Words Matter...

The Arsenal and the Repertoire: UNESCO, ICOM and European Frameworks

"Indeed, these gift exchanges spurred a surprising amount of local participation in rebuilding and then animating the space, and, in fact, revealed a process of collective action — what local NGOs labeled 'civil society building' using the pre-packaged project language from grant applications — yet it really was a re-enactment of a practice — what UNESCO would label as 're-creation of intangible cultural heritage' — of what people used to do together before socialism (...): coming together, without the government initiating or financing the initiative as well as without the present-day NGO grants and EU project funding — (...) the aesthetics of the project imaginary — but collecting money and donating labor, gifts, food, and time to the co-creation of a collective home for creativity."

This long quote comes from Nadezhda Savova-Grigorova's PhD thesis (2013) in which she describes a specific phase of launching a 'third space' project (a hybrid assemblage of a bakery, a community cultural center, an international network hub and a place for safeguarding intangible heritage, later even 'a museum') in a house, inherited from her grandmother in Bulgaria, that she wanted to transform from ("purely") "private" to (more) "public" (by getting it officially labeled as a *chitalishta*)." As a PhD student in anthropology and social entrepreneurship at Princeton University, global traveler and after a phase of working and participant observation in the Section of Intangible Heritage at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris during the first decade of the 21st century, she understood what buzzwords can do and how they could be used. In particular if they feature in "strong, powerful texts" like EU calls for projects or UNESCO's Recommendations and Conventions. So she started exploring, combining and tweaking words, articles, expressions and concepts,

N. Savova-Grigorova, Braed and Home: Global Cultural Politics in the Tangible Places of Intangible Heritage. (Bulgaria, Cuba, Brazil). Princeton, 2013, p. 236.

² See for this concept, based on Latourian actor-network theory, M. Jacobs, 'Zonder twijfel dat waarschijnlijk... Ambachtelijke geschiedenissen in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden aan het einde van het 'Oude Regime', in: C. Lis & H. Soly (eds.), Werelden van verschil. Ambachtsgilden in de Lage Landen. Brussel, 1997, p. 243-292.

from all kinds of networks, organizations and governments, including, as Savova pointed out "UNESCO's guidelines on framing 'intangible heritage' and 'preserving biological and cultural diversity' in distinct Conventions that hardly enter in contact or communication despite their overlapping interest in 'culture' and 'diversity'. I examined the potential loopholes in the regulations and the laws and the options for using the symbolic capital of UNESCO's categories and recognition to argue for exceptions,(...) negotiations over acceptable categories and legitimizing labels."³

It formed the basis for creating global networks of initiatives, projects and similar houses and 'bakeries', even franchised.⁴ But also a translation into a 'Bakers-without-Borders' toolkit that can travel and inspire. And, eventually grandmother's house became a small 'museum' documenting the initiative: the Bread for Social Change Museum in Gabrovo, Bulgaria.⁵

I (Marc Jacobs) was involved in working in the emerging cultural heritage sector in Flanders in the first two decades of the 21st century. I not only witnessed and studied, but also actively stimulated and facilitated the clustering of different institutions and networks via concepts like movable, intangible and digital heritage. It was and is a trajectory towards a goal that was elegantly captured by European policy makers in 2014 in the following formula:

"cultural heritage consists of the resources inherited from the past in all forms and aspects – tangible, intangible and digital (born digital and digitized), including monuments, sites, landscapes, skills, practices, knowledge and expressions of human creativity, as well as collections conserved and managed by public and private bodies such as museums, libraries and archives. It originates from the interaction between people and places through time and it is constantly evolving. These resources are of great value to society from a cultural, environmental, social and economic point of view and thus their sustainable management constitutes a strategic choice for the 21st century."

In this volume on 'museums and intangible cultural heritage' in particular the subsentence "as well as collections conserved and managed by public and private bodies such as museums, libraries and archives" is our point of entry, and discussion. Not only because of the intersections created by the similarity and overlap with that other important subsentence in the definition

- 3 Savova-Grigorova, Bread, p. 236.
- 4 https://www.international3c.org/ (International Council for Cultural Centers); http://www.breadhousesnetwork.org (26/05/2020).
- 5 https://www.breadmuseum.bg/welcome/.
- 6 Conclusions on cultural heritage as a strategic resource for a sustainable Europe. Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council meeting Brussels, 20 May 2014, article 2: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/142705.pdf (20/05/2020).

of intangible cultural heritage, in article 2 of UNESCO's 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage: "(...) as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith." But also because it refers to the notion of collections on the one hand, and institutions that conserve and manage on the other hand.

The notion of collections seems to refer more to the kind of elements that Diana Taylor called "the Archive" in contrast to "the Repertoire", embodied skills, knowledge and memories that correspond to what the concept of intangible heritage is referring to. Because it still is one of the key insights to understand the challenges today and tomorrow, it is useful to repeat what Taylor distinguished in 2003:

"The rift (...) between the archive of supposedly enduring materials (i.e., texts, documents, buildings, bones) and the so-called ephemeral repertoire of embodied practice/knowledge (i.e., spoken language, dance, sports, ritual).

'Archival' memory exists as documents, maps, literary texts, letters, archaeological remains, bones, videos, films, CDs, all those items supposedly resistant to change. Archive, from the Greek, etymologically refers to 'a public building', 'a place where records are kept.' From arkhe, it also means a beginning, the first place, the government (...) the archival, from the beginning, sustains power (...) archival memory succeeds in separating the source of 'knowledge' from the knower-in time and/or space-leads (...). What changes over time is the value, relevance, or meaning of the archive, how the items it contains get interpreted, even embodied."

"The repertoire, on the other hand, enacts embodied memory: performances, gestures, orality, movement, dance, singing-in short, all those acts usually thought of as ephemeral, nonreproducible knowledge. Repertoire, etymologically 'a treasury, an inventory' also allows for individual agency (...). The repertoire requires presence: people participate in the production and reproduction of knowledge by 'being there', being a part of the transmission. As opposed to the supposedly stable objects in the archive, the actions that are the repertoire do not remain the same."

The use of the word "the Archive" can be confusing because it is much broader than just the 'type' of memory institutions called 'archives', as it is used in the definition (2014) of cultural heritage quoted above. The subsentence mentioned public and private bodies, referring to legal and governance characteristics of

⁷ See M. Jacobs, 'As well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith', in: T. Derić a.o. (eds.), Museums and Intangible Cultural Heritage. Towards a Third Space in the Heritage Sector. A Companion to Discover Transformative Heritage Practices for the 21st Century. Bruges, 2020, p. 47-49.

D. Taylor, The Archive and the Repertoire. Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas. Durham & London, 2003, p. 19.

⁹ Taylor, Archive, p. 20.

these institutions. So... archives, libraries and museums. But do notice those remaining words: "such as." This implies that there are other possibilities than those types. This could be galleries or *chitalishtas* ... or something 'hybrid' perhaps.

In the emerging heritage sector in Flanders, in particular at the occasion of making new heritage decrees in 2004, 2008, 2012 and 2017, you cannot only notice the gradual introduction of the notion of 'intangible cultural heritage', resulting in the last version in 2017, even in a slot for an institutional actor (at present, since 2018, filled in by the organization Werkplaats immaterieel erfgoed). Also 'participation' was recognized as a specific function in the last version of the heritage decree. As I will mention further on in this contribution, different versions of the notion of 'heritage community' also evolved in the subsequent texts. Ever since 2005 I have also been pleading to introduce the concept of a 'hybrid institution' that combines components of what are called 'museums', 'archives', 'libraries'. Formats more adapted and ready to cope with the diversity of heritage, people and glocal challenges. Without success, until now. But I give this example as a constant reminder that things can change, just like concepts, definitions and formulas.

The Blue Boundary Arsenal...

In the 21st century, appropriate vocabulary is very high on the agenda in specific sections of the heritage field. This was certainly the case in the field in which the journal *Volkskunde* where this contribution is published is a player, i.e. in European ethnology or folklore studies, but also in policy making in the field of traditions, popular culture and folklore. The paradigm of 'safeguarding intangible cultural heritage' according to or empowered by the 2003 Convention can be (among other interpretations and translations) seen as the outcome (for the time being) of a translation process, in the sense Michel Callon and other protagonists in the actor-network theory movement used it.¹⁰ Susan Leigh Star and James Griesemer synthesized it as follows: "entrepreneurs gradually enlist participants (or in Latour's word, 'allies') from a range of locations, reinterpret their concerns to fit their own programmatic goals, and then establish themselves as gatekeepers (in Law's terms, as 'obligatory points of passage')."11 One of the gatekeeping activities was trying to monitor the bandwidth of vocabulary (and how to identify and describe relevant actors and activities). A whole series of words and concepts, associated with old school folklore or Volkskunde (in particular concepts appropriated by the Nazi regime in the

¹⁰ M. Callon, 'Some elements of a sociology of translation: domestication of the scallops and the fishermen of St Brieuc Bay', in: J. Law (ed.), Power, action and belief: a new sociology of knowledge? London, 1986. p. 196-223.

S. L. Star & J. Griesemer, 'Institutional Ecology, 'Translations,' and Boundary Objects: Amateurs and Professionals in Berkeley's Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, 1907 – 1939', Social Studies of Science 19, 1989, p. 387-420, p. 389.

1930s and 1940s for instance or by communist countries before 1989) were rejected and declared taboo, just like notions that could be linked to practices of colonization. And also, but for other reasons, the vocabulary that seemed appropriate for the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of 1972, like "outstanding universal value", or "authenticity." This excess baggage should be left behind when walking through the entrance of the realm of the 2003 Convention. A Ctrl-Alt-Delete operation as far as the suitable vocabulary was concerned.

It was an operation that can be described as an iteration of stages in the classic model of translation sociology that lead to the creation and consolidation in the 2003 Convention and the subsequent texts for implementation. These are brought together in the so-called Basic Texts, nicknamed the 'Blue Book'. In the emergence, 'coordination struggles' and the development of the aforementioned paradigm, the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage text itself is crucial: an 'Obligatory Passage Point'. Next to institutional arrangements, obligations and opportunities for Member States Parties, the UNESCO Secretariat and many other actors, the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage presents a limited population of words, phrasing and mantras (like communities, groups and, where appropriate, individuals, abbreviated as CGIs).¹²

Fortunately, most of the definitions are relatively vague, unprecise and open for interpretation, hence useful. Partly thanks to the efforts of the first 'epistemic generation' who negotiated, cultivated and 'protected'/'safeguarded' the 2003 Convention text, the Obligatory Passage Point could be expanded and kept more or less consistent, at least in the first two decades, in the Basic Texts. In a handy book with a blue cover, you find the slowly expanding but still controlled appropriate vocabulary in tools like the subsequent sets of the Operational Directives (2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, ...), the Twelve Ethical Principles, and the Overall Results Framework. This is not limited to the Blue Book, but it is also used in the forms that are used for submitting nominations for the international lists and register proposed in articles 16, 17 and 18 of the 2003 Convention. The 'translation sociology' model, with the Blue Book as obligatory passage point, is still useful for trying to understand how the '2003 Convention paradigm' evolves.

In a path-breaking article, Susan Leigh Star, and her co-author James Griesemer, proposed an alternative to the model of Callon and co. They wished to understand how intersectional work functions. They questioned the need for consensus, even obtained by soft 'Machiavellistic' nudging, and stated that it is not necessary for cooperation nor for the successful conduct of

But taking into account the power of article 15 in the paradigm of the 2003 Convention. See M. Jacobs, 'Article 15. Participation of Communities, Groups, and Individuals. CGIs, not Just 'the Community', in: J. Blake & L. Lixinski (eds.), The 2003 UNESCO Intangible Heritage Convention. A Commentary. Oxford, 2020, p. 273-289; M. Jacobs, 'CGIs and Intangible Heritage Communities, museums engaged', in: T. Derić a.o. (eds.), Museums and Intangible Cultural Heritage. Towards a Third Space in the Heritage Sector. A Companion to Discover Transformative Heritage Practices for the 21st Century. Bruges, 2020, p. 38-41.

work. They introduced the concept of "boundary objects": "objects which are both plastic enough to adapt to local needs and the constraints of the several parties employing them, yet robust enough to maintain a common identity across sites... The objects may be abstract or concrete. They have different meanings in different social worlds, but their structure is common enough to more than one world to make them recognizable, a means of translation. The creation and management of boundary objects is a key process in developing and maintaining coherence across intersecting social worlds." Since the first publication in 1989, the "boundary objects" metaphor has been used in many fields, developing into a key concept in actor-network theory, in documentation sciences and many other disciplines. In the last decade, after Star passed away, it leads a second life. It is now often used in combination with other "boundary concepts" and metaphors, like "boundary spanners", "boundary zones", etc. 15

Star and Griesemer used a case study of the development, management and operations of a museum to present their model. They investigated how sponsor Annie Montague Alexander (1867-1950) and director Joseph Grinnell (1877-1939) launched the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology (on the campus of the University of California, Berkeley) by using several techniques and tools at the intersection of the professional, amateur, lay, and academic worlds.

They distinguished four different kinds of boundary objects in their museum study: repositories, ideal types, coincident boundaries, and standardized forms. In order to illustrate the power of the concept, it is instructive to understand how for instance the "coincendent borders" of a region('s name) can function. The challenge for the museum was to bring many actors together and make them do or provide services or things:

"(...) draw a line around the West (sometimes even around the state) and declare it a nature preserve. (...) For Grinnell, then, California became a delimitable 'laboratory in the field' giving his research questions a regional, geographical focus. For the university administration, the regional focus supported its mandate to serve the people of the state. For the amateur naturalists concerned with the flora and fauna of their state, research conducted within its bounds also served their goals of preservation and conservation. This first constraint is a weak one with many advantages. It gives California itself the status of a boundary object, an object that lives in multiple social worlds and has different identities in each. Grinnell then transformed this agreement into a resource for getting more money." 16

¹³ Star & Griesemer, Institutional, p. 393.

¹⁴ G. Bowker a.o. (eds.), Boundary Objects and Beyond. Working With Leigh Star. Cambridge MA & London, 2015; S. Gießmann & N. Taha, Susan Leigh Star, Grenzobjekte und Medienforschung, Bielefeld, 2017. An introduction is https://scalar.usc.edu/works/boundary-objects-guide/index.

¹⁵ See, as a pars pro toto, R. Morse, 'Integrative public leadership: Catalyzing collaboration to create public value', *The Leadership Quarterly* 21, 2010, p. 231-245.

¹⁶ Star & Griesemer, Institutional, p. 409.

Boundary objects allow actors to collaborate without necessarily coming to a consensus, Star and Griesemer claimed. Crucial is their ability to "tack back and forth" between being specific and abstract, but also to allow being interpreted differently from the perspective of each community of practice that deals with it. The concept can be used for analyzing all sorts of problems and topics, including intangible heritage and museums.¹⁷

You could say that the 'Basic Texts' as such is a boundary object. But according to me it makes it more interesting to approach the 'Blue Book' as a whole set of tools, an arsenal of boundary objects. Hence, the 'Blue Boundary Arsenal'. So (being an item on) the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity or an Accredited NGO, the Secretariat, a Periodic Report, a territory (as in article 11 and 12 of the 2003 Convention), an Inventory, a nomination form, or indeed a CGI can be approached as 'a boundary object'. The Overall Results Framework, as published in the 2018 edition of the Basic Texts (p. 117-129), is a 'boundary object', but also the underlying indicators for instance. In order to analyze what is happening in periodic reporting from 2020 onwards, this terminology can be very useful to decode and understand what the impact is or could be. A 'theory of change' can be a major new phase in a translation trajectory that can be managed and fed back into the Blue Book as an Obligatory Passage Point, and appropriated and transformed by many other actors.

There are different ways to use or operationalize this. According to me, one of the products of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project (IMP) trajectory presents a road map of tools to explore, deconstruct and reconstruct, combine and transform. It is published as a separate PDF: "ICH & Museums: Reference framework, key texts and networks." It can be used as a manual for translation processes or for setting up 'boundary operations', by influencers of policies or practices or by cultural entrepreneurs or heritage brokers, or, for the more timid researchers, to decode such heritage work.¹⁸

The Blue Book, as Obligatory Passage Point and/or Arsenal of Boundary Objects

In the decade after the launch of the Operational Directives in 2008 the paratextual feature of the blue cover made it into an object that can be produced and distributed on mass and used in different circumstances. It is a portable 'arsenal' of boundary objects, crucial for the coherence of the intangible cultural heritage paradigm, empowered by the 2003 Convention text itself.¹⁹

- B. Reinhardt, 'Intangible Heritage, Tangible Controversies; The Baiana and the Arcarjé as Boundary Objects in Contemporary Brazil', in: B. Meyer & M. van de Port (eds.), Sense and Essence: Heritage and the Cultural Production of the Real. New York, 2018, p. 75-108; D. Chidester, 'Heritage under construction. Boundary Objects Scaffolding and Anticipation', in: B. Meyer & M. van de Port (eds.), Sense and Essence: Heritage and the Cultural Production of the Real. New York, 2018, p. 291-298.
- 18 https://www.ichandmuseums.eu/en/toolbox/ich-museums-reference-framework-key-texts-and-networks.
- 19 https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/2003_Convention_Basic_Texts-_2018_version-EN.pdf.

In several contributions to this special issue of *Volkskunde*, specific articles of the 2003 Convention are quoted, discussed and interpreted, also by one of the original ghost writers and guardian angels of the Convention text, Janet Blake. In 2020 there is a powerful tool available that discusses the 2003 Convention article by article, a "Commentary" edited by Janet Blake and Lucas Lixinski. It is systematically providing context and several interpretations from legal, historical and other scholarly and policy-oriented perspectives. How it is still open for interpretation and discussions can be illustrated by the analysis of article 15, where one author regrets the lack of precision of the definition of words like 'community' and another author (yes, me) embraces and celebrates that CGIs are not well defined.²⁰

From now on more efforts are due in the study of the other tools in the Blue Book. In first place we should consider the Operational Directives, those in the first version in 2008 and the version published in 2016 when complemented with another chapter, on sustainable development on the national level in order to accommodate the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Furthermore, in 2018 the Overall Results Framework has been added. The analysis of the periodic reports of all Member States, to be submitted between 2020 and 2025, will probably – hopefully – result in further development of this important instrument. Is it not high time to add extra guidelines to improve the connections between museums, safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and CGIs? As several authors, and in particular Cécile Duvelle, discuss or mention in this special issue of *Volkskunde*, until now the most detailed Operational Directive where museums are mentioned is OD109. It is part of a diptych under the chapeau "Community centres and associations, museums, archives and other similar entities", together with OD108.

OD 108: "Community centres and associations that are created and managed by communities themselves can play a vital role in supporting the transmission of intangible cultural heritage and informing the general public about its importance for those communities.

In order to contribute to raising awareness about intangible cultural heritage and its importance, they are encouraged to:

- (a) be used by communities as cultural spaces in which their intangible cultural heritage is safeguarded through non-formal means;
- (b) be used as places for transmitting traditional knowledge and skills and thus contribute to intergenerational dialogue;

²⁰ Compare and combine: G. D'Amico Soggetti, 'Article 15. Participation of Communities, Groups, and Individuals. Participation and democracy', in: J. Blake & L. Lixinski (eds.), The 2003 UNESCO Intangible Heritage Convention. A Commentary. Oxford, 2020, p. 290-305; M. Jacobs, 'Article 15. Participation of Communities, Groups, and Individuals. CGIs, not Just "the Community", in: J. Blake & L. Lixinski (eds.), The 2003 UNESCO Intangible Heritage Convention. A Commentary. Oxford, 2020, p. 273-289.

- (c) serve as information centres about a community's intangible cultural heritage."
- OD 109: "Research institutes, centres of expertise, museums, archives, libraries, documentation centres and similar entities play an important role in collecting, documenting, archiving and conserving data on intangible cultural heritage, as well as in providing information and raising awareness about its importance. In order to enhance their awareness-raising functions about intangible cultural heritage, these entities are encouraged to:
- (a) involve practitioners and bearers of intangible cultural heritage when organizing exhibitions, lectures, seminars, debates and training on their heritage;
- (b) introduce and develop participatory approaches to presenting intangible cultural heritage as living heritage in constant evolution;
- (c) focus on the continuous recreation and transmission of knowledge and skills necessary for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, rather than on the objects that are associated with it;
- (d) employ, when appropriate, information and communication technologies to communicate the meaning and value of intangible cultural heritage;
- (e) involve practitioners and bearers in their management, putting in place participatory systems for local development."

These Operational Directives were presented under a bigger chapeau 'Local and national levels' of awareness-raising. There is another Operational Directive under the heading 'International level' where the translation processes via the register and lists connected to articles 18, 17 and 16 are mentioned.

- OD 118: "The Committee updates and publishes annually the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and the Register of programmes, projects and activities that best reflect the principles and objectives of the Convention. In order to ensure better visibility of the intangible cultural heritage and awareness of its significance at the local, national and international levels, the Committee encourages and supports the widest possible dissemination of the Lists through formal and non-formal means, in particular by:
- (a) schools, including those belonging to UNESCO's Associated Schools network:
- (b) community centres, museums, archives, libraries and similar entities:
 - (c) universities, centres of expertise and research institutes;
 - (d) all forms of media, including UNESCO's website."

Of course many other Operational Directives can also be mobilized and used for enhancing the work between museums and the 2003 Convention paradigm.

Consider for instance the new chapter VI on sustainable development. Or the challenge by the Intergovernmental Committee in 2015 to develop sets of ethical tools in order to activate glocal ethics programs: museums can play an important role there.²¹

The next real occasion to make substantial additions and improvements of these tools in the Blue Arsenal will be after the first evaluation of the first round of processing periodic reports of Member States, framed by the Overall Results Framework. Although museums do only explicitly and nominatim pop up in just one of the eighty-six assessment factors linked to the twenty-six core indicators, they are implicitly linked to or relevant for much more of the indicators and factors.

Some museums could for instance recognize themselves (in their policy plans, subsidy applications and other strategic operations) as stakeholders in the mid-term outcomes of the Overall Results Framework "effective relationships built among a diversity of communities, groups and individuals and other stakeholders for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage" and "dynamic development and implementation of safeguarding measures or plans for specific elements of intangible cultural heritage led by a diversity of communities, groups and individuals." Or in any case in the short-term outcomes "improved capacities to support the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in general" and "improved capacities to implement safeguarding measures or plans for specific elements of intangible cultural heritage." Together with the second area (education), the first of the six thematic areas, 'institutional and human capacities', is directly linked to these short-term outcomes.

There are three core indicators linked to the first thematic area of building institutional and human capacities: "1. Competent bodies support practice and transmission; 2. Programmes support strengthening human capacities for safeguarding; 3. Training is operated by or addressed to communities and those working in the fields of culture and heritage." Here again, all three are directly relevant (challenges) for museums.

Linked to the first core indicator ('Competent bodies support practice and transmission') is then the one assessment factor where museums are explicitly mentioned: "1.5 Cultural centres, centres of expertise, research institutions, museums, archives, libraries, etc., contribute to ICH safeguarding and management."

But of course, it would be a shame if museums are only mentioned in the country reports under 1.5. There are many other points of entry, usually via the CGIs mentioned in article 15 of the 2003 Convention and/or via the

²¹ M. Jacobs, 'The Spirit of the Convention: Interlocking Principles and Ethics for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage', International Journal of Intangible Heritage 11, 2016, p. 71-87; M. Jacobs, 'La sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel immatériel et l'éthique', in: F. Lempereur (ed.), Patrimoine culturel immatériel. Liège, 2017, p. 247-259; M. Jacobs, 'Glocal Perspectives on Safeguarding. CGIs, ICH, Ethics and Cultural Brokerage', in: T. Uesugi & M. Shiba (eds.), Glocal Perspectives on Intangible Cultural Heritage: Local Communities, Researchers, States and UNESCO, with the Special Focus on Global and National Perspectives. Tokyo, 2017, p. 49-71.

(limiting wording of) 'practitioners' and 'bearers' like in assessment factor "4.1 Practitioners and bearers are involved inclusively in the design and development of ICH education programmes and/or in actively presenting and transmitting their heritage." ICOM could feel the itch to do something with assessment factor 25.2: "International networking is fostered among communities, groups and individuals, NGOs, experts, centres of expertise and research institutes, active in the field of ICH." Or to lobby and to try to get the underlying Operational Directive (or mentality) changed that causes the associated core indicator to be phrased as "25. Percentage of States Parties actively engaged in international networking and institutional cooperation."

European Tools

As Hanna Schreiber demonstrates in her contribution, safeguarding intangible cultural heritage has not been a priority of European institutions. Will the IMP-experience make a difference? Monuments and landscapes, and even authorized heritage discourses, remain dominant.

There is of course the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (CETS No. 199, 'Faro Convention') that pushes the door open a little bit, also for the 2003 Convention paradigm. In particular if we do not take a strange remark in the Explanatory Report – CETS 199 – Value of Cultural Heritage for Society too serious; stating that "in respect of intangible aspects of cultural heritage, where the present Convention focuses primarily on ascribed values rather than on the material or immaterial elements which combine to constitute heritages, thus taking an approach which is distinct from UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003). This is a Convention which, without excluding the exceptional, particularly embraces the commonplace heritage of all people."²²

The Faro Framework Convention does, as I have emphasized in other publications, comprise many interesting ideas and suggestions that are fully compatible with the 2003 Convention. In any case, I fully endorse the vision formulated in the preamble:

"Recognising the need to put people and human values at the centre of an enlarged and cross-disciplinary concept of cultural heritage;

Emphasising the value and potential of cultural heritage wisely used as a resource for sustainable development and quality of life in a constantly evolving society;"

The significance of introducing the notion of 'heritage community' can also not be underestimated, in particular as explained in the Explanatory Report: "The concept of heritage community is treated as self-defining: by valuing and

²² Explanatory Report – CETS 199 – Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, p. 3 (https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016800d3814, 25/07/2020).

wishing to pass on specific aspects of the cultural heritage, in interaction with others, an individual becomes part of a community. A heritage community is thus defined as a variable geometry without reference to ethnicity or other rigid communities. Such a community may have a geographical foundation linked to a language or religion, or indeed shared humanist values or past historical links. But equally, it may arise out of a common interest of another type. An interest in, for example, archaeology, can create an 'archaeological community' whose members are linked only by the cultural heritage which forms the focus of their activities."²³

In the IMP-trajectory, the potential of an interpretation by the Flemish Government of the notion of 'heritage community' in successive cultural heritage decrees since 2008 (2012, 2017) was emphasized, the tweaked definition that "a '(cultural) heritage community' consists of organisations and people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage, which they wish, within the framework of public action, to sustain and transmit to future generations." This can be interpreted as a network of different actors, 'a variable geometry' that is not necessarily connected to convenient coincidental geographical boundaries or levels (local, regional, national), webs of both (of groups of) living human beings and institutions. One of the consequences is that some museums (networks) can thus be part of a (heritage) community. As the notion of community is not defined in the 2003 Convention, it can be tweaked and used as a boundary object to make other combinations possible.²⁴

Recently the Council of Europe adopted the resolution 2269 entitled *Safeguarding and enhancing intangible cultural heritage in Europe*. The text was adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 1 March 2019.²⁵ The resolution does not contain explicit recommendations about museums or museology, but in the preparatory documents the link was made.

In the Explanatory Memorandum, several examples of museums working on the safeguarding of intangible heritage were mentioned. Next to bullet point "48. A wide range of actors in Europe are active in the safeguarding of ICH, including NGOs, civil society organisations, folk culture and local history associations, eco-museums and other community museums, professional heritage institutions such as documentary heritage centers and archives, academic institutions and research centres, etc. Networks among these actors

²³ Explanatory, p. 6.

²⁴ See J. Neyrinck, E. Seghers & E. Tsakiridis, 'At the interface between living heritage and museum practice: dialogical encounters and the making of a "third space" in safeguarding heritage', International Journal of Intangible Heritage 15, 2020, p. 61-85; M. Jacobs, 'CGIs and Intangible Heritage Communities, museums engaged', in: T. Derić a.o. (eds.), Museums and Intangible Cultural Heritage. Towards a Third Space in the Heritage Sector. A Companion to Discover Transformative Heritage Practices for the 21st Century. Bruges, 2020, p. 38-41; M. Jacobs, 'Van FARO naar Faro (en terug). Het internationale kader waarbinnen we werken', faro | tijdschrift over cultureel erfgoed 11, 2018, nr. 3, p. 46-49; L. Zagato, 'The Notion of "Heritage Community" in the Council of Europe's Faro Convention. Its Impact on the European Legal Framework', in: N. Adell a.o. (eds.), Between Imagined Communities of Practice. Participation. Territory and the Making of Heritage. Göttingen, 2015, p. 141-168.

²⁵ See http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=25434&rlang=en (consulted 1/3/2020). Doc. 14832 and Recommendation 2148 (2019).

are emerging internationally", in bullet point 51 the IMP-project is mentioned. The report also included the recommendation "62. In conceptual terms, clear dispositions on either tangible or intangible entries would help to facilitate dialogue and to recognise where connections and shared objectives may be retrieved. In practical terms, stimulating closer links between tangible and intangible heritage would bring many actors closer together, and provide existing expertise and infrastructure in the field of tangible heritage (heritage experts, museums, libraries, archives, etc.) to grassroots initiatives for safeguarding and enhancing intangible heritage. Such partnerships require however a certain degree of flexibility to accommodate the informal nature of grassroots activities."²⁶

The Resolution 2269 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe explicitly points at the 2003 Convention in combination with the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro, 2005). It also evokes several basic texts of the 2003 Convention including, in bullet point 4, the set of 12 Ethical Principles: "The Assembly considers, however, that models and methods of participatory governance are needed to address the challenge of setting up fair and feasible community participation. Moreover, it calls for a certain flexibility in managing ICH and highlights a set of 12 ethical principles which were adopted in 2016 to complement the ICH Convention, addressing the fragile balance between respect for the autonomy of communities, groups and individuals concerned and providing an adequate public support framework to intervene in the safeguarding of ICH."²⁷

Some recommendations to the Member States of the Council of Europe are a lever in modern museum work, like for instance "5.1.5. develop new and creative approaches to minimise the negative impacts of urbanisation on ICH while maximising the potential of ICH to contribute to a more cohesive society, for example as a factor which could help migrants build bridges with local communities." Also recommendation "5.2.1, create collaborative and participatory platforms to establish inventories of ICH; in this regard, develop models and methods of participatory governance to address the challenge of setting up fair and feasible community participation" can be picked up by heritage policy makers, national, regional or local authorities or boards of directors of museums. Museums as institutions often have a suitable scale "to address the challenge of setting up fair and feasible community participation." In this special issue of Volkskunde and in the IMP-toolkit, many examples are provided to do this. This is also the case, as for instance the case studies presented by Valentina Lapiccirella Zingari in this volume demonstrate, for the recommendation "5.2.3. foster and support urban, local and regional

²⁶ Jorijn Neyrinck was actively involved to provide input in this trajectory of the Council of Europe. Furthermore Tim Curtis of Marc Jacobs were consulted in hearings of the workgroup of the Council of Europe preparing the report, recommendations and resolution.

²⁷ Compare and do hear the echo from M. Jacobs, 'La sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel immatériel et l'éthique', in: F. Lempereur (ed.), Patrimoine culturel immatériel, Liège, 2017, p. 247-259 and M. Jacobs, 'The Spirit of the Convention: Interlocking Principles and Ethics for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage', International Journal of Intangible Heritage 11, 2016, p. 71-87.

development projects and strategies, and micro-economy, creative economy and sustainable tourism initiatives that integrate sustainable safeguarding and enhancement of ICH in close co-operation with the communities concerned."

Particularly relevant and compatible with the results of the IMP-project and in recent developments in policy and practice in the museum field is recommendation "5.2.4. provide incentives and funding for multi-stakeholder co-operation projects and effective platforms for sharing expertise and experience; in this context, provide training and incentives for local ICH stakeholders and ICH mediators to enhance co-operation."

Directly addressing policy makers and authorities at all levels is recommendation "5.2.5. promote closer links between tangible and intangible heritage in order to bring many stakeholders closer together and to provide available expertise and infrastructure in the field of tangible heritage; such partnerships, however, require a certain degree of flexibility."

In the light of the whole IMP-trajectory and of several contributions to this special issue, it is hopeful to read that the Assembly of the Council of Europe politely urges UNESCO and the European Union "to co-operate with the Council of Europe in supporting the effective implementation of the ICH Convention and the Faro Convention, and in particular to: '6.1. facilitate building capacities through: gathering and exchanging insights from ICH safeguarding and enhancement practices and methods; cross-disciplinary co-operation; educational programmes; alignment in digital strategies; ethics; and cross-border co-operation on common ICH elements or safeguarding programmes; and to '6.2. accommodate digital methods and tools for ICH inventories and for safeguarding practices, so that they can be harmonised in Europe (technically and methodologically) to further stimulate exchange and knowledge sharing."

Rather disappointing is the first reaction in October 2019 of a Committee of (deputies of) Ministers. Their response is narrowly framed within their own Council of Europe instruments and fails to fully develop the potential of 'safeguarding' or the harvest of almost two decades of implementation of the 2003 Convention and the Basic Texts (like the sixth chapter on sustainable development of the Operational Directives, the Twelve Ethical Principles), of which some aspects have been documented in the IMP-project. ²⁸ It is clear that on the highest level of the European political and policy networks, there is still a lot of work to do in awareness-raising and capacity building, as far as the safeguarding intangible heritage paradigm is concerned. This publication and the IMP-toolkit might help to open the vistas and discover the potential.

On the one hand the recommendation of the Assembly that resulted in the reaction of the ministers included the suggestion to "4.3. acknowledge that ICH safeguarding targets and competences are covered implicitly by the terms of reference of the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP)." The choice of the word "implicitly" speaks volumes. On the other hand there is the consideration "3. The Council of Europe Framework

²⁸ Doc. 14999 (21/10/2019): Reply to Recommendation 2148 (2019) by the "Committee of Ministers" (http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-DocDetails-EN.asp?FileID=28266&lang=EN).

Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (CETS No. 199, 'Faro Convention') and the European Heritage Strategy for the 21st Century (Strategy 21) set an excellent framework for cultural heritage preservation policies in Europe. In this context, the Assembly considers that the future development of ICH will require a policy vision based on these documents, in order to enhance ICH policies and measures to their full potential, and to provide guidance to the multiple stakeholders that are emerging across Europe who are committed to safeguarding ICH." There is however another opening (not yet picked up at the levels of the ministers) in recommendation "4.5. contribute, where possible, to monitoring efforts in Europe, in alignment with the Overall Results Framework established for the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2018, with a view to possibly integrating this work into the Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe and the European Cultural Heritage Information Network (HEREIN)."

Words matter... but definitions? Museums...

In the years before and after the transition from the second to the third decade of the twenty-first century, vocabulary is a hot issue in some museums in Europe and the West. The words on museum entrances or walls, the labels, the catalogue, etc. can cause conflicts. How problematic are paratexts? Is it not just a matter of "better, more elegant communication"? Is it about emotions, about protest and indignation...? It prompted the National Museum for World Cultures/Tropenmuseum in the Netherlands, to publish an unfinished booklet with the title *Words Matter*: "One of the areas in which museums should have a lot of experience is the use of words. They use language to describe objects and the makers of these objects and/or their countries and cultures. Museum staff know through their practice that the choice of words can be sensitive." 30

It is not easy to do the right thing, even if you try. In my courses on critical heritage studies, I try to convince the students that it is important to explore several perspectives, consider many stakeholders and values, and point systematically at the world wide impact in the 21st century of views and practices of Aboriginals on global heritage theory and practice, e.g. via the oeuvre of Rodney Harrison or the evolution of the Burra Charter. But in *Words Matter* I discover there might be a problem to use the concept when referring to CGIs in Australia and Canada: "The term does not adequately describe the complexity and diversity of Indigenous peoples. Many Indigenous peoples in both countries do not like to be referred to as 'Aboriginal', preferring to emphasize other markers of their identity such as language, land and clan relationships." In the case of Australia, it can perhaps be used but always with a capital A. I think I will embrace the construct of CGIs even more than before.

²⁹ Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe's Recommendation 2148 (2019) Safeguarding and enhancing intangible cultural heritage in Europe, http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-DocDetails-EN.asp?FileID=26469&lang=EN (27/7/2020).

³⁰ S. Schoonderwoerd, Foreword, in: W. Modest & R. Lelijveld, Words matter... An Unfinished Guide to Word Choices in the Cultural Sector. Leiden, 2018, p. 6-10, p. 7.

Among the words flagged in the Tropenmuseum's guide as potentially problematic is also the word 'traditional'. It is instructive, in particular in this journal, to read (and quote) the diagnosis and the prescription:

"traditional"

(diagnosis):

"The term itself is not problematic, but can take on a negative connotation when used in opposition to other terms such as 'modern' and 'progress'. Several scholars have argued that this dichotomy emerged as part of a Eurocentric intellectual and colonial project, which reinforced the idea that non-European cultures were pre-modern and static as opposed to a modern, progressive Europe. This belief established a hierarchy of cultures and peoples, where West was equated to modern and non-West to traditional. This divide still exists today as used in terms such as 'traditional arts and cultures' and is commonly associated with ethnographic museums."

"When writing about traditions, or objects understood by their makers to represent traditions or traditional styles, be as specific as possible about time, place and intention."

For example: 'In the 18th century people used this, in 2018 they use that....'

In some cases the term can be replaced with 'historic'.

Or "Western"

"The West is an ideological, historical, economic and geographical concept, the meaning of which has shifted over time.

The term represents both a mental and physical division of the world that categorizes and contrasts people, cultures, religions and regions, placing them in a hierarchy. It is often contrasted with 'non-western'.

Other terms with similar connotations include 'Third World' 'developed', 'undeveloped', etc.

Be as specific as possible in terms of country, population etc."31

This reminds me of a discussion I got the Belgian delegation into with the Indian Delegation in 2008 when debating about the first set of Operational Directives. I objected against the introduction of North/South dichotomies, referring to the potential 'negative' framing of Indigenous groups living near the North Pole, pleading to find another and better language. The Indian Delegation won the debate with the aid of several delegates from Africa. Using the couple 'North and South' was to be encouraged, but a reference to East and West was not. Although I was absolutely in favor of programs and trajectories under article 18, I am still puzzled, ten years later, about the lesson about geopolitics I had to learn in the UNESCO arena.

³¹ Modest & Lelijveld, Words, p. 140 & 143.

Today, you can read this quote in the Basic Texts of the 2003 Convention, in Operational Directive 6: "In its selection and promotion of safeguarding programmes, projects and activities, the Committee shall pay special attention to the needs of developing countries and to the principle of equitable geographic distribution, while strengthening South-South and North-South-South cooperation."

The Indian Ambassador approached me during the coffee break to ask if I, as a simple expert, did not know that South-South means East-West and that this was the politically correct way to phrase it.

A global debate about the words that can be used to define a museum is going on at the moment.

In 2020 the official ICOM definition for a museum still is the one coined more than fifteen years before, and accepted by ICOM in 2007. As the testimony of Amareswar Galla in the final symposium of IMP revealed, it was because of the direct influence of the discussions in UNESCO about the 2003 Convention and the intervention of cultural brokers and mediators like himself that 'intangible heritage' was added to the definition.

"A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment."

Since the 2016 ICOM General Conference in Milan, a *Committee on Museum Definition, Prospects and Potentials* (MDPP, 2017-2019) gathered opinions and tried to prepare a new, updated definition. After a series of conferences and meetings, online and offline, in July 2019 the committee on MDPP, convinced the Executive Board of ICOM in Paris to try out a new global obligatory passage point, as core and motor for a paradigmatic shift.

This was the proposal:

"Museums are democratising, inclusive and polyphonic spaces for critical dialogue about the pasts and the futures. Acknowledging and addressing the conflicts and challenges of the present, they hold artefacts and specimens in trust for society, safeguard diverse memories for future generations and guarantee equal rights and equal access to heritage for all people. Museums are not for profit. They are participatory and transparent, and work in active partnership with and for diverse communities to collect, preserve, research, interpret, exhibit, and enhance understandings of the world, aiming to contribute to human dignity and social justice, global equality and planetary wellbeing."

There was a flood of critique, openly or in the corridors, in journal articles and via e-mail exchanges. If we look at this proposal from the 2003 Convention's

interest, it can be regretted that the word 'intangible' has disappeared, losing the hyperlink to the 2003 Convention and the paradigm. The word 'safeguard' is present but in connection to memories, a word that is not part of the core vocabulary of the Convention (due to the existence of another UNESCO program on documentary heritage, called Memory of the World). The Archive is there more than ever, but the Repertoire no longer so clear. Notwithstanding references to planetary wellbeing, the words 'sustainable development', and hence a hyperlink to the sixth chapter of the Operational Directives or a direct mobilization of the UN Agenda 2030 was missing. In the eyes of people who want to work with the Blue Boundary Arsenal on intangible cultural heritage of CGIs, they are more set back than with the old definition.

It brought heated discussions in all directions, North-East-South-West (and the other way round) in ICOM and in the Extraordinary General Assembly on 7 September 2019 in Kyoto, Japan. The procedure was suspended. Since 2020 a new Standing Committee on Museum Definition, Prospects and Potentials (MDPP2) started up, again chaired by Jette Sandahl (pro every wind direction, but living in a Nordic Country) embarking on a new quest for 'the' definition; a global, top-down attempt to cultivate a participatory and bottom-up model. The brief is to come up with "a museum definition which will address normative, legislative and ethical criteria, will be generic and whose final version will begin with the phrase 'a museum is...'.

The museum definition should:

- 1) be clear on the purposes of museums, and on the value base from which museums meet their sustainable, ethical, political, social and cultural challenges and responsibilities in the 21st century;
- retain even if current terminology may vary the unique, defining and essential unity in museums of the functions of collecting, preserving, documenting, researching, exhibiting and in other ways communicating the collections or other evidence of cultural heritage;
- 3) acknowledge the urgency of the crises in nature and the imperative to develop and implement sustainable solutions;
- 4) acknowledge and recognise with respect and consideration the vastly different world views, conditions and traditions under which museums work across the globe;
- 5) acknowledge and recognise with concern the legacies and continuous presence of deep societal inequalities and asymmetries of power and wealth – across the globe as well as nationally, regionally and locally;
- 6) express the unity of the expert role of museums with the collaboration and shared commitment, responsibility and authority in relation to their communities;
- 7) express the commitment of museums to be meaningful meeting places and open and diverse platforms for learning and exchange;
- 8) express the accountability and transparency under which museums are expected to acquire and use their material, financial, social and intellectual resources."

So much work for a definition... and/or for a network of tens of thousands of museums.

The boundaries ahead...

It is not easy to imagine how the 'museum community' will reach consensus over 'what a museum is'. If you look at the requirements, it amounts to a paradigm shift, a series of ambitious goals. It is not just a combination of words and sensitivities. The assignment seems impossible to go for broad consensus, unless of course ritualized violence is used: a vote and decision by majority. Both on a global level and in the contact zones in the neigborhood ('musées de société'), the discussions will not be settled. Such global operations are possible.

One of the few attempts to clean up language that seemed to work, due to a conceptual Ctrl-Alt-Delete, is the paradigm shift empowered by the 2003 Convention. But many of the words and underlying motivations for choosing or defriending them, probably got lost in translation.

One of the lessons of the IMP-trajectory in order to get a grip on the complexity is to think in terms of 'intersections'. How can intersectional work, boundary work, be organized? Does it have to be in consensus? Or is it sometimes better to find coordination mechanisms, via sets of 'boundary objects'?

Can the repertoire of living heritage be ignored in museum practice and vocabulary today? Should it be excluded? "The archive and the repertoire have always been important sources of information, both exceeding the limitations of the other (...) They usually work in tandem and they work alongside other systems of transmission – the digital and the visual, to name two. (...) Other systems of transmission – like the digital – complicate any simple binary formulation."³² Time to think about some 'thing' else, 'networked', 'boundary spanning', 'hybrid', ...

Perhaps the 'museum definition' challenge is too important to only leave it to museum professionals. I do not think it is time for museums to leave the heritage paradigm, as Serge Chaumier proposed, and as I question in another contribution to this special issue. They can find allies, shelter and tools under that umbrella. The recent attempt to take a step towards a convention, in the form of a 2015 Recommendation concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections could be a step in the right direction. Many interesting combinations of words but not all okay; in particular when definitions are presented. Why using the term 'properties' is not a good idea when defining the term collection as "an assemblage of natural and cultural properties, tangible and intangible, past and present" was explained by Janet Blake in an article about international heritage policy. Since the unmasking of the problematic concept of tangible values and the tautological nature of a

³² Taylor, Archive, p. 22 & 24.

³³ See the interesting chapter "Cultural Heritage Law: Contextual Issues" (and the discussions about heritage and property on p. 6-9), J. Blake, International Cultural Heritage Law. Oxford, 2015, p. 1-15.

concept like "intangible values", by Laurajane Smith and Garry Campbell³⁴, it has become clear how it is now problematic to use the words in a definition, like the museum world tried in that recommendation, when presenting heritage "as a set of tangible and intangible values, and expressions that people select and identify, independently of ownership, (...) The term heritage also refers to the definitions of cultural and natural heritage, tangible and intangible, cultural property and cultural objects as included in the UNESCO culture conventions." Referring to the 'definitions' is not the way to go, because they are 'operational definitions' ('for the purposes of this convention'). Referring to the boundary tools might be more productive. The 2014 European definition of cultural heritage quoted above could also be a starting point.

I do not think that now it would be feasible or even a good idea to try a 'a museum (is)'-convention. Perhaps it is, in a decade or so, time to go for a hybrid mix. The IMP-trajectory and the road map at least offered a building block and interesting intersections, and points towards an arsenal of boundary tools.

³⁴ L. Smith and G. Campbell, 'The tautology of 'Intangible values' and the misrecognition of intangible cultural heritage', Heritage & Society 10:1, 2017, p. 26-44.