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## REIMAGINING THE ARCHIVE. Remapping and Remixing Traditional Models in the Digital Era.

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MEMORY SYSTEM : A CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL SOLUTION CONSIDERING AUDIOVISUAL ARCHIVES IN A DIGITAL ERA. CASE STUDIES AT INA AND RADIO-CANADA

# 01

Research issues: tension between audiovisual digital archival  
process and memory process

# What is an audiovisual digital archival process?

## Constitution of a heritage

Informational items of today become the traces of tomorrow which provide the raw material for the building of a memory and the construction of history.

- The cultural and historical values of television and radio programs are recently acquired
- Necessary transformation of the trace caused by digital archival process.
  - Trace only become an archive document when it's enriched within a process.

## New technological era

Digital impact has important consequences on archival practices.

- Advantage : digital improves professional practices
  - Increased possibilities and capacities of storage
  - Important access to audiovisual archives whose access has been particularly restricted for a long time
- Disadvantage : if digital brings solutions, it also raises problem
  - Digital tools and environments obsolescence
  - Permanent reinvention of the ressource
  - Gap between the stored ressource and the consulted one

# What is an audiovisual digital archival process?

## Specific characteristics of the digital audiovisual archive document

### Materiality as guarantee of robustness and stability

- With the digital, the object is dematerialized : content is no longer dependant to a physical support and the binary code is systematically replayed. The digital audiovisual archive document is permanently reinvented

### Digital audiovisual document archive is dependant to a reading machine

- Without this assistance this kind of ressource is unintelligible and so unusable

Composed of image and sound, digital audiovisual document archive is characterised by the requirements of the interpretation of its content.

- Visual signs show without specify what they show (Bachimont)
- Digital audiovisual document archive is systematically combined with written signs to make sens (Turner)

### Archive status of the digital audiovisual document archive is sanctioned by external intervention

- This object gets into a past event or past activity trace as soon as it's integrated in an archival documentary process
- This process gives the possibility to supply our memory

What is an audiovisual digital archival process?

So an audiovisual digital archival process is...

... a technical information system modeled on the documentary chain and consisted of successive stages whose the logical linking aims to turn a trace into an archive. The main challenge of this kind of process is to provide a fast and good quality access and to preserve reusable and reinterpretable records by the future generation.

# Memory as a process

## Definition in a historical point of view of the notion of memory

The whole of recall practices with which the common aim is to bring back to life an individual or a collective past by story, monument or ritual.

## Digital impact

Before digital age memory has been characterized as resting on physical objects and their conservation

time                      Reminder : a physical object is sustainable and robust through the

and the                      ↪ Keeping intact the physical integrity of an original to ensure the usability  
fidelity of the memory.

With digital objects, permanently evaluating and changing objects, this conception of memory is no longer possible

Memory needs to be dynamic in a digital environment

# Memory as a process

Memory provides us some illustrative examples :

- Ancient Greece : memory as a mental exercise → art of memory (Yates)
- The orator has to criticize what he memorizes (assimilates) and has to make his own judgement (interpretation)
- Middle Age : writing as a threat for the memory ability (Carruthers)
- Memory as an exercise considered by the Scholastics as more reliable than rare and often incorrect texts.

**Memory is not a stock of objects but a perpetual collaborative construction.**

# 02

Case studies : observations of digital audiovisual archival process  
on two fields : Ina and Radio-Canada



# Institut national de l'audiovisuel (Ina): a unique case

## Mission

Collecting, safekeeping, digitalizing, restoring and communicating french TV and radio broadcasting

## Specificities

Two archival documentary processes to manage two distinct fonds by two organisational structures :

- The « Vidéothèque/Phonothèque » is in charge of management of «professional archives »
- The Inathèque is responsible of the digital gathering of the flow for the preservation of the legal deposit of TV and radio broadcasting set up since 1995.

Two different publics of users :

- The professional archives are sold to the audiovisual professionals and are accessible for the large public.
- The legal deposit is only accessible to a researcher public.

Two processes completely digitalized from the acquisition to the diffusion :

- The existing stocks are digitalized since 1999 within the framework of a consequent digital safekeeping plan.
- The records of the legal deposit are digitally gathered since 2001.

# Radio-Canada : a broadcasting channel equipped with an archives service

## Mission

Providing good quality images and information as fast as possible to the employees.

## Specificities

One archival process distinguished between the raw material and the broadcasted one :

- Important Information sector : images are more valuable for the journalists and the produces before their broadcasting : rushes are more usable
- Broadcasted programs and rushes are distinguished in the archival documentary process

One public : the employees of Radio-Canada :

- A B-to-B model
- Very rare access providing to external researchers

# The observed audiovisual digital archival processes

## Methodology

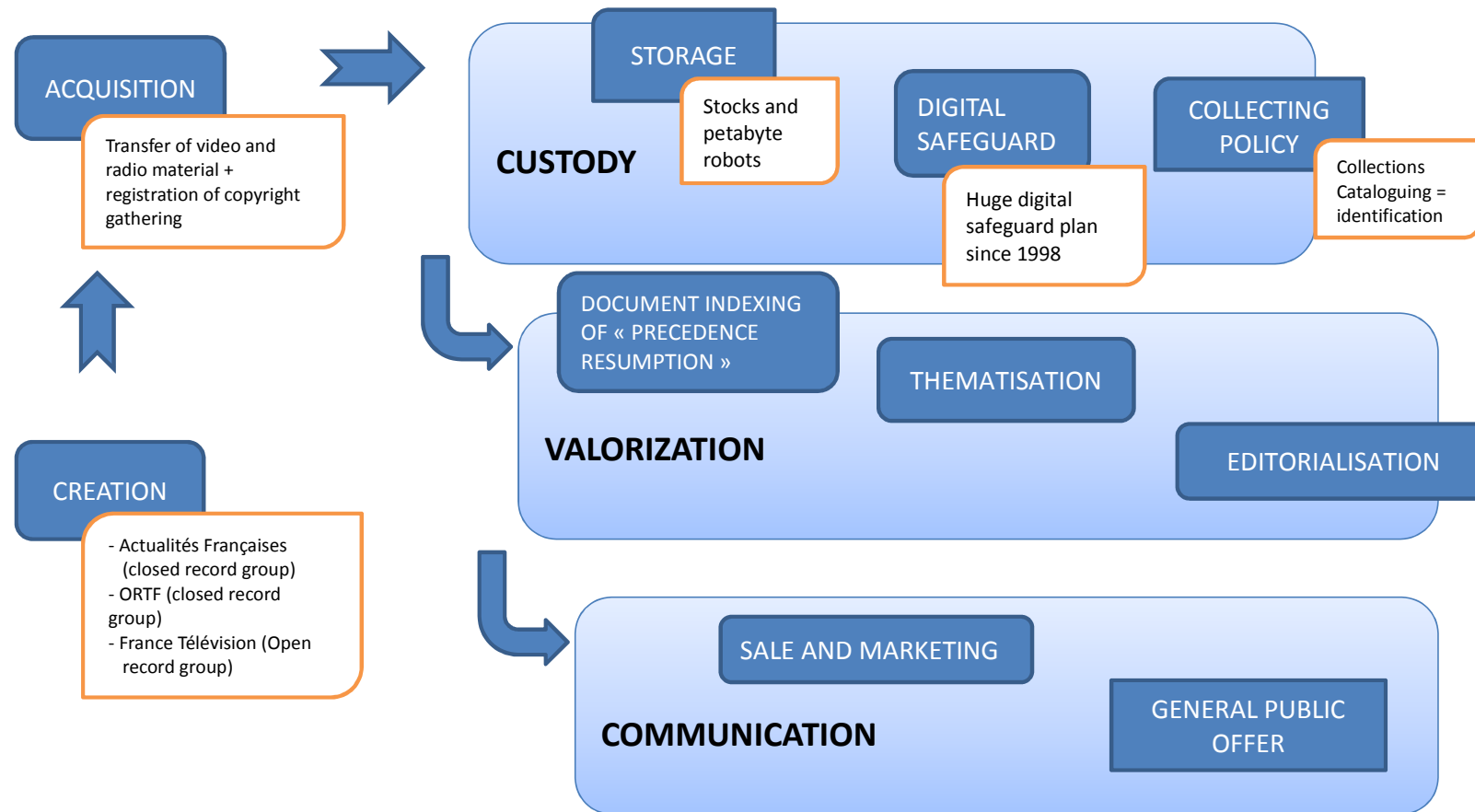
### Accomplished steps

- Interviews of the information professionals (technicians, „archivists“, indexers) to investigate on the professional practices
- Internal documents analysing

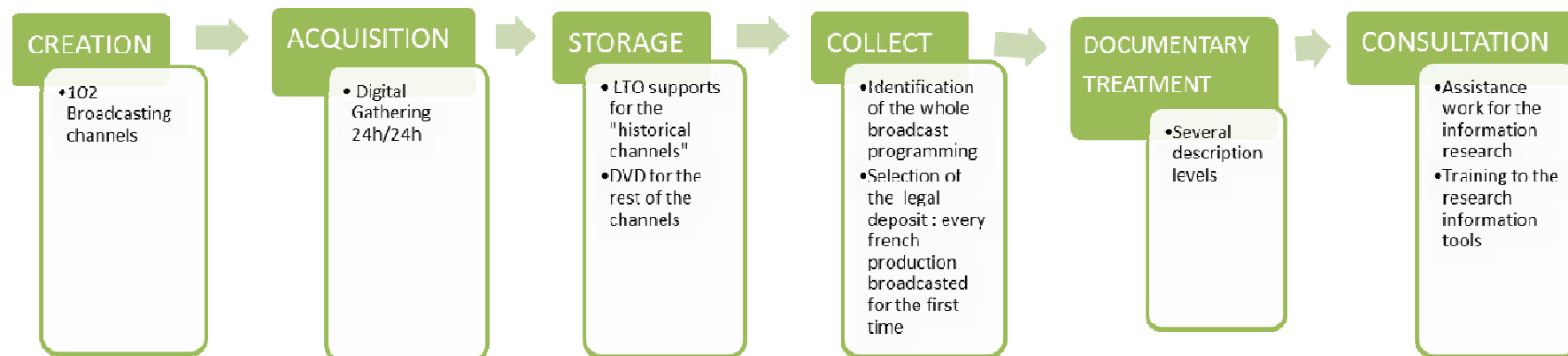
### Next step of the data collecting...

... will consist in the observation of technical information systems (tools and data basis)

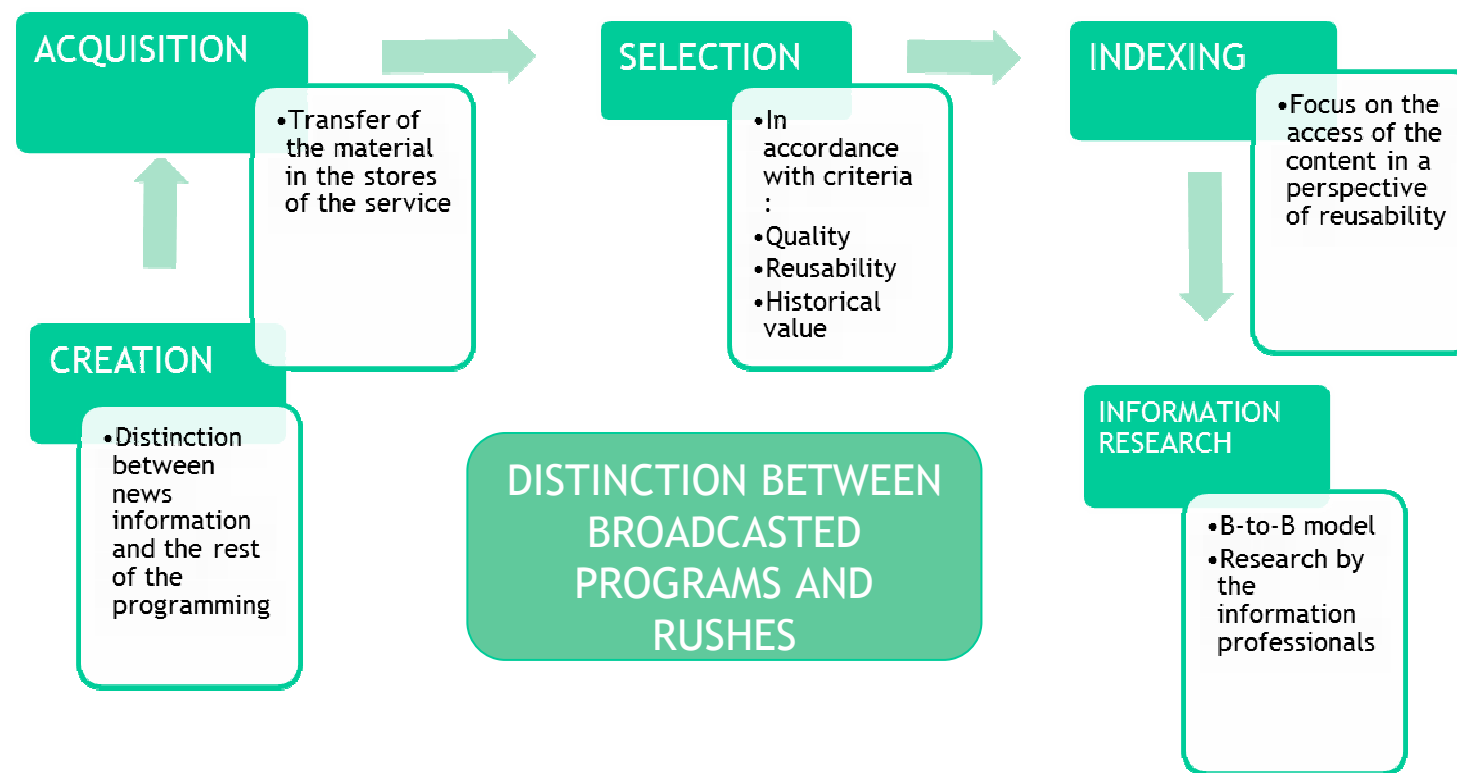
# Audiovisual digital archival process n° 1 : Vidéothèque/Phonothèque (professional archives)



## Audiovisual digital archival process n° 2 : Inathèque (Legal deposit)



## Audiovisual digital archival process n° 3 : broadcast programming in Radio-Canada



03

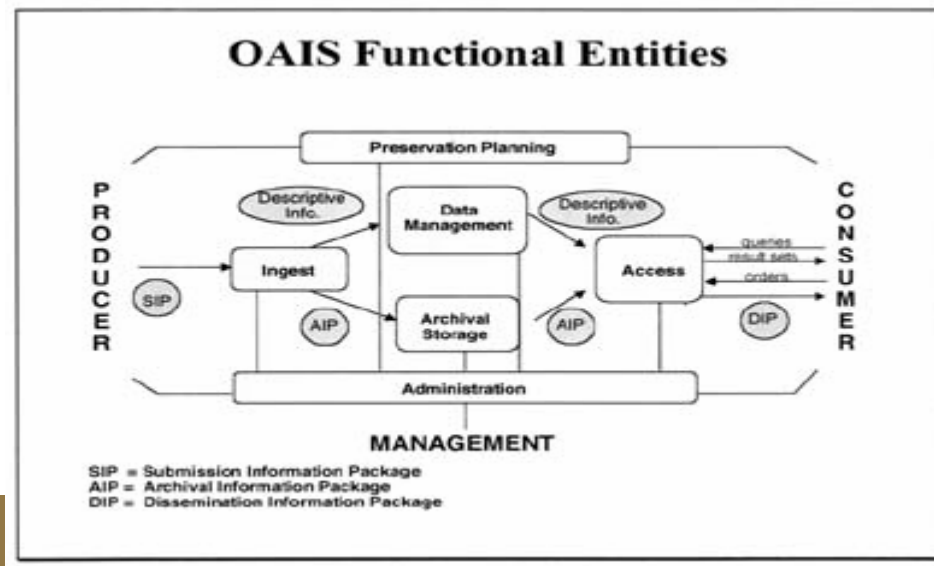
Memory System as a research tool

# Formulate the memory and preservation issue

## Memory system : Definition

Methodological and conceptual system which could keep the ability to assimilate and to analyse reliable contents of integrity whose the identity is proved.

Based on the OAIS model which allows to preserve the ability to put the informational process in which the content evolves (Watry, Factor)





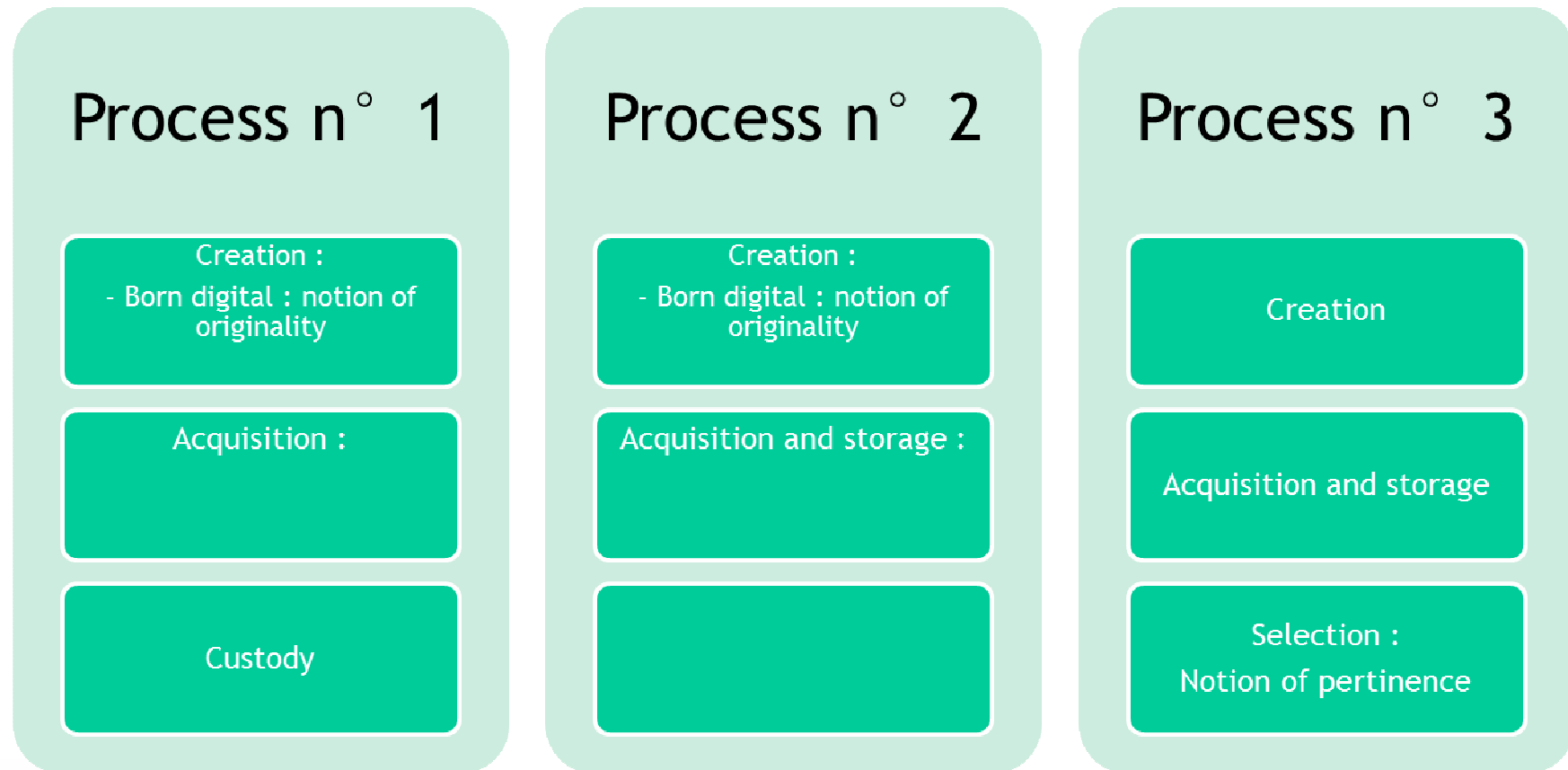
# Application : illustration by the cases studied

## Aim objectives

- Following and visualizing the physical transformations undergone by the archives
- Identifying the theoretical concepts implied by these transformations and their evolution

For example...

Juxtaposition analysis of the three processes observed



# Conclusion

## Keep the archive alive

In a digital environment, the sustainable and reliable preservation of dynamic resources is dependent to their access, provision.

It is necessary to keep the archive alive in order to make it intelligible in the different interpretation's context of the moment