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ISSUE PAPER ON INTANGIBLE HERITAGE

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DEFINITION OF INTANGIBLE HERITAGE

The definition of intangible heritage is still under debate. The concept grows conceptually from the assumption, as in the 1972 UNESCO document on World Cultural Heritage, that heritage is manifested in tangible forms--primarily buildings and historic sites. In Canada, the equation of heritage with buildings and sites is evident in longstanding national NGOs such as Heritage Canada and regional NGOs such as the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador; all use the term synonymously with buildings.

Criticisms from the Third and Fourth world about this definition of heritage led to introducing the idea that some cultures have largely non-material heritages--initially recognized in organizations like UNESCO under the rubric "Non-Physical Heritage" (1982)¹ that covered "Traditional Culture and Folklore." In 1989, a UNESCO declaration urged member states to safeguard "Traditional Culture and Folklore." However, over the next ten years, while applauding UNESCO's efforts to recognize non-monumental heritage, many countries criticized the term "folklore" as a vestige of colonialism and the implied stereotype that only Third and Fourth World peoples have intangible heritage (labeled "folklore"), while others did not.

While the emergence of intangible heritage as a focus of international concern was partly a reaction against the association of heritage with objects, there is clearly a connection between these two categories of tangible and intangible. In the realm of intangible heritage, there is a wide range of knowledge and activities (both intangible) associated with things; houses, clothing, gardens, pottery, for example, are all tangible things that require a complex of intangible knowledge and skills to make and use. Similarly, the intangible performances of a dance often involve costumes, some musical forms require instruments, storytelling sometimes is found in a particular place such as a kitchen. Objects are often the only surviving evidences of some larger intangible activity. In short, there is a fluidity between the categories of tangible and intangible heritage. In fact, it may well be that every item of tangible heritage has an associated intangible heritage, but in historical contexts these intangible aspects may well not survive.

Although there is still not an agreed upon definition, UNESCO--as well as various nation states--have settled on the term "intangible heritage" or "intangible cultural heritage". These terms, therefore, cover previous work by national and international agencies that appeared under rubrics such as "folklore", "folk culture," "traditional culture," "traditional knowledge," patrimoine culturel et immatériel," "culture traditionnelle et populaire," "oral heritage," "tradition,"² "our heritage of ideas, values and language."³

Through a series of meetings, UNESCO decided the preferred term to cover these forms of cultural expression is Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) or simply, Intangible Heritage (IH). Since IH is a living phenomenon, activities that are passed on through generations, the definition of IH should stress knowledge rather than static items. Thus the definition that UNESCO has adopted is:

Intangible cultural heritage is peoples' learned processes along with the knowledge, skills and creativity that inform and are developed by them, the products they create, and the resources, spaces and other aspects of social and natural context necessary to their sustainability; these processes provide living communities with a sense of continuity with previous generations and are important to cultural identity, as well as to the safeguarding of cultural diversity and creativity of humanity.⁴

While this definition might be somewhat obscure to the layman, it does indicate "a shift from a focus on products to a focus on production [that] has occurred, and that this focus recognizes cultural heritage as being in a permanent process of production."⁵

Along with this definition, UNESCO has listed examples of different domains covered by it. In many ways, these domains follow the conceptualizations of the 1989 UNESCO declaration that contained a list of things considered intangible heritage, a list subsequently criticized. However, what has recently been put forward is essentially in that spirit:

oral cultural heritage; languages; performing arts and festive events; social rituals and practices; cosmologies and knowledge systems; beliefs and practices about Nature

-UNESCO Turin meeting, 2001

forms of popular and traditional expression--such as languages, oral literature, music, dance, games, mythology, rituals, costumes, craftwork know-how, architecture

cultural spaces--places where popular and traditional cultural activities take place in a concentrated manner (sites for storytelling, rituals, marketplaces, festivals etc.) or on a regular basis (daily rituals, annual processions)

-UNESCO Proclamation of Masterpieces, 2001

Much has been written recently on reaching an all-inclusive definition of IH. The Canadian definition clearly needs to cover the IH of all groups, including Aboriginal and immigrant (whether recent or longstanding). The definition, as well, must ensure that all groups recognize that they possess IH, and that the Government of Canada's definition of IH will mean policies and programs that cover all citizens.

The UNESCO definition centering on *learned processes based on the past* would serve the Canada well. A proposed definition for the Canadian context is:

IH comprises the complex activities and forms of creative expression of ordinary people that draw on past traditions of their community/ies. IH involves knowledge, skills and creativity that

inform these activities and expressions, and, in turn, are further shaped by them. IH is sustained by and often of a piece with specific resources, spaces, and other social and environmental phenomena.

As UNESCO has done, it is useful to specify the kind of scope that this definition covers:

Canadian IH includes many activities including the stories we tell, the holidays we celebrate, the family events we find important, our community gatherings, the languages we speak, the songs we create and perform, our knowledge of our natural spaces, how we treat sickness, the foods we eat, the special clothes we wear, our beliefs and practices.

KEY POLICY ISSUES

Everyone has Intangible Heritage

Much of the pressure for developing IH policy and programs has come from groups that feel left out of international, national, and regional heritage policies that strictly emphasize built structures as heritage. UNESCO's recent work has now defined cultural heritage as both tangible (artifacts) and intangible (oral and customary). This broadening comes largely from criticisms of a Eurocentric approach to what is considered heritage (i.e., monuments), a situation that reflected a "historic focus on the protection of tangible heritage" largely of industrial cultures, thus "marginalizing a vast range of cultural expressions."⁶ However, the new UNESCO initiatives are not merely aimed at recognizing non-written cultures (such as Australia's Aborigines). Instead, following the work of ethnographers in many parts of the world, it is recognized that all peoples and groups have intangible heritage. What this means on a policy (and political) level is that all citizens can recognize that they possess intangible heritage, and what they possess is not only important to them, but of importance to the country as a whole. We all have IH, not just those others. The Government of Canada, then, can be seen as caring about the heritage of all people--not just minority groups or indigenous peoples. As well, heritage is not equated simply with heritage objects (buildings, furniture, etc.)--which often only the wealthy can purchase, restore or maintain.

Intangible Heritage can be exceptional and ordinary

IH programs in different countries are based on evaluations of IH that have different goals but are not necessarily contradictory. On the one hand, there are countries that aim to recognize the exceptional examples of IH within their

boundaries. This philosophy has led to what can be referred to as the “Living Treasures” model, first developed in Japan in 1950. The recent UNESCO “Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity” program is based on this model. Through it, the most outstanding examples of IH are recognized and given national (or international) attention; examples can cover a wide range of items including cultural groups, spaces, and activities.

The other philosophy regarding IH recognizes that it is a cultural activity not just limited to a few best examples, but, instead, is something that all people participate in. In this model, IH is related to people’s families, food, workplace, community life, religious beliefs, holiday celebrations, and knowledge of and use of their natural environment. The recognition that everyone shares in IH means that attention is paid to the ordinary and the common, where each person is made aware of the fact that he or she is a carrier of heritage, and that heritage is passed on to others in the immediate familial or community context.

IH defines identity: who we are as a local group and as a nation

One of the major functions of IH is that it helps to define a person’s identity. Identity is made up of elements of IH that each individual fashions in his or her own way. One person has many identities, simultaneously using many different aspects of IH to define them: e.g., membership in a family, in a particular belief group, involvement in a specific regional music, proficiency in a particular language or language dialect, awareness of specialized occupational skills--and more. All persons, then, have a unique combination of IH elements that make them what they are.

On the other hand, some of those IH elements may be shared with others in the region or the nation. A certain food tradition may foster identity for an entire region, and a series of such regional traditions may well define what it means to be Canadian for many citizens. Thus, IH is both extremely personal, but regional and national as well. While in other smaller countries with relatively homogenous cultural populations, specific examples of IH are often considered synonymous with nationhood, the breadth and diversity of IH in Canada means that national identity is more clearly understood (and strengthened) through the understanding of regional IH traditions.

In terms of identity, the safeguarding of IH recognizes the importance of cultural diversity. In a climate of globalization, organizations like UNESCO recognize the importance of safeguarding IH to promote cultural diversity in a world increasingly the same.⁷ In the Canadian context, the safeguarding of IH continues the longstanding federal commitment to encourage all citizens to maintain their own group traditions, thus ensuring a nation rich in cultural diversity. All groups

need to safeguard their IH, whether they be European or Native, immigrants recently arrived or here for many generations. With threats of global uniformity, safeguarding IH within the Canadian context will mean maintaining a broad range of cultural values and activities that help define the nature of Canada.

CONCERNS

There are a series of concerns that the Government of Canada might well have to address as it considers policies dealing with IH. In a report done for UNESCO, Janet Blake identified a number of measures that each country might be asked to consider in a final international convention on IH. While the final form of the UNESCO convention is far from certain, Blake's list serves as a practical working list of what Canadian Government officials might consider when discussing new policy initiatives. Blake lists:⁸

- develop and enforce a Code of Ethics for researchers and commercial bodies for the recording, collecting, using etc. of intangible heritage.
- preserve the transmission of intangible heritage through prizes, provision of spaces for traditional performances and practices and other forms of support to holders.
- protect the privacy and confidentiality of informants and extend this to guarantee the secrecy of certain aspects of intangible heritage.
- ensure the conservation and preservation of recorded materials.
- raise public awareness of traditional knowledge and skills and of their social value.
- guarantee holder communities access to their own intangible heritage while also respecting customary rules that deny access and use to outsiders.
- ensure adequate training (especially of holders) and resources in all areas of documenting, recording, preserving, managing etc. of intangible heritage.
- establish national documentation centres for intangible heritage with community involvement.
- support mother-tongue education and teaching of the value of traditional and oral elements.
- encourage the transmission to youth of intangible cultural elements.
- facilitate and assist tradition-holders to develop their traditional material culture and practices.
- involve tradition-holders in the safeguarding and management of intangible heritage.
- support communities in efforts to preserve the active use of local languages.
- protect significant material culture and spaces that are crucial to transmission of intangible heritage.

- support tradition-holders in exploring the commercial potential of their traditional culture.

- develop mechanisms and legislation that deal with the issue of authorisation and prior informed consent of tradition-holders in relation to traditional knowledge.

- ensure that the fullest possible protection is offered to intangible heritage through the intellectual property system.

Blake's list of possible measures can be grouped together under a series of practices that need to be developed that both safeguard and encourage IH. These practices fall under four major categories, starting first with documentation. After adequate documentation, decisions must be made in terms of recognition, dissemination, and encouragement. How each of these concerns is addressed needs to be considered.

Documentation

How IH has been documented varies depending on political contexts and end goals. There are many examples of different strategies for documentation. National documentation projects have been undertaken in a number of countries. The most recent model (influenced by ongoing UNESCO work on IH) is in Brazil; this program has established a Registry of Cultural Assets of an Intangible Nature.⁹ This Registry will recognize IH that has been identified by national and regional organizations as important to Brazilian identity and culture. Documentation programs have been carried out in other countries such as Ireland. Within Canada, some specific forms of IH (primarily folklore materials) were systematically surveyed by the former Canadian Centre for Folk Culture Studies (now Cultural Studies) at the Canadian Museum of Civilization. CCFCS attempted to survey all parts of the country, and landmark IH collections within the CMC Archive include those of Marius Barbeau (Québec and various Aboriginal groups), Kenneth Peacock (Newfoundland), Robert Klymasz (the Prairies)--among others.

Documentation of IH relates, then, to the encouragement of these traditions (see section below on Encouragement). Each recording of IH describes it at a particular time and place, but IH is continually evolving. Priorities are sometimes given to document IH that is in danger of disappearing (e.g., knowledge related to the Newfoundland salt cod fishery). However, in IH that is living, documentation projects may well consider periodic surveys. In Brazil, for example, the national plan is to document important examples of IH every ten years, to gauge how the particular form has evolved, to assess how assistance to grassroots groups might adapt to new conditions.¹⁰

Recognition

Recent concerns have been voiced about which kinds of IH should be recognized. The “Masterpieces” model sets up committees of “experts” (academics, grassroots stakeholders and NGO representatives who are knowledgeable of IH) to judge from either survey work or award programs which kinds of IH are important. Recognition sometimes is influenced by what is in danger of disappearing. In other cases, recognition comes from deciding what is the “best” example of a particular IH activity.

There is increasing concern with establishing grassroots involvement in the recognition process. At the recent UNESCO meeting in Rio, for example, the concluding draft document of the meeting recommended that it no longer be academic experts who largely decide which IH should be recognized as important. Rather, the document encouraged national bodies to work with regional and local grassroots groups to determine what IH is important for those involved, what should be documented, what should be recognized.

This latter emphasis brings up the question of standards (the quality of work that grassroots groups working on IH might produce), and the necessity of experts assisting and advising grassroots agencies on how to best do their work.

Dissemination

The issue of disseminating the forms of IH and the processes relating to them is based partly on the assumption that such dissemination helps to ensure a wide knowledge of the particular IH, and as a consequence may mean that this particular form continues to be practiced.

There are inherent dangers, however, when the issue of dissemination is raised. Often IH has been spread through media forms (such as compact discs, films, television, popular publications), and, more recently, the internet. Since IH often varies for each manifestation (such as those kinds publicly performed), and often varies from person to person, one major concern is simply that IH becomes static when it is translated into a particular media form. Unlike a physical monument that generally looks like the photo in the book or travel brochure, IH usually varies from what was seen or heard in a particular media form. The concern here is that IH is commodified into a static stage version of its former self, rather than an ongoing activity subject to development and change.

The impact of cultural tourism itself on IH is another concern. Static building landscapes can be viewed easily by tourists, with a certain distance between those who reside in the buildings, and those who view them. IH dissemination, on the other hand, requires direct contact between a particular culture and outside audiences. Local groups often worry that their IH is turning into mere “staged” performances for money--a process sometimes called “folklorization.”

Involvement of local groups in any dissemination strategy is necessary to reach a format that can both encourage group identity and IH safeguarding, as well as permit a wider understanding of IH for outsiders who may better appreciate cultural concerns and cultural diversity. Ideally, dissemination will become a vehicle addressing group values and the broader issue of sensitizing all Canadians to the importance of cultural diversity.

Encouragement

The current climate concerning work on IH clearly indicates how different IH is from the tangible heritage of monuments, buildings, and historic sites. Tangible heritage is considered static and therefore in need of being preserved in a pristine, original state. In general, IH is seen as something that continually changes and evolves, an ongoing process rather than a static thing. Definitions have focused on the academic concept of “process”: how a story is told, how a celebration happens, how a landscape is used, how a family prepares food--rather than just the products of these activities. In this mode of understanding, the element of adaptation and change becomes an important part of the process. Groups and individuals are able to alter the IH that they learn from those who have gone before, so that the IH meets current values and needs.

Intangible heritage, then, survives through encouraging its evolution: in the IH process, some aspects will continue, others change. Policies, then, need to recognize how different this is from the static mentalities surrounding tangible heritage sites. Work in the Brazilian context recognizes how important documentation is so that local groups can use such information in their own ways to enrich their IH; there is a clear understanding of how IH differs from monuments:

Stemming from cultural processes of social life-building, of forms of survival, of appropriation of natural resources and of relations with the environment, these manifestations [IH] have a specific dynamics of transmission, updating and transformation that may not be subject to the usual forms of protection of the cultural heritage. The intangible heritage does not require “protection” and “conservation”--in the same sense as the founding notions of the practice of preservation of real-estate and non-real estate cultural assets--but rather in the

sense of the identification, acknowledgment, ethnographic registration, periodical follow-up, dissemination and support. In sum, more documentation and follow-up and less intervention.¹¹

Again, grassroots organizations are the key stakeholders in safeguarding and promoting their own IH, avoiding the static commodifications that come from simplistic assumptions about how IH works.

CHALLENGES

Culture is a Shared Responsibility. A major challenge is how the Government of Canada can influence work on IH in the realm of culture, a domain that is a responsibility shared by both the federal and provincial governments. Many provinces recognize that cultural heritage plays a major role in provincial policy; however, heritage is still often equated with buildings, and many efforts remain largely in the area of tangible heritage.¹²

Consideration must be given to how to implement federal cultural policy on a provincial level. Some type of national coordinator or centre could assess the national and regional collections of IH that now exist in Federal, Provincial and Municipal institutions, to act to consolidate these wherever possible, and most important, using recent developments in Information Technology, to devise a system that will permit the public to access holdings on a national level. In general, however, national policies need to have provincial incentives to carry out work in the area of IH. Part of this challenge may be to follow the UNESCO Masterpieces model: UNESCO recognizes a particular IH of a member state, but as a prerequisite in the nomination process, the member state must indicate what programs are in place that deal with IH. Similarly, the Government of Canada could introduce a federal program of IH recognition. Provinces would be able to nominate candidates for national IH recognition (or some other designation), but the province would have to indicate which IH programs have been put in place.

Grassroots Participation. New programs need to ensure grassroots involvement with a network of regional and national experts. Programs may well start first at the local level, but because of the fact that much of the general public is not familiar with the term IH and what it covers, efforts must be made to ensure that programs educate the public on the fact that *their* heritage comes under the new federal initiatives. New programs might be vetted through regional or national advisors (as in the Museums Assistance Program), and mentoring can take place through the entire proposal process.

Every effort must be made to involve local groups in determining which IH is important to focus upon, and then cooperate with Federal efforts. Federal experts can help shape the general parameters of programs, but local cooperative work is essential, given that IH is a living phenomenon, and a fundamental goal of federal policies is its sustainability.

Finally, it will be necessary to carefully consider what qualifies as a grassroots organization. Federal and provincial officials must work to identify those groups that best represent local cultures, groups whose members are part of those cultures, and whose involvement in specific forms of IH demonstrates continuity over time.

Standards. With the challenge of grassroots involvement comes the challenge of standards. Federal policies and programs should apply a series of standards for the adequate documentation, recognition, dissemination and encouragement of IH. This means having trained professionals work in partnership with grassroots groups, training local players whenever possible. Policies and programs must strive to present materials that articulate in the best way possible the visions of the group involved in IH work. Evaluation of IH policy/practice will be based on discerning categories of quality, working first with grassroots groups, and then in consultation with regional and provincial agencies.¹³

National Focus, Regional Sensitivities. A major challenge is to have some kind of national focus for the Government of Canada's work on IH. Currently this exists for built heritage with the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. While the HSMBC is simply an agency that recognizes things (people, events) of national historic importance, it often acts, as well, as an advisory agency that can work with local groups on other built-environment policies and programs. At present, there is work going on in the area of IH at a number of Federal institutions, but that work is diffuse. Parks Canada has been concerned with Aboriginal IH, and IH related to the specific sites under its care. The Canadian Museum of Civilization has an archive that contains much material on IH, but its fieldwork in this area effectively ended around 1980. What is needed is a program that will identify some administrative body that is responsible for IH on the federal level, and where provincial, regional, and grassroots organizations can turn for advice or direction.

APPROACHES FOR IH INITIATIVES

Issues requiring resolution

1. Will there be a national administrative focus for a new Federal IH program? Will this reside, for example, in an existing body such as the Canadian Museum of Civilization, or in a body affiliated with the HSMBC?
2. Identification of individuals currently involved in Federal agencies that have expertise in IH. Who are the IH experts? What agencies are working in IH? What expertise is needed?

Parks Canada has a wide network of experts on tangible heritage (material culture, archaeology, buildings and monuments), but the number of experts who are working on IH appears small. Parks Canada's work in IH has occurred in two main areas: Aboriginal cultures; oral history related to the sites it curates.

Parks has recognized the IH dimension of Aboriginal landscapes, but how much work is currently being done on other aspects of Aboriginal IH needs to be determined.¹⁴ Parks' other work on IH deals with non-Aborigines; this is primarily the gathering of oral information relating to the European tangible sites it curates. A recent Secretary General of ICOMOS argues that monuments and sites have IH associated with them that needs to be gathered; but in his conclusions points to the fact that much IH has no physical manifestations.¹⁵ Given its mandate, Parks Canada's focus largely on the IH of the sites it is responsible for means that most IH falls outside its mandate.

Many heritage experts point out that the methods and practices involving tangible heritage are totally different for IH, and require different individuals with different skills. Those who will be responsible for IH policies and programs, and those working in such programs, should be knowledgeable of ethnographic techniques and methods (interviewing, observation, oral and visual sound technologies, fieldwork ethics--and more), a set of skills different from those connected to historic sites and buildings (building styles, technological forms, object conservation and preservation concerns).

Initiatives

Awards/Recognition

Recognizing Traditions (UNESCO Masterpieces model). This program would parallel the work of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board that deals with tangible heritage. A federal program would be set up that would identify and recognize examples of IH that are of national importance. These could include groups, spaces, events (following the UNESCO model), and would be chosen by a jury made up of a mix of researchers, grassroots stakeholders, and heritage officials. Nominations would come from provincial government organizations, indicating their current work in IH, and plans for the safeguarding of the particular activity nominated.

Recognizing Individuals. This program would be modeled on the Living Treasures program in Japan, or the National Heritage Fellows Program in the United States. A program would be established to recognize each year a small number of Canada's most important traditional artists. The National Endowment for the Arts in the United States, for example, has a longstanding program recognizing important folk artists as "National Heritage Fellows".¹⁶ Those recognized by the NEA as National Heritage Fellows in the Folk and Traditional Arts (2001) include Dorothy Trumpold, a German-American rug weaver; Fred Tsoodle, a Kiowa sacred song leader; Eddie Pennington, a western Kentucky thumpick-style guitarist.¹⁷

Recognizing Best Practices. A series of awards could be given to grassroots organizations for outstanding IH programs. These awards would recognize programs that have outstanding local involvement, developing innovative practices and programs to document and safeguard

examples of IH. Through these particular programs, projects have been instituted that encourage sustainability.¹⁸

National Initiatives

National Survey/Inventory. Conduct a national assessment of IH, either through a national organization, or in conjunction with regional organizations. A central repository is needed (as with the HSMBC for buildings) where information about IH on a national level can be found. Before 1980, the Canadian Centre for Folk Culture Studies issued research contracts to local fieldworkers to gather materials so that some overall reading could be made of the national Canadian scene. That such archival work is important is witnessed by the fact, for example, that native elders are now coming to CMC to learn what Barbeau collected in order to revitalize contemporary traditions. Staff and research resources are needed to undertake such survey and archival work again, whatever agency takes it upon itself to fulfill this mandate.

National Festival of IH. Under the auspices of the Smithsonian Institution in the United States, the annual Festival of American Folklife is held during each summer in the Washington Mall area. A similar event could be considered for the Canadian context. As with the American model, specific themes can be showcased each year at a Festival of Canadian Culture: one particular province, one minority group, one native group, or one more mainstream Canadian theme (family, Christmas, work, etc.).

National IH Centre. Consideration should be given to whether some national centre could be established for IH work, or whether such a Centre could be established within an existing national institution or bureaucracy.

To look to other countries for models, for example, in the United States, two bodies act nationally in the area of IH: the American Folklife Centre within the Library of Congress, and the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage within the Smithsonian Institution. The American Folklife Preservation Act created the American Folklife Centre in Washington, D. C.¹⁹ This Centre has a small staff which acts as advisors and coordinators on IH activities for both academic IH researchers and for the public at large. The Centre at the Smithsonian acts as a clearinghouse, as well, of IH information. One of its major responsibilities is sponsoring the Festival of American Folklife each year. This festival involves staff conducting fieldwork on the particular annual themes, and then working with grassroots groups to accurately present their IH.²⁰

A Canadian IH Centre could be established along this model, a model that other countries such as Australia are pursuing.²¹ Such a Canadian Centre would act as an administrative and research centre. First, staff would coordinate the various Federal Government programs that deal with IH (Canada Council, SSHRCC, Multiculturalism, and others), liaison with Provincial Government programs dealing with IH (Museums, Art Galleries), ensure interchange among the various

academic programs in the country dealing with IH, act as professional and technical advisors to folk arts and multicultural organizations (folk festivals, craft groups, dance troupes) and private individuals (performers, artists).

Over twenty-five years ago, a researcher at the Canadian Centre for Folk Culture Studies wrote that the CCFCS functioned as the country's leading IH research centre; that its responsibilities were to contribute to international folklore scholarship, stimulate the development of folklore studies in Canada, disseminate information and materials concerning Canada's folklore heritage to the public at large. The old CCFCS structure (under a new name) might well provide a model that can be adapted to current national IH work.²²

Dissemination

On a national basis, IH materials that are documented should be available where appropriate. In the Brazilian national inventory currently being conducted, the intention is “documenting, by the most appropriate technical means, the past and present of the manifestation of its [IH] different versions, making this information widely available to the public, through the use of the resources provided by the new information technologies.”²³ In the Canadian context this means possible recording and dissemination by CBC (both radio and TV), CHIN, and cooperating with the private sector (Cable TV, music industry) to consider IH programming. CBC in Atlantic Canada, for example, is beginning a documentary on a traditional Innu watercraft, part of a hoped-for larger project recording a broad range of IH topics.

Consideration might be given to the establishment of a website devoted exclusively to IH; such a website may be associated with a national IH Centre. A model is the American Folklife Centre website; a project is currently underway to put much of its IH survey materials on the web. Two surveys are now online, one dealing with landscape and environmental knowledge in West Virginia, another dealing with ranching culture in Nevada.²⁴ These websites are part of the larger American Memory Project, a project aimed at placing archival materials on the web. A similar cooperative venture might take place in Canada with CHIN.

A central IH agency might explore the establishment of a publication support fund earmarked specifically for popular IH products, be they books, CDs, videos, or DVDs. Websites as well as printed guides could be compiled on various Government Departments and programs that are involved in IH documentation and/or research.²⁵ Directories would be compiled and periodically updated on current academic programs working in IH across the country, research projects, publications, concerts, media events, museum and gallery shows, folk art sales.

Partnerships with Federal agencies/programs

Museums Assistance Program. MAP might initiate a specific program devoted exclusively to IH within the museum context. In some African contexts, for example, museums are moving "from the reliance on collections of the colonial past, collections that reenforce stereotypes and in no way represent a holistic view of African life and traditions,"²⁶ to museums that involve local communities in using the institution as a voice for community participation. In these contexts, IH is presented as the most important element of exhibitions, often involving presentations and performances.

Environment Canada; Agriculture Canada; Health Canada. A number of federal agencies deal with IH ("traditional knowledge") related to the natural world and its use. Topics include information about the traditional working of the cultural landscape (fishing, farming, hunting), and gathering materials for use in everyday life (herbal remedies, edible wild plants). The Geographical Names Board of Canada has been involved in several projects recording IH (including local place names) relating to landscapes that have been used to revise topographical maps. Experts in these agencies can partner with those documenting IH to accurately record complex details about the natural environment.

Canada Council. Expand Canada Council programs to more fully include IH, in a grants program, an apprenticeship program, and through an awards program.

Canada Council might create a Traditional Arts Grants Program. The National Endowment for the Arts in the United States has a specific grants program to fund work in the area of traditional cultures and their arts. The NEA has funding program categories devoted to particular art forms that include (among others) dance, design, literature, music, theatre, visual arts. In this list, as well, is the category devoted exclusively to "traditional arts" programs, a category with its own jury and its own allocated funds.²⁷ Within this grants program, money has recently been given to a wide range of projects including: performances and demonstrations of artistic traditions found in the forest regions of northern New England; documentation of sheep ranching artistic traditions in Nevada and Idaho in order to create a national radio show, public performances, and an exhibition; support for Native American basket makers in Maine to demonstrate their craft; documentation and presentation of traditional building practices in New Orleans. A Traditional Arts funding scheme could be developed that would establish a framework where local grassroots organizations could apply for funds that involved local groups in the fundamentals elements of IH: documentation and dissemination.

An apprenticeship program could be established under Canada Council, as well, where young performers and craftspeople would apprentice with recognized traditional artists, ensuring that traditions recognized as of national historic importance are maintained. The NEA specifically funds a Folk Arts Apprenticeship Program, supporting a wide range of artists who work with younger members of their group.

Canada Council could consider a category covering IH in its Governor General's Awards in Visual and Performing Arts. Within this framework, IH performers could be recognized. The IH

Awards Program under the Canada Council could play the role of an award of national recognition mentioned above.

HRDC. HRDC might introduce a scheme to fund traditional artists for particular projects over specific periods of time. These projects could relate to Provincial Tourism plans, and might involve an apprenticeship program.

SSHRC. Create a new Strategic Grants program aimed at joint projects involving IH between University researchers and local grassroots agencies. These projects would help local agencies properly document IH, train local residents in documentation skills, and enable agencies to then interpret their IH through public formats (such as exhibitions, performances, etc.).

Partnerships with Provincial Agencies

University Research. Consideration can be given to funding a Research Chair in Cultural Heritage Studies, either through the creation of a small federally-funded institute, or through an existing program such as the Canada Research Chairs Program. Such a chair would focus on heritage--both tangible and intangible--and its role in topics such as nation-building, tourism, identity, and problems related to safeguarding and dissemination. The Janapada Sampada section of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts in India created such a Chair in cooperation with UNESCO in 1995; recent research has included "Use of Cultural Heritage as a Tool for Development"; "Village India: Identification and Enhancement of Cultural Heritage--An Integral Necessity in the Management of Development."²⁸

Provincial Departments of Education. Efforts should be made to encourage each Province to establish programs that involve IH performers and artists within local schools. This means involvement of local tradition-bearers within a formal institutional framework, able to discuss their skills with members of their own community. Federal policies should encourage the use of IH materials in the classroom through the publication of guides for teachers, and help make available IH materials through CDs, videos, and internet sources. IH specialists from Federal agencies could conduct workshops on the use of IH in the classroom for teachers across the country.²⁹

Provincial IH Specialists. In the United States, the National Endowment for the Arts has made possible (through various funding schemes) for most states to have an official responsible for state-wide IH policies and programs. In former times, these were referred to as "state folklorists", although that has been superseded by terms such as "traditional arts," "community research," "native heritage," or "local cultures."³⁰ Ideally, each province with Federal guidance would create a position within Provincial Departments of Culture that would have responsibility for IH.

Federal-Provincial Inventories. The Canadian IH Centre would cooperate with Provincial organizations (Ministries of Culture, Museums, Historic Sites), and universities to engage in a series of IH surveys. In the United States, for example, the American Folklife Centre has documented traditional artistic expression in rural Georgia and among Chicago's ethnic communities; traditional farming life in Montana; traditional ranching life in Nevada; heritage and language schools; maritime occupational culture in Florida; Italian-American family traditions in the American West. The American Folklife Centre has also worked in cooperation with the National Parks Service in nature heritage parklands to document traditional uses of landscape by residents of such preserves.³¹ Working in conjunction with the Provinces, joint projects would be established to survey diverse traditions across the country. Decisions might well be made on which IH should be documented partly through the criteria of what is at risk of disappearing.

Québec undertook an assessment survey of its own in the 1980s; that program was abandoned because of financial constraints. The province is now focused on new ways of engaging grassroots groups in documenting IH, including the establishment of what are called “mnemo centres.”³² Each province might develop survey formats and local IH centres particular to its specific cultures.

Another option is to cooperate directly in co-research projects with the important regional IH archives and research institutions across the country, or to fund research conducted solely by them on agreed upon themes. These archives and research institutions would include CELAT at Université Laval and its associated Les Archives de Folklore; Memorial University of Newfoundland’s Folklore and Language Archive; Centre d’études acadiennes at the Université de Moncton; Centre franco-ontarien de Folklore archives at the Université de Sudbury; Ukrainian Folklore Archives at the University of Alberta—and various other regional repositories identified as specializing in IH.

NGOs/Private Sector

Trust Fund. Explore possible partnerships with existing regional and national funding agencies to establish a fund specifically for IH. Japan, for example, has established the UNESCO Japanese Trust Fund for the Preservation and Promotion of Intangible Cultural Heritage. By the year 2000, the fund had over two million dollars US in contributions. In Canada, contributions might come from both the public and private sector.³³

Private Foundations. Explore partnership with Saidye Bronfman Foundation to establish an award to specifically honor traditional craft. Other foundations partnerships might be the Bronfman Foundation (to include IH in its “Heritage Moments”), the Dominion Institute (inclusion of a broader range of IH in its “Memory Project”).³⁴

Concluding Remarks

When I prepared my report on the work of the Government of Canada in implementing the 1989 UNESCO declaration on IH and traditional culture, I pointed to a wide range of federal policies and programs that had supported work in this area. However, as I concluded in that report, such support was coincidental rather than coordinated, haphazard rather than planned.³⁵ As numerous countries around the world now have mechanisms in place to document and safeguard IH, as UNESCO is in the process of preparing an international convention on IH, and as many provincial governments across Canada begin to establish programs dealing with IH, it is obvious that the Federal Government needs to have a clear and guiding presence in this area. Such a presence will mean that Canadian citizens will realize that their Government recognizes something they already know: that we all participate in ongoing forms of intangible heritage, a heritage that gives us a sense of who we are and--as we shape that intangible heritage today--where we are going.

NOTES

1. Samantha Sherkin, "A Historical Study on the Preparation of the 1989 'Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore'," in Peter Seitel, ed., Safeguarding Traditional Cultures: A Global Assessment (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 2001), p.46.
2. Terms from: "Definitions for 'Intangible Cultural Heritage' (Member States)," Document Rio/ITH/2002/Inf/12, 15 January 2002, Paris: UNESCO, 2002.
3. "Heritage—Our Past and Our Future," "Creative Nation," Government of Australia, 2000, <http://www.nla.gov.au/creative.nation/heritage.html>.
4. "Final Report, International Round Table on 'Intangible Cultural Heritage--Working Definitions', 14-17 March, Turin, Italy." Rio/ITH/2002/Inf/5, 11 January 2002, Paris: UNESCO, 2002, Annex 4.
5. "Final Report," p. 6.
6. Sebastian Veg, First Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity (Paris: UNESCO, 2001), p. 2.
7. "UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, adopted 2 November 2001, Rio/ITH/2002/INF/2, 11 January 2002.
8. Janet Blake, "Developing a New Standard-setting Instrument for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage: Elements for Consideration." Paris: UNESCO, 2001, p. 86.
9. See: Registry of the Intangible Heritage: Final Dossier of the Working Group on the Intangible Heritage (Brasilia: Ministry of Culture, Institute for the National Historical and Artistic Heritage, 2002).
10. Registry of the Intangible Heritage, pp. 16, 26.
11. Registry of the Intangible Heritage, p. 15.
12. E.g., "Heritage Planning: A Guide for Local Government," Province of British Columbia, <http://www.heritage.gov.bc.ca/branch/hp/hpint.htm>; "New Brunswick's Heritage Policy: Through Partnership to Stewardship, <http://www.gov.nb.ca/culture/heritage/policye.htm>.
13. These evaluative criteria are more extensively discussed in: Carole Henderson Carpenter, The Intangible Heritage of Muskoka (Toronto: Ontario Folklife Centre, 1993), pp. 7-8.

14. "Parks Canada: An Approach to Aboriginal Cultural Landscapes," http://parkscanada.pch.gc.ca/aborig15_e.htm.
15. Jean-Louis Luxen, "The Intangible Dimensions of Monuments and Sites with Reference to the UNESCO World Heritage List," http://www.international.icomos.org/luxen_eng.htm, p. 6.
16. See: Steve Siporin, American Folk Masters: The National Heritage Fellows (New York: Abrams, 1992); Bess Lomax Hawes, "Our National Treasures: The Story So Far," pp. 81-85, and Dan Sheehy, "The National Heritage Fellowship: Frames, Fames and Ames," pp. 86-91, both in 1994 Festival of American Folklife (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1994).
17. 2001 Folk and Traditional Arts Fellows, <http://arts.endow.gov/explore/Heritage2001>.
18. Peter Seitel, "Defining the Scope of the Term Intangible Cultural Heritage," Rio/ITH/2002/WD/8, Paris: UNESCO, 2002, p. 7.
19. For more extensive discussions see: American Folklife Center, The Library of Congress (Washington: American Folklife Center, n. d.).
20. For the work of the Smithsonian see: www.folklife.si.edu.
21. Committee of Inquiry into Folklife in Australia, Folklife: Our Living Heritage (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1987), pp. 142-145.
22. For the work of the old CCFCS see Robert Klymasz, "Folklore Studies at the National Museum of Man, Ottawa," Folklore Forum, 5:1 (1972), 13.
23. Registry of the Intangible Heritage, p. 16.
24. For the West Virginia project see: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/cmnshtml/cmnshtml.html>; for the Nevada project: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ncrhtml/crhome.html>.
25. A model from the American Folklife Center: Linda C. Coe, comp., Folklife and the Federal Government: A Guide to Activities, Resources, Funds, and Services (Washington: American Folklife Center, 1977). A website sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts devoted to Traditional Arts programs, funding, and resources is: <http://www.tapnet.org/>
26. Dianna Thompson, "Amasiko Lessons from Africa," MUSE, Summer 1996, p. 2, <http://www.museums.ca/publications/muse/1996/summer96/fethomp.htm>.

27. For NEA funding categories (including “Traditional Arts”) see:
<http://www.arts.gov/artforms/index.shtml>

28. UNESCO Chair, <http://www.ignca.nic.in/unesco01.htm>.

29 . The American Folklife Center, for example, has published Peter Bartis, and Paddy Bowman, eds., A Teacher's Guide to Folklife Resources for K-12 Classrooms (Washington, D.C.: American Folklife Center, 1994); also see: Folk Arts in the Classroom: Changing the Relationship Between Schools and Communities (New York: City Lore, 1993).

30. The extensive work done in the United States on the regional and state level by professional specialists in IH can be seen in the Public Programs Bulletin of the American Folklore Society; see: <http://afsnet.org/sections/public/newsletter/>.

31. For a discussion of these surveys see: Carl Fleischhauer, "Cultural Conservation and Government Planning," in Benita J. Howell, ed., Cultural Heritage Conservation in the American South, Southern Anthropological Society Proceedings 23 (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990), pp. 118-124.

32. See: www.mnemo.qc.ca.

33. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan,
http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/culture/heritage/coop/fund_p.html.

34. For the Memory Project see:
<http://www.grantswar.com/>
for the Saidye Bronfman Award:
<http://www.bronfmanfoundation.org/indexe.html>.

35. Gerald L. Pocius, “Academic Folklore Research In Canada: Trends and Prospects (Part 2),” Ethnologies 23, 1 (2001), 310.