

Confidential

Ottawa, August 16th, 1957.

Dr. Jacques Rousseau,
Director, Canadian Museum of Human History
(National Museum of Canada),
Ottawa, Ont.

Dear Dr. Rousseau:

I have just read Mr. Duff's letter of August 12th, about the Tsimsyan project, and I hasten to give you the opinion which you desire concerning it.

Without hesitation and with great emphasis, I support his proposal, subject to a few precisions. For a long time, as you know, I have tried, without success so far, to get an assistant who would become acquainted with my North Pacific Coast materials, especially Tsimsuan, in order to help in making them available and publish them. The Nina Epton project on secret societies and the potlatch which you are endeavouring to bring about is in line with this development, and I am giving my entire support to it.

Mr. Duff's qualifications for this project are first class, and I agree that it would be an inspiration to work with him. We would soon adjust our views and ways about the vast materials which in most part now lie dormant in my files. The Tsimsyan project has been my chief contribution to research in Canada, and it has an important bearing on recent Siberian migrations in the North West.

I beg of you to give your entire practical support to the Duff project, covering a year's of his time at the Museum.

The precisions I have to introduce at this point are of minor importance, and will take care of themselves in due time. The work to be done would be in collaboration, as long as I can be of service. Due credit to each would have to be given to each according to his contribution.

I have not ceased to be interested in Tsimsyan on North Pacific Coast, far from it. But Mr. Duff is not acquainted with my monographs and books which are now at the publishers and at our Editor's office. These are: Haida carvers in argilite, now ready to appear as a museum publication; Medicine-Man on the Pacific Coast; Tsimsyan Myths illustrated; Slavic Cultural Influence on the North Pacific Coast - all these at our Editor's and ready for publication; also Pathfinders in the North Pacific, to appear next spring at the Caxton Printers, in the United States and at the Ryerson Press. The plan for next winter is to work on my most important Pacific Coast monograph called "Recent Siberian Migrations on the North Pacific Coast - Part I - The Thunderbird and the Raven Clans. And I intend to collaborate with Nina Epton on the subject of Secret Societies and the potlatch.

Another point to rectify is as to how available my field materials in my files now are to outsiders. No doubt my guidance and initial assistance is needed. But the files are in good shape and in order. There is very little in shorthand in this bulky file, covering two or three drawers of a filing cabinet. Some of it (on songs) has already been published and is being transcribed into manuscript by Mrs. Darling, and her assistance is being continued. The bulk is in English and in Tsimsyan, carefully written and annotated. So there should be no real problem here.

And Mr. Duff is right in laying emphasis on the urgency of this enterprise. No time should be lost. And I hope no technical difficulty will stand in the way.

Yours sincerely,

Marius Barbeau

Marius Barbeau.

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To Wilson Duff
My best wishes for your success
Marius Barbeau

Ottawa, November 26th, 1957

Marius Barbeau

Wilson Duff

I wish to recommend the application of Mr. Duff for a Guggenheim grant, to enable him to pursue his research on North Pacific Coast ethnology and art, here at the National Museum in collaboration with me.

First, regarding Mr. Duff's personality and accomplishments, I would say that I know rather little about him, except through his publications in the series of the Provincial Museum, B.C. - and they are scholarly - and a short visit here last year. He seems to be a conscientious and able man, with a keen spirit of first-hand research in his own province. He is also interested in the historical and cultural problems involved, as is shown in his statement.

I consider Mr. Duff a serious student of the young generation, and I need not elaborate upon his project. But I wish to say that I concur with his view that my Tsimsyan and North Pacific Coast materials should be made accessible to him while he stays here for a prolonged period, on leave from his Provincial Museum. Should my files remain as they are, unexplored by a member of his generation, they would prove difficult of access and understanding, therefore partly lost, as the hieroglyphs used to be.

We have sought previously here to get a young American ethnologist from Columbia University to undertake this work of collaboration with me, but without success so far. Mr. Duff comes along at the right moment, and I strongly desire to support his case and to promise my utmost care and help to him, should he be a successful applicant with your Foundation.

Yours sincerely,

M. B.