

GENEVIÈVE SUSEMIHL

Cultural World Heritage and Indigenous Empowerment

The Sites of SGang Gwaay and Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump¹

Zusammenfassung

In SGang Gwaay an der Westküste des Inselarchipels Haida Gwaii zeugen Überreste von Langhäusern und Totempfählen von der traditionellen Lebensweise und Kultur der Haida. Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump (HSIBJ) im südlichen Alberta ist einer der ältesten, größten und am besten erhaltenen buffalo jumps in Nordamerika und ein einzigartiges Beispiel für die traditionelle Jagd- und Lebensweise der Prärieindianer. Beide Orte – von herausragender Bedeutung für die Haida und Blackfoot – wurden 1981 in die Liste der UNESCO Weltkulturerbestätten aufgenommen. Für die indigene Bevölkerung ist ihr kulturelles Erbe essentiell für die Wiederbelebung und Weiterführung ihrer kulturellen Eigenständigkeit. Die vorliegende Fallstudie vergleicht die gemeinschaftlich-kooperativ verwaltete Kulturerbestätte SGang Gwaay mit dem von der Regierung Albertas verwalteten HSIBJ, untersucht die Bedeutung von Weltkulturerbestätten für die Stärkung, Sensibilisierung und Kompetenzerweiterung der Indianer Nordamerikas und zeigt, welchen signifikanten Einfluss Faktoren wie Eigentumsverhältnisse und Administration, Beteiligung der indigenen Gemeinschaft im Management und die Erwartungen der Besucher auf die sozio-politische, kulturelle und spirituelle Förderung und Entwicklung der indigenen Gruppen sowie auf die Narrative der Stätten haben.

Abstract

At the village of SGang Gwaay, located at the west coast of Haida Gwaii, the remains of large cedar long houses, together with a number of carved mortuary and memorial poles, illustrate the art and way of life of Haida society, bearing unique testimony to the culture of the Haida. Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, located in the Porcupine Hills of Southern Alberta, is one of the oldest, largest and best preserved buffalo jumps in North America and an outstanding illustration of the subsistence hunting techniques of Plains nations. Both World Heritage sites, inscribed on the

1 The research presented in this paper was conducted with the kind assistance of the Government of Canada, for which I want to express my gratitude.

UNESCO list in 1981, and their surrounding cultural landscapes represent a complex range of indigenous identities, ideologies, and social relations. For indigenous people, cultural heritage is essential to the restoration and permanence of their cultural distinctiveness. The following paper compares the value of a community-led cultural heritage management project with a site that is owned and managed by the provincial government and examines the implications and consequences of such aspects as ownership and control, community involvement, and visitors' expectations for indigenous empowerment and capacity building, and consequently on the modes and contents of the sites' storytelling.

Résumé

À Sᑭang Gwaay sur la côte ouest de l'archipel Haida Gwaii des vestiges de longues-maisons et de mâts-totémiques témoignent de la manière de vivre traditionnelle et de la culture des Haida. Le site de Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump (HSIBJ) en Alberta du Sud figure parmi les précipices à bison (buffalo jump) les plus anciens, les plus grands et les mieux conservés en Amérique du Nord et constitue un exemple unique de la manière traditionnelle de chasser et de vivre des Indiens des Prairies. Ces deux sites – de signification prééminente pour les Haida et pour les Pieds-Noirs (Blackfoot) – furent inscrits en 1981 sur la liste du patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO. Pour les peuples autochtones le patrimoine culturel joue un rôle essentiel dans la renaissance et la persévérance de leur indépendance culturelle. L'étude de cas ci-présente compare le site d'héritage culturel de Sᑭang Gwaay, géré collectivement en coopérative, avec celui de HSIBJ, administré par le gouvernement de l'Alberta, en examinant la valeur des sites de patrimoine mondial pour le renforcement, la sensibilisation aux et l'élargissement des compétences des Nord-Amérindiens, tout en montrant l'influence signifiante de facteurs comme la gestion des rapports de propriété et l'administration, la participation de la communauté autochtone à la gestion et les attentes des visiteurs sur le cheminement et le développement sociopolitique, culturel et spirituel des groupes autochtones, ainsi que sur les histoires racontées autour de ces sites.

There comes a time when people got to do what a people got to do.
And when the stakes are your land and your culture, losing is not an option.

Guujaaw²

1. Introduction

At the village of Sᑭang Gwaay, located at the west coast of Haida Gwaii, the remains of large cedar long houses, together with a number of carved mortuary and memorial poles, illustrate the art and way of life of Haida society, bearing unique

2 Guujaw, qtd. in: "Athlii Gwaii: 25 Years Down the Road", 2.

testimony to the culture of the Haida. Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump,³ located in the Porcupine Hills of Southern Alberta, is one of the oldest, largest and best preserved buffalo jumps in North America and an outstanding illustration of the subsistence hunting techniques of Plains nations. Both World Heritage sites, inscribed on the UNESCO list in 1981, and their surrounding cultural landscapes represent a complex range of indigenous identities, ideologies, and social relations.

As World Heritage sites, they are among a long list of more than 900 locations worldwide that are regarded as the world's most outstanding attractions and the greatest cultural and natural sites on earth. Since 1972, the UNESCO⁴ has been seeking to encourage the identification, protection, and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity.⁵ Its universal application makes the concept of World Heritage exceptional; World Heritage sites are meant to "belong to all the people of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they are located" (UNESCO, *World Heritage*). They are perceived by tourists as places of superior significance, and the stories they narrate and the information passed on about people and their pasts are perceived worldwide. Consequently, besides having a symbolically highly significant status, Cultural World Heritage is being valued for its educational aspects: it informs and educates local, regional, and international communities about the past, present, and future of peoples and societies associated with the sites.

For indigenous people, cultural heritage is essential to the restoration and permanence of their cultural distinctiveness. But how and to what extent is the concept of World Heritage supporting the empowerment and capacity building of First Nations communities that are linked with a World Heritage site? Examining the sites of SḠang Gwaay and Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump in Canada, I argue that such aspects as ownership and control, community involvement, and visitors' expectations have significant implications and consequences for indigenous empowerment and capacity building and consequently on the modes and contents of the site's storytelling. In the following paper I will compare the value of a community-led cultural heritage management project with a site that is owned and managed by the provincial government and take a closer look at the participation

3 In the article "Storytelling from Tribal to Global: Cultural World Heritage as Universal Storytellers", 2011, I examined various modes and contents of storytelling in relation to Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump.

4 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

5 In 1972, UNESCO adopted the *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*, in order to identify cultural and natural heritage worldwide, and to provide organized international protection of World Heritage sites. As of March 2012, 189 States Parties have ratified the World Heritage Convention. Currently, the World Heritage List includes 962 properties, including 745 cultural, 188 natural, and 29 mixed properties in 157 State Parties (UNESCO, *World Heritage List*).

of the local indigenous population in the administration and operation of the respective site.

A Faculty Research Grant by the Canadian government enabled me to travel to Haida Gwaii and Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump near Fort Macleod to examine the sites and conduct interviews with numerous individuals, including representatives of the indigenous heirs of the two sites, the Haida and the Blackfoot, of the Canadian government, and scholars of cultural conservation and heritage studies. My journey proved to be a venture into the historical, scientific, cultural and spiritual world of two very diverse indigenous people, and I am truly grateful for the insights and teachings of my guides and interview partners.

The interviews that I conducted followed a structured questionnaire, dealing with four main areas of interest. The first set of questions was concerned with the UNESCO in general, the second section concentrated on ownership, management, and control of the heritage site, the third section dealt with questions regarding community involvement and identity, and the fourth section with education and tourism. Since the two sites are fundamentally different concerning ownership, management, and community involvement, the questions had to be adjusted accordingly. Each interview was recorded and partially transcribed. Furthermore, using a structured questionnaire, I conducted visitors' surveys at the two sites, inquiring about visitors' expectations and impressions of the site, access to information, as well as their general understanding of cultural heritage, UNESCO, and the respective site.⁶

2. Indigenous empowerment and capacity-building through heritage

There are many controversial and sensitive issues regarding ownership and control, management and community involvement, interpretation, and representation of heritage, which have been discussed fairly extensively in heritage, tourism, and museum studies (Gerberich 2005; Kavanagh 1996; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998; Kramer 2006; Notzke 2006; Simpson 1996; Smith 2003; Walsh 1992). Many writers in the field of indigenous cultural tourism have focused on the political nature of cultural tourism, where representation of culture and the protection of cultural identity and traditions are central to its development and management. Walsh (1992) thus claims that a superficial, unquestioning portrayal of the past separates people from their own heritage and their understanding for their cultural and political present. Simpson (1996) argues for museum curators to adopt more inclusive practices in today's pluralist society, and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett explores the "agency of display" (1998, 16) and shows how objects and people are made "to perform" (1998, 3), meaning by the very fact of being collected and exhibited. Although heritage is marketed as something old, she states that heritage is actually a new mode of cultural production that revitalizes vanishing ways of life, economies, and places.

6 See appendices 1 and 2.

Discussing indigenous cultural tourism within the globalization of heritage tourism and showing that the development of the cultural tourism industry has exacerbated the commodification of heritage, Smith (2003) calls for more community-based cultural tourism initiatives. Notzke (2006) then examines the community involvement in tourism development, arguing that the use of social space and the assignment of certain roles to tourists by indigenous hosts play an important part in their management strategies. Charting the fluid character of material culture and analyzing the ambivalent reactions to ownership, appropriation, and repatriation of tangible and intangible Nuxalk culture, Kramer (2006) demonstrates in her case study that the loss of cultural objects proves that culture is valuable through external affirmation and thus for asserting a collective national indigenous identity, which, among others, is supportive in reclaiming traditional territory and regaining self-determination.

Ownership and control are inevitably linked with education and empowerment, since the owner determines what and how heritage is being protected and what stories are being told. When one culture decides what is significant and worth protecting in the cultural heritage of another, there is always the possibility of injustice arising. While the argument has been made that cultural heritage belongs to the public and "should be used for the greater good of contributing to the knowledge of humankind" (Asch 2009, 395), many indigenous peoples assert that increased protection and control of cultural heritage significant to them is fundamental to the continuity, revival, and survival of their cultural identity.

In Canada, the final authority to control cultural heritage is divided between the federal and provincial governments. Since First Nations are not provinces, the law assumes that they do not have the legitimate right to ultimate authority over decisions that affect their heritage (Asch 2009, 395). Consequently, where Canadian authority assigns control outside of First Nations, as "in the case of statutory 'ownership' of material culture by the federal or provincial governments, or heritage sites located off reserve land, First Nations seeking greater control are left to make claims, to negotiate, and [...] to make 'demands'" (Asch 2009, 395).

Powers in Canada, however, seem to be in evolution, and more and more First Nations are taking control of their cultural heritage. Indigenous empowerment, i.e. the increasing awareness of spiritual, political, social, racial, educational, gender, and economic strengths of individuals and communities through heritage, is thus gaining importance to First Nations, and the value of community-led cultural heritage management is increasingly being explored among First Nations and the government (Bell/Paterson 2008, 2009). Empowerment,⁷ which can be both a process and an outcome (Spreitzer/Kizilos/Nason 1997; Thomas/

7 The origins of the theory of empowerment are associated with the Brazilian humanitarian and educator Paolo Freire (1971; 1973), who proposed a concept of liberating the oppressed people of the world through education. See also Biancalana (2007) and Hur (2006).

Velthouse 1990), can be seen as a social action process through which individuals, organizations and communities gain expertise on their lives, so as to modify their social and political environment in order to improve the quality of life. It also means participation, education, and opportunities to use the acquired knowledge in a way contributive to society, and thus linking “the acquisition of knowledge and skills to social needs and mobilization” (Biancalana 2007, 24).

As heritage can be considered as an asset of economic, social, cultural, and political significance, heritage sites associated with indigenous cultures require attention to the relation between the respective indigenous communities and the site itself (Biancalana 2007, 7). This link that binds heritage and indigenous communities is related to spiritual values, historical significance, and traditional occupations. Heritage thus holds a strong connection with identity and individual and collective memories. Memory, being an essential element of individual and collective identity (LeGoff 1992, 98), and the continuity with the past give “certainties, allowing us to draw a line in which our present can fit” (Biancalana 2007, 6). Collective memory is formed, among others, by historic environments, containing an infinity of ancient and recent stories, written in stone, brick, or wood, or inscribed in the features of the landscape that become the focus of community identity and pride. Heritage sites thus provide mnemonic features, as Armstrong, Basso, Calloway, Eigenbrod, Lutz, and Nelson express (Armstrong 2007; Basso 1996; Calloway 2003; Eigenbrod 2005; Lutz, 2007; Nelson 1993). This communal memory is part of indigenous culture.

Since indigenous heritage sites are part of a living culture, the state levels of significance used in the assessment of non-indigenous cultural heritage do not easily translate to the assessment of indigenous heritage (NSW Heritage Office 2011, 28). It is therefore important to investigate the community’s understanding of the heritage and have the indigenous community participate in the preservation of heritage sites. Participation, however, is a process that is more than making communities the beneficiaries of a tourism project. Jobs are an important benefit, but they do not replace empowerment. Communities must participate in the decision-making process, which involves more than consultation. Processes must be initiated to ensure that communities are able to manage their own growth and resources sensibly, project managers must identify local leaders, local organizations must get involved, key priorities of the community must be identified, and ideas, expectations, and concerns of the local people must be met (Notzke 2006, 186). Organizations in charge of the preservation of the heritage site must consider integrating the indigenous communities in this process. UNESCO meets this demand with its mission of encouraging the participation of the local population in the preservation of their cultural and natural heritage (UNESCO, *World Heritage*). The practical application of this objective, however, can be very different.

People's ethnic origin, heritage, and culture are part of their distinct intellectual and scientific discoveries and spiritual achievements – the development of complex and intelligent works of art. Each nation or ethnic group has achieved these works in their own ways that have grown out of geographical positioning, necessity, and inspiration. Cultural World Heritage has the obligation to teach about indigenous culture, current problems and society; it has the responsibility to tell not only stories about the past, but also about the present, and thus help shape the future. The close connection of the concept of heritage with ideas of “material permanence and authenticity” (Mathew 2008) is reflected in the discourses and practices relating to heritage with their “references to notions of preservation, protection, management and sustainability” (Mathew 2008) as well as with a sense of identity, as Mathew states: “The apparently ever-increasing importance of heritage in an individual and collective sense relates directly to an on-going series of challenges to, and explorations of, notions of identity and belonging in a highly mobile world” (Mathew 2008). For indigenous people such as the Haida and Blackfoot a close connection with their cultural heritage means empowerment and strength in a highly challenging and demanding post-colonial world, as will be shown in the following two case studies.

3. SGang Gwaay

Haida Gwaii is a place where land and sea are woven into Haida culture. For thousands of years the Haida have been living on the islands, thriving on the wealth of the sea and the forest. Shellfish and salmon were staple foods; giant western red cedars were the raw material of ocean-going canoes, vast post-and-plank houses and great poles bearing both symbols of family history and holding inside them the bones of ancestors. The village of SGang Gwaay Inagaay (also called Ninstints),⁸ located on SGang Gwaay at the Haida Gwaii archipelago (formerly Queen Charlotte Islands, BC), “bears a unique testimony to the vanished civilization of the Haida Indians, a tribe living essentially from hunting and fishing in the archipelago which extends the length of the west coast of British Columbia” (ICOMOS, *World Heritage List No. 157*). Recognizing the art represented by the carved poles at SGang Gwaay to be “among the finest example of its type in the world” (UNESCO, *SGang Gwaay, Statement of Significance*), the village was inscribed on the UNESCO Heritage List in 1981.⁹ While much of the village's structures have been consumed by age and the elements, the remains of ten large

8 “Ninstints” was a corruption by Europeans of the name of the head chief of the village, *Nanistins* (“He who is two”). The Haida named their village *Sqa'ngwa-i Inaga'i*, Red Cod Island Town (MacDonald 1983, 7).

9 SGang Gwaay was inscribed as Anthony Island under criterion iii, “to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared” (UNESCO, *The Criteria for Selection*). Its name was changed into SGang Gwaii in 2000 and into SGang Gwaay in 2006.

cedar long houses and 32 carved totem and mortuary poles, sculpted with stylized anthropo-zoomorphic figures, illustrate the art and way of life of the Haida, commemorate the power and artistry of a rich and vibrant society, and offer a visual key to their oral traditions.

Protecting the heritage of SḠang Gwaay, which once counted more than 300 inhabitants, began when the naturalist and artefact collector Charles Newcombe made a thorough photographic inventory of the village between 1897 and 1913 (MacDonald 1983, 52). Having been described first by Robert Haswell in the log of the *Lady Washington* in June 1789, the village was visited by a series of epidemics between 1863 and 1873, which proved fatal to many of the villagers. It was not deserted until 1880, though, when about 25 Haida still took up winter quarters there before leaving for summer hunting and fishing expeditions near the Queen Charlotte Islands (MacDonald 1983, 47). During an expedition in 1957, the first archaeological tests were conducted at the village (MacDonald 1983, 54-55).

When the provincial government declared the site a provincial park in 1958, there was no interference with the Haida, who had settled in Old Masset and Skidegate (MacDonald 1983, 55).¹⁰ In 1972, George F. MacDonald¹¹ submitted a provisional study to the National Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, including “comments on their present conditions, setting, accessibility, and when still inhabited, the attitude of inhabitants to commemoration or development” (MacDonald 1972, i). In the report, he recommended ten villages as designated heritage sites, favouring Haina in terms of accessibility and proximity to modern communities and listing SḠang Gwaay only on a secondary list (MacDonald 1972, 32). In the following years, a series of studies was launched to examine long-term measures to safeguard what remained at SḠang Gwaay. The islets and foreshore of SḠang Gwaay were declared an Ecological Reserve in 1979 and designated a Provincial Archaeological and Heritage Site in 1980. Being declared a World Heritage site, however, initiated a new phase of interest in the preservation of the site. Thus, a long-term conservation and management plan was developed that would ensure that a “significant portion of the site was preserved for the education and enjoyment of native people, scholars, and the public” (MacDonald 1983, 53). Although the Haida were not directly involved in the designation process of SḠang Gwaay as a World Heritage site, their struggle for control over the land resulted in a much more comprehensive agreement with the government that had fundamental impact on their management position of the site.

10 Today, the Haida have a total population of about 2,000, predominantly in the villages of Old Masset and Skidegate, which are both considered Indian Reserves.

11 In the late 1960s and early 1970, the anthropologist and later museum director George F. MacDonald made several trips to SḠang Gwaay to refine details of the existing maps and to take photographs and shoot films for the new galleries of the National Museum of Man in Ottawa (today the Canadian Museum of Civilization).

When the establishment of British Columbia in 1858 paved the way for industry – mining, logging, fishing and whaling – processing of resources began in saw mills, salteries, canneries, and the Rose Harbour whaling station. In 1985, in a move to protect the area from logging and other resource extraction, the Council of the Haida Nation (CHN; formed in 1974) designated the land and sea of Gwaii Haanas, which included SGang Gwaay, as a Haida Heritage site. The *South Moresby Agreement* in 1988 committed the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia to establish Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve.

In 1993, the CHN and the Government of Canada negotiated a landmark cooperative management agreement, the *Gwaii Haanas Agreement*, which resulted in the creation of the Archipelago Management Board (AMB), made up of two representatives from the CHN and two representatives from the Government of Canada. In the spirit of the agreement, both western science and Haida traditional knowledge inform decision-making, with the intent to maintain and restore the rich cultural and ecological heritage of Gwaii Haanas for the benefit, education, and enjoyment of present and future generations (Parks Canada *Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve*, 6). Focussing its attention on minimizing the impacts of people on the environment, the AMB examines all initiatives and undertakings relating to the planning, management, and operation of Gwaii Haanas. A Management Plan identifies goals, strategies, and expected results, which include the protection and presentation of the natural and cultural heritage, the sustaining of the continuity of Haida culture, the management of visitor use, and environmental responsibilities. Key principles that guide the AMB's decision-making embrace heritage integrity, understanding human-land relationships, spiritual values, productive partnerships, continued learning, facility development, commercial harvesting restrictions, appropriate marketing, and cooperative management and consensus, as the management plan states:

The successful management of Gwaii Haanas is the responsibility of this generation to future generations. Fulfilling the Gwaii Haanas vision and adhering to the guiding principles will require commitment, dedication and cooperation. The cooperative management arrangement between the Governments of the Haida Nation and Canada can serve as a model of how two parties with different views can work together to protect special areas of the world. (Parks Canada "Management Plan", 9)

Though the Haida had never signed treaties with the British government, there is a long standing disagreement in respect of who owns Haida Gwaii. This has been recognized in the *Kunst'aa Guu–Kunst'aayah Reconciliation Protocol* in 2009, outlining a process to reconcile Haida and Crown titles. Operating under their respective authorities and jurisdiction, the parties agreed to focus on joint

decision-making respecting lands and natural resources on Haida Gwaii and other collaborative arrangements including socio-economic matters pertaining to children and families. Consequently, the name Queen Charlotte Islands was returned to the province of BC in June 2010 and the name Haida Gwaii was restored. Finally, in 2010 the Gwaii Haanas National Marine Conservation Area Reserve and Haida Heritage Site was established and the *Gwaii Haanas Marine Agreement* was signed by the CHN and the Government of Canada, putting in place a cooperative management partnership to protect and conserve the marine ecosystem of the proposed National Marine Conservation Area Reserve and confirming the boundaries of the marine area.¹²

Acknowledging their “differing views with regard to sovereignty, title, ownership and jurisdiction over Haida Gwaii” (*Kunst’aa Guu–Kunst’aayah Reconciliation Protocol* 2009), both parties have been managing and controlling Haida heritage for years cooperatively, improving the socio-economic situation for both the indigenous and non-indigenous population. As part of the *South Moresby Agreement*, for example, a Community Development Fund was established to stimulate the economy of the island and “enhance understanding between the communities and cultures of the islands through the process of joint community economic planning and development” (Gwaii Trust Society 2009). In 1994 the Gwaii Trust Society (GTS) was formed to operate the fund, subsidizing educational, cultural, and social programs and handing out grants and travel assistance to indigenous and non-indigenous community members. Furthermore, due to a fifty-percent commitment of Parks Canada – one of the major employers on the islands –, more than forty employees of the government department are Haida staff, and approximately two Million dollars in salaries flow into the indigenous community annually.¹³ Gwaii Haanas itself is predominantly funded by Parks Canada. In order to reduce reliance on public funds, however, the AMB adopted a “creative approach”¹⁴ to finance programs and services through user-pay programs, corporate sponsorship, endowment funds, and commercial publications. Since public funding has been decreasing over the years, the conservation of the poles at SĠang Gwaay has become rather difficult, as Parks Canada has little means to bring maintenance personnel to the remote site.¹⁵

12 The new Archipelago Management Board, that was formed in March 2011, consists of three representatives of the Council of the Haida Nation, and three representatives from the Government of Canada – two from Parks Canada and one from Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

13 Interview with Ernie Gladstone, Superintendent, Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, 4 Oct. 2011, unpublished.

14 Interview with Ernie Gladstone.

15 Interviews with Ernie Gladstone, Barbara J. Wilson, Cultural Resource Manager, Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, and Jason Alsop, Operations Manager, Haida Heritage Centre and Member of the AMB, 4 and 7 Oct. 2011, unpublished.

SḠang Gwaay and Gwaii Haanas also play significant roles in the social and spiritual empowerment of the Haida and the education of visitors, and different programs have been created to communicate traditional Haida culture. Formed in 1981, the *Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program* strives to educate young Haida and visitors about the natural and cultural heritage of Gwaii Haanas (Parks Canada, "The Haida Gwaii Watchmen Program"). In the past Haida watchmen were posted at strategic positions around the villages to raise alarm in advance of an approaching enemy. Today, the watchmen serve as guardians at the sensitive sites of former villages,¹⁶ sharing first-hand knowledge of the land and sea, stories, songs, dances and traditional food. While elders pass on their knowledge to a younger generation, the youth obtains a new intimacy and knowledge about the land, as Jason Alsop explains: "This is our land. We go down and camp there and look after it... It makes you feel better about who you are; you build up a relationship with the land."¹⁷ The program provides seasonal employment for the Haida, has its own management and is funded out of several sources, including the fees visitors pay to enter Gwaii Haanas.

Another program is the *Swan Bay Rediscovery Program*,¹⁸ a camp where through a variety of activities such as visiting Haida heritage sites, traditional singing and dancing, cedar bark weaving, and sports activities, indigenous children and youth learn Haida cultural skills and knowledge from elders while acquiring life skills, self-esteem and confidence. Furthermore, within the *Skidegate Haida Immersion Program*, a program of healing and awareness, elders have developed a working alphabet for the Skidegate Haida dialect, compiled a glossary of over 8500 words, and video documented Haida legends and myths.¹⁹ Through these programs, the Haida gain cultural and spiritual awareness and pass on their traditional knowledge to indigenous and non-indigenous people. Parks Canada with their mandate of supporting the Haida Nation in continuing their culture also runs various public outreach activities, including school projects such as a stream restoration project in 2011.²⁰

In 2008, the *Haida Heritage Center* at K'aay Llnagaay opened as a gathering place for the indigenous community and for elders sharing their wisdom, displaying and interpreting Haida history and developing Haida art, language and culture. The multi-million dollar building houses meeting rooms, exhibition space,

16 The Haida watchmen are located at the villages of K'uuna Llnagaay (Skedans), T'aanuu Llnagaay (Tanu), SḠang Gwaay (Ninstints), Hlk'yah GaawGa (Windy Bay), and Gandll K'in Gwaayaay (Hot Spring Island).

17 Interview with Jason Alsop.

18 'Laanaa Dagang.a. – The *Swan Bay Rediscovery Program* is subsidized by the Haida band council and does its own fundraising.

19 Interview with Barbara J. Wilson.

20 Interview with Terrie Dionne, Manager, External Relations, Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve, 3 Oct. 2011, unpublished.

a performing house, a canoe house, the Bill Reid Teaching Centre, a carving shed, a gift shop and a café. It is also home of the *Haida Gwaii Museum*, which opened in 1976. With about 7000 visitors per year, it is an important instrument for communicating Haida history and traditions to visitors from Canada and around the world.²¹ Additionally, office space is rented to different organizations and programs, and Haida hold jobs in the museum, the gift store, and the cafeteria, exhibit their arts and crafts, and participate in educational programs. In order to “inspire understanding and respect for all that Haida Gwaii is” (*Haida Gwaii Museum Profile and Mandate*), the museum works in consultation with the Haida community, including hereditary chiefs, elders, and the CHN, as well as in cooperation with language programs and the Haida Repatriation committees. While the centre does not run its own educational programs, it supports partnerships with the *NW Community College* and the *Haida Gwaii Higher Education Society*, a non-profit organization that provides university-level education through field courses in resource management and other subjects.

For tourists the visit of the World Heritage site of SḠang Gwaay is still the highlight of Gwaii Haanas. While the UNESCO label certainly makes SḠang Gwaay a must-see place, many visitors are not aware of it being a UNESCO heritage site. Others know about it, but are unsure of its meaning. About a quarter of the visitors surveyed in 2011 were not aware of Haida Gwaii being the homeland of indigenous people, as a visitor from Australia said “I did not know that there were Indians here.”²² Usually, they are not aware of the Haida acclaimed title to the land or the co-management of Gwaii Haanas, and about twenty percent had not heard of the UNESCO before. Because of its remoteness, though, Gwaii Haanas has merely approximately 2.000 visitors per year. SḠang Gwaay and other park locations are only accessible by boat or plane, and several companies offer Zodiac or mother ship tours into the park.

While over the past years the targeted audience has changed from young, individual adventurers to senior, more affluent couples from Canada, the U.S., Japan, and Europe, tourists still visit Gwaii Haanas for recreation, and although they generally do not spend much time there they “still want the wilderness experience.”²³ To provide a safe and enjoyable experience without compromising the ecological and social carrying capacity of Gwaii Haanas, the AMB limited the number of people permitted in the protected area. Thus they established a quota of 3300 user nights and restricted the party size to twelve people on shore at any one time, as that is a reasonable number of people the watchmen are able to handle at a site. While this meant limiting the amount of income for Gwaii Haanas, as visitors pay an entrance fee for the park, Parks Canada has not yet achieved the

21 Interview with Jason Alsop.

22 Visitors’ survey conducted with thirty visitors at Gwaii Haanas, B.C., 30 Sept. – 08 Oct., 2011.

23 Interview with Heron Wier, owner of Moresby Explorers Ltd., 30 Sept. 2011, unpublished.

number of people they set the quota on. Quotas and restrictions also created tensions, however, and in 2007 the Gwaii Haanas' management arrangement was challenged in court by Moresby Explorers Ltd., who has been taking tourists into the park since 1988. The court ruled that the management and quota system was legal and an innovative solution for protecting the area, and the company had to pull their floating lodge out of the parameters of the park ("Athlii Gwaii", 11).

Due to the political situation of the Haida, indigenous involvement in the management and control of Gwaii Haanas is very strong. Even though the UNESCO label does not seem to have a strong effect on empowerment and capacity building, as it does not bring any financial means and many visitors are unaware of it, for many Haida it makes "a big difference" as it "brings awareness, internationally, credibility, reassurance and authenticity" to SGang Gwaay and Gwaii Haanas.²⁴ Moreover, through programs such as the watchmen program the Haida narrate their own stories about their cultural heritage. However, since the Haida are not yet providing access to the park with their own tour operations, tourists are usually guided by non-indigenous tour guides, who give different versions of Haida-related issues, which is a source of consternation to the Haida and one of many fields in which indigenous cultural awareness and education still needs to be developed.

4. Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump

Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, located in the Porcupine Hills of Southern Alberta, is one of the oldest, largest and best preserved buffalo jumps in North America. Because of its "extraordinary archaeological, historical, and ethnographical value," combined with "its prairie setting" and "outstanding interpretive potential," it was designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1981 (Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump "Buffalo Tracks", 4). Inscribed under criterion vi,²⁵ which recognizes its direct association with "the survival of the human race during the pre-historic period" (ICOMOS *World Heritage List No. 158*, 1), this site is an outstanding illustration of the subsistence hunting techniques of Plains nations. Layers of bison bones buried up to ten metres below the cliff represent nearly six thousand years²⁶ of use of the buffalo jump by Aboriginal people. Covering 1,470 acres, this site is composed of four distinct components, i.e. the gathering basin, the V-shaped drive lanes, the cliff kill site, and the campsite and processing area, each of which has different archaeological remains associated with com-

24 Interview with Jason Alsop.

25 Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump was 1981 inscribed under criterion vi, "to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance" (UNESCO, *The Criteria for Selection*).

26 The site was used for the slaughter of bison from 3,600 B.C. to 2,600 B.C., then intermittently toward 900 B.C., and finally, continuously from 206 A.D to 1850 (ICOMOS, *World Heritage List No. 158*, 2).

munal buffalo hunting, ranging from drive lane cairns and projectile points to butchered bone and fire-broken rock. The site thus very well exemplifies the culture and society of the Plains Indians for many centuries before the European settlement of the region.

Explored first in 1938 by members of the American Museum of Natural History, since the 1950s, Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump (HSIBJ) has been the object of systematic excavations, which have considerably enriched the knowledge of prehistoric arms and tools and transformed current thinking on the use of game as food and in clothing and lodging. After the government had purchased the land²⁷ from proprietors who had ranched it for decades, HSIBJ was designated a Canadian National Historic Site in 1968, a Provincial Historic Site in 1979 and a World Heritage site in 1981.

To tell the story of the Plains hunters, a 9.8-million-dollar Interpretive Centre was built in 1987, depicting and interpreting on five levels the ecology, mythology, lifestyle, and technology of Blackfoot peoples within the context of archaeological evidence.²⁸ Furthermore, the ten-minute film *In Search of the Buffalo* featuring a re-enactment of a buffalo drive and related activities is shown at the theatre throughout the day, the permanent photo exhibition "Lost Identities – A Journey of Rediscovery" pictures Blackfoot people of different communities, a gift store sells Blackfoot arts and crafts and souvenir items, and a cafeteria offers food and beverages. While most visitors explore the exhibitions on their own, a guided facility tour leads through the centre, the theatre and the cliff top trail, introducing Blackfoot culture and history and the mechanics of the Buffalo jump. Blackfoot interpreters guide the tour and offer information. For students specific educational programs are provided,²⁹ designed to "compliment the Alberta Learning Curriculum" (*Dynamic Diverse Destinations in Southern Alberta*).

27 Due to the signing of Treaty No. 7 there has been no question concerning ownership of the land. Treaty No. 7, concluded on 22 Sept. 1877, is an agreement between the British Crown and several, mainly Blackfoot, First Nations of Southern Alberta that established a delimited area of land for the tribes as reserves, promised annual payments and provisions from the British Government to the tribes and guaranteed continued hunting and trapping rights on the "tract surrendered." In exchange, the tribes ceded their rights to their traditional territory, of which they had been recognized as the owners (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada).

28 The exhibition "Napi's World" explores and explains the geography, climate and vegetation of the Northwestern Plains; "Napi's People" details the culture of an ancient way of life, including food gathering, ceremonies and family life of prehistoric Plains peoples; "The Buffalo Hunt" presents the story of how a buffalo jump works, including the explanation of pre-hunt ceremonies, the process of gathering and driving the buffalo, and the kill at the cliff; "Cultures in Contact" charts the decline of traditional buffalo hunting, with the arrival of Europeans and the introduction of the horse and gun; a recreated archaeological dig and slide at the exhibit "Uncovering the Past" explores the science of archaeology and shows how we study and learn about the past.

29 The educational programs at HSIBJ include the programs "Buffalo Tales" (ages 4-6), "Living Long Ago" (grades 1-3), "Living Off the Land" (grades 4-6), "History Underground" (grades 5-9), "Social

Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump is owned, controlled, and managed by the Government of Alberta with only minimal indigenous involvement in the executive decision-making process. With approximately 60,000 visitors per year,³⁰ HSIBJ is the 'flagship' of the four Southern Alberta Historic Sites.³¹ While the provincial government provides the means for operating the building, salaries for the government staff, a small annual goods and services budget and regional marketing, the site generates revenues out of admissions, the profit of the gift shop, educational tours, a tipi camp, and a percentage of the café income, thus financing vehicles, communication, office and tipi camp supplies, marketing, and contract staff.³²

Holding the majority of jobs at the centre, however, including those as site interpreters, the Blackfoot play a key role in the operation of the site. Currently, there are five governmental staff positions: the position of Site Manager and of Head of Finances and Visitors Services are filled by non-indigenous employees, and Piikani are holding the positions of Site Marketing/Program Coordinator, Head of Interpretation and Lead Guide. Additionally, for the winter season of 2011/12 seven Piikani contractors were hired as interpreters and employees working in the gift shop, at the front desk and in the office. For the summer, up to thirteen additional contractors are hired as interpreters, shuttle bus drivers, and extra staff.³³ While applications by non-indigenous candidates are being considered, Blackfoot staff is preferably hired as they are "what people want to see." For the interpreters "it is also preferential if they speak Blackfoot, because visitors like to hear the Blackfoot language."³⁴ Besides employment as staff and contractors, HSIBJ provides some extra business opportunities for the local Blackfoot. Drummers and dancers of all three Blackfoot communities are hired for performances every Wednesday in summer and for special events on National

Organization" (grades 7-9), "Sticks and Stones" (all grades), and a Facility Tour (all grades). A portable education program, the "Contrast' Resource Kit," featuring a slide show, photographs and teachers' guide and documenting the lifestyle of the Blackfoot before and after the Europeans' arrival in southern Alberta can be provided for schools.

30 Visitors' numbers have been decreasing during the past years from 150,000 after 1987 to 90,000 in 2001 to 60,000 in 2011. Interview with Deloralie Brown, Head of Finances and Visitors' Services, 13 Oct. 2011, unpublished.

31 Southern Alberta Historic Sites include besides HSIBJ the Frank Slide Interpretive Centre, The Remington Carriage Museum and the Lougheed House Historic Site.

32 The author has been informed about exact numbers of budgets, expenses, and revenues.

33 Usually Kainai contractors are also hired, but since their reserve is 50 km away and driving takes much of their earnings, only few apply. The Piikani Reserve is about 40 km away and most of the staff is carpooling. There are no employees from the Siksika as their reserve is 200 km north of Fort Macleod.

34 Interview with Deloralie Brown. Since the employment at HSIBJ requires a drivers' license and a reliable vehicle, there are sometimes also openings for non-indigenous applicants, as Blackfoot fail to have either one.

Aboriginal Day, and art by local artists and crafters is purchased for the gift store.³⁵ As HSIBJ is a government-run facility, government rules apply. Concepts of indigenous time, spiritual values and traditional practices have thus to be forsaken in favor of 'western' management concepts,³⁶ which seems to make working together sometime challenging for both sides.³⁷

When it comes to operations, marketing, and educational programs, Blackfoot knowledge is taken into consideration and Blackfoot staff influence decisions within their position, as program coordinator Quinton Crow Shoe argues:

It's a place shared by the First Nations and the Government of Alberta, who are stringent in what they do here, because it's tax payers' money, and so we have to follow those rules. But at the same time it gives us the opportunity to share stories, knowledge and ideas, to have input. Right now we are talking about redesigning the building, and [...] I'm very fortunate that as a First Nation, as an employee, I am involved in this process [...] our input is being valued...³⁸

Crow Shoe sees HSIBJ as a co-operated facility, "between the Plains Blackfoot people and the Alberta government: We are telling the story, we are sharing the culture, and we are key players, we work here. It would be a museum otherwise."³⁹ Others disagree with this perspective and oppose the current ownership and management of HSIBJ, as the Blackfoot see the site as their tribal heritage. A number of Blackfoot⁴⁰ is thus rejecting the fact that "the government is draining

35 The Peigan Crafts Ltd. moccasins factory in Brocket, established in 1976 as the first of its kind in Canada to manufacture authentic First Nations moccasins, mukluks and mitts, was closed down in 2011 because of failing support of the community. Interview with Ian Clarke, Regional Director, Southern Operations, Historic Sites and Museums Branch, 12 Oct. 2011, unpublished.

36 Interview with Catherine Bell, University of Alberta, 14 Oct. 2011, unpublished.

37 According to Deloralie Brown, indigenous reliability and punctuality are tested now and again: "When an elder dies, everybody goes to the funeral, and everybody of the staff is gone."

38 Interview with Quinton Crow Show, Site Marketing and Program Coordinator, HSIBJ, 14 Oct. 2011, unpublished.

39 Interview with Quinton Crow Show.

40 The Piikani Nation, the smallest Blackfoot tribe to sign Treaty No. 7 in 1877, count about 3,900 people today, about 1,900 of them living on reserve at *Peigan 147*, an area of 430.31 km² between Fort Macleod and Pincher Creek in Southern Alberta. The Kainai Nation (or Blood) count approximately 10,000 members; their reserve *Blood 148* around Stand Off is currently the largest in Canada with 3,850 inhabitants on 1,414.03 km². The Siksika Nation, with a total population of 3,000, has its home at the reserve *Siksika 146*, with approximately 2,700 people living on 696.56 km² (Statistics Canada 2006).

money out of the region and of Native culture.”⁴¹ However, neither the Piikani nor the Kainai Nation have the means to operate the site on their own.

HSIBJ is of great spiritual significance for the Blackfoot people, as Blackfoot culture is based on a long and intimate relationship with the land, and the landscape has always been part of indigenous traditions. In spite of government ownership, the Blackfoot have come to claim the site “as their own” (Brink 2008, 290), and HSIBJ has become a place of weddings, funerals, medicine bundle openings, meetings of elders, and many other ceremonies that reflect the esteem in which the place is held. For while the buffalo jump method was abandoned around 1850 (Brink 2008, 257; Verbicky-Todd 1984, 132), the descendants of the Blackfoot have always resided within a few kilometres of the jump. Thus the knowledge of its existence and use, together with the traditions, were meticulously passed on to successive generations and the jump has never ceased being a proud piece of the past for the local Blackfoot (Brink 2008, 257). For the government, though, the use of HSIBJ as some form of a ‘community centre’ is rather difficult, as the site had been designated as an archaeological site, as Regional Director Ian Clarke explains:

One of my problems with the place is that it has become a Blackfoot cultural center, and my sense is that it is not really that. It is a World Heritage site because of the buffalo jump and what the buffalo jump means. And the buffalo jump and its content are more important than the Chicken Dance. The Chicken Dance is colorful, and it’s an interesting representation of Blackfoot culture, but it doesn’t tell us the whole element of what this place means. This place is about how Native people of this country survived thousands of years by their ingenuity and their knowledge, and that is what I think people need to understand.⁴²

This conflict between the government and the Blackfoot partly originates in differing views of the concepts of archaeology and heritage. The designation of HSIBJ is predominantly based on archaeology, and culture officially came in only in 1987 when the centre opened. But archaeology is a western concept, containing both a record of the past and the interpretations and values that people today apply to that record. Many indigenous people do not view archaeological artefacts or sites as things of the past, though, but rather as active elements of their contemporary world. These objects, places and stories are valued as much for their “heritage” values as for “being repositories of beings and powers of

41 Interviews with Ian Clarke and Edwin Small Legs, Regional Director and guide at HSIBJ, 16 Oct. 2011, unpublished.

42 Interview with Ian Clarke.

importance within their worldview" (Nicholas 2006, 218). This has major implications for understanding the critical reactions that some indigenous communities have to archaeology, and it also identifies the need for alternative heritage management strategies. As the story of HSIBJ predated Blackfoot culture, it represents Plains Peoples in general, argues the government, and therefore "it is not really a Blackfoot story, but it's really a Plains people story."⁴³

Blackfoot involvement with the site is important for the cultural and spiritual capacity building of the Blackfoot, as they keep a close relationship with their traditions and beliefs. While many Piikani and Kainai have thus become closely involved with the centre, there is also hesitation and critique among other Blackfoot, who believe that the government is exploiting and utilizing indigenous knowledge and who see Blackfoot contributions as a betrayal of their culture, as Piikani site interpreter Trevor Kiitokii says: "Many of my people feel I'm selling out our culture. They don't like that I'm working here."⁴⁴ Others, however, believe it is important to share their knowledge, as Quinton Crow Shoe explains: "I'm not selling out, I'm sharing. Because when I don't share, the colonialists are going to win."⁴⁵

When the government developed the storyline for the galleries, they consulted Piikani elders. The government did not consult the elders of the Siksika and the Kainai, and thus the storyline was developed without the voice of the Kainai elders, who believed that "their people had built and used the buffalo jump every bit as much as the Piikani" and who did not always agree with the stories of "their fellow traditionalists of the Piikani" (Brink 2008, 284). This conduct again raises questions of who has the right to interpret another culture and hence "gain authenticity for one's case" (Braun 2007, 199). This is also reflected in the guided tours. Although a general guideline exists for teaching the programs, each Blackfoot guide approaches the topic differently and presents a unique personal insight into Blackfoot culture.⁴⁶ While one guide explained that the Blackfoot "never had wars back then," another mentioned that the Blackfoot were "a very war-type people." And even though they are expected to talk about traditional culture and life style only, the interpreters point out historical and current problems of the Blackfoot people such as alcohol abuse and residential schools and thus often put their jobs at the centre in jeopardy.

Tourists visit the site with certain expectations, which is especially true for indigenous culture. Most come to see the cliff, watch the film, and walk though the centre. As they are looking for "authentic Indians," which is a stereotypical

43 Interview with Duncan Daniels, Head of Regional Marketing, Government of Alberta, 12 Oct. 2011, unpublished.

44 Interview with Trevor Kiitokii, guide at HSIBJ, 13 Oct. 2011, unpublished.

45 Interview with Quinton Crow Shoe.

46 I participated in the "Living Off the Land"-program on 13 Oct. 2011 with Edwin Small Legs, and on 18 Oct. 2011 with Trevor Kiitokii.

image of the Plains Indian as mounted warriors and buffalo hunters (Susemihl 2007, 2008), they are sometimes disappointed with the “modern, non-authentic”⁴⁷ guides. As a survey on visitors’ satisfaction revealed, most important for tourists at HSIBJ is authenticity (64%), an educational experience about people’s current lifestyles (45%), Native ownership and operation (38%), ticket prices (17%), and entertainment (12%) (Notzke 2006, 86). While the general degree of visitors’ satisfaction with their experience at the site is rather high, selected criticism focuses, among others, on the absence of live bison, and the desire for more personal contact with and guidance by aboriginal staff (Notzke 2006, 86). About half of the questioned visitors⁴⁸ had either a guided tour or spoke to the guides individually. All of them found the guides friendly and knowledgeable. However, during their visit, the visitors do not learn about the location of the Blackfoot reserves, the ownership or management of the site, and many visitors are unsure whether the site is on reserve. A visitors’ survey conducted after the visit of the site shows that about one third of the visitors believe that the Blackfoot own the site and the building (30%), one third thinks that the federal or provincial government are the owners of the site (25%), another third is now sure who owns the site (25%), a minority thinks the Blackfoot and the government share ownership (10%) and another 10% believe that the UNESCO owns the site.⁴⁹

The various and partly controversial (and thus competing) narratives of the Blackfoot as ecologically sensitive people, stereotypical Indians, people of the past, and contemporary custodians of their cultural heritage are being communicated through interpreting the site and thus by the stories told. These narratives are strongly affected by and dependent on ownership and control of the heritage, community involvement, and customer’s expectations. The stories told and the histories passed on not only to non-indigenous visitors but also to a younger generation of the Blackfoot are important in terms of indigenous empowerment and capacity building, as children and youth learn through heritage about their tribes’ history and traditions and build up an understanding for their culture and identity. While there are many different educational programs and tipi camp sleepovers offered to schools and youth groups,⁵⁰ none of them are directed towards indigenous people only. Instead of indigenous youth being interested in the stories, the opposite effect has been witnessed, where Blackfoot children misbehaved and acted ignorantly and discourteously at the site. This behaviour can be ascribed to present socio-economic circumstances at their reserve. Therefore,

47 Person interviewed during a survey at HSIBJ, 2011.

48 A survey of thirty visitors was conducted at HSIBJ by the author in Oct. 2011.

49 Visitors’ statements as to the ownership include: “The tribe itself owns it, which is amazing. I know that they run it, and it’s well done”; “I hope that the Natives do, but I think the government does”; “I think it is shared. Is it on the reserve?”; “The First Nations own it, through the government.” Survey at HSIBJ, Oct. 2012.

50 See programs at Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, *Education Programs 2012*.

although the Piikani, and to some extent the Kainai, have been involved with the heritage site of HSIBJ and their communities have gained certain cultural, spiritual and economic benefits, there is little to no socio-political empowerment through the UNESCO site for the indigenous heirs of the ancient buffalo jump.

5. Conclusion

Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations; it is an irreplaceable source of life and inspiration. Cultural heritage is also an important source of empowerment and capacity building for indigenous communities, and the actions outside the boundaries of the heritage site effect the site's preservation while communities are partners and protagonists in the conservation process.

The sites of SĠang Gwaay and Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump are unique places and differ considerably in terms of ownership, management and funding, indigenous community involvement and visitor numbers, as both sites have developed within a different political context. SĠang Gwaay is a remotely located village that is co-managed by the Council of the Haida Nation and the Government of Canada and challenged by access, funding and the decay of the remaining totem poles. Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump is a popular tourist attraction along the Cowboy Trail of Southern Alberta, visited by thousands of visitors each year, and owned and managed by the Government of Alberta.

The situation of the Blackfoot is an unresolved political conflict and a legacy of colonialism. While there were no treaties negotiated in British Columbia, in Southern Alberta the land was ceded through Treaties No. 6 and 7, and the treaty Indians involved have a different bargaining position than non-treaty Indians. The Blackfoot, therefore, have no legal title to the land of their ancestors and to the site of HSIBJ, since it was negotiated at a time before the *Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures*.⁵¹ Since the Blackfoot do not own the land and have no authorized voice in the management, there is no co-management of HSIBJ. The site's attraction, however, depends significantly on Blackfoot presence and involvement in the operation of the site. This involvement, though, is not based on formal agreements with the Piikani or Kainai, as it is the case with SĠang Gwaay, but consists of the contributions of single Blackfoot in certain positions within the operation process. Their attitude towards HSIBJ, though, does not

51 The *Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures* was appointed in 2002 by the Minister of Aboriginal Heritage. In June 2005 it published "Towards a New Beginning – A Foundational Report for a Strategy to Revitalize First Nation, Inuit and Métis Languages and Cultures," recognizing the importance for Indigenous people "of maintaining a close connection to the land in their traditional territories, particularly wilderness areas, heritage and spiritual or sacred sites" and recommending "their meaningful participation in stewardship, management, co-management or co-jurisdiction arrangements" (The Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures).

represent the position of the Piikani or Kainai in general. Without official cooperation, there is no general employment policy for Blackfoot and no revenues that go to the indigenous community. Moreover, improvement in indigenous employment, living conditions, and education as well as identification seems only to exist on an individual basis. While Blackfoot working as guides, dancers, or sales personnel at HSIBJ identify with the site, there is little identification with the site among the young Blackfoot. Many visitors, however, believe that the Piikani are the owners and managers of the site and can thus not understand Blackfoot complaints about living circumstances, as they expect the indigenous community to make use of revenues.

Since the Haida have never signed any treaties, they have never given away title to their land, and even though there is disagreement as to ownership of the land, both governments decided to manage the natural and cultural resources in agreement. These accords give the Haida strength and influence, and they established a locally controlled, interest-bearing fund to advance economic diversification and sustainable development on their homeland. The co-management allows identifying existing problems and solving them through a series of actions, involving the indigenous and non-indigenous communities in the decision-making process. It also permits better living conditions, employment and education for the local indigenous population. Gwaii Haanas thus represents a successful partnership between different types of institutions that have the same objective. Even when the Supreme Court decides about ownership of Haida Gwaii in the near future, a co-management of Gwaii Haanas will most likely be considered as valuable and beneficial by both sides, as it brings together indigenous traditional expertise and values with western competence.

For indigenous empowerment and capacity building through Cultural World Heritage, indigenous involvement in the decision-making process is essential. For heritage preservation to succeed it is also fundamental that all the stakeholders are involved in the process of conservation, including communities and their main interests. Heritage, together with education, can become the basis for the construction of meanings and learning. The visitor, however, must be able to read the context and reality that surrounds him, attributing sense to the learned contents in a way to endow significant meanings to it. This conception of heritage coincides with the basic human necessities of orientation and identity, creating vital relations of men with environment to give sense and order to the world. In this context it becomes essential that the stories about indigenous people at the sites are told from an indigenous perspective. At HSIBJ indigenous storylines about the contemporary situation of the Blackfoot need to be included, as heritage always educates about the present as well as about the past. Thus heritage needs to be "moving forward, creatively re-defining itself, seeking engagement in critical agendas relating to conflict resolution, inter-cultural dialogue and poverty reduction" (Mathew 2008). Hereby, heritage tourism "can

relate to the emerging generations of tourists who seek not only to passively observe the past, but to learn from it and, where appropriate, challenge and change it" (Mathew 2008).

The challenge of storytelling and education also shows that tangible and intangible cultural heritage cannot be looked at separately, for material culture can only be understood and appreciated in the context of the appropriate knowledge of the natural world, with all the narratives that come with it. The ways intangible properties are valued and thereby order social behaviour is of vital importance for the relationships among people who are engaged with such property. These intangible property systems shed light on "the basic principles and objectives underlying their protection within the appropriate customary cultural frameworks" (Thom/Bain 2004, 43). Understanding and protecting tangible and intangible cultural heritage, like traditional knowledge, requires a systemic approach; and cultural protocols around the regulation of traditional knowledge are inherent in traditional knowledge systems. Only if these are respected can the expected teaching follow. And only then Cultural World Heritage – fundamental to the continuity, revival and survival of indigenous cultural identity – will be an asset in the empowerment and capacity building of First Nations.

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Appendix 1: Interview Questions for Site Managers and Staff

1. UNESCO

- How important is the UNESCO label for the heritage site in terms of protection and preservation, financing, tourism, marketing, and prestige?
- How much are the visitors aware of UNESCO?
- Do you know how and why the site was inscribed on the UNESCO list?

2. Ownership, Management and Control of World Heritage

- Who owns/should own the heritage site? Who has legal and political jurisdiction?
- Please explain the management structure and strategies for the site.
- How can effective heritage management be undertaken in accordance with Aboriginal law and community control?
- How does the management of Cultural World Heritage differ from the management of other cultural heritage sites?
- What is necessary for managing First Nations cultural heritage in terms of knowledge, training, and understanding?
- Gwaii Haanas: The question of ownership is still unresolved. What consequences does that have for the control and management of the site?
- How does the co-management work? What are the advantages of and challenges for the management? What could other nations learn from your experience?
- Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump:
- Do the traditional Blackfoot owners work collaboratively with the government to design and implement a method for a cultural heritage assessment and management that not only meets legislative requirements relating to an archaeological site, but also indigenous needs regarding this culturally significant landscape?

3. Community involvement

- What are the opportunities for the community?
- How is the community involved in the heritage protection?
- What tensions and challenges arise or are mediated?

4. Identity formation and Education

- How is Cultural World Heritage helping indigenous people in identifying with culture? How do they see themselves through Cultural World Heritage?
- How can they learn from them?
- Visitors' expectations: What do visitors learn from Cultural World Heritage?
- What stories are narrated; what is left unsaid?
- Visitors' stereotyping/nostalgia: What do visitors learn about indigenous people?

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for Visitors

A) General information

1. Name of the cultural heritage site:
2. Why did you choose to visit this cultural heritage site?
3. What were you most looking forward to seeing or doing here?
4. What did you see and do?
5. What did you find most interesting?

B) If you came with children:

6. What was most interesting for your children?
7. How old are the children that you came with?

C) Information on site

8. How much did you learn about:

	a lot					nothing
a) political history	5	4	3	2	1	1
b) economical history	5	4	3	2	1	1
c) social history	5	4	3	2	1	1
d) cultural history	5	4	3	2	1	1
e) First Nations history	5	4	3	2	1	1
9. About what topics would you have liked to learn more?
10. Did the visit add to your understanding of Canadian history? Yes / No
11. How would you assess your knowledge about Canadian history before and after the visit?

D) Interaction and Interpretation

12. Did you speak with the interpreters or guides at the site? Yes / No
13. Did you speak with male or female interpreters or both? Male / Female / Both
14. How did they respond?
15. What were the interpreters doing?
16. Would you have liked the interpreters to act or react differently?

E) Cultural Heritage

17. What is the use of cultural heritage?
18. Who owns this cultural heritage site you just visited?
19. Who should own cultural heritage in general?
20. Who should decide how cultural heritage is being presented to the public?
21. Should cultural heritage be protected?
22. Have you heard of UNESCO? What is UNESCO?
23. What cultural heritage in Canada is currently protected by UNESCO?

F) Personal information

24. Male / Female? 25. Age: 26. Profession/Job:
27. Where are you from? Country: Province: Town:
28. With how many people did you come to visit this site?