THE POTENTIAL FOR ACQUISITION OF ETHNIC ARCHIVES:
A CASE STUDY OF FIVE CHINESE ORGANIZATIONS IN VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

by

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARCHIVAL STUDIES

in
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
(School of Library, Archival, and Information Studies)

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
August 1993
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Date September 20, 1993
ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study of attitudes towards the final disposition of archival records among representatives of five organizations in the Chinese community, Vancouver, British Columbia. The findings reveal three different types of attitude towards the final disposition of their archival records: "closed", "fairly open", and "open". Organizations with a political mission, a long history, and financially independent of government support tend to hold a "closed" attitude towards the final disposition of archival records; those with a project-oriented mission, existing for a limited time, and financially dependent of the government tend to hold an "open" attitude; those with missions such as cultural and social services tend to hold a "fairly open" attitude. The size of an organization does not influence the attitudes. The organizations open or fairly open towards access of their records possess higher potential for acquisition of ethnic archives by a public archival institution, whereas those closed to access of their records hold lower potential for acquisition. It is argued that these findings, though preliminary in nature, have significant importance for the archival community as regards the development of acquisition policy and strategy in keeping with the situation and desires of records generators, in this case, ethnic groups. Its implications are especially significant in the Canadian setting, being a country widely acknowledged to have many ethnic groups.
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Many people helped in the making of this thesis. My advisory committee -- composed of Terry Eastwood, Mary Sue Stephenson, and Graham Johnson -- provided guidance all the way through. Dr. Johnson helped particularly by providing the initial contacts with the associations interviewed for this study. My supervisor Terry Eastwood gave me valuable suggestions, timely counselling, patient editing, and constant encouragement to finish in good time. My classmate Francis Mansbridge patiently read and corrected the first draft of my thesis. The Chinese community in Vancouver, especially those members of the five organizations interviewed, were very generous with their time and patience. The government of Newfoundland provided student loans and grants, which made it financially possible for me to devote two years to this program. My ten year old son Danny helped in every small way he could during the writing of this thesis. I am deeply moved by his understanding, because many evenings that I was too occupied with my study could have been spent playing with him. To all the above mentioned, I extend my heartfelt gratitude for their help in making this thesis a reality.
INTRODUCTION

The overarching archival goal is to preserve records representative of all spheres of human activity. Wilfred Smith, the fifth Dominion Archivist of Canada, observes that one of the objectives of total archives is to preserve records bearing on "all subjects of human endeavour."\(^1\) As a nation of many cultures,\(^2\) Canada has long experience of ethnic groups playing a vital part in its national cultural heritage. Vancouver, British Columbia, has had a thriving Chinese community in its midst for over a century.\(^3\) The purpose of this study is to investigate the question of preserving the records of the experience of the Chinese community in Vancouver.

Archival acquisition follows the principle of provenance. In implementing acquisition policy, which provides "a reference for staff when assessing potential acquisitions and for donors looking for a suitable repository for their records,"\(^4\) archivists need to identify organizations or persons generating records in a determined sphere. The idea that the attitudes and preferences of the donors are significant in this exercise of acquiring records has long been recognized. For instance, in 1970, Dr. Kaye Lamb

\(^1\) Wilfred I. Smith, "'Total Archives': the Canadian Experience," Archives et Bibliothèques de Belgique 57 (1986): 341.


\(^3\) Paul Yee, Saltwater City: An Illustrated History of the Chinese in Vancouver (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1988).

observed that the donor's preference is one of the factors that might upset well-defined acquisition policies. He stated:

There is the matter, first of all, of conflicting interests.... Secondly, there is the matter of the nature of materials.... There may be a question of lack of money.... We must also reckon with the personal preferences of the person who owns a collection that we would like to have. The person may for some reason prefer to put it in institution "B" instead of institution "A" where we would prefer to see it go.5

Kathy Hall raised this issue in her discussion of legal mandates and methods in archival acquisitions in 1984. She presented donor's preference as something that escapes even well conceived policy.

Even the most clearly defined collecting mandates and most effective communication and cooperation cannot prevent an individual from offering a collection to a repository that is "unsuitable" to its collection mandate.

In some cases, the donor may wish to deposit materials which are outside an institution's policy. As Hall puts it:

Does the archivist accept the donation to ensure preservation at any cost, ... or does he stand firm on a strict interpretation of the collecting mandate and refuse to accept the collection.6

This issue was also addressed in 1980 in a landmark study of Canadian archives.

No matter how systematic or rationalized archives may become, the right of individuals and families to dispose of their personal documents as they see fit must be respected. Although the archives system may see one repository as the "appropriate" one for the material, the owner may have other loyalties. Alumni spirit, identification with a certain organization, distrust of government and similar factors all play a role in an individual's decision about to whom he will entrust the unique record of his life's work. The archival


system must respect this right and through the exchange of finding aids or of microfilming can work to serve the needs of acquisition rationalization.\textsuperscript{7}

Disagreements will occasionally arise in dealing with privately owned materials, as donors naturally have their own preferences. No rationalization within the archival system will overcome such personal preferences.\textsuperscript{8}

This line of argument supposes that the creator or owner is willing to deposit records in an archival institution. There is of course the prior question of what causes willingness. Moreover, there is also the question of whether those acting for organizations, as opposed to individuals acting in relation to their own records, are willing to preserve records in archival institutions, and what factors affect their decision making. As the Wilson report makes clear, creators of archives have the right to make decisions about preservation, and there may be conflict between the goal of institutions to rationalize acquisition and the preferences of creators of archives. Despite this acknowledgement of the rights of creators and owners, there has been little serious study to understand the factors affecting their willingness to preserve records in archival institutions.

One factor which lies outside the scope of this study is the monetary value of the records.\textsuperscript{9} Prospective donors may wish to

\textsuperscript{7}The Consultative Group on Canadian Archives, Canadian Archives: Report to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1980), 87. [Hereafter cited as Wilson Report]

\textsuperscript{8}Ibid., 90.

\textsuperscript{9}Wilfred I. Smith, and John H. Archer, "Donors, Taxmen and Archives," The Canadian Archivist 2, 2 (1971): 25-32. Also see Kenneth Duckett, [Modern Manuscripts: A Practical Manual of Their Management, Care, and Use (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1975): 79] about the danger of making such a monetary appraisal in the acquisition process: "it is dangerous
sell material to an archival institution or to receive a tax benefit. The question of monetary value is best considered on its own and as part of actual negotiations for acquisition of identified materials. In that light, it did not seem to be directly relevant to an investigation of donor attitudes and preferences regarding preservation of records in archival institutions, where the assumption is that no question of monetary value arises, as is the case in most transactions between creators and owners and archival institutions. For this reason, the word donor is used to indicate persons or organizations which either create or own archival material worthy of preservation in an archival setting.

Ethnic groups as such do not generate archives. Persons identify themselves with ethnic groups, and may form themselves into organizations to promote some ends considered to be in the interest of members of the group. It is the records of these persons and organizations which potentially form the archival heritage of ethnic groups. This heritage may be considered as one of the "subjects of human endeavour" suitable for the attention of archival acquisition.

Before any decisions can be made about archival acquisition, some understanding of the ethnic group and the actors in it must be obtained. It is the argument of this thesis that the attitudes towards archival preservation of those responsible for generating records relevant to the ethnic experience should be a paramount

for a curator to do an appraisal because he would set too low a figure for fear that the donor would want to sell the manuscript or want it back if he knew its true value."
consideration in building effective acquisition policy and strategy for ethnic archives. This involves making a close study of the records environment to determine the factors which condition the attitudes towards archival preservation in general and the preferences with regard to the most appropriate institution for preservation in particular. The overriding assumption is that factors in the records environment are of paramount importance to the success of acquisition activities, and should be put before and not after questions about the resources to pursue a chosen policy. Therefore, the goal of this study is to come to some conclusion about both the attitudes of members of an ethnic community towards preservation of records reflecting its experience and about their preferences as regards the best setting for preservation.

To achieve the goal the study adopts a qualitative approach employing case study interviews of individuals holding responsible positions in five organizations acting in the Chinese community of Vancouver. The five organizations are the Chinese Benevolent Association, the Chinese Cultural Centre, the Freemasons, the Strathcona Property Owners and Tenants Association, and the United Chinese Community Enrichment Services Society, in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Fieldwork was conducted in the month of March, 1993. Personal interviews guided by questions set beforehand were held with six individuals representing those five organizations.

To put the findings in a larger context, the thesis begins with a consideration of the literature on ethnic archives and on efforts to preserve them in Canada. An aim of this chapter is to define the concept of ethnic archives, and place it in the larger
context of archival acquisition in Canada and the United States. The second chapter gives an account of the history, functions, and structure of the five organizations under study to place the interviews in their proper setting. The third chapter explains the methodology for data collection and details of the fieldwork, and then analyzes the data. The concluding chapter considers the implications of the findings, makes some recommendations for the archival community, and suggests some areas of further research.
CHAPTER ONE:
THE CONCEPT OF ETHNIC ARCHIVES

This study of the attitudes of records creators in the Chinese community in Vancouver towards the disposition of their records must be placed against the wider context of the evolution of the concept of ethnic archives and development of programs to preserve them. The literature on the subject in both Canada and abroad has tended to address questions of defining ethnic archives in the context of developing programs for their preservation. A review of this literature will make it possible to come to some conclusion about how best to define ethnic archives in the light of this study's objectives.

This chapter therefore examines the concept as it has evolved in the Canadian setting, then reviews writing about the subject in Canada and the United States, and finally surveys the development of programs to preserve ethnic archives in Canada.

1) Defining Ethnic Archives in the Canadian Context

Several difficulties stand in the way of defining the term ethnic archives. Writing as recently as 1990, Eulenberg had difficulty defining "Jewish archives", arguably one kind of ethnic archives, because of the popular American view of Jewry as religion rather an ethnic entity. Though this question is not applicable

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to most other ethnic groups, defining ethnic archives has always been a difficult task. In 1985, the Ethnic Archives Workshop held in Canada took the approach of attempting to define what an ethnic archival institution is. It ran into an unsolvable difficulty. The workshop participants tried to determine by what criteria should institutions be defined as ethnic, particularly within a Canadian setting. The difficulty lay in determining whether the institutions' collections reflected the history not only of an ethnocultural group, but also of Canadian society at large, or whether they were merely repositories for documents from the respective homeland, with no relevance to the group's history in Canada. ... That some general archives contained a certain percentage of ethnic archival materials compounded the problem of definition. Added to this was the further difficulty of ascertaining the value to researchers of the ethnic collections within the general archives and whether, therefore, the latter should be included on the list.\footnote{Ethnic Archives Workshop Report, ed. Elizabeth Boghossian (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1985), 3-4.}

The above approach is unproductive. Archival institutions exist. They have evolved mandates and collection policies. It is this context into which the issue of ethnic archives must be placed. Therefore, there is no way to define which institutions are ethnic. A better way to solve the problem is to reach a definition of what ethnic archival materials are, which is the approach to be adopted in this thesis.

To begin, two concepts, "ethnic" and "archives", are to be examined. "Archives" may be defined from three perspectives.

1. The whole of the documents made and received by a juridical or physical person or organization in the conduct of affairs, and preserved.
2. An agency or institution responsible for the acquisition, preservation, and communication of archives selected for permanent preservation.
3. A place in which archives selected for permanent
preservation are kept. This thesis is only interested in the first of the above three meanings, namely, archives as a complex of documents, not institutions or places where archives are preserved.

The dictionary definition of "ethnic" is "of or related to a racial, national, or tribal group." This definition of "ethnicity" has caught the attention of sociologists. In a 1974 article, Isajiw examined 27 definitions of ethnicity advanced in 65 different studies, which are classified into those delineating cultural difference, ethnic boundary, subjective, and objective definitions.

While factors such as cultural difference, ethnic boundary, and objective blood relationship, are important in identifying ethnic groups, the subjective definition of ethnic group, which emphasizes psychological identity and embraces second or third ethnic generations, seems to prevail these days. Max Weber, German sociologist, offered this explanation of the subjective approach. He designated 'ethnic groups' as those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization and emigration: this belief must be important for the propagation of group

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12School of Library, Archival and Information Studies, University of British Colombia, Select List of Archival Terminology (1991), 3.


15Ibid., 115-6.
formation; conversely it does not matter whether or not an objective blood relationship exists. Ethnic membership (Gemeinsamkeit) differs from the kinship group precisely by being a presumed identify, not a group with concrete social action, like the latter. In our sense ethnic membership does not constitute a group; it only facilitates group formation of any kind, particularly in the political sphere. On the other hand, it is primarily the political community, no matter how artificially organized, that inspires the belief in common ethnicity. This belief tends to persist even after the disintegration of the political community, unless drastic differences in the custom, physical type, or, above all, language exist among its members.16

Weber makes two things clear in the above explanation. First, persons identifying with an ethnic group do not formally belong to one. This will naturally make it difficult to set clear boundaries as to who falls in the group and who does not, or which actions do and which do not. Secondly, it is the political culture that defines ethnic group.

Isajiw's own definition of "ethnicity" refers to:

an involuntary group of people who share the same culture or to descendants of such people who identify themselves and/or are identified by others as belonging to the same involuntary group.17

This subjective approach is expressed in official Canadian policy. As a landmark federal document on the subject put it,

What counts most in our concept of an "ethnic group" is not one's ethnic origin or even one's mother tongue, but one's sense of belonging to a group, and the group's collective will to exist.18


17Ibid., 122.

As such, it is obvious that "we are all ethnic."\textsuperscript{19} It is especially so in a country such as Canada, whose population is estimated to consist of over 90 ethnic groups (6 British, 4 French, 3 Native, and over 80 of other origin).\textsuperscript{20} The term ethnic groups in Canada is commonly used to refer to non-French, non-British, and non-native groups, which make up about one third of the Canadian population, and trace their roots to other countries.\textsuperscript{21}

To have a better understanding of the Canadian concept of ethnicity, it is necessary to examine a few historical events that have a bearing on the question. The concept of ethnic groups in Canada arose from the claims of groups other than those of British or French origin for some government recognition. Although people of varying ethnic origins existed in Canada virtually from the outset of European settlement, the modern movement of ethnic groups for government recognition began in the 1960s and early 1970s, and is attributable to the existence of forces both inside and outside Canada.

External influence mainly came from the United States of America, specifically, the civil rights movement. Called the "second reconstruction of the 1950s and 1960s", this movement sought "the political, social, and economic rights of African-


American citizens to vote and to enjoy equality of opportunity in education, employment, and housing."\textsuperscript{22} Broadly speaking, the movement for civil rights in the neighbouring U.S. created a climate conducive to recognizing other groups in Canadian society.

Several internal events contributed to increased recognition of ethnicity in Canada. In 1947 Canada officially opened the door to Third World immigration from the Commonwealth, and in 1967 removed all racial exclusion provisions from its immigration law.\textsuperscript{23} These changes had significant effects on the demography of Canada. The 1981 census shows that those of non-British and non-French ancestry totalled 31\% of the Canadian population.\textsuperscript{24} By this time, immigration from Asia, rather than the European countries, became "the major single source of immigrants to Canada."\textsuperscript{25} These demographic changes challenged the government to rethink policies based on the concept of the two founding groups of Canada. There was the need to recognize ethnic plurality and cultural diversity as intrinsic components of the Canadian social system. The former preoccupation with notions of bicultural partnership led to "a definition of a country that denied recognition to a quarter [in actuality closer now to one-third] of the population of other origins".\textsuperscript{26} At the same time, Quebec was


\textsuperscript{23}William Sheridan, \textit{Canadian Multiculturalism} (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1992), 16.

\textsuperscript{24}Ibid., 16.

\textsuperscript{25}Ibid., 3.

\textsuperscript{26}Carl Berger, \textit{The Writing of Canadian History: Aspects of English-Canadian Historical Writing Since 1900}, 2d ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 308.
asking for recognition of its special cultural and linguistic needs.

From these concerns, the idea of a multicultural society within a bilingual framework emerged. In the 1960s, the term multiculturalism came to refer to the ethnic, racial and cultural diversity of Canadian society. This multiculturalism aimed at the ultimate goal of fostering a kind of national unity in which the British and the French elements were acknowledged as the founding groups, while the contribution of people of the First Nations and from "ethnic groups" was formally recognized, in framework of "a political and ideological doctrine that emphasized the equality of all Canadians regardless of their socio-ethnic, racial or cultural background."^{27}

Evelyn Kallen sees the concept 'multiculturalism' used in at least three senses:

1) to refer to the 'social reality' of ethnic diversity; 2) to refer to the federal government policy, designed to create national unity in ethnic diversity; and 3) to refer to the ideology of cultural pluralism (the Canadian mosaic) underlying the federal policy.^{28}

Sheridan proposes two levels in understanding Canadian multiculturalism, first on the socio-demographic level, and second, on the institutional level. On the former level, the reason for his proposal is

because ethnocultural diversity is an inherent characteristic of Canada and because the Canadian government is actively involved in a complex process of social integration through

\footnotesize{\cite{27} Sheridan, Canadian Multiculturalism, 2.}

\footnotesize{\cite{28} Evelyn Kallen, "Multiculturalism: Ideology, Policy and Reality," Journal of Canadian Studies/revue d'etudes canadiennes 17 (Spring 1982): 51.}
the ideal of 'unity in diversity'.

The pressure for government recognition of ethnic groups other than the British and French became so intense that the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, after having fulfilled its mandate to deal with French-English relations in Canada in 1969, was instructed to "recommend what steps should be taken to develop the Canadian confederation between the two founding races, taking into account the contribution made by the other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada and the measures that should be taken to safeguard that contribution." Proposals made by the Commission led to the publication of the landmark document, Book IV: The Cultural Contribution of the Other Ethnic Groups, in 1969.

In Ronald Con's view, Book IV "formally recognizes the 'other' ethnic groups as legitimate and deserving of assistance from the government to help them to survive, caught as they are between the dominant Anglo- and Francophone cultural groups." In the eyes of one strong advocate of preservation of ethnic archives, Robert Harney, Book IV was "the first modern, public recognition of the possibility of cultural rights for minorities and of limits to Anglo-conformity and gallicization respectively." It "not only

29 Sheridan, Canadian Multiculturalism, 1.

30 Book IV, 3.


brought the question of the cultural persistence of the non-British and non-French to the fore, it also firmly identified ethnic and immigration studies as the new civic or moral science which would serve as the legitimating instrument, or handmaiden, for whatever public policy was adopted.\(^{33}\)

This new policy was enunciated by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau on 8 October, 1971 in the House of Commons:

We are of the belief that cultural pluralism is the very essence of the Canadian identity. To say that we have two official languages is not to say that we have two official cultures; no culture is in and of itself more "official" than any other.\(^{34}\)

Therefore, an institutional status for multiculturalism was achieved. In much more detail, four objectives were elaborated over the years:

First, resources permitting, the government will seek to assist all Canadian cultural groups that have demonstrated a desire and effort to continue to develop, a capacity to grow and contribute to Canada, and a clear need for assistance, the small and weak group no less than the strong and highly organized.

Second, the government will assist members of all cultural groups to overcome cultural barriers to full participation in Canadian society.

Third, the government will promote creative encounters and interchange among all Canadian cultural groups in the interest of national unity.

Fourth, the government will continue to assist immigrants to acquire at least one of Canada's official languages in order to become full participants in Canadian society.\(^{35}\)

\(^{33}\)Ibid., 13.

\(^{34}\)Pierre E. Trudeau, "Statement by the Prime Minister, House of Commons, October 8, 1971" in Multiculturalism and the Government of Canada (Ottawa: Ministry of State for Multiculturalism, 1971).

\(^{35}\)Sheridan, Canadian Multiculturalism, 4.
The formal establishment of a policy of multiculturalism encouraged the establishment of programs for ethnic archives in Canada. These programs were first justified politically. It was claimed that the nation's archival repositories have little evidence of the social diversity of Canada. Walter Neutel speaks of "the dearth of available ethnic source materials." It was the same with archival institutions at other levels of government. In Neutel's view, the establishment of ethnic archives can support "progress towards national and international brotherhood, toward social and economic security."37

Secondly, programs for ethnic archives responded to research interest in ethnic questions. Government multicultural policy provided support to academic studies of various ethnic groups. As Berger points out:

In practice this recognition of pluralism meant government financial support for cultural organizations and for the writing - and rewriting - of history, a history that would give certain groups a larger place in the country's past.38

Interest in ethnic history was part of a larger revolution against the previous focus on "nation building and national unity." Historians were urged to "pay greater attention to the more 'limited identities' of regions and provinces and the distinct worlds of working people, women, and ethnic groups other than those

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37Ibid., 109.

38Berger, Writing of Canadian History, 308.
of French or British origin."39 Hence the "new" history of the 1970s developed, with emphasis on regionalism and social history. While regional studies approached Canada's past through the recognition that "Canada is a country of regions", social history in Canada "has been cultivated as series of distinct subfields devoted to the working class, native peoples, women, ethnic groups, urban centres, and education."40 As Palmer notes,

before 1970 ethnic history and ethnic studies in Canada remained a highly neglected field of academic inquiry. During the last decade this situation has been dramatically reversed as a result of the growing importance of social history; a revival of interest in ethnic roots and the research support provided by government multiculturalism policies.41

Palmer has attributed the causes of this neglect to the following factors:

the historical profession was dominated by scholars of British and French origins whose major preoccupations were political and economic history and biography. Archives had very little material dealing with the "other ethnic groups". A vicious circle of the prevailing ethnocentric attitudes toward these minorities (they were disappearing anyway through assimilation, they were small, they weren't important), combined with a dearth of language skills, scholarly incentive, archival resources and publisher interest, discouraged the Canadian historical profession's involvement in ethnic studies research.42

Some of the most significant efforts to write ethnic histories in the 1970s and 1980s were the writing of the Generation Series, the Ethnic Groups Series, and the various Canadian symposia. The Generation Series was initiated under the Commission of the

40Ibid., 1-2.
41Palmer, "Canadian Immigration", 35.
42Ibid., 36.
Citizenship Branch of the Department of the Secretary of State to write "histories specifically directed to the background, contributions and problems of various cultural groups other than British, French and Native peoples in Canada." It aimed to promote the histories of 25 to 30 different ethnic groups. The Ethnic Groups series was published by the Canadian Historical Association with the support of the Multicultural Program. The Canadian Symposia were organized by the related social science disciplines. These efforts succeeded in publicizing certain historical events, such as Japanese evacuation during World War II, the Chinese Exclusion Movement, and the Komagata Maru incident. These studies brought those past incidents and experience into contemporary public consciousness, where, in Peter Ward's words, they acted as "the remembrance of the past" and "as the common bond" uniting members of the group in their continued cultural adaptation and maintenance. This historical and sociological interest was paralleled in other disciplines such as political science and other social sciences.

In this climate, archival institutions began to focus attention on acquiring materials bearing on the experience of ethnic groups. As was then common, ethnic groups were conceived as being groups other than of English, French, or native origin. Recognizing that the term ethnic archives was "something of a


44W. Peter Ward, The Japanese in Canada (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1982), 18.

45Berger, Contemporary Approaches, 308.
misnomer," Walter Neutel, first head of the Ethnic Archives Section of the Manuscript Division of the Public Archives of Canada, nevertheless felt that "few other terms have the merit of being so descriptive and brief."\textsuperscript{46}

There is some sense in what Neutel says, if we consider that ethnic groups are loose, unorganized groupings of people with common characteristics or interests. But when it comes to either the persons or organizations taking part in the group's life, the concept of ethnic archives runs into difficulties. Very often persons do not act all the time in relation to the ethnic group with which they identify. As a result, their personal archives may contain some documents which bear on ethnic experience and some which do not. Similarly, not all organizations acting in ethnic community affairs will be devoted solely to the interests of the ethnic group. The very looseness of the group and the fact that its members and member organizations may have wider interests than those strictly ethnic in nature makes it hard to identify a body of ethnic archival materials on which to focus acquisition activity. These difficulties do not prevent us from defining ethnic archives; they merely make it necessary to carefully qualify what is meant, because Neutel's "descriptive and brief term" is not clear enough.

Therefore, we may define ethnic archives as archival \textit{fonds} created by organizations or persons identifying or identified with ethnic groups other than those of English, French, and native origin, and whose activities in whole or in part reflect overt actions of an ethnic character, regardless of where these \textit{fonds} are

\textsuperscript{46}Neutel, "Necessity of Having Ethnic Archives Programmes", 107.
preserved. The definition makes it clear that ethnic archives are simply *fonds* generated by persons or organizations which identify themselves with or can be identified with ethnic groups. Using the term "English" instead of "British" leaves it open to the Irish, Scottish, and Welsh to claim ethnic status, but not the dominant English culture traditionally given status as predominant in Canada along with the French. Because ethnic status in the Canadian context tends to denote some connection with immigrant origins, native Canadians are excluded. Finally, to be designated as an ethnic archives, a *fonds* need not be made up of documents exclusively related to ethnic affairs.

2) The North American Literature on Ethnic Archives

Although there is some literature on ethnic archives outside the North American context, the subject has been most seriously addressed by writers in the United States and Canada.

The concept of ethnic archives in the United States is different from that in the Canadian setting. It emphasizes sources documenting the immigrant experience of all ethnic groups other than the Anglo-Americans. As such, the concept of ethnic archives in the U.S. has a different application than that in Canada. Ethnic archives in the United States is extended to including "sources relating to new thematic areas such as

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47For example, as regards Australia, see Franca Arena, "Ethnic Archives," *Archives and Manuscripts: the Journal of the Australian Society of Archivists* 8, 1 (June 1980): 22-6.

sexuality, food, and street life, within the American ethnic experience."\(^{49}\)

The idea of documenting the immigrant experience in the U.S. dates back to 1927, when Marcus Lee Hansen, in an article in *American Historical Review*, called for the creation of archives and libraries of records of the immigrant experience.\(^{50}\) Different from the Canadian experience, and consistent with its sponsorship of archives with historical society, the systematic preservation of immigrant records prior to the 1960s was due to the initiatives of immigrant/ethnic historical societies, such as the American Jewish Historical Society, the Norwegian American Historical Association, the Polish Museum of America, and so on. The last three decades has seen relatively significant progress in the area of ethnic archives. By the early 1980s some national and large regional collections had been created at the Immigration History Research Centre at the University of Minnesota and the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies in Philadelphia. Currently some of the most prominent examples are: the American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati, Ohio, established in the late 1940s; the Immigration Studies Collection at the University of Minnesota, which concentrated on people in the United States with roots in southern and eastern

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Europe and the Middle East; and the Bentley Historical Library of the University of Michigan, which mainly collected materials dealing with the great migrations of Europeans between 1820 and 1920.51 The newest, the Ellis Island Museum of Immigration, was inaugurated on September 9, 1990.52

The writing on ethnic archives in the United States saw its beginning with Rudolph J. Vecoli's article in 1969 "The Immigration Studies Collection of the University of Minnesota."53 This seminal article, though casting itself as a description of the collection, was the first to point out that the regrettable cultural myopia of the historians in writing about multiracial, multilingual, and multicultural societies mainly from an Anglo-American perspective is often shared by the custodians of past records.54 He goes on to express the view that ethnic archives can play a role in politically stabilizing the country. To use his own words:

only a realistic appraisal of our cultural diversity deriving from racial, religious, and national origins will enable us to deal effectively with the American social order and disorder.55

Vecoli's call did not receive any response until the late 1970s in the U.S. Between 1976 and 1981, there took place two


52 Vecoli, "Why a Conference?", 40.

53 Vecoli, "Immigration Studies", 139-45.

54 Ibid., 140.

55 Ibid., 145.
significant events for ethnic archives. First was the formation of the committee on Ethnic Archives by the Society of American Archives.\textsuperscript{56} Second, there appeared a number of guides on ethnic information sources, for instance, Wasserman and Morgan's \textit{Ethnic Information Sources of the United States},\textsuperscript{57} and Buttlar and Wynar's 1977 \textit{Building Ethnic Collections}.	extsuperscript{58} This rising interest was reflected in several other publications.

Richard Juliani's article gave a researcher's view of the tendencies in the study of immigration. He proposes an expansion of communication and cooperation between researchers and collectors in order to remove further those obstacles which continue to impede the growth of our knowledge and understanding of immigration and of the role of immigration in shaping the individual character, cultural heritage, and social institutions of modern society.\textsuperscript{59} However, he leaves the creators of ethnic archives out of the equation, which is one important party of the three who may be said to have an interest in the matter. Articles by Raphael and

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\textsuperscript{57}Paul Wasserman and Jean Morgan, eds., \textit{Ethnic Information Sources of the United States} (Detroit: Gale Research Company, 1976).


\textsuperscript{59}Richard Juliani, "The Use of Archives in the Study of Immigration and Ethnicity," \textit{American Archivist} 39 (October 1976), 477.
\end{flushleft}
Montalto make similar arguments.  

Warner and Blouin's article recounts the experience of the Bentley Historical Library at the University of Michigan. \(^61\) They believe that records could be acquired both in the United States and in the countries from which immigrants have come. They mentioned records from Finland, Ireland, the Netherlands, and Poland. The issue of collecting overseas in order to provide interested archival institutions and programs with comprehensive sources for documenting the great migrations is a dubious one. Warner and Blouin's idea of collecting records of both host and originating countries was echoed by Vecoli in 1981 with the Immigration History Research Centre experience, which was established in 1967. He calls for "large scale, collaborative projects undertaken by a consortium of institutions," and the "recovery of the archival sources in the countries of origin." In Vecoli's view, this involves developing collaborative projects and producing finding aids or research tools to promote access to the documentation already assembled. \(^62\)

The Vecoli/Warner approach runs counter to archival principles


in two ways. First, it focuses on accumulating documentation on a subject rather than in a well defined sphere of activity. The massive migrations to America were an event we now study, but they are not capable of being reduced to even the sensible framework that ethnic archives can be. Beyond that, it violates well established international principles to remove archives from the territory in which they were generated. If Vecoli and Warner are only interested in copying archival material, they are still in the realm of building a documentation centre and not acquisition of archives properly speaking.

In 1985, a special issue of the American Archivist carried five articles dealing with acquisition of the records of ethnic groups. It aims to redress the deplorable neglect in this area. Jacqueline Goggin describes the activities of Carter G. Woodson in preserving black culture, and the Woodson Collection of Negro Materials in the Manuscript Division of the Library of the Congress. Kreneck describes the systematic buildup of a collection of materials relative to the history of Houston's Mexican American populace in the Houston Metropolitan Research Centre in the Houston Public Library. In both cases, these are artificial collections, not holdings made up of archival fonds.

Susan Grigg documents the experience of the Immigration History Research Centre of the University of Minnesota, which has

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65 Kreneck, "Documenting a Mexican American Community", 272-85.
acquired material relating to twenty-four ethnic groups. Grigg concludes that the literature on ethnic archives consists mainly of variations on themes such as "to stimulate better work by identifying available materials, explaining how to work with ethnic groups members, or inculcating the importance of ethnic documentation."

Anderson describes the experience in the Balch Institute, created in 1971 by the Orphan's Court of Philadelphia, acting on behalf of trusts established by the Balch Family a half-century earlier. This is a very large scale repository, with a collection of material on more than seventy different ethnic groups, covering primarily the mid Atlantic region. Anderson deals with the methods for developing collecting policies in social history archives. He advocates a cyclical approach to policy development and a careful consideration of acquisition strategies. He accepts the necessity of thematic archives, and believes that they offer an alternative to traditional broadly based repositories that will help solve the problem of identifying records valuable for the study of social history. He believes that flexibility and ongoing reassessment are important requirements of an effective policy.

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68 Ibid., 296. Five collecting models have been discussed. They are: the research model, which represents the genesis of many important archival collections; developing a network of supporters from within the archives' collecting universe, which has been the
Grabowski deals with acquisition from another aspect in his account of the experience at the Western Reserve Historical Society, particularly its Cleveland Regional Ethnic Archives Program begun in 1971. In describing the society's acquisition policy, and the evolution of its practice, he concludes that "the successful implementation of the original policy has depended especially on three factors: good working relations with ethnic group leaders, selectivity within the scope of the policy, and cooperation among repositories." He observes that the records creator factor is the most important one in determining the success of the policy. He also notes that pressure from donors, trustees, and faculty has traditionally wrenched institutional policies off course, and in many instances the spirit of interinstitutional competition has often lured curators beyond the rational limits of their collections.

The regret is that he raises the problem without giving it serious study or suggesting any way of solving it.

All in all, this special issue rather confuses the picture of ethnic archives. On the one hand, we see that documentation mainstay of traditional, single group ethnic repositories; targeting records to ensure mutually supportive documentation; conducting regional surveys; and creating documents, which has usually consisted of oral history interviews, and selecting from among these five models, three major criteria adopted, namely, to use the collecting strategy or group of strategies which would provide a better knowledge of the universe and create the basis for a long-term collecting program; to achieve initial results in terms of acquisitions quickly; and to choose either strategies which could be implemented by existing staff or strategies for which they could obtain outside funding.

69John J. Grabowski, "Fragments or Components: Theme Collections in a Local Setting," The American Archivist 48, 3 (Summer 1985), 304.

70Ibid., 305.
activities are confused with or intermingled with archival activities. This may be the way institutional programs develop, but it does not help clarify how best to go about preserving ethnic archives as they have been defined for the purpose of this study. On the other hand, discussion of practical matters obscures fundamental questions about how to develop effective policy and strategy, for no attempt is made to evaluate the results of any of the programs the authors describe. Articles on the American Jewish Archives,71 and on the Swedish Community in Chicago fall into the same category.72

A significant and most recent thrust for ethnic archives in the United States is the 1990 conference attended by a group of historians and archivists to consider the state of ethnic archives and ethnic history. It aimed to promote a collaborative effort to preserve and interpret the historical record of this basic dimension of the American experience.73 An opening paper by Vecoli surveys the history of thirty years' experience of ethnic archives work.74 Grabowski and Wurl gave papers recounting institutional experience along the lines of those in the special


73 CDIE, Documenting Diversity, 1.

74 Vecoli, "Why a Conference?", 40.
issue of the *American Archivist*.\textsuperscript{75} Two papers were contributed by historians with focus on their own need of services from archivists, such as for "better analysis and reporting of major collections in terms of their ethnic relevance",\textsuperscript{76} and identification of series "less concerned with issues generated by national, state, or federal agencies and more focused upon issues generated by the immigrants themselves."\textsuperscript{77} The last paper by Mary Lynn McCree Bryan makes recommendations about the administrative structures and funding required to achieve the publication of a documentary history of American Immigration.\textsuperscript{78} In sum the papers


at this conference place ethnic archives in the context of immigration studies in general and the broader documentation on the subject.

While Vecoli's 1969 article was waiting for response in the United States, the Canadian archival community's first article in the field of ethnic archives appeared in 1972. A. J. Arnold describes the difficult birth and development of a Western Jewish Archives Program, conceived in the spring of 1967 with the formal establishment of a Western Region Archives and Research Committee by the Winnipeg Office of Canadian Jewish Congress.\(^\text{79}\) However, his article mainly describes the contents of cataloguing results up to April 15, 1972, with a clear aim of promoting access to the collection. Another similar effort was made by Edward Laine, whose article describes some archival resources relating to Finnish Canadians.\(^\text{80}\)

A short and forceful article by Walter Neutel appeared in 1978. It explicitly expresses the necessity of having ethnic archives programs.\(^\text{81}\) He also summarizes the first six years of the ethnic archives program at the Public Archives of Canada. Neutel concludes that,

> If we seek progress toward national and international brotherhood, toward social and economic security, it is not an optional programme but is an essential endeavour."\(^\text{82}\)

\(^{79}\)Arnold, "Birth and Development", 24-9.


\(^{82}\)Ibid., 109.
An analysis of ethnic archives in Canada was made in 1982 by Robert Harney, director of the Multicultural History Society of Ontario, with a focus on the problems of intellectual control and preservation of ethnic archival and library materials. While acknowledging the progress made, Harney regretted its uneven character. He was especially concerned about the confusion of acquisition policies and practices in programs at various levels of government:

the problem of provenance, of mandate, of who should locate, collect and preserve ethnocultural material exists, of course, in the United States as well as in Canada, but, in Canada, the problem is more immediate because of the strong tradition of state intervention in culture and because so much government money has been committed so rapidly to the effort.

Harney criticizes the "total archives" approach mandate of the NEA, stating that to collect and make available to researchers at the PAC archival material of national significance pertaining to these communities "resembles a privateer's lettres de cachet in the sixteen century, a skimming of the cream." Harney proposes "a more rational collecting effort" at the national level aimed at a thematic, or "a subject approach," to ethnic materials.

An important conference on ethnic archives took place in Toronto in 1983. As the first national meeting of its kind, its purpose was to conduct a general investigation into the state of

\[\text{Harney, "Ethnic Archival and Library Materials"}, \text{3-31.}\]

\[\text{Ibid., 21-22.}\]

\[\text{Ibid., 23.}\]

\[\text{Ibid., 25.}\]

\[\text{Ibid., 27.}\]

\[\text{Boghossian, Workshop Report, 1985.}\]
programs to preserve ethnic archives in Canada and to explore ways of improving them. The conference was organized by the steering committee members made up of Michael Batts of the University of British Columbia, Robert Harney of the Multicultural History Society of Ontario, Bohdan Krawchenko of the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, Ronald LeBlanc of the Centre d'etudes acadiennes, and Hesh Troper of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education; the workshop coordinator was Elizabeth Boghossian, with participants as representatives from national, provincial, local and university archives, and from ethnic institutes of study. Five topics received special attention: the need for a survey of ethnic archives, acquisition policy, management of ethnic archives programs, ethnic archives and research, and the importance of ethnic archives.

The question of acquisition of ethnic archives in Canada received heated debate, and acquisition policy for ethnic archives received much attention. It was alleged that public archival institutions give ethnic archives a low priority.89 However, it was urged that since public institutions were created to serve the public, and since ethnic groups were part of the public, public archivists should not be looking for alternatives for ethnic materials. It was further held to be neither historically nor socially justifiable to assign priority to the papers and records of politicians over those of ethnic community leaders or of any other segment of the population. Public archives would therefore have to prepare themselves to accommodate ethnic archival materials.90

As for the question of conflicting acquisition policies, it

89Ibid., 5.
90Ibid., 6.
was advanced that nationally and internationally significant materials should be deposited in the National Archives, while materials of local relevance should be left in the appropriate local or provincial institutions. This could be decided through mutual good will and open communication between the archival institutions and ethnic communities.

It was suggested that the ethnic donors look upon the various archival institutions as a marketplace for their materials, which would allow them to entrust these to the institution of their choice; conversely, institutions would be charged with informing donors as to where their archival needs would best be served. An institutional structure was proposed to "foster co-operation among the ethnic communities, scholars and archivists in this important enterprise."91

The workshop participants advanced two ideas about acquisition. First, they concluded that public archival institutions should develop acquisition policies for ethnic archival materials, and not neglect them as in the past. Second, they believed that the burden of acquisition should fall on public archival institutions with materials of national significance preserved in the Public Archives of Canada and those of regional significance in public archival institutions at the provincial and municipal levels. This view of the matter is in accord with Smith's view that archival institutions collectively should strive to preserve a record of all aspects of human endeavour, and with the prevailing view, as enunciated by the Wilson report, that

91Ibid., 7.
Canada's system of federal, provincial, and municipal public archival institutions should assume the main burden of developing a rational policy for preservation of materials in the region in which they were created and to which they pertain.

The participants also acknowledged, if public and other institutions were open to acquisition of ethnic archives and publicized their policies in that regard, creators and owners would be able to exercise their preference for setting of preservation. This would be the soundest method of promoting better preservation in a pluralistic society. Finally, participants recognized the need to involve ethnic groups, scholars interested in ethnic history, and archivists in efforts to preserve ethnic archives. In principle, this approach is a sound one. It recognizes the existing framework of Canadian archives, avoids recommending the establishment of thematic repositories like the failed one at the Multicultural Society of Ontario, and firmly includes creators, archivists, and users in the development of awareness and preservation of ethnic archives. It may only be lamented that these deliberations do not seem to have had much direct effect on the recognition of the need to be more active in preserving records of the Canadian multicultural experience.

A substantial paper produced after the conference was by Edward Laine in 1986.92 He analyzes the archival sources of the Finnish-Canadian Archives community. He identifies several kinds of archival sources: personal papers, family and business papers;

corporate records; printed documentation by the indigenous Canadian, Finish-language press; and "synthetic research archives" produced by scholars or organizations in the Finnish community. He also examines the efforts of the Finnish Canadian Cultural Federation to acquire records of local Finnish festivals, and reflects on the role of archival institutions to preserve Finnish Canadian Archives. This article gives a good picture of the complex relationships within an ethnic group and with outside organizations which must be addressed in any program to preserve ethnic archives.

To sum up, there are a few points that can be made about the literature reviewed. First, most writers feel that it is necessary to sensitize archivists to the special circumstances of ethnic archives. By definition, the actors in ethnic groups are not easily identified, and they themselves do not always perceive the importance of the materials they produce. Almost all observers agree that a rounded archival records must contain a reflection of the ethnic experience, but in few cases do they explore the implications for acquisition policy and strategy in any systematic way. Secondly, little attention is paid to the ideas those responsible for creating ethnic archives have about the process of preserving them. Often the matter is regarded as a problem somehow to be solved by archivists and researchers. The creators are left out of the equation.

Therefore, a careful exploration of a single, even restricted case in some systematic way might contribute ideas about the best way to go about identifying and preserving ethnic archives, in short by putting the creators and their environment first in the
development of archival acquisition for ethnic archives.

3) Efforts in Canada to Preserve Ethnic Archives

The first ethnic archives program in Canada is recorded to have been conceived in 1967. It was conceived by members of the Jewish community in Western Canada as a program to preserve records documenting the Jewish experience. However, the major efforts to develop ethnic archives programs were sponsored by the public archival institutions.

In 1972, the Public Archives of Canada established a National Ethnic Archives (NEA) program by financial allocation from the multicultural program of the Government of Canada. As described by Neutel, the aim of the NEA has been two-fold:

to alert ethno-cultural communities to the nature of archival material and the importance of its preservation, and to collect and make available to researchers at the PAC [Public Archives of Canada] archival material of national significance pertaining to these communities. The goal was to make the holdings of the PAC and of other repositories reflect more fully the diversity of Canadian society and eventually Canadians might have a better understanding of themselves.

In Neutel's view, the program considerably enhanced public awareness in saving ethnic archives by acquiring and preserving a considerable volume of records.

Other programs specifically devoted to preserving ethnic

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95For details, see Neutel, 1978.
archives followed. Some of the most prominent examples are: the efforts of the Multicultural History Society of Ontario to establish an ethnic archives program; the efforts of several provincial archives, notably Ontario, to develop a formal program for ethnic archives;96 and the efforts of the Jewish and Mennonite communities97 to foster archives programs.98 However, existing institutions have to decide how to approach this realm. A point worth noting is that NEA tried to encourage awareness in communities where there is an ethnic presence.

In British Columbia, ethnic collections can be found in Provincial Archives,99 the City of Vancouver Archives,100


97Mennonite Heritage Centre in Winnipeg has a program for archival records and periodicals on Mennonites and Mennonite groups in Canada. In addition, Mennonite Archives of Ontario in Waterloo holds minutes, correspondence and other records of Mennonite conferences, congregations, institutions and ministers in Ontario. [See Marcel Caya, et al. eds., Directory of Canadian Archives, Ottawa: Bureau of Canadian Archivists, 1986. 34 & 83.]

Canadian Jewish Congress, National Archives in Montreal, holds records of institutions, associations, groups and private papers which reflect all the concerns of the Jewish community: immigration and integration into Canadian society, religious practice, education, anti-Semitism, Zionism, literature, legislation, etc. [See Marcel Caya, et al. eds., Directory of Canadian Archives, Ottawa: Bureau of Canadian Archivists, 1986. 120.]

981990 also recorded another project relating to ethnic archives program, Serbian Heritage Museum, the only Serbian Museum outside of Yugoslavia, established in 1987 in Ontario with a grant from the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Culture. [refer to "Serbian Heritage Museum, Windsor, Ontario," ACA Bulletin 14, 4 (March 1990): 14.]


University of Victoria Special Collections,101 University of
British Columbia archives,102 and Simon Fraser University
Archives,103 although none of these institutions claims to have
a focus on ethnic archives.

Within the Chinese community, there is the Chinese Community
History Room, established in 1983 by the Chinese Community Library
Services Association with the help of people from all walks of
life. Its mandate is to "collect and preserve materials
documenting the Chinese heritage in the province and across North
America."104 The holdings are classified into four categories:
SUBJECT FILE: with more than one hundred and fifty subject
headings, covering topics and issues such as "head tax",
"immigration-rules and regulations", "politicians of Chinese
descent", "biographies of the famous", mostly from newspapers and
magazines; ORAL HISTORY: with more than one hundred cassette tapes

101 A Guide to Non-Administrative Records, Personal Papers and
Canadian Manuscripts in the University of Victoria Archives/Special
Collections, p. 70 (one item for example).

102 See "Sources for Researching the History of Chinese
Canadians in British Columbia in the Special Collections and
University Archives Division," compiled by Christopher Hives,
Special Collections and University Archives Division, University of
British Columbia Library, May 1992. And also see "Sources for
Researching the History of Japanese Canadians in British Columbia
in the Special Collections and University Archives Division,"
compiled by Christopher Hives with Mary Oh, December 1991.

103 There are some records of the Sikh community of East Indian
ethnic group in Vancouver, spread through the research material of
Hugh Johnston, author of two books on East Indians: The Voyage of
the Komagata Maru: the Sikh Challenge to Canada's Colour Bar.
Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1979. And The East Indians in

104 Tommy Kwan, "Quest for the Mission of the CCLSA," in
Chinese Community Library Services Association: 20th Anniversary
Commemorative Special Publication (1972-1992) (Vancouver: CCLSA,
of interviews with senior Chinese Canadians conducted in 1984; Vancouver Chinatown Buildings Photographic Collection: from a project in 1985, in which the CCHR commissioned a photographer to photograph all the buildings in Vancouver Chinatown for historical reasons; and "Pender Guy" Program Notes and Master Tapes: "Pender Guy", a co-op radio program, with major concern on issues of assimilation and cultural identity, which was on the air between 1976 and 1981, and was awarded the 1980 Media Human Rights Award of the B'nai B'rith of Canada. As is clear from the above information, the program of the CCHR is not archival. It is rather a documentation centre where information about the Chinese community's history is collected and organized.

In summary, two types of efforts to preserve ethnic archives in Canada are present. First, institutions have developed special programs for ethnic archives, especially in cases where resources were made available for the purpose as part of government policy, such as in the cases of NEA and Ontario. Secondly, the existing mandate and acquisition policy simply caught some ethnic archives in its net, as might be expected. In the scheme of Canadian total archives, it could be expected to preserve ethnic archives without mounting a special program, such as in the cases of archival institutions at provincial or municipal levels of government. The one case of trying to develop a freestanding ethnic archives program outside the framework of archival institutions, by the Multicultural History Society of Ontario, failed completely when the society could no longer support it and the records acquired.

105 Information abstracted from the brochure on the Chinese History Room.
were turned over to the Archives of Ontario. Programs to develop a documentation centre on the history of some ethnic group, such as the one by CCHR, should not be confused with preservation of ethnic archives. With this review of the general situation, we may now turn to the study of Chinese organizations in Vancouver to assess the potential for acquisition.
This study assumes that the Chinese in Vancouver form an identifiable ethnic group. As a means of conducting a study of the records creating environment, five organizations were selected as being representative of the kinds of organization active in the community. They are the Chinese Benevolent Association, the Chinese Cultural Centre, the Freemasons, the Strathcona Property and Tenants Association, and the United Chinese Community Enrichment Services Society.

To provide a necessary context, this chapter will briefly touch upon the historical background of the Chinese community in Canada as a whole, followed by a description of the five organizations, which will also lead to a discussion of the rationale for choosing the five. A brief summary at the end of this chapter will highlight the characteristics of the five organizations.

1) Historical Background of the Chinese Community in Vancouver

The Chinese have been part of the Canadian scene at least since 1858, the year of the Fraser River goldrush, and the year the colony of British Columbia was created. The Chinese community in Canada began in the province of British Columbia. Over 130

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years, the Chinese community has grown into one of the largest ethnic groups in Canada. The Chinese people spread to almost every part of Canada. As far as language is concerned, Chinese now ranks as the third most common household language in Canada, after only English and French.\textsuperscript{107}

This growth of the Chinese Canadians has not occurred without certain ordeals and hardships. The history of over one and a quarter centuries of immigrant life for Chinese in Canada has found expression in a number of studies by scholars of non-Chinese origin as well as those within the Chinese ethnic group.\textsuperscript{108} These studies show that the Chinese in general and in their various communities constitute an ethnic group in the minds of both the Chinese themselves and the populace at large. This sense of identity has been forged in a common historical experience, such as involvement with railroad building, which contributed to the Confederation of Canada in 1867; the struggle of early immigrants to establish themselves; and the experience of the "Chinese


\textsuperscript{108}The following publications offer a panoramic picture of the Chinese in Canada. They are:

E. B. Wickberg et al., \textit{From China to Canada: A History of the Chinese Communities in Canada} (Toronto: McClelland and Steward, 1982).


Jin Tan, and Patricia E. Roy, \textit{The Chinese in Canada} (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association with the support of the Multiculturalism program, Government of Canada, 1985).

Exclusion Movement" from 1923 to 1947, with its Head Tax, the Chinese Immigration Act of 1923, disfranchisement of Chinese Canadians, and stringent barriers on competition in a wide range of occupations. Only with the repeal of discriminatory legislation in the post Second World War period have Chinese immigrants been able to participate more fully in the Canadian life. Even so, they are now playing an increasingly active role in the larger society.

In Vancouver, the first Chinese came from California in 1858. A community known to be made up exclusively of men, early Chinese immigrants were merchants, peasants, and labourers mainly from eight rural counties in the Pearl River delta in Guangdong Province of the People's Republic of China. They were engaged mainly as miners, road builders, teamsters, laundrymen, restaurateurs, domestic servants and cannery workers. In Vancouver, they created "Canada's largest and most dynamic Chinese community." Since the early days, there have been certain organizations in the Chinese community.

One study of ethnic organizations classified them into following categories:

mutual aid or benefit associations designed to give assistance in crises such as unemployment, illness, accident, or death; philanthropic or social welfare associations through which the more successful and established members of the group may assist the less successful and newcomers; associations with political aims, either in the homeland or in the new country; social and recreational associations; occupational and professional associations; research institutes and learned societies; women's groups; youth groups; and coordinating bodies.110

All these types of organizations are active in the Chinese community.

109Yee, Saltwater City, cover information.
110Book IV, 107-8.
community in Vancouver. There are organizations with political aims both in the homeland and in the New World; those aiming to promote traditional culture within the Chinese community and to introduce it to the society at large; those established to render services to newly arrived Chinese immigrants; professional organizations; research societies; religious organizations; merchants' associations; clan associations; and neighbourhood associations. There are over two hundred organizations in Vancouver acting to further aspects of Chinese community life.111

Among these organizations, five have been chosen for the purpose of this study. They are the Chinese Benevolent Association (CBA), the Chinese Cultural Centre (CCC), the Freemasons (FM), the United Chinese Community Enrichment Services Society (commonly known as SUCCESS), and the Strathcona Property Owners and Tenants Association (SPOTA).

Each of these organizations is well established in the community, and all are of long enough standing to have made a significant impact. CBA, CCC, and SUCCESS are three of the most important organizations in the Chinese community. The Freemasons is the organization with the longest history in Vancouver. SPOTA is best known for its successful opposition to plans for urban renewal in the Chinatown area in the late 1960s and 1970s.

2) Background Information on the Selected Organizations

To understand fully the rationale for choosing these

organizations, it is necessary to examine the role each one has played within the Chinese community. This section will consider such factors as the history, the current status, the mission, activities or programs, and financial support of each organization.\textsuperscript{112}

a. The Chinese Benevolent Association

The Chinese Benevolent Association of Vancouver (CBA) was established in 1895, and officially incorporated in 1906. It has occupied the same premises, located at 108 East Pender, since 1909. CBA currently has "49 organizational members" and "a couple of thousand individual members" from all walks of life.\textsuperscript{113} It is incorporated as a non-profit association under the Societies Act of British Columbia. Its mission has been stated in its brochure as two-fold:

- internally, or within the Chinese community: promote friendly contacts, mediate disputes, offer assistance to the needy, and endeavour to bring about unity and cooperation among all the organizations in the Chinese community;
- and externally: promote friendly relations with other ethnic groups, and fight for the rights and equality of the Chinese

\textsuperscript{112}This part of the background information for each organization is based both on the interview information from my fieldwork conducted during the month of March 1993 and the existing literature on these organizations. When there is conflict between interview information and published information, the information from the latter source is quoted in this thesis. For instance, the Chinese Culture Centre is recorded in the published information as established in 1973, yet the interview information was in 1972. In this case, the published information is cited, namely, the year 1973. However, in most cases, the information from two sources are the same.

\textsuperscript{113}Interview information, March 3, 1993.
in Canada.\textsuperscript{114}

The Association has been an advocate for the Chinese community since the turn of the century. Vancouver city records show that CBA has approached City Council on many occasions in relation to various matters of interest to the Chinese Community, such as permission to carry out fund-raising drives, the Chinese hospital, flood relief in Canton (Guangdong), and aid to Chinese war refugees.\textsuperscript{115} The Association is credited with having

* established a hospital on its premises to offer free medical service to the sick and poor Chinese in Vancouver;
* built the public cemetery, and helped send back to China the remains of the dead;
* established the Chinese public school in 1917, then raised funds within the Chinese community to build the new school building at 499 East Pender;
* in 1913 helped feed the unemployed and Chinese without family support;
* in 1924 circulated a public notice to all Chinese in Canada setting July 1 as the Shame Day for the Chinese, so as to protest the government's passage of legislation discriminating against Chinese immigrants;
* in 1937 held a large scale fund raising drive for the War Against Japan, within the eight years of war, total donations amounted to $5,000,000;
* in 1947 fought for the right to vote for Chinese Canadians;
* between 1947 and 1967, made many representations to the federal government about instances of discrimination;
* between 1967 and 1970s, protested the City Urban Renewal Scheme III affecting the Chinatown area;
* in 1979 in cooperation with Chinese Cultural Centre, held a grand celebration of Chinese Spring Festival
* in 1980 protested W5 TV show, resulting in a public apology to the Chinese;
* joined with the cooperative efforts of Chinese in every city of Canada in establishing PingQuanHui, to enhance and further protect the legal rights of the Chinese and other minority ethnic groups;
* in 1981 initiated a petition, seminar, and protest against racism, contributing to the province's legislation on the


\textsuperscript{115} Paul Yee, "The Chinese in British Columbia: Bibliography" Summer 1977, City of Vancouver Archives, Vancouver, B.C., 27.
elimination of racism;  
* in 1982 protested the Japanese government's distorting the 
history of its invasion of China; 
* joined in a cooperative effort to prevent fire and theft; 
and celebrated the 125 anniversary of the Chinese community in 
Vancouver in 1983.116

More recently, it has organized forums on head-tax issues and 
seminars with the police department regarding the establishment of 
the Chinatown police community service centre.117

The President of the organization describes CBA as "having 
some representative capacity of being an umbrella organization for 
the Chinese community."118 The major work of the organization 
has been carried out by volunteers. The Association has a board of 
31 members, 20 of whom are elected from among the organizational 
members, the rest from among individual members. Currently there 
is only one part time employee, working from one o'clock to five 
o'clock, performing such duties as answering phone calls and 
inquiries, collecting correspondence, and notifying the board 
members about meetings.

The Association is largely self sustaining. Its revenue comes 
mainly from lease or rental of property that it owns. It receives 
almost no support from governments. The main exceptions are for 
its sponsorship of the annual Spring Festival (traditional Chinese 
New Year celebration), and for the Chinatown police community 
service centre on Main Street.119

116"Introduction of Chinese Benevolent Association of 
Vancouver", 2.
117Interview information, March 3, 1993.
118Ibid.
119Ibid.
b. The Chinese Cultural Centre

The Chinese Cultural Centre was established in 1973. Its original office building was located at 313 East Pender Street. In 1974, it registered as a non-profit organization. With grants from three levels of government\(^{120}\) and the contribution from the Chinese community, the CCC complex was completed in 1981 at 50 East Pender, and ever since has become the centre for the Chinese in Vancouver to get together and conduct communal activities.

Currently, the CCC has 64 organizational members, and over 1,000 individual members from all walks of life.\(^{121}\) In the CCC, there are 14 full time, and 4 part time employees, with varied numbers of volunteers, depending on the project.\(^{122}\)

Ever since its inception, some of the aims and objectives as stated in the registered constitution are:

* to cultivate and promote better understanding and friendship between the Chinese Community and other communities or ethnic groups
* to promote the interchange of cultures and traditions of China and other nationalities
* to interpret China and its people to the people of Canada by the introduction and presentation of all aspects of Chinese Culture
* to collaborate with other local organizations in sponsoring

\(^{120}\)In 1975, the City Council of Vancouver agreed to lease the land for a nominal rent of one dollar per year for a period of sixty years for the construction of CCC building. In 1978, the Federal government granted one million dollars to the City of Vancouver for building a Chinese garden. In 1979, the Provincial Government announced a grant of $400,000 for the construction of the CCC's phase one building. The above information is from Chinese Cultural Centre 15th Anniversary: 1973-1988, Chinese Culture Centre, Vancouver, B.C., 1988.

\(^{121}\)Interview information, March 13, 1993.

\(^{122}\)For instance, for the Dragon Boat event, 200 volunteers turned out during two days. Information from the follow up telephone conversation with current chief manager of CCC, on March 23, 1993.
international artistic and cultural programs * to build, purchase and maintain facilities and premises for the society in order to achieve all related aims and objectives.123

Major activities and programs of the CCC revolve around cultural events such as the celebration of important traditional Chinese festivals, for instance, Spring Festival, Ancestor Worship Festival, Moon Festival, Dragon Boat Festival, and Canadian public and civic holidays (Christmas, Canada Day, etc.). They are organized by the Activities and Special Events Committees. Another important activity of the CCC is its fund raising activity, which has been organized by the Women's Committee made up of all the volunteers, through Bazaars, flower markets, fund raising dinners, and Chinatown tours. The Centre also organizes sports activities, performances, and maintains an arts and crafts collection. In the early days, the Building and Planning Committee supervised the construction of the CCC building, completed in 1981, and later the Chinese Classical Garden, completed in 1986. In 1982, CCC began a series of educational programs in the areas of language, art, and business.

Funding from the government is limited to certain projects, particularly in association with summer student employment. Its revenue comes from rental income and fundraising. The Women's Committee raises at least ten thousand dollars every year, and other income comes from donations at special occasions. Some educational programs also produce revenue.124

124Interview information, March 13, 1993.
c. The Freemasons

The Freemasons\textsuperscript{125} in Canada was first established in 1863 in Barkerville, B.C., the earliest Chinese organization in Canada.\textsuperscript{126} Due to various historical factors, the organization was not registered in Canada until 1971. The Freemasons now have tens of thousands members across Canada in over 20 branches, and in Vancouver, a few thousand active and inactive members. There is no paid employee in the organization, all are volunteers. Even for the people helping the organization with answering the phone and collecting mail, compensation does not go beyond such minor benefits as parking fees and transportation.\textsuperscript{127}

The original purpose of the organization, apart from its strong political aim in the homeland, was to get together its

\textsuperscript{125}Here it is necessary to point out that there is another organization called Masonry, or Freemasonry, one of the largest and oldest fraternal organizations in the world, with about 3 and a quarter million masons in the U.S., and about 1 million and a half in the rest of the world. Its purpose is to promote brotherhood and to foster morality among its members. For a detailed explanation, see "Freemasonry" in The World Book Encyclopedia Vol. 13 (Chicago: World Book, 1991), 266-8.

\textsuperscript{126}Freemasons was a political party originated in China, and had a history dated back to around 1644, when the Ming Dynasty was replaced by Qing Dynasty. The members of the Freemasons were determined to overthrow the Qing Dynasty and restore the Ming regime. For hundreds of years, members of the Freemasons fought heroically, laid down their lives, and carried on the cause one generation after another, in China and overseas, until the final removal of the Qing Dynasty in 1911. Though the cause was successfully carried out, the organization of Freemasons and its traditions have been carried on by its believers. Currently, Freemasons members are spread over the world: United States, Canada, Mexico, Jamaica, Cuba, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Panama, and Peru, making new contributions to the development of the Chinese communities outside China. A brief history of Freemasons can be obtained in The Chinese Freemasons in Canada: 1863-1983 by Harry Con (in Chinese) (Vancouver: the Chinese Freemasons in Canada, 1989.)

\textsuperscript{127}Interview information, March 2, 1993.
members, mainly railway workers and miners, to fight against racial discrimination, and for the rights of the Chinese, and to provide help to its members when needed. Currently, it joins with other organizations in the Chinese community in efforts to improve the status of the Chinese in Canada.\textsuperscript{128} It tends to be a secretive organization, as is demonstrated by the fact that it does not disseminate information about its programs or activities.

Financially, the Freemasons are self supporting. Their revenue comes mainly from the property they own and from membership fees. The organization received a government grant of about $3,000 to $4,000 for the 125th anniversary celebration in 1988.\textsuperscript{129}

d. The United Chinese Community Enrichment Services Society

The United Chinese Community Enrichment Services Society (SUCCESS) was established in 1973. SUCCESS is a non-profit social service agency serving the Chinese Canadian community in Vancouver and the Lower Mainland. SUCCESS has approximately 200 life members, and about seven to eight thousand general members made up of people from all walks of life.\textsuperscript{130}

SUCCESS has as its logo a bridge, symbolizing a two-way communication channel. Its purpose is to "assist new Chinese Canadians in overcoming language and cultural barriers in their process of integration, ... [and] to enhance the understanding of

\textsuperscript{128}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{129}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{130}The former class of members are supposed to pay $2,000 for individuals, and $5,000 for corporations. Interview information, March 16, 1993.
Canadians of Chinese origin by other Canadians.131 Towards the Chinese community, the main goals are to assist the new Canadians of Chinese descent to overcome language and cultural barriers, achieve self-reliance, and contribute fully to Canadian society.132

SUCCESS is a relatively large organization, with headquarters located in the heart of Vancouver's Chinatown, at 87 East Pender Street. Its regional branch offices are located in Vancouver (Fraser Street), Burnaby, Coquitlam, and Richmond. SUCCESS has approximately 70 full and part time employees, including some contract staff, with a core staff of about 40.133

SUCCESS provides a wide variety of services and programs. It is recorded that SUCCESS provides 100,000 service units to over 60,000 individuals per year. Its network of services fall into five categories:

- Settlement & Public Education
  - direct information referral service
  - new immigrants orientation
  - public education program
  - English language training
  - citizenship program
  - refugee program
- Group and Community Services
  - women's leadership advocacy
  - women's program
  - senior's program
  - citizens/members participation
- Family & Youth Counselling
  - family counselling
  - parent support groups
  - youth at risk program
  - peer & lay counselling


132 SUCCESS information brochure.

133 Interview information, March 16, 1993.
Sources of funding for SUCCESS come from the following channels: government grants, United Way of Lower Mainland, donations, membership dues, community-based fund-raising events, and the SUCCESS endowment fund established with a grant from the Vancouver Foundation.\textsuperscript{135} Funding from three levels of government constitutes between 70 and 75\% of its revenue.\textsuperscript{136} One small added source is some of its fee-generating programs, such as its ESL (English As a Second Language) program. The budget last year was 3.9 million dollars, with actual expenditure of 3.63 million dollars.\textsuperscript{137}

e. The Strathcona Property Owners and Tenants Association

The Strathcona Property Owners and Tenants Association (SPOTA) was established in 1968 by the residents of the Strathcona area, covering about four or five square blocks of housing next to commercial Chinatown. It aimed to halt the urban renewal program developed by the three levels of government. The majority of the members of the Association were Chinese, but it also represents

\textsuperscript{134}SUCCESS information brochure.

\textsuperscript{135}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{136}Interview information, March 16, 1993.

\textsuperscript{137}Ibid.
residents of other ethnic origins living in the area. Its original goal was to save the housing in the neighbourhood. Supported by the Chinese community in Vancouver, and by volunteer students (law school students and social work students mainly) from the University of British Columbia, the Association studied the feasibility of residential rehabilitation, and held negotiations with the three levels of government. Its protest succeeded in squashing the urban renewal proposal, and its substitution with the "Strathcona Rehabilitation Project" in 1971 to construct new public works, roads, and sidewalks, and to fund renovation of neighbourhood homes. The project lasted from 1972 to 1975, and was guided by the Strathcona Rehabilitation Committee, which included representatives from the three levels of government and SPOTA. This involvement of the neighbourhood association in the decision making process for the housing project was one of the first such cases in Canadian history. Before SPOTA became defunct in 1991, it also became involved in developing new, non-profit "infill" housing for the neighbourhood through its housing arm, the Strathcona Area Housing Society, and in promoting linear parks, monitoring freeway proposals and other neighbourhood development projects. In short, the Association had been involved with urban development issues that affect the neighbourhood, many of whom are Chinese. In recent years, Association has become less active. In 1993, it was replaced by the Strathcona Residences Association.\textsuperscript{138}

\textsuperscript{138}There are three separate but closely related organizations, namely, SPOTA, the Strathcona Area Housing Society, and the Strathcona Residences Association. In this case, archival practice should include the acquisition of records of all three entities. However, for the purpose of this study, only one organization is investigated, because this thesis deals with the attitude issue,
SPOTA raised revenue through activities such as fundraising dinners, and donations from supporters, and a token membership fee of five dollars. SPOTA received money from the government only when actually doing the rehabilitation project from 1972-75, when it had two paid persons. While it was active, the organization held residents' meetings, lobbied the government, and took part in the implementation of the project.\textsuperscript{139}

3) Summary

All five organizations exist to contribute to the welfare of the Chinese community, but each has its own focus. Some of the key characteristics of each organization can be summarized as follows.

The Chinese Benevolent Association has a long history. It has now only one part time employee, with all the other work carried out by volunteers. Financially, it has been completely self-reliant for its daily operation. Its main concern is with political issues affecting the Chinese community in the New World.

The Chinese Cultural Centre has been in existence for twenty years. It has now 14 full time and 4 part time employees, with daily office hours. Financially, it is mainly self-supporting. However, it is linked with the government as regards land and special project funding. Its major concern is with the promotion of cultural exchange within the Chinese community and the greater community.

The Freemasons have a long history, the oldest among the

\textsuperscript{139}Interview information, March 5, 1993.

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Chinese community. All volunteers carry out the functioning of the organization. Financially, it is completely self-supporting for its daily operation. It was, for a long time, mainly concerned with political issues in the homeland, and with service to its own members in the New World. But now it also joins the efforts of other organizations in the development of the Chinese community in Canada.

The Strathcona Property Owners and Tenants Association existed for over twenty years. It is now defunct. Its work was project based with significant funding from governments. Its major concern was with the welfare of the Strathcona area residents, and anything that affected the neighbourhood.

The United Chinese Community Enrichment Services Society (SUCCESS) has been in existence for twenty years. It now has 70 employees. It operates on daily office hours with headquarters and a number of branch offices across the Lower Mainland Area. It maintains strong links with the government financially, obtaining 75% of its sources from the government. Its main concern is with rendering social services to the Chinese community.

As such, the five organizations cover a relatively wide spectrum. The three larger organizations represent the Chinese community in three very important areas: political (CBA), cultural (CCC), and social services (SUCCESS). The Freemasons are representative of organizations with a long history. They manifest features similar to clan associations; they share with other organizations an interest in political causes in the homeland. SPOTA is distinguished for its history making project, and distinctive in being a neighbourhood association within the
Chinatown area. With this understanding of the nature of the five organizations, we can now turn to questions about their archives.
CHAPTER THREE:

CASE STUDY OF THE POTENTIAL FOR

ACQUISITION OF ETHNIC ARCHIVES

This chapter reports the results of the case study. It will first explain the methodology used in gathering the data. Then it will present a rather full view of the data collected without analyzing them. This straightforward reporting method is chosen because the interview method necessarily generates data open to considerable interpretation. Some extensive account of the data will allow readers to form a good view of the information acquired. Finally, the data will be analyzed.

1) Description of Methodology

The need to explore the attitudes and preferences of those responsible for running organizations and to arrive at some understanding of the factors determining those attitudes and preferences led to the adoption of a qualitative approach. The one best suited to explore these issues was the fieldwork method of interviews, for this method provides opportunity to explore the matter in extensive discussions.

"Fieldwork" is defined as:

a: work done in the field (as by students) to gain practical experience through first hand observation b: the gathering of anthropological or sociological data through the interviewing of subjects in the field.140


58
The fieldwork of this study falls under b category. It adopts an ethnographic approach.

Ethnography is the work of describing culture. ... Fieldwork, then, involves the disciplined study of what the world is like to people who have learned to see, hear, speak, think, and act in ways that are different. Rather than studying people, ethnography means learning from people.141

This method suits this study. It is the culture of the organization which is important in determining attitudes towards records and then preservation of archives. The purpose of this case study is to learn from the selected representatives of Chinese organizations about their attitude towards the final disposition of their organizational archival records, and report the findings. There is no intention to judge what is right or what is wrong in their practices, nor to impose any "correct" practices upon the investigated organizations. Rather, this study aims to make some inferences from the investigation about attitudes. By learning from people, and objectively describing what is discovered, the ethnography approach seeks to avoid imposing any preconceived ideas on the environment to be studied.

Specifically, the case study method has been chosen for collecting data. This method is defined by Robert Yin as an empirical enquiry that

(1) investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when
(2) the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which
(3) multiple sources of evidence are used.142


Raya Fidel considers case studies to be appropriate for investigating phenomena when

(1) a large variety of factors and relationships are included,
(2) no basic laws exist to determine which factors and relationships are important, and (3) when the factors and relationships can be directly observed.\footnote{Raya Fidel, "The Case Study Method: A Case Study," \textit{Library and Information Science Research} 6 (1984): 273.}

This study deals with "how" and "why" questions, namely, how the organizations regard the question of records disposition and why they take the view they do. Both types of questions can be addressed in a case study.\footnote{Yin, 17.} To investigate the attitudes\footnote{By attitudes of organizations, I mean the attitudes evinced towards records by the experience of the persons I interviewed, and their account of organization policy.} of the selected organizations involves a variety of factors and relationships such as the organization's history, its mission, size, affiliation with the government etc., which, through analysis, may or may not influence their attitude to their final disposition of their archival records. Further still, since no such study has been conducted before, no propositions about which factors are the most important in determining their attitudes have been established. As such, the case study interview method is best for the exploratory nature of the research at hand.

Case study interviews take several forms, among which three are most common. They are "interviews of open-ended nature", "focused interview", and "a formal survey" containing more structured questions. The first type of interview is mainly used to ask key respondents for the facts of a matter as well as for the
respondents' opinions about events. Further enquiries may follow based on the propositions developed from the respondent's insights into certain occurrences. In this method, repeated interviews are often conducted. In the second type of interview, the respondent is interviewed for a short period of time — an hour, for example. In such cases, as in the interview of the first type, the interviews may still remain open-ended and assume a conversational manner. The difference lies in that the interviewer is more likely to follow a certain set of questions derived from the case study protocol. Yin has stated that a major purpose of such an interview might be simply to corroborate certain facts that the investigator already thinks have been established (but not to ask about other topics of a broader, open-ended nature). The third type of interview entails more structured questions, along the lines of a formal survey, which works best with a large scale interview populace.  

This study adopts the focused interview. There are three advantages of this method for this project. Firstly, this study is limited to only five organizations, and so does not call for a more structured survey. Secondly, the focused interview method appears well suited to elicit opinions about records disposition and how they are affected by the culture of the organization. Thirdly, the interviewees are all volunteers for the organization, with their own business to take care of on a daily basis. Therefore, the most feasible method appeared to be the single focused interview.

Further, the focused interview can keep the interview open-

\footnote{Yin, \textit{Case Study}, 83-4.}
ended, which allows the interviewer to solicit opinions from the respondents on the issue at hand, and to try to find out as many factors as possible affecting their opinions. Carefully worded questions make it possible to test a number of suppositions about the factors expected to be at play and to provide points of comparison among the organizations.

Naturally the focused interview has its weaknesses. It has been criticized for a lack of rigor, for providing little basis for scientific generalization, for being too time consuming and often for resulting in massive, unreadable documents. However, these potential weaknesses are mitigated in this project. The research was designed to be of limited scale. The main benefit aimed at is to stimulate further study by establishing some tentative propositions. The project will be satisfied to present all the findings that will provide a basis for further research. The time factor can not be avoided, for research takes time, all the more with the exploratory research such as this. However, with careful preparation to give the interview some structure, the results should prove of use in making some preliminary judgements.

2) Description of the Case Study

The case study process for this thesis includes the following stages: preparation of guiding questions, conduct of interviews, transcribing the tape-recorded interviews, and data analysis. This section will provide an account of the interview process.

The interviews began after the guiding questions were

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147 Ibid., 21.
The interviewees are in positions of authority (President or Chairperson of the board of directors) from each organization, except for the now defunct SPOTA, which was represented by its former President and English secretary as interviewees. All of the interviewees had been involved with their own organization for a considerable period of time, ranging from over ten years to 35 years, and had played a key role in the organization.

The time span for all the interviews for this project was from March 2, 1993 to March 23, 1993. Each interview appointment was made through the phone, which was preceded by an introductory letter from Dr. Graham Johnson, one of the three thesis advisory members, sent out on February 17, 1993.

For the convenience of data analysis, tape-recorded interviews were conducted. Each interview lasted about 45 minutes, with the exception of the interview with the representatives from SPOTA, because two persons were present for the interview, which took one and a half hours. Each interview was guided by a set of questions. As experienced fieldwork folklorist Edward Ives advises, the list of questions only served as a guide, not something to "get locked into it by checking things off or reading directly from it." Therefore, the interview was conversational, with the investigator monitoring as it progressed to determine additional or supplementary questions.

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148 See appendix A.

The guiding questions were designed to collect information on three areas: information about the organization (see questions 1-6 in appendix A); information about the records (questions 7-12); and the interviewees' opinions on the final disposition of their archival records (questions 13-18). It was assumed that this investigation of attitude was in essence what Werner and Schoepfle called "interviewing about evaluative questions", which, in their view, "should be linked to factual questions, the latter should not be asked too early in the interview process." This advice was taken into account in designing the guiding questions.

As the interviewees are the chief authorities of each organization, the interviews focused mainly on gathering information about the organization, and opinion on the final disposition of records. Information about records only briefly touched upon some general ideas, such as where records are kept, how far back the records go, who is responsible for the records, and any experience about the difficulty of gaining access to the records. As information on the organizations has been incorporated into the previous chapter, this chapter will focus on information about records and opinions about their disposition. The first set of questions was designed to serve two purposes: to build rapport with the interviewees; and to gather some information as a supplement to the published literature about the organizations, although in the case of SPOTA it served as the main source to reconstruct a brief history of the organization.

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The tape-recorded information from all the five interviews has been transcribed so that the information could be analyzed. It resulted in about 35 pages of single-spaced information. Its purpose was to provide a fuller view of the information collected, so that a decision on the selection of information for the presentation in this study could be reached.

3) Data Collected

The collected data presented here will focus on questions relating to records and to the interviewees' opinion on the final disposition of their organization's archival records. Though ethnographers insist on having accurate, full transcriptions of notes from interviews,\textsuperscript{151} this study will present only selected portion of the transcripts. There are two reasons for this decision. First, the researcher for this project is satisfied to illustrate the cases with selected remarks from the interview. Secondly, a full transcription would result in presenting much irrelevant discussion. The chosen parts are from the full transcription of the interviews conducted by the researcher.

The data will be presented in the strict order of the questionnaire, although sometimes the questions were not asked in the strict order of the guiding questions. The location of the information is indicated by the digital number of the audiotapes as commonly practised by most folklorists in collecting oral interview data. The selected information, or highlights of interviews will be presented one organization after another, in an alphabetical

\textsuperscript{151}Werner and Schoepfle, \textit{Systematic Fieldwork}, 390.
order by organization name.

a. The Chinese Benevolent Association

When asked about the location of their records, and the person looking after the records, the interviewee reported:

(428-34) It would be in the eh, premises of the eh, Benevolent Association. ... [your part time secretary working from one o'clock to five takes care of your records?] Yeah.

As regards the law or regulations from the government in mandatorily keeping certain records, the explanation is:

(436-) No. Strictly up to us.

His experience in locating any old records:

(450-69) [For locating records] it depends on myself. I do, ah, keep lots of records, from the time of the period that has taken place in the past. I have records here, eh, from the first Chinese national conference, for instance, held in Vancouver in 1975, I keep it in my office here, because those belong to me, in a sense that I was personally involved. As far as the organizational records, it stays in the organization, ... I don't have the need to go back to, to eh, their records. If I need something I simply tell them I need something and they would get it to me. (satisfied each time?) But whether they can find it or not, I don't know, but I have very few need for going back to records like that.

About how far back do the records go:

(510-) I don't think the records would go back that far [to the beginning of the organization], I am sure if all the records are kept, we would have quite a space needed to keep all those records, ...152

Whether they welcome scholars to consult their records:

(523-) Well, it depends, I mean, ah, we would have to be

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152The CBA building had a disastrous fire in 1951. In the 1970s, there was no assigned person to take care of records. Many documents of the organization were lost. Some of the most important records lost were in relation to activities to help the poor, and lobbying the government, and fighting for equal rights. As a result, the CBA has difficulty now in reconstructing a comprehensive organizational history. This information is from its flyer of introduction about the CBA.
informed what is the purpose of the research of somebody going through our records, I mean if it is just eh for academic reason it is one thing, but as to eh, to keep track of, to keep track of what our organization has done, maybe something else, I don't know, I mean, that is, eh, the decision, that the board would have to make, I suppose. ... (So if for academic reason you are open?) I don't know. It would appear to me if somebody makes such a request, I would have to bring it up the issue to the board, and let the board discuss it. ... No [scholars have not made many requests].

As regards whether the organization has deposited any records in a repository:

(539-) Not that I know of, besides, I was not involved prior to 1979, so I have not looked through those old records. I am sure that there would be some in the eh CBA, but eh, to be honest, I have no need to go through those records, so I don't have to care.

Whether their organization should have any permanent records:

(552-) I expect all of those records, whatever we have done in the past should be kept. ... That goes without saying I would expect eh, that is why we have secretaries. (So, you should have permanent records?) Mm.

About discarding records:

(572-) No. (The Secretaries are not involved in any decision making about throwing away any records) I would imagine that if she wants to do something, she would have to get direction from the board.

Whether they will keep their records in their own premises forever:

(583-) I imagine we'll be keeping all those [records], until at some point, somebody decides to bring the matter up for the board to consider, whether we will be running out space or whether it is causing, eh some problems, for, for, healthy reasons, or whatever reason.

Whether they are willing to give them away, if some archival institution is interested in the records:

(593-) No, I think that is too hypothetical. I think the request has to come in and we have to discuss it on the board, eh, what we exactly, eh, eh, what we do with such a request. ... I doubt very much we would ever give our records away. I mean, that doesn't somehow seem right for what records to be given, we may allow, for the purpose, and intention is clear, that for somebody to look through them, but unless we have decided to throw them away, we may give it to somebody. But still, I doubt it very much that would, eh, happen.
As for the reason for keeping records in its own building:

(side 2, 068-) Well, it seems to me, the record of an organization is just like a record of an individual, I mean it belongs to the organization, as it belongs to the individual, then why would somebody want it? Unless somebody, you know, there is a good reason, I mean, I doubt very much any organization would be willing to give up ... its record, it may want to share some of the information with other people, but I can't imagine somebody wants to, unless the organization decides to cease to exist, that may be different. But if an organization is, have every intention to continue to survive, why would it want to give it up. I just cannot understand that kind of rationale. Because, I mean, eh, because I think those records are more important to the organization than to others, even, eh, for a government agency, I mean they may want to share some of the records, to actually keep those, when the organization still in existence, it is most unlikely. ... also we would need all those information, if we give it away, how could we get it back, I mean if we give it away, we would have to ask to, to, to look at them, that is the difference. What I mean is if they want to look at them, we may be willing to share, but somehow I just can't imagine an organization would give records away. ... You could never tell, I mean, may not be in need for my term, ... but there may be a need in another ten years down the road or fifty years down the road. So, I don't think I have any right of giving the records away, unless we decide not to exist any more, and our record, what do you do with it, which one should be keeping? I don't think, any of us has that kind of right, it belongs to the organization, therefore, unless that organization is not going to exist, then it makes sense to give it away, otherwise I think most organizations would be very, very, eh, foolish indeed, to give it away.

As regards the archives within the Chinese community:

(side 2, 155-) That would only be up for people to donate, some individuals may, may, you know. We have been given some relics or artifacts by some family members, you know their ancestors may have died, the younger generation see no need to keep some of those, they may want to give it away, that is different... (So you would not give records to archives in the Chinese community?) ... Unless the organization decides to cease to exist, that makes sense, but I just can't imagine, as a lawyer, I think that would be foolish to give up something like that, because that individual should not be cutting off its history, I mean, its own history, if they give them up, they won't have that any more.

Whether he has heard of the Chinese Community History room:

(183-) Yes, we have heard of it. Not [much to do with it]. They had contacted us about keeping our list of directors correct, that is about it, so that has nothing to do with the
records. ... They have not asked us [about published information, or pictures, tapes etc.] ... We know there are [other archives] organizations, there are people would like to collect those things, but that doesn't mean very much to our organization as such.

As regards the best place to keep permanent records:

(211-) (Do you think your organization is the best place to keep your records?) Yes, [firm]. (What about facilities?) They may not be the best place to keep that [records], they may not have the best personnel to look after them, but that doesn't matter. As far as I am concerned that the records belongs to the organization, that organization has the responsibility, and should be keeping those records.

b. The Chinese Cultural Centre

As regards where records are kept and the person responsible for the records:

(451-) It is here [the building of CCC complex, the records are kept]. ... the management here [responsible for the records], the manager eh, usually knows where it is, it is under him, in general, but he may designate it to someone else, ...

Any experience with the use of old records:

(500-) No.

Whether they had deposited any records in any repository:

(511-) Not at this time, ... I don't remember anything like that, someone approaching us, or anything like that. [What about Chinese Community History Room?] They are not keeping any records, ... unless they changed, you know, I was there a few years ago, and I looked at the books, mainly, you know what we call, modern day novels, and what have you, ...

Contribution to the development of the Chinese community:

(528-) The only thing that I can say, you know, is we enrich the cultural life, and also true, you know, introduce much wider the Chinese culture to other ethnic groups, and also to bring in other ethnic groups, you know, so that Chinese would understand them...

As regards the permanent records of the organization:

(413-) Well, we have newsletters and so on, but, you know I don't even know whether those newsletters documenting this type of thing, whether we should keep, everyone will keep an issue or not. ... Also, too from the festival, eh, we had
As regards the plan to establish an archives in the Chinese Cultural Centre complex:

(side 2, 047-) You know we've been talking about building a library museum, but again, you know, up to now, that is only a talk, even though we have some fund, some pledges, but we don't have enough to build anything. .... [archives] plan, that is may be ten years, fifteen years or whatever. (what made you propose this establishment?) My own personal feeling, ok, ... because we see the need for it, these old stores closing down, and there are records, and veterans they are passing away, but on the other hand, building the building is not too much a problem, as long as you can raise enough capital, but maintaining it, it is going to be a problem, it is expensive. ... You have to hire people, you need air conditioning, air and humidity control, that is expensive, you know, you need to hire specialist, you cannot. Usually museum and archives are losing propositions, unless you get government grant, .. So far we have not been able to negotiate with the government, first thing they said, when we asked, they said how are you going to maintain it, the government will not offer any fund for it, they see it as a losing proposition, year in year out, they put the money in, they got nothing out of it, the government, you have to see, if they are going to give you the money, what are they going to get back, how many votes, they could get back. And, eh, with a capital project, there is no problem, there is a physical building there.

As regards willingness to deposit records with an archives:

(135-) (Suppose you have archives? do you think you would donate your records to the archives of the CCC?) Probably would. ... (Provide access to all the people?) Yeah. ... (giving records away to other repository?) (177-) there may be duplicates you know, for instance, tenth anniversary of publication, ... (what about your records like minutes, or correspondence, your financial statement?) I don't know, that depends on the board, you know, lots of board members may feel well, why not keep them here, and if people they want to take a look at it, they can take a look at it, you know, even now, if you come here, board meetings always open, ... only personal matters, ... no, not on personal matters, ...

As regards the best place to keep permanent records:

(264-) (do you think the building is the best place?) You know
I have never thought about it. See, to me, keeping records is not that important, what is ahead is more important than looking behind, I am sorry, ...

Whether they had any dealings with some archives repository:

(285-) [Vancouver] City archives, what we did, we tended to borrow something from them, ... like, set of photographs, copies, in city archives, of Chinese Canadians' early life, we have a set of those, for exhibition. (Did the city archives approach you for any records at all?) No. ok, I didn't say that, ... they may have, but again, I wouldn't know about it because the staff would deal with that. I don't think they had ever approached us for minutes or anything like that,153 ok, ... I don't think so [B.C. Provincial archives] I know the city archives, because one of the former directors used to work for the city archives, Paul Yee, so we had a good relation there, ... I know about BC archives, National Archives, ... I know Ban Sang Ho there, he came here several times, I do know something about that too,... [University archives?] we don't know anything about that at all. (336) as for provincial archives, my personal work has something to do with them, not your records, preserving specimens that type of thing, so I know about them.

As regards the choice of archives:

(351-) (suppose you are in a position of giving out certain kind of records, when you have all these archives, which would you like to give your records? which is the best place for preserving your records?) (363-) I would personally prefer the city archives, tell you the truth, that is because I know more about them, not anything else,... because for provincial archives, I have been dealing with them only on the scientific aspects, but I don't know anything about how they keep their records, or any thing like that. (Vancouver City Archives is closer to you than provincial archives?) That's right.

As regards own community archives:

(387-) (when you have your own archives, is it something showing your ethnic identity?) Well, mainly, it is you know, we would like to keep our own records in our own place, it is lots easier, for instance... mainly for our own people who want to look at something, ...also too, you see, priority of city archives and provincial archives, the same priority as we have or not, I don't know, ... this is my personal feeling, ah, the veterans', their, you know, their staff kept, but whether the same priority put on them by the city archives, or provincial archives, I doubt it, (not interested?), Well they are interested in that, but not the Chinese community, you

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153I checked the City of Vancouver Archives, and found no records.
see, it is in general... (435-) Well, you know, you see, we would be specialized, and you know, city archives, would be in general, ... if we are going to build it, it would be specialized in the Chinese Canadians,... (any concerns of confidentiality?) (478-) No, all meetings are open, ... no secret whatsoever.

c. The Freemasons

As regards the location for keeping the records:

(381-) You know, different branches keep their own records [in their own building] ... elected officers, you know, to do the work [volunteer takes care of the records]... I don't know how far back... I think they got to keep the records, minutes of the records. (You keep the records from the very beginning?) yeah.

As regards any law to keep the records:

(411-) ... the government knows that we exist, what we are doing,... (not obliged by the law to keep the records). Yeah. ... (Keep as much as you can in the building, eh?) yeah.

As regards experience of locating old records:

(444-) Well, occasionally, ... I think we had quite a lot of staff, we threw away before, we threw away a lot, lot ..eh, of documents long time ago, when we were moving, getting new offices, you know, moving from one place to another, we threw a lot of things. (... difficult to find records?) ... I got records from my own term. ... (who made the decision to throw the document?) Well, ... I can't say what they did before.

As regards the important records as President of the organization:

(492-) ... my own notes, correspondence also in the office, sometimes I keep one for my own reference, in case I go to the meeting, ... all my staff, my recent mail everything, ... ... most important record is constitution, because people keep asking for the constitution, you know, ah we have a registrar from the federal government, that is the certificate, that is the most important thing, because you have to keep that in ah, good place, safe places, that is the most important thing, ah they keep for every year, annual reports, things like that is the main thing, keep the reference straight for the government.

As regards depositing records in any repository:

(540-) No. ... [At the UBC] they kept the record of the Chinese times, the newspaper, ...nobody [gives the records away] (What about the records, finding aid, I showed him. His comment:) Those places except Victoria, none of them exists.
... Well you know, we used that place there, after we move, ... lots of stuff, I think somebody getting to it, they took away from our own place, I don't surprise people got some of our stuff, ... Canada has many branches... to Halifax. ... You don't give them away unless, you know, some, some people move away, and some people broke in, you know, the records, nobody, no organization gave their records away. (609-) They may throw it away, but they don't think it is important to them. You know, they destroy it. they don't, eh, give away.

As regards permanent records of the organization:

(side 2, 035-) Well, they appreciate, they realize or not, doesn't matter, we do, do, eh, our best. We don't want any people to say, oh, you do a good job... we have been here so long, we do what we can, contribute to the community as much as we can but we don't ask for reward, or anything for it. (... permanent records of your organization?) (055-) I think, for professional people to keep those things, you know we like I say, all these people work, all officers elected in terms, ... I don't know what they do with their records, .. at least the records supposed to turn over from one term to the other term, they can look at what they did before, and check what the minutes, what has been done, and what has to be done, they do that. But ah you know, after a little while, way back, I think all the minute books left a few terms before, ten years fifteen years ago, you know, .. can't keep track of it. So I don't know, it is tough for any community, any society, especially they move from one building to other...because this is not professional to keep the records, but, eh, secretaries may do a better job,.. try to get the annual book, .. borrow minutes from convention, ... we try to keep the records, way back...

As regards giving records to archives:

(side 2, 129-) No, I don't think we are allowed to do this. (you are not allowed, why, what are your concerns?) Records are for your own so eh society, but eh not for public, anybody keep it. (That confidentiality of your organization, right?) yeah, and there is no use to any other people, ..I don't think any use to any other people. (What if some archives is interested in your records, do you want to give them away?) No. [firm] ... non members not supposed to, even members, some, some of things not supposed to know to eh any body. ...

As regards access to its records:

(side 2, 192-) Well, maybe, you know, for you, you are doing the study, ... you think this is a good place for the records are safe, and people well organize records, in the way you look for and the way you get it, but that is especially confidential to other people, nobody can get access to it except your own people, you know, maybe, if your written content for somebody to go, otherwise cannot let anybody look
at it. But mostly, people, they... they feel, you know, it is our business, you know, you don't want to be, ..I think 100%, no other organizations would give any records, like this, [refer to the finding aid] happen, you know willingly to give it to them, but they pick it up from other sources, you know, I don't know where they get it.

As regards the awareness of archival repositories:

(side 2, 269-) No [not heard of Vancouver City Archives]. [Chinese Community History Room] never been there, [heard about BC Provincial Archives], heard about it from Dr. Lai, ...

As regards the best place for records:

(side 2, 324-) Well, I don't think. It never happens [give records away]. (That is more of the confidentiality of your organization, you don't want people to...) Mm.. (you don't trust other institutions?) Not that, I think, our business is our own business, no use to you, anyway, what is past is already past, ... (What if they say we do have interest?) I don't think any community, any society will give any records away for you, if they can keep it, they keep it, if they can't keep it, I don't know what they do... (your organization is the best place?) No, not the best place, but, I know it is not the best place, you know, but what you can do, I can't say I give this to you, let you keep our records, you know, never done, ... I have no authorization, I can't say I can give you the record, let you keep your records, I cannot do that, unless I have the approval from the convention or delegation. But from my own personal point of view, I don't think this will ever happen.

d. The United Chinese Community Enrichment Services Society

As regards where the records are kept:

(380-) Well, I kind of know, all the branches, of course, they have their correspondence, they have, eh, own financial operating statements, they provide, they have their own data base, and so all these branches would have [in the head office building, and each branch building] ... we do have a lot of photographs, financial annual reports for example, our gala dinner programs, those are all what we call historical value photographs we kept them for the duration, from inception, they are all kept in Pender Street. Basically, it is all kept under the director that look after the media...

As regards the law governing the keeping of records:

(420-) ... the financial information, we kept it according to the revenue Canada stipulations, which is normally seven years, then, of course the correspondence wide, we dealt with
our correspondence ongoing basis, we cannot afford the storage, and look at other areas, client files, of course, we have to keep all the active client files, eh, this actually I phone and ask, because that is one area, I don't know enough, there is client, client finished, then, the file closed, we usually leave it for three years period.. then destroy it, because that information does not belong to us, belong to the society, it is only one case, or one phase, when happen it happen, when done, then it is gone, unless they three, four years down the road, similar problem comes up, it is a whole new body anyway, we are not in here to serve the kind for life, we are only a transition, we are not there to look after them for life, we will try our best to refer them to agency that can help them on a more permanent basis. So our correspondence are of very little value, once it is aged. ... computer data base is always new, database we don't delete, for now anyway, because the storage is simple, is easy, is not like a hard copy that needs a lot of rooms. ... (any laws?)

(504-) Not really, I can't recall in the society act that certain stipulation we have to keep....some records are permanent anyway, for example, our incorporation, those are with our lawyers, or with government body, our minute book is being kept to date by our lawyer, so these things are locked automatically, so we don't have a concern with these legal type of permanent records as required, because it is being done by people outside, so as to make sure our status is current. Accounting wise, we kept the biennial financial report, we have a seven years prescription requirement under the Revenue Canada, tax act, so we have to keep those.

As regards the experience in locating some old records:

(545-) Well, .. we don't have anyone that really is held responsible for keeping records, because we cannot afford them, government funding don't provide us to keep records, so we keep the records, we don't really have a catalogue or whatever, so sometime look for really old file, except some thing with historical value, we know exactly where they are, it is simple, it is easy, otherwise, it is difficult to locate, for example, one time I remember I want to locate correspondence happened four or five years ago, eh, we had the problem locating them, and eh, but that of course is not the end of the world, something happened four or five years ago, with the time passage, it is already no value to us, um, it is not like something with historical value, ...

As regards permanent records of the organization:

(566-) for example, founding documents, our annual report, .. our gala dinner program, a lot of the gifts and uh, significant gifts,.. received from other people, that we feel of historical value, .. some of them ..uh, our annual director's photographs, uh, which probably we don't have one in the way back, but in the last ten years or so, we know we should keep these directors annual photographs, those are of
value to us. Other than that, pictures of all kinds...

As regards depositing records in any repository:

(589-) No, not with SUCCESS, .. also a lot of our, we service
oriented, a lot of our records are more operation oriented,
there is really no archival or historical value, after time
there is really no value, ... we are an ongoing current
society, our founding documents things like that are more
valuable to us, than to library or than to archives. (what if
researchers want to consult your records?) (609) .. that may
help, but I think, we probably never really think about these
records in that kind of light, the reason why that SUCCESS is
always with philosophy, just want to service and work, really
no attention to whether other people, whether we are well
known to the other people, whether they need to know, uh, to
know more about us, but it is interesting thought. ... (side
2, 004-) I see that perhaps more for the historian than for
us, like uh, I think maybe from the organization society point
of view, we can only deal with ourselves, based on resources
that we have, um, and I think, if other people are interested
in the role that we are playing, either in the past or
current, is more a role of historian, and if someone really
has the interest of finding out how ourselves, or CBA, or CCC,
um, or the various.. family clans, ... the influence, the
evolvement over the years, that is all the job for historians,
and that is very interesting subject for people to do, ... but
whether SUCCESS has the need to keep this deliberately put in
the library and archives, I question the need of SUCCESS to do
it ... SUCCESS itself might not have the need to make history,
because our goal and mandate is to service our clients, and
also improve the quality of Canadians of Chinese descent, and
to keep record of how we play a role in history is not our
mandate, ...

As regards ever giving away records to any repository:

(side 2, 101-) Yes, um, No, I don't see us, SUCCESS would
have a lot of, sort of, we ourselves, it all depends on
subjective and objective view, SUCCESS look at this things has
no historical view, someone else might, ok, because we are on
a daily operating type of society, for example, if you ask me
what I look at as historical value, it is not really that
many, I mean, even 50 years, maybe the room, I can pack them
all in, if you ask us to cataloguing them to respend time in
doing this, it will be very difficult to do it, so if it is
really something that we accumulate, then we suddenly decide
to give, by that time, maybe a lot of these records, other
people might view as valuable, they are really been so long ,
are gone, because the value to us, as an operating
organization, will not be the same as a historian, we really,
I don't think, we could, or we are qualified, to play the role
of historian, .. I have no idea of what kind of records, you
look upon as valuable from historical point of view,
(significance of your role with the Chinese community and with
the society at large in Canada, since Canada has so many ethnic groups, you know?) (side 2, 154-) if that is the case, then we need lots more education of our staff and... directors, and also the resources, too, how to catalogue these type of records of information, tell us what is valuable, and what is not, what is to throw out, what is not to throw out, I guarantee you that through years, we might have a lot of information, that a historian will think important at this time, but is not important to us.

As regards the best place for records:

(side 2, 190-) I think, yes, [organization is the best place], actually this a spontaneous reaction, if there is a place, can provide us the resource to keep aside cataloguing, just insure the access of SUCCESS, guarantee that access by SUCCESS when we need them, what you are suggesting is interesting, and should pursue, because yes you are right, I don't even know some of the thing we should have is around. ... if certain things, unless a historian thinks is valuable, they have future value of preserving it, SUCCESS being a society of Chinese community, all our belongings doesn't really belong to SUCCESS, it belongs to the community, and we really don't have the expertise or public standard to assess what should be preserved what should not be preserved, so if someone would take that out of hand, um, maybe it is a welcome suggestion, so long at all time SUCCESS should have access to this type of records, because for SUCCESS to keep operating all we need is our legal, accounting, and our database and that kind of files, I can keep functioning. ... not that I know of [any archives approaching us for records].

As regards the awareness of archives:

(side 2, 256-) No,.. Maybe historians are a different breed, (What about Chinese community history room?) Maybe we are too young, in Chinese, they never thought of us in this regard [in Chinese],

As regards the ideal place to keep permanent records:

(side 2, 298-) (as far as facilities, and expertise are concerned, you think that your organization is not the ideal place for preserving your long term records, right?) yeah, ... Personally, I am a very open person, maybe a lot person find me too open too radical, I always suggest if there is an organization like ourselves, if the community doesn't want us, we can pack ourselves and go tomorrow, I also agree that our information is almost like an open book, except some client file, of course some of them are on our data base, with some confidentiality involved, but otherwise open book, financial uh, information are open for scrutiny by the government, by the public, um, and we belong to the community, I have no doubt, .. actually the Chinese community should have more to say because they do contribute by virtue of donations,
donations 90% come from our Chinese community, so they are almost like a part owner, uh of us, I have no problem of sharing some of our documents or information, provided there is no confidentiality attached, the only thing is we don't even know what is valuable what is not, we only know what is of sentimental value to SUCCESS, and what is operation value to SUCCESS, we have no idea about historical value.

As regards the willingness to give records to any repository:

(side 2, 372-) Well, from our point of view of course I would rather have stay within the community, but then of course it depends on that community archives, objectives, and mandate, and whether it is a truly public archives within the community, we may not, I don't know, I personally may have differentiation if that archives is more to do with the individual society, preference I may not be that open, about it, because I don't know where the funding coming from, whether there is here today, and go tomorrow, how the records would be kept out, so all these things have to be taken into consideration, If I have to leave mine, what I think is the value, sentimental or not, or historical value, to somebody else, then I want to make sure that we preserve, and there is the system of support to preserve them. My preference, of course, is the community, if the government funding is there, the basic funding the back up funding is always there, is not going to be one year, maybe next year maybe not, then I definitely prefer the community, than the society at large personally, because we are the Chinese community as well, all our clients are Chinese, our supporters are Chinese, we are mandate, trying to improve the quality of life of Canadians of Chinese decent, um, then another very fundamental is longevity of the archives, this archives is really going to maturity.

... community, I would personally.

Explanation of ethnic identity in the choice:

(side 2, 418-) because without the ethnic community, I wouldn't be here, SUCCESS won't be here, there is no need for SUCCESS, (What about 75% of fund from the government? accountable to the taxpayers at large?) yes or no. because 75% sounds like a lot, but if you come to, you look at the total funding, the government provide, the area like lower mainland, because of our phase, the government is not providing sufficient funding, to further the interest of Canadians of Chinese descent in a strict portion of population, so we are not really getting these things, these things are not extra for the government, if these things were, I think the Chinese community deserve, because otherwise we are fighting for our proper percentage, so I think also the way they are going to present it, the way they preserve should always carry the ethnic connotation, because otherwise, at the end, a very important aspect of history could be lost interpretation in the environment, being interpreted, um, because without ethnic, .. as being ethnic is a public value,
is a very important portion of value, um, otherwise we are just another society, that without the community, our impact within the Chinese community, our supporters of Chinese community, we spend money in the Chinese community, those records of value mainly, in our mind, because of the ethnic connotation attached to them, and I don't think a public archives are making assumptions, I don't think a public archives will pay as much detail attention to this kind of setting than a community archives, then of course, the public archives have better facilities and resources, than a community unless they are able to convince the government we have much deserve as much support from the government, as public archives, because of uh, a value of these documents, without ethnic connotation attached, you lost a lot of value,...

e. The Strathcona Property Owners and Tenants Association

As regards the location of the records:

(451-) ... (P): In Mr. Mah's house [rented office of the then Association], we have all the boxes of all the minutes, and everything we had ever done, and pigeon started to come in the window, and nest in it, and we have clean everything up, and you could see that it was going to get lost, if we did not do any thing about it. (side 2, 417-) (B) records kept in the office [a rented house] until some came and took over... Penny organized all the records, give records to Vancouver city archives

The way of knowing Vancouver City Archives:

(435-) P: Major Matthews was always city archivist,... he planned to move it from the Carnegie centre to the new building of archives, and they started thinking about that and somehow, some one told me to talk with Paul Yee about it, I talked to him, and he said by all means bring it here so that, ... I approached Paul Yee, he was a new archivist, and get a new grant for it.

As regards the reason to give records there:

(452-) B: at that time not only Chinese.. we did everything in the first, like the basic neighbourhood improvement program across Canada, the community was in trouble, .. we were the first citizen group that had the equal power [with the government] on a financial matter, those are lot of first, then I thought the records are worthwhile preserving, the reason why so many students keep coming to us, constantly, so

we wanted to put it in the archives so they eventually will look it up and do research there.

As regards who made the decision about giving records there:

(side 2, 470-) ... [by the organization] I took boxes of boxes of records... B: [we do this], because eventually we see we will be phasing out, of the programs, .. we needed to sort it out somehow, and put them in a certain perspective .. (keep history?) B: Even it was important at that time, because so many researchers came here at that time, masters, also so many new organizations wanted to ask us what we did, .. we all share, we go to a lot of community meetings, people like to make contact, if we don't have information, at least, they know where to look it up, our memory stay eventually. .. because we did not have a permanent home, we used that house at a temporary basis, .. you can't use a community centre, .. because it would take a lot of, lot of space, the only other way, if we keep it home they could get lost, ...

As regards the way the records were deposited:

(side 2, 520-) we wanted to do a history of SPOTA, and so we have arranged records in a sort of historical order to do that. B: we just did the evaluation there, P: there was a diary, I did a diary published, ... I had also asked Paul what sort of way he wanted me to present him with this stuff, cause I said this is the order that it was put in, he said that was fine, ... I gave every single piece of records to him, everything, all of it.

As regards awareness of other archives:

(side 2, 560-) We didn't know that [archives at UBC, or SFU] B: Matthews was very outspoken.. P: enthusiastic speaker, nothing escaped him. (So you were influenced by him?) P: Oh, very much so, and he kept everything in the Carnegie building,

As regards facilities:

(side 2, 588-) B: they can sort it out properly and eliminating..

As regards the confidentiality of records:

(side 2, 599-) P: all of our things are open, B: very open, a meeting never closed, ... P: there was nothing secret, no scandals, .. or anything like that.

As regards records after 1980:

(side 2, 607-) B: they are in the basement, somewhere. (what are you going to do with those records?) B: yes that is a good question. B: well, we got some plans too, ... we have applied for Mclain card, ... quite a bit [of records], no idea, have
to ask Jim about, because Margaret became the president of the program, then she has to renovate her place that was moved to roseharlic, in the meantime, we know where it is, ... store there in the original order ... B: I think we are trying to revitalize Strathcona area houses society, called SAHS, the records might be kept for reference for future members of the board, who would like to educate, assessing involvement, in community as well, I think that is one of the reason, I never thought of doing anything with the records, such as if they want to look at the constitution of what year,

As regards the most important records in their view:

(No.2, 006-) (penny said all the records are extremely important? what do you think are the most important records?)
B: minutes of meetings, very early ones, to get people organized, minutes of meeting, (what about financial records?)
B: well, we never had any money, only about 3-4000 dollars, ..
P: only two fund raising, we had newsletter, occasional lobbying of politicians at that time, ... everything is recorded, every single step is recorded,

As regards the remaining records:

(No. 2, 067-) B: I would follow through [to the Vancouver City Archives] P: (087-) I would think the whole organizational history is more important to Vancouver, than to UBC or SFU, and it is not provincial, .. to me they have better access... I think they were actually treasured by the city, because we helped them do many first things, I don't think we are treasured by either university, .. (151-) I had some faint memory that [Major] Matthews155 said he did not have any collection of citizen groups and it planned to see that where we belong. I do remember library, I remember, I always thinking of getting a library student to organize that, and make sure that we were in good order,

As regards the best place for their records:

(No. 2, 191-) P: City archives. .. I think it does not have any biases, I think it is an important part of the city, for Chinese community archives, it will only be used by the Chinese, only the very diligent will be able to dig it out, public not have that. .. so it is not biased, more to the public... (454-) I think so, Penny agreed with me because the first of [our records] is there, if we send it somewhere else, that will break, it does not make any sense not to make it a

155Major James Skitt Matthews was the first city archivist of Vancouver, and the founder of the City of Vancouver Archives [see Caya et al. eds., Canadian Archives 1992 (Ottawa: Canadian Council of Archives, 1992), 34-5.]. Also see: Robin G. Keirstead, "J. S. Matthews and an Archives for Vancouver, 1951-1972," Archivaria 23 (Winter 1986-87): 86-106.
4) Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted to test the aforementioned assumptions, namely, whether some factors such as nature of the organization, its affiliation with the government, length of the existence of the organization, or its size have some role in determining the findings with regard to the attitudes of the organization towards the final disposition of the archival records. Their possible relationship was explored. However the findings are not generalized, for this is only a case study of the five organizations. As such the findings are only true for the selected organizations, although their implication can be extended to a wider spectrum of ethnic groups.

a. Major Findings

As far as records are concerned, the organizations tend to keep documentation of their activities on their own premises. In the case of SPOTA, the records of its first ten years are in the City of Vancouver Archives, and those for more recent years are stored in the basement building known by the responsible persons. Secretaries take care of the records of CBA, FM, and SPOTA. In the cases of CCC, and SUCCESS, management personnel have a role in monitoring the records keeping practices, although not in a very specific or detailed way.

Keeping of records is performed for administrative purposes,
not consciously for keeping the history of the organization. This is because each organization assumes that its contribution may be made known through published information, instead of records generated from daily activities. The only exception is with SPOTA, which foresaw its final phasing out, and tried consciously from the very beginning to keep the history of the organization.

None of the five organizations are aware of any law which requires them to keep any records for specific periods of time, except for SUCCESS, which has considered the stipulations of Revenue Canada.

The current heads of each organization who were interviewed seldom experienced any need to go back to any old records. They keep their own records for their own needs. This is a common problem in organizations with revolving elected executives. Each office holder is responsible for keeping his or her own records. Often no consistent policy for preservation/disposition exists. This is an element of the organization's culture, and may apply in all volunteer organizations such as those studied by Susan Hart.¹⁵⁶

Except for SPOTA, none of the other four organizations have disposed of their records systematically. One noticeable factor is the moving of offices. This is not really a question of attitude, but is a possible factor affecting preservation and disposition. If an organization frequently moves premises it might be more likely to dispose of records at each move, such as in the case of

the Freemasons (see page 74). Therefore, moving premises may increase destructiveness, whereas stability of premises may promote preservation. CBA experienced the loss of valuable records in a fire in 1951. Deterioration of records has not been recorded, as the interviewees are not directly involved with the records keeping practices. SPOTA is again the exception. It has never destroyed records. It deposited them in the City of Vancouver Archives. The other four organizations have not deposited archival records in any archives, museum, or library so far. Although some records of another branch of the Freemasons' were deposited several years ago in the British Columbia Provincial Archives, they have no direct connection with the Freemason's activities in the Chinese community. However, each of the interviewees asserted firmly that its organization has made a significant contribution to the development of the Chinese Community in Canada, and each acknowledged the necessity of having some records permanently preserved. Nevertheless, the attitudes of the various interviewees vary.

The attitude of the CBA representative was quite firm. The organization assumes that its records have no use to others, and no one else is interested in its records. Their records exist to serve administrative needs of the organization. They can not be accessible to the public unless the purpose of the use is justified and approved by the organization. It is unwilling to give up records to any public archival institutions, not even to a Chinese community archives.

CCC acknowledged having never thought about depositing records in any institutions, and paid no attention to the treatment of
their records. FM is similarly firm as CBA in its resolve never to deposit records in an archives. The Freemasons think that their records are for their own organization. The records are confidential, and have no use to other people. Further still, they maintain that it is the decided policy of all Freemasons to keep records under the control of the organization and strictly confidential.

SUCCESS also regards its records primarily valuable for administrative purposes. The organization has no need to deliberately keep things for historians. It exists to fulfil its functions. What is more, there is no space problem for records at the moment, because the organization is relatively young.

SPOTA deposited its records in the City of Vancouver Archives, because of the late Major Matthews' influence, and the connection with Paul Yee, who was working there at the time the records were deposited. In their view, there is no bias against treating all records in a public archival institution, where there are better facilities, wider access, better expertise in preserving their records.

All the interviewees, except for the person from SUCCESS, had heard of archives. They were familiar with public archival institutions at three levels of government. However, they were not familiar with university or church archives in Vancouver. None of them is familiar with the Chinese Community History Room, and knew nothing about its collection policy.

Each of the interviewees also recognized that the organization's premises were not the best place for keeping records permanently. They all recognized that they are short of facilities
for better preservation of records, and lack expertise to look after the records. However, this does not mean that they believe their organization will give their records to an archives. CBA thinks the most important thing is the organization has the records, which is clear from the following words, worth repeating here:

they may not be the best place to keep the records, they may not have the best personnel to look after the records, but that doesn't matter. As far as I am concerned the records belong to the organization, the organization has the responsibility, and should be keeping those records (see page 70).

CCC's chief authority personally prefers the City of Vancouver Archives, because he personally knows more about them, over the provincial archives, whose system he does not know. However, in the event that the CCC establishes a building to house cultural materials, CCC prefers, as is only logical, to have their records there, because it would facilitate access, and it offers a specialized focus on records of the Chinese community. They welcome researchers to consult the records, for no confidentiality is involved.

The Freemasons holds the view that whatever the case, the records cannot be given out, which is clear from the conversation:

I know it is not the best place, but what you can do, I can't say I give this to you, let you keep our records, never done... I don't think this will happen (refer to page 76).

SUCCESS is willing to give records to a public archival institution, because they have better facilities and resources, and they do not mind sharing some of their information, provided there is no confidentiality attached. However, if the community has its own archives with the same level of facilities, expertise, funding,
and the potential to be sustained, they prefer to have records stay within the community. Ethnic identity is involved here. They see those records valuable mainly because of the ethnic connotation attached to them, and the public archival institution will not pay as much attention to this kind of setting as a community archives.

SPOTA expressed its clear preference for the City of Vancouver Archives based on the unbiased treatment of records, better facilities, and better personnel.

The foregoing summary of the major findings reveals some common characteristics. Clearly CBA and FM are firmly assertive about the right of keeping their own records in their own buildings no matter what. This may be interpreted as a "closed" attitude towards their records, for access to the records is controlled by the organization.

On the other extreme is the attitude of SPOTA, which clearly expressed a preference for public archival institutions over community archives. This attitude may be interpreted here as "open" towards their records, the access is public oriented. It should be noted, however, that SPOTA never considered itself as primarily an organization devoted to ethnic ends, but rather to the broader community concerns of an urban neighbourhood containing a mixed populace.

Somewhere between these two extremes are CCC and SUCCESS, which are willing to share their documents or information with the public. This means when need arises that they are willing to give their records to a public archival institution such as the City of Vancouver Archives, or other public institutions which can provide better care of their records. However, if the same level of
facilities, funding, and personnel exists in the Chinese community, their preference is clearly to have the records stay within the community. This attitude may be interpreted as "fairly open", for the access is oriented to the public, yet with the preference for a continued attachment with the ethnic community under certain circumstances.

b. Contextual Analysis

It is one thing to describe the degree of openness to preservation and access, but quite another to isolate the factors which determine the degree. At the outset of this study, it was assumed that the nature of the organization and its business, its affiliation with government, the length of its existence, and its size would be factors determining attitudes towards setting of preservation. Clearly, the first of these is most important. The nature of the organization and its mission determines the kinds and degree of sensitivity of its records, which in turn cultivate how open it will be to the idea of preservation for purposes beyond its own. This is widely the case. For instance, Canadian access to information legislation recognizes a necessary degree of confidentiality in administration of cabinet records. For example, the British Columbia act closes cabinet records for fifteen years.\textsuperscript{157} Private organization rarely develop such policies, but they often have similar concerns, which obviously need to be addressed in the course of acquisition negotiations.

On the score of affiliation with government, it would appear

\textsuperscript{157}Bill 50 - 1992, Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, s. 12 (2) (a).
that the more the organization interacts with government, receives funding from government, and considers itself to operate in the public domain, the more it is likely to concern itself with public preservation of its records. This very tentative supposition needs confirmation. No conclusion even from the limited perspective of this study can be drawn about the relationship between length of existence and attitude towards archival preservation, except that other factors would appear to be more important. Similarly, it appears difficult even to draw a tentative conclusion about the influence of size on attitudes towards archival preservation. However, if size is interpreted as size of the paid bureaucracy, the larger the organization, the more attention it would seem to pay to records matters.

These are however suggestions that the way the organization conducts business can have important effects on the whole question of disposition. For example, when executive officers regularly change in voluntary organizations, records can disappear. Some specific matters like this can have a determining effect. Beyond these general remarks about factors, we can examine the elements of context which seem to be important in each of closed, fairly open, and closed categories proposed by this study.

1 The "Closed" Attitude Group

There are some common features shared by the two organizations (CBA and FM) falling into this closed attitude group. Firstly, both organizations are politically involved. CBA has a major focus on promoting the welfare of the Chinese community and the rights of all Canadians of Chinese origin. The Freemasons, on the other
hand, have long been politically involved with causes in China. These political involvements would appear to cultivate a closed attitude. Both happen to be of long standing in the Chinese Community. One was established in 1863 (FM), and the other (CBA) was established at the turn of the century. Each has not had even one full time employee. CBA has a part time employee, working from one o' clock to five every afternoon, and it is the same with the Freemasons.

Another common feature of the two organizations is that the two are operating as financially independent entities. The only association either has with the government is the occasional funding for events such as the 125th anniversary with FM, and the Spring Festival celebration expense for fees to pay to the government for the street closure with CBA. They are independent, and each supports its own organization through the property they own.

In these two cases, the closed attitude is not surprising. In both cases, a fairly high degree of confidentiality is regarded necessary in the conduct of the organizations' affairs. CBA has to develop strategies to fight against discrimination. Its meetings are only open to its own members, and not to others. Hence its records retain the same characteristic of being exclusive. Some strategies may involve advice or background information, as political strategy is always highly diplomatic and not always an open process. As for the Freemasons, secrecy meant safety for the lives of its members before 1971 in certain circumstances, especially as the cause they were fighting for had been filled with setbacks and loss of lives. The nature of these two organizations
determines that their activities be kept close to their own members to achieve their goal.

The long history of the two organizations demonstrates the importance of the two within the Chinese community, especially during the early days of immigrant life in Canada, when it was marked by ordeals, sufferings, and institutional and societal prejudices. Therefore the records of the organizations are most valuable to their own members because of the unique Chinese ethnic connotation attached to them. Also this may account for why the organizations are most reluctant to part with their records. The records document the history of each organization. Naturally, they want to see the records close to the organization.

Both organizations stand aloof from government, as is demonstrated by the words of the chief officer of CBA:

we don't believe in depending on the government for subsidy, for quite often our position on many issues, like the immigration law, for instance, we think the government's approach is not correct, we would stand up, and we would make a statement, and oppose it. So we believe only when we are not financially dependent on them, we can be able to take that kind of independent position without the feel of cutting our grant or subsidy, whatever may be (310).

The fact that both also exist without having a paid bureaucracy contributes to the attitude they manage their own records for their own purposes.

All of the above factors were furthered by a high degree of identity awareness. Their political involvement demonstrates a strong identity within the ethnic group. The closed attitude towards their records is only one manifestation of preserving their group identity, to carry on its tradition and heritage, and to fight for the good of the ethnic group the organizations represent.
ii The "Open" Attitude Group

It is difficult to draw generalizations from one case. Most of SPOTA's records were generated in the progress of the project implementation. Project funding was from the government, although the pre- and post-project operations were entirely self-reliant. The size of the organization was small with two paid employees, and a large team of volunteers from the University of British Columbia (approximately 12). It existed for 23 years.

No factors seems to hinder the openness of its attitude. There is no great concern over confidentiality. The projects for which the organization was best known were funded by the government, as openly devoted to publicly established goals, in which SPOTA itself was instrumental. Neighbourhood groups like SPOTA tend to be very open and public spirited. Even before it ceased operation, it had donated records to a public archival institution. Now there is no one to be concerned about the records. Nevertheless, it is not unreasonable to surmise that organisations having close links with government to accomplish publicly accepted and funded goals will be very open to the idea of archival preservation. Often the organizations will have a limited lifespan, suggesting that archival institutions need make early contact to provide for acquisition before the organization ceases operation.

iii The "Fairly Open" Attitude Group

Within the fairly open attitude group, there are some common features. The nature of the two organizations is publicly oriented, with the purpose to promote interaction. CCC introduces
the traditional Chinese culture to members of its own ethnic group and to other ethnic groups, and to the larger community in Canada. SUCCESS provides services to the immigrants so that they can shorten the integration process, and contribute more effectively to society as a whole.

Another common feature of the two organizations is their time of existence, both being established in 1973. It is obvious that they were beneficiaries of the Canadian Multiculturalism policy established in 1971.

Further still, the two organizations are affiliated with the government as regards the funding. Though CCC receives little funding from the government for its daily operation, its land belongs to the government, which makes the personnel there aware of its relationship with government all the time. SUCCESS has received a considerable amount of money ever year since its establishment in 1973. In Canadian society, social policy ends are often achieved through such organizations as SUCCESS and CCC. Finally, because they are a kind of arms length agent of government, such organizations develop a considerable bureaucracy to conduct their affairs as opposed to volunteer organizations like CBA and FM.

The common features of these two organizations favour an open attitude towards records. Except for some sensitive records of a social welfare case kind, all the records can be shared with the public. Their ties with the government also make them less resistant to the idea of being accountable to the public through preservation of their records in archival institutions.
5) Summary

The following table presents the findings with regard to attitude, mission, affiliation with government, length of existence, and size.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Org.</th>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Mission</th>
<th>Affilia.</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBA</td>
<td>closed</td>
<td>political</td>
<td>weak</td>
<td>long</td>
<td>small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCC</td>
<td>f. o.</td>
<td>cultural</td>
<td>strong</td>
<td>short</td>
<td>consid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM</td>
<td>closed</td>
<td>political</td>
<td>weak</td>
<td>long</td>
<td>small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPOTA</td>
<td>open</td>
<td>project</td>
<td>strong</td>
<td>ephemeral</td>
<td>small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUCCESS</td>
<td>f. o.</td>
<td>social se.</td>
<td>strong</td>
<td>short</td>
<td>large(^{158})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are manifested among the five examined organizations three distributions of attitude: "closed", "fairly open", and "open". The contextual analysis of the above major findings has revealed some noticeable factors within the group holding the same attitude. Factors such as the nature of the mission of the organizations, affiliation with the government, and length of

\(^{158}\)Here are some operational definitions of the following concepts used in the chart.

**Affiliation:**
- weak=occasional funding from the government
- strong=regular funding from the government, or land property from the government

**Length:**
- short=less than 25 years
- long=over 80 years
- ephemeral=defunct now

**Size:**
- small=fewer than 3 paid employees
- considerable=more than 12 paid employees
- large=more than 40 paid employees

org. stands for organizations; f.o., for fairly open; consid., for considerable; social se., for social service; affilia. stands for affiliation.
existence of an organization seem to play an influencing role in
determining the difference of attitudes towards their archival
records within ethnic group organizations. The size of an
organization does not, for organizations with a small size
demonstrate both open (SPOTA), and closed (CBA, FM) attitudes.
CHAPTER FOUR:
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study reveals that persons working in organizations consider records to have primary value for the organization, and have often given little thought to their secondary value. Administrators commonly and reasonably take this attitude. Records are the product of administrative activity. They are not created for the purposes of recording history, but they can be used as sources of evidence and information about past actions and events. If the activities of persons and organizations in an ethnic group such as the Chinese community in Vancouver are to be accessible in the future for both continuing primary use and secondary use for historical and other purposes, some arrangements for their continued preservation and availability must be made. This study of five organizations acting in the Chinese community in Vancouver further reveals that several factors condition the openness of organizations to the idea of preservation for secondary use and the preference for a setting for preservation.

The question of openness to preservation in an archival institution devoted to facilitate secondary use is conditioned in the first instance by the openness of the organization to the idea of disseminating information about its activities. Public organizations are often required to make their archives accessible by law or regulation. Private organizations like those examined in this study do not have any legal requirement to preserve their archives for public purposes. However, the nature of the activities of the organization, its connection with public
authority, and its policies or habits with regard to access to the information in its records create the degree of openness to the question of archival preservation. This study suggests that some organizations are closed to the idea of archival preservation, some are only fairly open, and some are open.

The organizations holding a closed attitude tend to regard their records as being their "own business," that is, created for their own purposes and of no concern to outsiders. Ultimately, this attitude is an attitude towards access to information rather than towards the idea of archival preservation. Organizations in the closed category may preserve their archives very well for their own continuing administrative purposes, but they resist any suggestion of removing the records from their control. This study has found that these organizations regard their activities as being confidential or requiring an environment of confidentiality and even secrecy. This is the case for both the Freemasons and the Chinese Benevolent Association. The Freemasons are by tradition a secret society, whose activities are not paraded in public. It is concerned with the personal and spiritual welfare of members, and takes no regard of public interest in its activities. The Chinese Benevolent Association has often involved itself in political activities in both Canada and abroad which it regards as requiring a high degree of confidentiality. Neither organization receives much in the way of public funding, and feels no obligation to open its activities to public scrutiny on that account.

It is possible that these organizations could be convinced that their interests could be protected if their archives were preserved in an archival institution. For instance, it is within
the power of such institutions to place sensitive materials under certain kinds of restriction until the interest in confidentiality is no longer at issue. However, it was not the purpose of this project to convince organizations one way or another in this regard, but rather to discover their attitude towards disposition of their records and the factors conditioning that attitude. It is of course open to archivists to try to convince persons to overcome their secretive susceptibilities. Organizations in the closed category will obviously need more convincing than those in the other two categories, and for that reason their records hold lower potential for acquisition. Moreover, closed organizations do not show preference for any particular class of archival institution for obvious reason that they are closed to the idea of disposing of documents to any institution.

Organizations holding a fairly open attitude are willing to share the documents and information with the public. They are sympathetic to the idea of preserving records for secondary purposes, but resist the idea of keeping records themselves deliberately for historical purposes. They feel that institutions set up to serve secondary users are better served to that task. They are however concerned to have the records accessible to the organization. They therefore are likely to prefer some repository existing in the immediate community. The Chinese organizations in Vancouver holding a fairly open attitude have a clear preference for an archives in the ethnic community, if it were up to the standard of established public archival institutions. They believe that an institution in the ethnic community would better understand and appreciate the records, and be better situated to serve the
continuing interest in the records of members of the ethnic group.

Organizations in this category tend to cooperate in a less confidential environment than those in the closed category. They are more likely to provide overt services to the community, and have some sense of contributing directly to the public welfare of the community rather than to the pursuit of private or political ends. The potential for acquisition is actually quite high in these cases so long as the interest in maintaining the connection with the ethnic group and the creating organization is sustained.

Organizations open to disposition of their records adopt the firm position that it is important to preserve a record of their actions in the public domain. They are likely to be sympathetic to the notion of saving records for secondary, historical purposes, and may favour a public archival institution as the setting for preservation. The example of SPOTA is most striking in this regard. It has already deposited records in a public archival institution. The fact that the organization acted as an advocacy group for a neighbourhood of mixed Chinese and non-Chinese residents makes it less likely to prefer an institution with strong ethnic overtones. Those organizations which act in a wider sphere than strictly the ethnic one may well be more likely to take an open attitude and prefer a public archival institution setting.

One must be cautious about generalizing from this limited study. Still, it seems likely that organizations (and also probably persons in regard to their own personal archives) will fall along a scale from closed to open, and the factors conditioning their attitude to archival preservation will depend on the nature of their business, the degree of confidentiality in its
exercise, and the ends to which they are devoted. Some analysis of these matters will likely result in a rough assessment of the degree of openness to archival preservation, some indication of preference for setting of preservation, and allow archivist to predict the potential for acquisition or suggest just what the barriers are. Beyond that, knowing the degree of openness and preference for setting of preservation will guide archivist in developing strategies of acquisition. They will know what barriers to acquisition exist, which institution are best suited to pursue acquisition, and where most productively to place their energies, whether in careful cultivation of a more open attitude or more directly in efforts to reach acquisition agreements.

Interestingly, neither the size of the organization nor the degree to which it has in fact preserved records would seem to have as strong an influence on attitude towards disposition as these other factors. It is possible to have a closed attitude and still be strongly committed to preservation for the purposes of the organization, as in the case of CBA. Once again, this simply confirms the notion that records are not preserved by administrations for historical purposes, but rather only to serve the needs of the organization. At least, only the open category would appear to be amenable to the historical justification for preservation, and openness seems to be cultivated by factors other than concern for history. Nor is there any simple connection between length of existence and openness. Even long standing organizations may be closed to the idea. Recent organizations may be quite open. Or the opposite may be the case. It is other factors which rule.
More significantly, it may be supposed that these findings may be replicated for other ethnic groups in Canada. This is so because these three types of attitude, "closed", "fairly open", and "open", can be easily related to the process of acculturation experienced by all immigrants. This acculturation process is subject to two forces simultaneously, one force to assimilate, another to counterbalance the assimilation,¹⁵⁹ which is referred to as "ethnogenesis" by Yvonne R., and William G. Lockwood. "Ethnogenesis can be demonstrated in virtually any aspect of culture."¹⁶⁰ Stephen D. Glazier, a scholar in ethnic folklore, termed it "juxtaposition" of "syncretism" and "separation."¹⁶¹ This coexistence of the desire to assimilate and to remain separate has been found in various aspects of immigrants' life, in religion,¹⁶² in foodways,¹⁶³ and other customs. It may well be that the different attitudes discovered in this study illustrate the juxtaposition of "syncretism" and "separation", the open end of the scale reflecting dominance of assimilation tendencies and the


¹⁶²Ibid., 49-62.

closed end dominance of separateness. As such, the findings of this case study can have potential application to the attitude of all ethnic groups towards the final disposition of their archival records. If this can be established, the findings of this study may prove useful both for Canada and for all countries with substantial immigration.

All of the conclusions which can be drawn from this study are highly tentative. Further study is needed of more organizations to bear out these tentative findings. Future studies might also want to refine the view of the factors affecting attitudes taken in this study, particularly factors of organizational structure and procedure which came into view in some of the interviews. Studies of other ethnic groups would provide the basis for comparison across the range of Canadian ethnicity. It would also be interesting to see how persons react to preservation of their personal archives bearing on the ethnic experience.

Future studies of the persons and organizations making up an ethnic group, the kinds of archives they produce, their attitudes towards preservation, and their preferences as regards the best setting for preservation offer an opportunity for archivists to refute the allegation that they are unsympathetic to the question of preserving ethnic archives. Better actions in the field can then be hoped for. To that end and to complete this study, we may now turn to some recommendations to the archival community.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ARCHIVAL COMMUNITY

Based on the findings of this study, six recommendations for
the archival community are offered. Many more things could be recommended to make preservation of ethnic archives more likely to succeed, but they go beyond the scope of matters directly addressed in this thesis. The recommendations are:

A. That archivists take the time to approach organizations or persons to learn what they do, what their attitude towards preservation is, and to discuss feelings about the best setting

This recommendation is to pay due attention to the immediate records environment. Some extensive study to understand the history, purpose, and concerns of the organization must go before overt attempts to acquire records. Archivists will be able to develop more feasible acquisition strategy with knowledge from the investigation of the creators or owners situation. It will not only set the acquisition activity on the right track, but also facilitate the successful implementation of acquisition policies.

B. That the archival community respect the preference of ethnic group organizations in their disposition of archival records

This recommendation is in conformity with Book IV as regards the policy towards ethnic groups, which specifies that "Their members must always enjoy the right - a basic human one - to safeguard their languages and cultures." The ethnic groups' preferences in their disposal of archival records is a right for them to exercise. Subject to providing donors with all the information they will need to make an informed choice, members of

\[164\] Book IV, 1969, 14. s.31.
the archival community should respect the decisions of creators and owners of ethnic archives. By respecting preferences in this way, members of the archival community can foster better long term relations with ethnic groups.

C. That established archival institutions or professional organizations be concerned with the treatment of archival records preserved in the ethnic community

In the case where organizations choose to preserve their own records, the archival community should provide advice on record keeping to insure the best possible preservation of the records of ethnic experience. While respecting the right of ethnic organizations to keep their own records, the archival community should offer professional guidance about both current records administration and long term records keeping programs.

D. That archivists play a proactive role in acquiring archival records from ethnic groups

It is clear from this case study that archival institutions have rarely reached out into the Chinese community in Vancouver. More conscious efforts on the part of archivists will definitely promote the acquisition of archival records from all ethnic groups. Moreover, ethnic communities may well need special efforts of understanding. They may feel remote from existing archival constitutions, or think they only serve the mainstream culture. Archivists need to reach out and understand potential donors and their immediate environment, and work from there.
E. That public archival institutions be prepared to accommodate ethnic archives

This case study also bears out that ethnic groups tend to have a strong desire to keep their archival records in the community in which they were generated. However, the ethnic groups themselves by their very nature will probably rarely establish archival programs. This study demonstrates that the majority of ethnic group organizations are willing to deposit their records in a public archival institution, in the absence of a proper one in their own community. Therefore it is imperative for public archival institutions to accommodate their records. This preparation will ensure the preservation of the entire history of Canada, which will benefit not only the society at large, but also the ethnic group community itself, taking into consideration that records of ethnic organizations are deteriorating, and are often destroyed without consideration of their enduring value.

G. That public archival institutions make access to ethnic archives they acquire a priority

This study reveals a high degree of concern about post-deposit access to their own records among the organizations. Therefore, the proper attention to this aspect will not only free the organization of this worry, but also enhance the trust in public archival institutions from the ethnic group organizations, which in turn will facilitate the acquisition of archival records from ethnic communities.

* * * * *
Clearly, preservation of ethnic archives is justified on several grounds. It is consistent with the overall archival goal to preserve records of aspects of human activity. It is imperative in a country officially committed to promote multiculturalism, because it provides the means for ethnic groups to recover memory of their historical experience and identify their contribution to society. It also leaves a record of that experience for all others to use and learn from.

It is also clear that organizations and groups acting in ethnic communities may be remote from the mainstream of archival preservation. Special efforts are needed to reach out to members of ethnic groups to overcome the various obstacles uncovered in this thesis. Above all, as in many other areas, archival institutions need to develop a dedicated policy in this area, and work diligently with members of ethnic groups to cultivate understanding and sympathetic settings for preservation and access to ethnic archives.

One question which has not been addressed in this study is worth touching on as a final comment. It might be asked what kind of archivist should act in this sphere. Does the archivist have to be part of ethnic group targeted for acquisition activity? Are the cultural circumstances such that specialists in each ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and religious group are needed to do the job? This would be impractical, and counterproductive. Such a solution suggests that archivists can only act in realms from which they come directly. However, there is no escape from the need to understand the culture and circumstances of every realm the archivist approaches. You do not need to be a member of an ethnic
group to understand it and work with it, as this thesis has shown. In fact, it is important to see ethnic groups in the larger societal context, as this thesis has also tried to show, so that they can be brought in from the cold of neglect and misunderstanding to occupy their rightful place in a rounded documentary heritage.
A Guide to Non-Administrative Records, Personal Papers and Canadian Manuscripts in the University of Victoria Archives/Special Collections. Victoria: University of Victoria Archives.


Brochure on the Chinese Community History Room.


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SUCCESS Information Brochure.


APPENDIX

Questionnaire

1. When was your organization established?
2. What is its purpose, what does it exist to do?
3. Who are its members?
4. How many employees does the organization have? Full-time? Part-time?
5. What are your main program or activities?
6. Do you receive regular funding from the government? [If yes, the range of the funding from the government per year.]
7. Where do you keep the records of the organization?
8. Who is responsible for the records?
9. How far back do your records go? To the beginning?
10. Does government, or any law, require the retention of any records of your organization for a certain period of time? If yes, what kind of records, for how long?
11. Have you ever gone back to some old records? If yes, how easy/difficult is it for you to find them?
12. Do you regularly dispose of older records you no longer need? (if yes), how do you do it?
13. Have you ever deposited any documents of any kind of your organization in a library, museum, or archives? If so, which institution, and which kind of records? Why chose the institution?
14. Do you think that your organization has made a significant contribution to the development of the Chinese community? In what way?
15. Do you think that there should be some permanent records of your organization? What form do you think it should take?
16. Has your organization ever considered depositing seldom used records with some repository? Which ones have you considered? If not, why?
17. Do you know about Vancouver City Archives? Chinese Community History Room? Provincial Archives? National Archives? University Archives? Any other institutions?

18. Which do you think would be the best place for preserving your organization's records? Why?