Articulation and Game Playing of the ICH Discourses in Folk Culture Field

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Abstract: It has been over ten years since the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) protection movement was launched in China. During this period, a unique discourse system has been established. The three parties of the state, market and academic circles have respectively created administrative, industrial and knowledge discourses about the ICH. First, the representation of folk culture was incorporated into both the ICH protection system with list as the core and the cultural reconstruction strategy in the transition period, subsequently into national narrative through implementation of policies and administration by the government. Second, market operations have transformed heritage resources into cultural capital to boost the culture sector and tourism, and thus reinvigorate folk culture and brought about qualitative changes. Third, academics have made ICH discourses integrated with multidiscipline and extend academic discourse from universities and research institutions to the public sphere and cultural practice. The formation of the above discourse types reflects the articulation and game playing of ICH discourses in the folk culture field, and therefore they combine to form an ideal way to approach the cultural transformation and cultural politics of contemporary China.

Keywords: Intangible Cultural Heritage; discourse; folk culture; transformation

Over the past decade, the proceedings of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) protection movement in China has brought about an unprecedented change and turned a spotlight on the originally marginalized folk culture. Multiple parties are involved in this ICH fever. Under such circumstances, the folk culture field of China has become an ideal way to approach the cultural transformation and cultural politics of contemporary China. Perhaps nothing can demonstrate the intertwined relationships among power, ideology, capital and knowledge production behind the upgrading of "folk culture" to "ICH" better than "discourse." Starting

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from ICH discourse and based on synchronic dimension, this paper attempts to examine the corresponding administrative, industrial and knowledge discourses of the state, market and academic circles (Xuan, 2014)[①]. It first explores how the Chinese government, through cultural policies and administrative systems, has included folk culture into an ICH list-based "ICH protection system" and a cultural reconstruction project during the transitional period to include it into our national narrative. Second, it also examines how market operations have transformed heritage resources into cultural capital to boost the culture sector and tourism and thus to reinvigorate folk culture and bring about qualitative changes. Third, it unveils how academic elite have made ICH discourses integrated with multi-disouse and extend academic discourse from universities and research institutions to the public sphere and cultural practice. By analyzing the articulation and game playing of ICH discourses in folk culture field (Zhou, 2010)[②], this paper aims to promote a rational reflection of the ICH campaign and the healthy development of folk culture.

1. The administrative discourse of intangible cultural heritage

1.1 The national narrative and cultural policy in the context of cultural reconstruction

China's ICH protection should be understood in the context of cultural reconstruction, which in turn should be understood with fair consideration to China's modernization in the current world.

At the state level, since the 16th CPC National Congress, a series of strategies and plans have been introduced, including the cultural system reform, soft power development strategy and national cultural development strategy. This indicates the Communist Party of China, as the ruling party, has an increasingly clear understanding and an explicit view of the importance of cultural development. At the 18th CPC National Congress, the timely proposed Chinese Dream further set the tone and specified the route for cultural development. Since then, how to retell and shape the recognition of "China" has been a much-talked-about cultural and political issue (He, 2012).

The appropriate introduction of Intangible Cultural Heritage creates an opportunity for China to develop systems of concepts, discourses and knowledge, and rediscover its tradition and use it to establish universally recognized values. Regarding how to ensure cultural continuation, some scholars exhibit a preference to grand narration. For example, as Xiao Fang (2016) pointed out, "The understanding and evaluation of ICH rescue and protection should be based on a thorough analysis of mast recent 100-year proceedings of Chinese culture and philosophy". A similar view has been expressed by Ma Guoqing, who concluded the Chinese folk culture's deconstruction & reconstruction, subsequent formation of a socialism-based cultural tradition, and the inclusion into the national discourse system as ICH throughout the recent 100-year development process of Chinese society (Ma & Zhu, 2014). It is fair to say that such narration represents a tendency among scholars to integrate ICH formulation into the construction of the national narrative and ideology and draw support from strong national discourse power to ensure the legitimization of ICH. This is the national condition that has quickly fostered a state-level ICH campaign with extensive engagement.

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① Given the "cultural aphasia" facing the entire public discourse in the folk culture field, this paper replaces the term "ICH cultural discourse" with "ICH knowledge discourse" to highlight relevant scholars' construction in this ICH campaign.
② The term "articulation" was first proposed by Post–Marxist Ernesto Laclau and was elaborated by Stuart Hall. In its literal sense, "articulation" means "a joint or connection that allows movement" and it refers to the expression of an idea or a feeling in words.

The introduction of ICH discourse from abroad has delivered a significant impact on Chinese society. First, it shifts the focus of cultural values from elite culture to folk culture. Second, it gradually plays down the ideology that cultural policy carries by transforming its revolution orientation to protection orientation. Third, it helps to shape a three-dimensional cultural development strategy covering cultural sectors at all levels (Zhou, 2011, p. 350).

More specifically, ICH-related policies mainly concern two aspects. The first is about cultural programs and industries that concern cultural heritage protection. At the 16th CPC National Congress, policymakers proposed to divide cultural development into cultural programs and cultural industries. Since then, this has been reiterated in a series of major national strategic plans and annual reports on the work of the government. Thus, cultural development, centering on public cultural programs and a profit-oriented cultural industry, has increased its presence in China's overall strategic framework. And the social benefits of cultural development obtain a more important position than the economic benefits that the cultural industry generates. Cultural heritage is placed in the category of cultural programs and overlaps with the cultural industry, for which its importance is increasingly highlighted in the national cultural policy.

The second aspect is about macro-policies that involves ICH and concerns national transformation and transition. Examples of such macro-policies are the China Western Development strategy, which attaches equal importance to the regional development of eastern and western China; the New Socialist Countryside program and the urbanization strategy, which keep in mind economic and social development in both urban and rural China. They all concern the vital interests and development prospects of folk culture and therefore arouse extensive attention among cultural scholars,

particularly folklorists. Scholars in many other areas tend to focus on economics and politics. Different from them, cultural scholars proactively think about the fate of the vulnerable folk cultures and ethnic minority cultures in the context of modernization and globalization.

Therefore, ICH protection is inevitably influenced by China's cultural policy and cultural heritage administration. Its localization is bound to involve a variety of real social issues, which test the Chinese government's decision-making and executive capacities when it acts on international conventions and carries out community-level missions.

1.2 ICH list-based mechanism and heritagization declaration in the building of the ICH protection system

Drawing on the experience of previous success in tangible cultural heritage and relic protection, the Chinese government wastes no time in responding to the international ICH protection campaign. Governments at all levels attach great importance to this, extensively mobilizing the general public, and improving relevant organizations, laws & regulations, protection mechanisms, etc. to gradually develop an ICH protection mechanism that is in line with China's national conditions.

At the core of this system is the ICH list-based system. Also, what's worth paying special attention to is the "heritagization" issue included in the system. This list-based system regards "selectivity" as its structural component and is based on cultural heritage-related "value judgments" held by different social organizations (Qian, 2013, pp. 211-213). This list-based system also artificially segments sound and complete cultural phenomena into the categories of heritage and non-heritage. When a folk cultural phenomenon enters the process of ICH declaration and state examination & approval as an "item", it needs to complete the internal conversion of multiple key factors such as scope of meaning (naming),

relationship pattern, formulation framework, subject rights & interests and subject scope before it can be officially identified as a piece of cultural heritage. The upgrading of cultural heritage at the small local community level to a big shared community level means a complicated integral process in which value particularity is generalized to universality; value diversity is transformed to representativeness; "value-in-itself" is replaced by legality; value differentiation is evolved to exclusion of rights and interests; value identity is translated to ethnic integration (Li, 2008).

The understanding of cultural heritage varies among different subjects, giving rise to numerous conflicts in cultural heritage applications. First, there is a contradiction between the "internal value" held by the "cultural owner" as an "insider" and the "external value" held by the "outsider" and universally accepted by society (Liu, 2011). According to relevant conventions, the subjects of ICH should be creators and inheritors from the masses. In real practice, however, the reported "ICH protectors" on cultural heritage applications are usually administrative subjects such as government authorities, scientific research institutions, universities and enterprises. Besides, it is government officials and scholars that have the final say in declaration approval and value identification. There are times that local cultures are embellished to reach certain external standards and a higher cultural heritage level.

Second, there is a contradiction between contemporary and historical perspectives of cultural heritage values. On the one hand, folk cultural phenomenon needs the legitimacy based on "cultural heritage knowledge and practice in modern society." On the other hand, cultural heritage protection practically targets the "continued vitality" of the manifestation of traditional culture (Li & Liu, 2012). As a result, these contradictions have given rise to improper replacement of traditional standards with contemporary standards.

Third, there is also a conflict between cultural heritage's integral pattern and value duality. Today, the biggest challenge facing the recommendation and selection of items on the ICH list still lies in folk belief-related area. The ideology behind cultural heritage places its values under the scrutiny of a superstitious framework and judges it in accordance with the principle of "taking the essence and discarding the dross." Dynamic folk culture itself is an integral existence. Given that, adherence to the established dichotomous "essence-dross" approach to cultural heritage values will inevitably damage the original ICH features.

The abovementioned contradictions, which revolve around the value assessment of the cultural heritage list, root in cultural heritage's value, ownership and right of speech. This requires us to pay attention to the non-discourse level from the discourse level for studying. In other words, it needs to go beyond knowledge acquisition to the core of power operation. The modern knowledge of cultural heritage, shaped by UNESCO's *Convention for Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, is also a power framework and a worldwide "game." Once an entity participates in this game, it must follow a corresponding set of knowledge and discipline of power (Li & Liu, 2012). This results in "hierarchy" among cultures on the list. Going against the concept of cultural diversity, the real practice has formed "cultural uniformity." Cultural heritage list's "territorial style-specification" has triggered a range of conflicts and disputes among neighboring countries and states in cross-border cultural communications (Iwamoto, 2014).Within the same cultural system, the state power can realize institutional "logging" and organizational "integration" and control folk ideology (Tatsuhiko, 2010). The ICH standards, which are set by the cultural heritage list, facilitate the game of power over a cultural phenomena's subject, formulation

and profit sharing among different ethnic groups or within the same ethnic group and thus enable the establishment of a new relationship system (Li, 2008).

2. ICH industrial discourses

2.1 Cultural heritage capitalization and productive protection in the cultural industry

The two trends of thought, "intangible cultural heritage" and "cultural industry" were introduced almost simultaneously to China at the beginning of the 21st century. The former indicates an approach to the revival of traditional Chinese culture since the 1990s; while the latter creates an opportunity for China's much anticipated economic reform (Wei, 2010). In China, the concept of "cultural industry" was officially proposed in 2001 in the 10th Five-year Plan, which marked the first time ever that the development of the cultural industry was included in the planning of national economic and social development. Internationally, UNESCO's *Convention on the Protection* and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions issued in 2005 highlights the strategic significance of culture in the economic sphere from the perspective of international law.

Thanks to the then economic boom both at home and abroad, the cultural industry unswervingly galloped ahead, interacting well with the vigorous ICH protection campaign. With inherent resource value, intangible cultural heritage immediately became a target of the cultural industry. Through industrial development and a market approach, ICH resources were capitalized, having their own values upgraded and interaction space extended. The concept of "cultural capital" was proposed by famous French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, who extended the notions of capital and economic interests to the areas of semiotics, culture, and many other intangible activities.

Due to cultural capital's value-added effect, local governments, which are driven by work performance and economic interests, are enthusiastic about the industrial development of intangible cultural heritage. On the one hand, listed folk culture items, with great influence and popularity, are likely to generate more economic benefits and therefore become the targets of industrial development. On the other hand, folk culture items which have experienced tourism and cultural development are believed to be of more protection value and therefore are prone to be included in the ICH declaration by local governments. By contrast, folk cultures failing to be included in the ICH list or generate satisfactory revenue can barely attract any attention. They can only expect to rely on their own to survive or go extinct.

Revolving around commercialization and industrialization, there have been two different routes, with one being conservative and the other aggressive. In practice, the conservative route is faced with such challenges as excessive investments and static protection while the aggressive route pays undue attention to ICH's economic value, which goes against the UN's tenet of cultural heritage protection. In such a context, a compromised route, i.e. "productive protection", has emerged (Song & Wang, 2013, pp. 145-146).

Upon introduction, the concept of "productive protection" immediately fueled the "industrial development" of ICH and triggered debates. Most scholars hold a positive attitude towards the development of the cultural industry. They are just somewhat worried about the over-development of the ICH sector. Through contrastive analysis of the "cultural industry" and "cultural industrialization," Feng Jicai (2014) points out the damages that profit-seeking commercial activities can bring to culture (p.54). For example, cultural heritage items failing to enter the market may be set aside; ethnic minority languages and folk cultures (folk epics, legends,

stories, ballads, etc.) are the ICH items that disappear most quickly. Unlike assembly-line work, ICH's productive protection also concerns the inheritance and safeguarding of the ICH spirit. It is precisely the core skills and values of ICH items that such productive protection strives to retain.

In the real practice of productive protection, some scholars have taken the initiative to explore theoretical routes for the resource transformation of numerous ICH items in rural China, calling for a combination of the "rural craftsmanship" paradigm with the "design industry" paradigm. The former paradigm targets eco-friendly settlement development while the latter paradigm concentrates traditional cultural elements and spirit (Pan, 2014). In urban China ICH's productive protection exhibits dynamics and trends different from those in rural China. Regarding this, some scholars examine the positive interactions between cultural heritage protection and commercial development of the cultural industry, and explore how the inheritors draw on the support of modern media and the creative industry to transform their "physical capital" such as knowledge, techniques and skills to "symbolic capital" (You, 2015). In short, both productive protection and industrial development should be community-based and sustainable living-oriented (Xing, 2006, p. 222).

2.2 Local heritage tourism and cultural performance

Heritage tourism now enjoys enormous popularity, for it satisfies people's needs for nostalgia and consumption and also arouses tourists' interests in experiencing "otherness" and "exotic culture." For ICH protection, heritage tourism offers a perspective of the cultural industry and an opportunity for real practice. In addition to its industrial protection of folk arts and crafts (crafts category), it is also conducive to the inheritance and continuation of folk literary heritage and folk custom heritage.

As a continuation of the ICH item declaration process, heritage tourism, through "de-contextualization" and "re-contextualization," re-encodes region-specific culture. In this sense, ICH tourism can also be deemed a type of "cultural performance." At present, common types of cultural performance include individual narrative-dominated folk literature and public display-featured folk custom heritage. Performance theories can help interpret the entire complexity of ICH negotiations and interaction at the local level.

In this regard, one thing that cannot be overlooked is the attendant phenomenon of the so-called "folklorism". According to some scholars, such an attendant phenomenon represents "a folk custom that has been detached from its original context and transformed or even invented to serve a particular purposes" (Bendix, 2006, p. 859).This concept, having long been out of date, suddenly becomes a much-talked about topic in the academic circles of China with the emergence of ICH development.

Perhaps it is better to regard heritage tourism as a phenomenon and process of folklorism, interpret it from the perspective of performance theories, and include multiple relevant subjects in an examination process (Wang, 2014). In this regard, some cases of ethnography are adopted to demonstrate heritage tourism's dynamic complexity and new ideas of ICH inheritance and innovation.

First, in response to the already changed traditional academic views, heritage tourism offers a brand-new interpretation of "context-based folk culture" (Liu, 2009). For example, Yang Lihui, a folklore scholar, focused on tour guide scripts and narrations and studied the integrated application and retelling of Nv Wa's myth at the Wa Huang Palace in She county, Hebei province. Yang's study vividly displayed the mythicism in the context of heritage tourism and highlighted four major changes, namely, the organic integration of the oral tradition with the written tradition, scenario and

Wa Huang Palace

tourists-centered narrations, myth systematization and myth localization (Yang, 2014). Consequently, it is necessary to forge a lasting link between the eye-catching public cultural performances and those spontaneously initiated (unplanned) optional performances. This is a folklorist phenomenon that requires our full attention (Bauman, 2008, p. 33).

Second, the listed ICH items benefit back to where they are from and promote the development of local economies and cultures. ICH tourism enables region-specific examinations of power relations, visibly or invisibly indicates the presence of state power, and demonstrates multi-part narratives. In other words, it highlights multilevel nationality, locality and identification. Another scholar Li Jing (2014) studied the tourism development of the Dai people's New Year celebrated in Jinghong, Xishuangbanna, Yunnan province. In addition to

local government's preservation of its ritual function, Li also highlighted their reliance on the tourism economy and local development to re-integrate localized narrations. Beginning with cultural change, Li's case study explored local festival space among the Dai people, Han people, as well as cross-border Mekong geo-cultural and religious circles and unveiled a dynamic process of multi-discourse, power flow and operation actively facilitated by multicultural subjects.

Third, ICH tourism, being a "double-edged sword," is faced with a range of challenges, such as the safeguarding of traditional local lifestyles, the protection and development of ICH items, and cultural recognition & consumption. Given that, relevant parties need to transform their concept from "cultural commodity" to "tourism culture" (Li, 2014). Another scholar Zhang Qiaoyun carried

out a field investigation concerning the post-2008 Wenchuan Earthquake-themed tourism and ICH tourism at the Qiang people's Aba village, Sichuan province. Through this investigation, Zhang (2014) discovered that the "development replication" was detached from local reality and that the "inconsistent" reconstruction reduced this ethnic village to an "official exhibit" and an "imagined Qiang ethnic scenic area" targeting tourist consumption. The disputes over whether the "sacredness" can be separated from the "performance" in the Qiang people's unique "Shibi" culture compelled the author to explore a development path that could attach equal importance to heritage tourism and folk traditions.

The abovementioned cases of ethnography provide current scholars with valuable theoretic and practical references. Still, more attention should have been paid to the discourse practices of local people. In cultural heritage tourism, local people, in the face of the strong intervention of external capital and power, have no dominance or power of speech over their own culture. Relevant parties compete for more benefits, bringing about many more contradictions to local society. For example, at the material level, there is a contradiction between "public" and "private" cultural heritage. At the social network level, there is a contradiction between "acquaintance society" and "stranger society." At the spiritual level, there is a contradiction between the "subject" and "object" (Zhou & Shi, 2011). These contradictions are all worth academic attention in cultural heritage studies. After all, human feelings, verbal expressions and behavioral patterns are what deserve our attention most during the process of social changes.

3. ICH knowledge discourse

3.1 Modern knowledge types and ICH canonization routes

The formation of ICH discourse systems is a process of transition from "life-world" to "modern knowledge type". ICH is in the transformation from the unitary expression of "culture owner" to the multiple expression of "cultural other", and from traditional expression to modern expression. Moreover, drawing on the support from many scholars, it is exploring a canonization route for IHC protection, inheritance and innovation.

"Knowledge type" is a concept proposed by French philosopher Foucault and indicates the rules and relevance of knowledge production from a perspective of discourse practice. According to the modern disciplinary paradigm, ICH research objects must be rationally described and sorted and must undergo the examination of the "conventional paradigm" before they can enter the knowledge field. This results in a life-world experienced by actual human beings and the abstract world explained by theories. The two "worlds" are incommensurable in knowledge type (Wang, 2011).

Therefore, ICH knowledge production inevitably experiences a "transformation of traditional expression to modern expression." However, the process of such a transformation is bound to be accompanied with a range of challenges and contradictions. First, traditional expression, when confronted with a changed time-space context and a modern lifestyle, no longer applies. Second, relevant scholars, being the "cultural other," have limitations in ICH recording and interpretation, which may lead to a crisis of expression. Third, foreign subjects' involvement means multi-subjects intervention in traditional unitary expression. Fourth, newly emerged communication media and high-tech expression tools can overcome and transcend previous expression limitations but at the same time have their profound problems (Lin, 2010).

It is precisely in the context of traditional expression's transition to modern expression that the ICH canonization issue was proposed (Lin,

2014). The ICH canonization demonstrates the joint efforts of the state authority and the elite class in re-establishing and regulating national cultural order through folk culture value ratings. "Canonization" refers to the formation of a classic item, which includes key factors such as "who decides, what is to be decided and what standard is to be adopted."

First, Intangible Cultural Heritage itself is an outcome of "value re-evaluation." In China, drastic social transformation has destroyed its traditional world outlook and values. Under such circumstances, the introduction of UNESCO's new ICH concept and discourse virtually helps to screen and upgrade the abundant peripheral folk cultures in the established life-world. Only when their local values are upgraded to universal values shared by all human beings can those folk cultures be identified as ICH. The ICH value judgment includes multiple indicators (qualitative assessment, quantity assessment, rating, etc.) (Yuan & Gu, 2009, pp.36-47), thus giving rise to modern knowledge-type canonization, which is a process between the identification of folk culture's "inherent value" and artificial "ICH value."

Second, ICH canonization cannot be possible without the operation of ideology and cultural power. In nature, ICH canonization is a process of hierarchization and standardization. The Chinese government gave legal and institutional protection to ICH items by introducing *Intangible Cultural Heritage Law of the People's Republic of China* and establishing the "ICH protection system." It also ensures the legitimate status of folklore studies, ICH studies and other relevant disciplines in the national system of education and scientific research by means of disciplinary establishment. Through media promotion, it creates a favorable public opinion environment to expand ICH influence at the same time, it introduces the Chinese ICH items to the rest of the world and allows them to represent the positive image of China via external communications and cultural exhibitions& performances. Such peripheral supports pave the way for ICH canonization. The clearance and review of the "list-based system" and "representative inheritors" is an inevitable process for canonization.

Third, the process of ICH canonization surely incorporates its reverse side, i.e. "de-canonization," or rather "popularization" or "secularization." Beyond the range of "classic ICH items" lie many "non-classic ICH items," which form a cradle for the former. The classic and non-classic ICH items combine to form the entire folk culture, which once had no value distinction. In fact, canonization reflects an elite mindset. Elite cultural classics were created by individuals and therefore are individualist works; while ICH classics, which were created and inherited by the masses, will continue to be passed down and accepted among the masses (Lin, 2014). The famous "Homeric Question" (concerning the doubts and consequent debate over the identity of Homer) is a good demonstration of how to look on ICH canonization, which is different from the elite culture.

In contemporary society, mass culture is flourishing; scientific technology produces rapid development; communication media keep changing. Accordingly, the context of IHC inheritance also makes constant adjustments and its canonization is faced with many more challenges. Following the development of a consumer culture, urban culture and youth subculture, some academic folklorists attempted to draw on the experience of new media forms (animation, TV series, movie, computer games, online folk piece, etc.) to explore how to leverage the market means of mass culture to enhance the enormous vigor of ICH classics and generate strategies and approaches to the reconstruction of traditions (Yang, 2014). It must be pointed out that just like elite cultural classics. ICH classics also

require a process of endless re-interpretation, re-explanation and re-construction.

3.2 Discipline integration and a reflective return to practice

As an integrative concept, the proposal of ICH proves to be an innovative move and forges a new area of social practice and academic activities (Gao, 2008, pp. 52-53). On the one hand, ICH-related opportunities enable traditional humanities and social sciences to move from the margins towards the center and from desk research towards field investigations so as to satisfy real-life needs and boost the development of applied research. However, those disciplines are unavoidably faced with tasks of academic reflection and disciplinary orientation to address coming risks and challenges under new circumstances. On the other hand, some universities and research institutions, by virtue of the sound and complete structure of the international cultural heritage system, successively put the launch of heritage studies on the agenda to echo the practice of cultural heritage protection in China.

The ICH-centered discipline integration is both a game process to allow relevant disciplines to have more say and a dynamic process in which knowledge production is involved in social practice. In this gigantic ICH campaign, the two roles of folk culture, i.e. "a social movement and an academic discipline" are closely intertwined (Chen, 2006). There are scholars worried about the positioning of academic studies in current politics and the feasibility of "public folklore studies" in China. This

China ICH Park in Hefei Province

prompts relevant disciplines to rethink knowledge practices in a reflective way. Seizing this rare chance, many scholars introduced "public folklore", a discipline prevailing in the USA, to China, hoping to provide references to Chinese folklore studies. In the real practice of ICH protection, however, these "public folklore studies" in China may always find themselves in awkward situations. For example, there is a chaotic overlap between professional classifications and academic classifications in this regard, and a contradiction between the ICH-related national policy evaluation system and the academic evaluation system of folklore studies. Given the pervasiveness of profit-driven pragmatic behaviors, excessive interferences in public life, as well as distractions from regular academic research in this ICH campaign, many scholars worry that the rising tide of this ICH campaign will quickly ebb and leave folklore studies no room to survive and develop (Shi, 2009). According to scholar Zhou Xing (2012), academic research in China today does not enjoy full independence and is prone to be affected by political factors. Therefore, it is better not to give "public folklore" independent discipline status. Rather, public folklore is expected to perform much better as an academic extension of folklore studies. This requires exploring the practicalness of folklore studies and calling for "folklore's return to practice in the ICH era" (Hu, 2015).

However, this return should first of all be based on a thorough disciplinary reflection to gain constructive significance. According to Pierre Bourdieu, the acquisition of a general science of all human practices (including knowledge practice) can only be possible with a reflective return to scientific practice. To transform knowledge practice from professional ideology to science, the only possible approach is to reflectively study human attempts to objectify the social world (Swartz, 2006, p. 304).

Folklore practice in the ICH era includes both the masses' life practice and scholars' knowledge practice. The aforementioned aspects (i.e. Chinese-style "public folklore" practice, relevant scholars' maintenance of clear ontologic perception against the ICH campaign's negative influence, relevant scholars' reflection of the articulation and game in the folk culture field, the UNESCO's newly adopted *Ethical Principles for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage*, etc.) should all be attributed to scholars' consciousness of knowledge practice. The "absence" and "aphasia" of cultural subjects and inheritors at the grassroots level highlights the pressing concern for the masses' life practice. During this process, it is imperative for scholars with vision to become involved and advance knowledge practice. At the same time, they should take the initiative to "represent folk life, voice general public concerns, identify subjective intentions, and fulfill the obligation of intellectual practice" (Hu, 2015).

4. Conclusion

The above analysis of the ICH's administrative, industrial and knowledge discourses demonstrates how parties concerned, i.e. the state, market and academic circles conduct discourse articulation and game for their own benefits during their involvement in the folk culture field. Therefore, it is necessary to reflect on the problems and drawbacks concerning ICH realization, capitalization and canonization and empower the masses with the full power of speech so as to facilitate the diversification and democratization of the ICH discourse practice.

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