*), Kakadu National Park, *Ngarrabullgan* (Mount Mulligan), Quinkan Country, the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, Wave Hill Walk Off Route, Western Tasmania Aboriginal Cultural Landscape, Wilgie Mia Aboriginal Ochre Mine, and Wurrwurrwuy stone arrangements (DAWE 2020).

Native Title 2007 & 2011

The most significant step in the Gunditjmara regaining control over their traditional lands came with the awarding of Native Title by the Federal Court in 2007. The Court recognised the Gunditjmara's 'strong and unrelenting connection to this area' from before European settlement to the present. It further recognised that 'their ancestors farmed eels for food and trade, at the time of European settlement and back through millennia', and that traditional knowledge and management practices had been retained, continued to be transmitted and also adapted to incorporate new materials (Smith 2019, 291). Gunditjmara Elder Daryl Rose explained that 'We actually managed the eel. We just didn't come out here and hunt and fish. We actually came out to collect and manoeuvre and farm and move these eels into places where we wanted them to go so we could then pick them up when we wanted to pick them up' (cited in Bell and Johnston 2008).

In 2011 the Federal Court extended Native Title (Part B) over Crown Land between the Shaw and Eumeralla Rivers, from Deen Maar island to Lake Linlithgow, and brought in the Eastern Marr peoples who are also Traditional Owners (Gunditj Mirring 2014). Owning title to the land was a critical breakthrough because it meant that the Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (GMTOAC) was now able to direct the cultural, economic and natural resource management of the land, and control access' (Parks Victoria 2015, 22). Exercising their new autonomy, the Gunditjmara commenced restoring the landscape, bringing back its pre-colonial water system and cultural landscape (Jones 2011, 131). They engaged archaeological, engineering consultants and academic researchers to collaborate and work on developing ongoing land management strategies (Gunditjmara with Wettenhall 2010), including partnering with the Winda-Mara Aboriginal Corporation to establish the Lake Condah Sustainable Development Project in 2012 (Gunditj Mirring, 2020b). Other Management Plans were also developed for different parts of the land to cover future

development, water management and employment programs such as the Budj Bim Ranger Program. Indigenous rangers are now employed full-time and are mentored by Gunditjmara Elders who provide them with cultural knowledge and support. As well as cultural heritage management they are responsible for weed management, pest control, maintaining visitor facilities, revegetation, fencing and livestock operations (Parks Victoria 2015, 22).

Consultations and partnerships produced specific working Plans, laying the groundwork for preparing the detailed World Heritage nomination. Most importantly they proceeded under the direction of the Traditional Owners in a way quite unlike the more usual heritage submission process which Greer describes as the 'reactive' method. Under that process heritage experts too often take the lead in an 'expert-driven agenda' and the applicants respond to the expertise ideas and methods (Greer 2010, 46).

External recognition of their successful progress began in 2010 when the Lake Condah Restoration Project was awarded the Civil Contractors Federation Earth Award. It acknowledged three attributes including 'the engagement of the local Indigenous community in all aspects of construction, training, recruitment of Indigenous workers in construction and administration; and an exhaustive community consultation program' (Park Watch 2019, 13). The following year Engineers Australia awarded the Budj Bim works with an Engineering Heritage National Landmark (Jordan 2015, 68).

After Native Title was extended in 2011 the Traditional Owners set a goal of satisfying the criteria for World Heritage Listing. In an example of 'defining, valuing and protecting their own intangible heritage' (Deacon and Smeets, 2013, 129, 132) the Gunditjmara carefully considered which criteria they would most likely satisfy, settling on criteria (iii) and (v). Criterion (iii) referred to 'a unique cultural tradition or civilisation which is living, or which has disappeared' and criterion (v), considered to be the most relevant, required an 'outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use which is representative of a culture…, or human interaction with the environment'. Worth noting is that criterion (vi), which required evidence that 'directly or tangibly associated (the place) with events or living traditions, with ideas or with beliefs', was also considered but rejected because it would have required

opening up and documenting cultural beliefs and dreaming stories that the Gunditjmara decided should not be put in the public domain (Jones 2011, 138-140).

Table 1: Budj Bim timeline

30,000 BCE	Budj Bim erupts
5,000 BCE	Aquaculture system exists since
1810	First contact between Gunditjmara and Europeans
1833-1859	Eumeralla Wars
1867	Lake Condah Mission established
1886	'Half-Caste' Act passed leading to many expulsions, reducing the population by half
1919	Lake Condah Mission closed
1951	Victorian government reclaimed land for Soldier Resettlement
1984-1987	Mission lands returned to Traditional Owners
1996	Native Title Claim launched
2004	Budj Bim listed on National Heritage Register
2005	Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (GMTOAC) established by Gunditjmara Traditional Owners
2007	Gunditjmara win Native Title Rights (Part A) through the Federal Court. Achieve recognition of their heritage and identity[4]
2008-2010	Lake Condah area returned to the Gunditjmara by the Victorian government
2011	Native Title Extended (Part B)
2017	Mt Eccles National Park renamed Budj Bim National Park
2019	UNESCO lists Budj Bim on the World Heritage Register

World Heritage Recognition

The World Heritage Convention was adopted by UNESCO's member states in 1972 and was developed to ensure the 'identification, conservation and presentation of the world's heritage' (UNESCO 1972).

4 The ruling totalled 140,000 hectares, covering national parks including Lower Glenelg, Mt Richmond, Budj Bim (Mt Eccles), Discovery Park Coastal Park, and Cobboboonee, Dunmore and Hotspur State Forests. The 2011 Determination added another 4,000 hectares when Native Title was granted over Deen Marr island.

Around ten percent of the 1092 listings on the World Heritage Register included Indigenous peoples' territories at the time of the Budj Bim submission, and less than forty had been inscribed for their Indigenous cultural values (Smith A, et al, 2019, 286).

A detailed comparative analysis of cultural landscapes on the World Heritage List was undertaken to inform Budj Bim's nomination. It concluded that 'Indigenous knowledge, use and management of natural resources are rarely considered as cultural values' but argued that that is what they are. The analysis further contended that the disparity between recognising the significance of natural values and the representation of these as cultural values reflects the 'continuing legacy of the association of Indigenous peoples with the 'natural' world' (Smith A, et al 2019, 285, 302). At the same time a convergence of new approaches to fieldwork in anthropology, archaeology and heritage management, what Gfeller (2015) referred to as the 'Indigenous turn' in world heritage, also highlighted shortcomings in the requirements for nomination.

Smith et al (2019, 288-289) argue that there has long been a recognition that 'both the conceptual framework of the World Heritage Convention which distinguishes between natural and cultural values and places, and the central concept of 'Outstanding Universal Value' are not necessarily relevant or appropriate to the values of Indigenous peoples'. While they outline a number of structural problems embedded within the World Heritage system that contributes to under-recognition, they also note changes that have been made that seek to address those shortcomings. Significantly, the changes opened new avenues for Indigenous voices to develop new policy. Two examples illustrate this impact.

Firstly, in 2003 UNESCO adopted the Convention on Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICHC), which recognised the interdependence between intangible and tangible cultural heritage, and which took effect in 2006. Its definition of intangible cultural heritage included practices, representations and expressions, associated knowledge, and necessary skills that communities recognise as part of their cultural heritage. Changes were made to criterion (iii) and 'cultural landscapes' was added as a category of site to 'reflect the interrelationships of people and their communities', with the aim being to bring together 'biological and cultural diversity expressed at a landscape scale and to provide a vehicle' ... for 'intangible values' to be

recognised in nominations. Head (2010, 7) argues that the UNESCO process has highlighted 'the way the cultural landscape concept has been mobilized to, at least in principle, include Aboriginal voices and values in the land management process'. Secondly, in 2018 the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on World Heritage (IIPFWH) was established and in the same year its Policy on Engaging with Indigenous Peoples was released (Smith et al 2019, 288-289).

The nomination and listing

The nomination of Budj Bim was completed in 2018. For sites to be included on the list they must be of outstanding universal value and meet at least one of ten criteria. The nomination emphasised that the aquaculture system is an expression of Gunditjmara knowledge and traditional practices (Commonwealth of Australia 2017), and that a key dimension of the Budj Bim cultural landscape is that 'local ecologies are not radically altered but selectively and strategically enhanced. ... Manipulating local ecologies for resources for human use give rise to cultural landscapes ... [that] are patterned by tangible evidence of these practices' (Smith et al 2019, 293-294). The Traditional Owners insisted that commonly used terms such as 'hunter-gatherer', and 'complex hunter-fisher' not be used as they were 'outdated and colonialist concepts' (Smith et al 2019, 293; see also Graeber and Wengrow 2022 for a more detailed historical/anthropological exposition supporting the Traditional Owners views based on examples from around the world in particular Indigenous settlements in north America).

At its 43rd session in 2019 in Baku, Azerbaijan, the World Heritage Committee inscribed the Budj Bim Cultural Landscape on the World Heritage List becoming the only Australian World Heritage site to have been listed exclusively for its Aboriginal cultural landscape and values and the twentieth Australian property on the World Heritage List (Context n.d.; Park Watch 2019, 12).

UNESCO's listing recognised that Budj Bim met the two criteria that had been submitted, acknowledging the mix of tangible (stone-walled facilities) and intangible (traditions, practices and ingenuity) characteristics. Criterion (iii) recognises 'cultural traditions, knowledge, practices and ingenuity of the Gunditjmara' .... including associated storytelling, dance and basket weaving, (which) continue to be

maintained by their collective multigenerational knowledge'; and criterion (v) as an outstanding example of 'human interaction with the environment', exemplified by the 'dynamic ecological-cultural relationships evidenced in the Gunditjmara's deliberate manipulation and management of the environment' (UNESCO Cultural Landscape, 2020).

That dynamic relationship of Gunditjmara and their land is nowadays carried by knowledge systems retained through material culture, oral transmission and continuity of cultural practice illustrating the ways multiple systems – social, spiritual, geological, hydrological and ecological – interact and function.

Conclusion

The Budj Bim World Heritage listing is the culmination of a series of historic initiatives and firsts. It reflects a new understanding of cultural landscapes and lays the ground for others to follow. UNESCO assessed that the evidence of construction and farming at Budj Bim 'challenges the common perception and assumption of Australia's First Peoples as having all been hunter-gatherers living in resource-constrained environments' (cited in Carey 2019; Budj Bim IPA p.22, see also Pascoe 2018). It acknowledges that Budj Bim as a cultural landscape rests on an intimate connection to community, landscape and lived experiences which form identity and which in turn create repositories of knowledge, traditions and lore. The World Heritage process, like the national listings before it, explicitly recognises the enduring importance of Gunditjmara knowledge and practices. The international recognition process is itself the product of new ways of understanding. The theoretical foundations of the 'Indigenous turn' in heritage assessment and recognition with its new approaches to fieldwork in anthropology, archaeology and heritage management can also be seen in the 'practice turn' in educational theory and socio-material approaches to knowledge.

World Heritage Listing has already had a number of impacts. At the local level, it consolidates recognition of the cultural landscape within Australia, it strengthens the autonomy of the Indigenous led management plan and direction and affirms the employment strategies and future development that the Gunditjmara are following. Most importantly it offers an example of an Indigenous led process with

its goals and objectives identified many years ago and systematically pursued using traditional knowledge along with engaging other external expertise in support of the objective.

Today the site is now co-ordinated by the Budj Bim Cultural Landscape World Heritage Steering Committee comprising Traditional Owners and state heritage and environmental agencies. It has attracted new, additional government support with the Victorian government committing $5 million for the development of a Master Plan and tourism infrastructure in anticipation of an increase in global attention that a world heritage listing will bring (Carey 2019). Public education for visitors via interpretive signs, pamphlets, online materials, ranger talks, and walking tracks, will mean increased opportunities to understand millennia-old Indigenous society; conflicts and dispossession following European settlement, and the struggle to regain land ownership and autonomy in driving national and international recognition.

Its 'rights to recognition' especially for those who have 'fallen on the wrong side' of globalisation (Weiss 2007, 414) offers hope for achieving recognition for Indigenous people and their cultural landscapes within and beyond Australia. Acknowledging global significance provides a pathway for future nominations of cultural sites and shows the potential that when considered from an Indigenous cultural landscape perspective rather than a typology of tangible evidence many other sites will be recognised.

The case of Budj Bim demonstrates that heritage recognition is not just always a question of how community groups create a sense of belonging and attachment to the historical and archaeological locales, memorials, protected areas, and landscapes they live in and around. The Gunditjmara do not need to create that sense as they have lived it for so long. They do not need to create meaning and maintain identities through heritage places because that meaning has existed far longer than any attempts to construct criteria and registers to identify such places. What the National and World Heritage Registers do achieve is to officially recognise the living history, connection, and meaning of the Gunditjmara lands.

The importance of listing means the recognition of social practices, oral traditions, the knowledge and the skills to produce food, buildings, crafts, and living with the land. This is an important recognition of

history, cultural diversity and, intercultural dialogue, and encourages mutual respect for the ways of life that have existed in Australia for millennia.

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