

X. Conclusion

The broadening the perspective even further, we can understand living ICH practices—which produce songs, ritual, dramas, crafts, agricultural techniques, medicinal treatment, etc.—as patterned forms of social interaction which have a relatively stable structure, which persist over time, and which shape and are shaped by cultural values. That is, ICH practices can be understood as social institution, with particular roles, norms and modes of material exchange. Like other social institutions, living ICH practices reproduce themselves through recruitment, training and the possible control of access to non-shared information. They help to reproduce society as a whole by creating the utilitarian and aesthetic forms that sustain social life and the ethical knowledge that informs it. They coexist with other institutions in various and potentially complex relationships: interdependence, various kinds of economic and / or strategic support or as smaller institutions included within larger ones.

Understanding ICH practices as social institutions makes several things clear: First, that change in ICH is inevitable. As social institutions transform themselves to meet the needs of developing social and natural environment, other institutions adjust their practices to actively respond to the systemic change. A living ICH practice does the same. Second, ICH practices become endangered when components of a formerly reproducing institution become weak or inoperative: local audience do not provide sufficient support for performances; local markets do not support craft; recruitment processes of performers, craft workers, or healers do not replace the membership; or the loss of an exchange relationship with providers of raw material curtails craft production.

Disseminated representations of ICH can work to support mutual respect and understanding when they encourage a relationship of empathy— An imaginative and intellectual connection between the feelings and ideas expressed in a particular performance or other artwork and those present in the observer. An interactive viewing experience and it strengthens one's intellectual and

imaginative grasp by providing multidimensional information on the social and historical context in which an ICH performance was created. ICH can be disseminated in ways that encourage this ethical and aesthetic dialogue.

There is a further implication to an institutional perspective on safeguarding ICH. Because social institutions including those of ICH are complex, and because relationships among institutions are interwoven, the possible strategies for collaborating with local communities to assist ICH practices to attain sustainability are many. Those that immediately come to mind include, in addition to direct subsidy of ICH practices, the use of communications media to provide performance venues and marketing for crafts production, media recordings of various types and for various purposes, the use of microfinance, cultural tourism, and the periodic housing of ICH processes in educational institutions. The multiplicity of possible approaches to the sustainable safeguarding of ICH spans a variety of types of collaborating institutions, non-governmental organisations, educational institutions, development agencies, local art agencies, etc. it would thus seem that a crucial areas of safeguarding practice would be lively cooperation among collaborating institutions, from the sharing of project information to the joint planning an execute of particular projects.