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List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding





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Foreword

by Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO

UNESCO is proud to launch this much-awaited series of publications devoted to three key components of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage: the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, and the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices. The publication of these first three books attests to the fact that the 2003 Convention has now reached the crucial operational phase.

The successful implementation of this ground-breaking legal instrument remains one of UNESCO's priority actions, and one to which I am firmly committed. In 2008, before my election as Director-General of UNESCO, I had the privilege of chairing one of the sessions of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Sofia, Bulgaria. This enriching experience reinforced my personal convictions regarding the significance of intangible cultural heritage, its fragility, and the urgent need to safeguard it for future generations.

It is most encouraging to note that since the adoption of the Convention in 2003, the term ‘intangible cultural heritage’ has become more familiar thanks largely to the efforts of UNESCO and its partners worldwide. However, much remains to be done. We must continue to send out clear messages about what constitutes intangible cultural heritage, why it should be safeguarded, and what actions need to be taken.

The present publication series, along with UNESCO’s intangible heritage website, will serve as our principal communication tool for informing the widest possible public about all aspects of living heritage. Moreover, we trust that the numerous examples of intangible cultural heritage worldwide and the concrete information about community participation and effective safeguarding practices featured in these pages will incite all those concerned – from government officials, policy makers, teachers and youth, to NGOs and international organizations – to appreciate the significance of their own living heritage and that of other cultures. This heightened awareness should, in turn, spur further safeguarding measures and activities.

The UN General Assembly proclaimed 2010 as the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures. UNESCO’s efforts to safeguard intangible cultural heritage aim to promote “reciprocal knowledge of cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity” – one of the four stated objectives of the Year. Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage directly contributes to UNESCO’s priority mission to safeguard the world’s cultural diversity.

Safeguarding intangible heritage requires close collaboration with local, regional and international actors and practitioners of all ages, thus providing an excellent opportunity for intergenerational as well as intercultural dialogue. The multinational intangible heritage elements and multinational good safeguarding practices described in these publications provide good examples of constructive international cooperation.

I am confident that these publications will also encourage more Member States to join the growing ranks of the States Parties to the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. More than 120 have ratified the Convention to date. This unique legal instrument will thus become a truly universal tool and the foremost reference point for safeguarding our irreplaceable living heritage.



Introduction

UNESCO

Founded in 1945, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), a specialized agency of the United Nations, has a mandate in international cooperation in the fields of education, science, culture, and communication. UNESCO functions as a laboratory of ideas, setting standards to forge universal agreements on emerging issues. The Organization also serves as a clearing-house for the dissemination and sharing of information and knowledge as it assists its 193 Member States to build on their human and institutional capacities.

The Culture Sector, as one of the Programme Sectors of UNESCO, has over the years been involved in the creation of seven international conventions in the field of culture¹, for which the Culture Sector assumes a Secretariat role. The Sector assists the Member States in the protection and promotion of cultural diversity through the adoption of measures encompassing heritage protection, rehabilitation and safeguarding, and the development and implementation of cultural policies and sustainable cultural industries.

The Convention for Intangible Cultural Heritage

The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, adopted during the 2003 General Conference of UNESCO, and which entered into force in 2006, is one of seven UNESCO Conventions in the field of culture. The Convention has four primary goals:

- To safeguard intangible cultural heritage.
- To ensure respect for the intangible cultural heritage of the communities, groups and individuals concerned.
- To raise awareness and appreciation of the importance of the intangible cultural heritage at local, national and international levels.
- To provide for international cooperation and assistance.

The term 'intangible cultural heritage' is defined in the Convention as "the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces, associated therewith – that communities, groups, and in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage" (Article 2.1). The domains covered by the Convention include oral expressions and traditions, performing arts, rituals and festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, and traditional craftsmanship.

1. UNESCO's seven conventions in the field of culture includes: Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005); Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003); Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (2001); Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972); Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Cultural Property (1970); Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954); and Universal Copyright Convention (1952, 1971).

The 2003 Convention is composed of two statutory organs: the General Assembly of the States Parties to the Convention, made up of signatory States to the Convention that meet every two years to provide strategic orientations for the implementation of the Convention; and twenty-four members of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage elected by the General Assembly that meet annually to carry forward the concrete implementation of the Convention. One of the principal responsibilities of the Intergovernmental Committee is to inscribe intangible cultural heritage elements on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, as well as select programmes, projects and activities that best reflect the principles and objectives of the Convention in order to create a Register of Good Safeguarding Practices.

Urgent Safeguarding List

The List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding is established in accordance with Article 17 of the Convention. Unlike the Representative List, whose objective is to ensure visibility and raise awareness about intangible cultural heritage, the primary objective of the Urgent Safeguarding List is to mobilize concerted efforts of various stakeholders in order to safeguard endangered intangible cultural heritage in an urgent, yet culturally appropriate manner.

Nomination for and inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List confirms the commitment of the States and the concerned communities towards intensifying their safeguarding efforts. The driving force for inscription and subsequent safeguarding is therefore apparent in the ways and means deployed by the Parties concerned to ensure that on-going safeguarding efforts, once elements are inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List, are consolidated such that safeguarding measures proposed in the nomination files are met with success.

In the case of endangered elements of intangible cultural heritage nominated by developing States Parties, inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List may result in the mobilization by the Committee and the international community of much needed, urgent support, whether institutional, human or financial, with the aim of safeguarding the element in question. It is important to emphasize, however, that the responsibility to implement safeguarding measures ultimately lies with the nominating States Parties.

Intangible cultural heritage is a 'living' being, but when inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List, it is considered endangered, implying the need for urgent and immediate action in order to reverse the threat. The ongoing viability of the inscribed elements is evaluated through the periodic reports that each State Party is required to submit for the elements inscribed on either the Urgent Safeguarding List or the Representative List. When appropriate safeguarding efforts have been implemented for the elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List and the Committee determines that the endangered intangible cultural heritage in question no longer meets one or more selection criteria, the Committee can remove it from the List. The removal from the Urgent Safeguarding List signifies the successful operation of the involved stakeholders, especially the concerned States Parties and the concerned community who will be duly congratulated for fulfilling their commitment towards safeguarding.

The nomination process begins with awareness by States Parties of the presence of endangered intangible cultural heritage in their territories. Once the element is identified and the community concerned has provided their free, prior and informed consent to nominate their heritage to the Urgent Safeguarding List, the submitting States must complete and submit to UNESCO form ICH-01, available for download from the ICH Convention website (www.unesco.org/culture/ich/fr/forms/). Based on recommendations provided by appointed experts, the Committee evaluates the nominated element and decides whether or not to inscribe the element. It should be clearly noted that unsuccessful nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List does not, in any way, question the validity of the element. Moreover, guided by the experts' appraisal, nominating States Parties may resubmit the nomination in a subsequent year.

In order to comply with the requirements for nomination, submitting States Parties are requested to demonstrate that the element nominated for inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List satisfies all five criteria (criteria 1–5), and all six in the case of an extremely endangered element (criteria 1–6):

2. Article 2 – **Definitions**
For the purposes of this Convention,

1. The 'intangible cultural heritage' means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. For the purposes of this Convention, consideration will be given solely to such intangible cultural heritage as is compatible with existing international human rights instruments, as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development.

2. The 'intangible cultural heritage', as defined in paragraph 1 above, is manifested inter alia in the following domains:
(a) oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage;
(b) performing arts;
(c) social practices, rituals and festive events;
(d) knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe;
(e) traditional craftsmanship.

Criterion 1 The element constitutes intangible cultural heritage as defined in Article 2² of the Convention.

Criterion 2 a. The element is in urgent need of safeguarding because its viability is at risk despite the efforts of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals and State(s) Party(ies) concerned; (or)

b. The element is in extremely urgent need of safeguarding because it is facing grave threats as a result of which it cannot be expected to survive without immediate safeguarding.

Criterion 3 Safeguarding measures are elaborated that may enable the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned to continue the practice and transmission of the element.

Criterion 4 The element has been nominated following the widest possible participation of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned and their free, prior and informed consent.

Criterion 5 The element is included in an inventory of the intangible cultural heritage present in the territory(ies) of the submitting State(s) Party(ies), as defined in Article 11³ and Article 12⁴.

Criterion 6 In cases of extreme urgency, the State(s) Party(ies) concerned has (have) been duly consulted regarding inscription of the element in conformity with Article 17.3.

The 2003 Convention includes a provision for those intangible heritage elements in extreme need of safeguarding (c.f. criteria 2.b and 6). In cases of extreme urgency, the Committee may inscribe an item of the heritage concerned on the Urgent Safeguarding List in consultation with the State Party concerned. Developing countries can request preparatory assistance in completing the nomination file, a requisite component of which is the close consultation between government officials and the communities concerned as well as photographic and film documentation. Developing countries wishing to urgently safeguard endangered elements can request international assistance by filling in and submitting to UNESCO form ICH-04, available for download from the ICH Convention website (www.unesco.org/culture/ich/fr/forms/).

Should assistance be needed, the request can be made in parallel with the nomination of the element to the Urgent Safeguarding List, but it is not mandatory.

The current publication presents the 12 intangible cultural heritage elements that constitute the first inscriptions made by the Committee on the Urgent Safeguarding List in 2009. It provides descriptions of each element and their communities, the threats, the planned safeguarding measures, as well as the Committee's decisions. We hope that the publication will offer readers insights into the determination shared by both the States and the communities in safeguarding the inscribed endangered elements. More detailed information including the actual nomination files, community consents, photographic and film documentation as well as any updates are all available for consultation on UNESCO's intangible heritage website (www.unesco.org/culture/ich/fr/lists/).

While many of us demonstrate interest and commitment towards safeguarding intangible cultural heritage practices in the hope of protecting cultural diversity for all its fascinating aspects, it is important to note that the responsibility of guardianship and safeguarding must always lie with the communities concerned. Regardless of the outside help extended to these communities, if the communities cease their practices or the heritage bearers fail to transmit their knowledge to the next generation, their intangible cultural heritage is destined to disappear. It is equally important to remind ourselves that as a living entity, intangible cultural heritage can cease to exist if its social function wanes.

UNESCO is aware of the intricate and complex nature of safeguarding as well as its own limited reach at the local level. Moreover, as an intergovernmental organization, UNESCO cannot singly safeguard the world's living heritage. What it hopes to ensure is that it fulfils its role as a catalyst to create international cooperation so that communities and States demonstrating commitment and willingness to safeguard their endangered intangible heritage, but requiring technical know-how or financial assistance, can receive the urgent assistance they need in order to carry out their safeguarding plans.

3. 'Safeguarding' means measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage.

4. 'States Parties' means States which are bound by this Convention and among which this Convention is in force.

5. This Convention applies *mutatis mutandis* to the territories referred to in Article 33, which become Parties to this Convention in accordance with the conditions set out in that Article. To that extent the expression 'States Parties' also refers to such territories.

3. Article 11 – **Role of States Parties**
Each State Party shall:

(a) take the necessary measures to ensure the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage present in its territory;

(b) among the safeguarding measures referred to in Article 2, paragraph 3, identify and define the various elements of the intangible cultural heritage present in its territory, with the participation of communities, groups and relevant non-governmental organizations.

4. Article 12 – **Inventories**

1. To ensure identification with a view to safeguarding, each State Party shall draw up, in a manner geared to its own situation, one or more inventories of the intangible cultural heritage present in its territory. These inventories shall be regularly updated.

2. When each State Party periodically submits its report to the Committee, in accordance with Article 29, it shall provide relevant information on such inventories.

Rite of the Kalyady Tsars (Christmas Tsars)

Every year on 13 January (New Year's day for Orthodox Christians according to the old Julian calendar) the villagers of Semezhava, Belarus, celebrate a ritual New Year's procession known as the Kalyady Tsars (Christmas Tsars). Five hundred members of the local community and beyond participate. Of these, groups of seven young men who act as individually-named 'tsars' proceed through the village, enacting a traditional play, and receive gifts and good wishes from the inhabitants. The play, 'Tsar Maximilian', recounts the conflict between a pagan Tsar and his Christian son, Adolf. The comic performance depicts the Tsars' meeting and consequent fight, while the characters of the elderly *dzad* and *baba* (played by a young boy and girl) interact with the audience. Plentiful allusions to contemporary life create a vivid blend of old and new.

The Tsars' visits are the village's main traditional event and are seen as a good omen and sign of prosperity. The 'Kalyady' festival itself predates the arrival of Christianity and has its origins in a pagan masked carnival. The original 'Tsars' were soldiers from a neighbouring garrison who would visit houses to offer New Year greetings. Today, the 'Kalyady Tsars' ritual is a synthesis of these performances with the traditional Belarusian New Year's carnival. The original rite has survived almost intact and constitutes a central part of the outlook and culture of the local population.

Semezhava (formerly known as 'Semezhevo') is located in the Kapyl (Kopyl) district of the Minsk

region of central Belarus, with a population of more than 1200 people. The local young men constitute, along with senior residents, the principle transmitters and propagators of the tradition. Other women and men of all ages also participate, performing certain parts in the Christmas and New Year's carnivals and the traditional drama. The rite is supported by local, district and regional executive councils. Local teachers, doctors and the staff of the cultural and handicraft centres are among the active initiators of rite events.

Although actively performed from the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries up until the 1960s, the Kalyady Tsars ritual was gradually abandoned over subsequent years, until attempts to revive it began in the 1980s. Although these were successful, and provided the rite with a new impetus of life accounting for its current vitality, it now faces distinct threats in the form of emigration of Semezhava residents and lack of interest on the part of the younger generation whose numbers are also declining. Such threats may result in a gap in the transmission of the rite.

In concrete terms, this would mean a lack of leaders and participants in the rite ceremonies, the loss of craftspeople for the production of costumes, objects, musical instruments and interior decorations for the festive events, and the loss of associated knowledge and practices such as the preparation of traditional dishes. As a result, this form of intangible heritage could endure as a social practice only during the

Tsar Maximilian, in white, is followed by Tsar Mamai, as spectators try to stay warm in the Belarus winter.







The village procession of the Kalyady Tsars, led by Tsar Maximilian, in white, and Tsar Mamai, in red, followed by other Tsars, a doctor in army uniform, and musicians.

lifetime of the present generation of Semezhava residents. It is therefore vital to emphasize the importance of the shared values the ritual represents for the practising community. Otherwise the rite could well lose its distinct characteristics in the face of globalization and urbanization and become a routine New Year feast.

Local researchers have studied the origins and evolution of the rite. This documentation constituted an essential component of the nomination file that Belarus submitted to UNESCO for the inscription of the Rite of the Kalyady Tsars on the Urgent Safeguarding List. Letters were also received from the community in support of the nomination. Following local community requests, the element has been inscribed on the State List of Historical and Cultural Values of the Republic of Belarus. The community is currently working with national bodies to develop a strategy to safeguard the rite. A film that showcases the rite has been produced and made available for copying and distribution.

Following on from the inscription of the 'Kalyady Tsars' rite on the Historical and Cultural Heritage List of the Republic of Belarus, the local community and the authorities have proposed a series of measures to help safeguard the element. These aim to increase awareness among all members of the community of the rite's status as a part of local intangible cultural heritage. The measures include the introduction of an annual award for the protection of traditions of Semezhava, the aim of which is to encourage detailed study of the ritual, to diversify it, and to expand the circle of participants. Several measures concern the dissemination of information about the ritual – via the production of a series of programmes on the rite by national mass media, the publication

of special print and electronic materials to help ensure its popularity and continuity, and the creation of a dedicated website.

On the educational front, the Belarusian State University of Culture and Arts has plans to introduce a special training course for natives of Semezhava. The aim is to develop cultural tourism to spread information and knowledge about the ritual, thereby helping to embed it within modern forms of culture. This will be accompanied by the creation of an associated infrastructure with the subsidiary aim of creating employment opportunities for local young people. A course on the 'Protection of local folklore and oral tradition' is due to be introduced into the curricula of nearby schools. Meanwhile, at the professional level, training of local specialists on the protection of intangible cultural heritage will be undertaken. Crucially, the bearers of the 'Kalyady Tsars' ceremony will be invited to participate in master classes,

folklore schools and different national, regional and international meetings and festivals. The village of Semezhava will also host folklore festivals on the basis of local traditions where the 'Kalyady Tsars' ritual will form the centrepiece. Finally, a system of annual monitoring will be created to observe the ongoing viability of the element.

The fight between Tsar Maximilian and Tsar Mamai, in inside the house of a villager in Semezhava.



The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed the Rite of the Kalyady Tsars (Christmas Tsars) on the Urgent Safeguarding List as the nomination file satisfied all the selection criteria, as follows:

Definition of intangible cultural heritage	The Rite of the Kalyady Tsars (Christmas Tsars) embraces several domains of intangible cultural heritage such as performing arts, rituals and festive events and traditional craftsmanship. Combining features typical to the 'Kalyady' rituals in a number of Slavic cultures with locally-based traditions, its annual performance plays an important role in the social cultural life of the Semezhava rural community, providing it with a sense of identity and continuity and helping to maintain the links between generations.
State of viability	The viability of the element is at risk, in spite of the best efforts of a group of enthusiastic practitioners, due to the fact that the bulk of the community, while enjoying the festivities, takes little part in the preparation or performance of the ritual. This lack of broader interest is due to recent social transformations leading, among other things, to an increased rural-urban migration of the population, and in particular, the youth.
Safeguarding measures	Several safeguarding measures, focusing particularly on education and raising awareness, have been implemented and proposed by the national and local authorities to ensure the viability of the element, but it is necessary to review certain other measures so as to enable the continued practice and transmission of the element.
Community participation	The nomination clearly demonstrates that the local community of Semezhava, as well as the village and district authorities, actively participated in the preparation of the nomination file and gave their free, prior and informed consent to it.
Inventory	The element was given the status of a historical and cultural value by a 2008 resolution of the Council of Ministers and inscribed on the State List of Historical and Cultural Values of the Republic of Belarus.



Qiang New Year festival

The Qiang New Year Festival takes place on the first day of the tenth lunar month in China's Sichuan Province. Celebrated for two millennia, the festival constitutes a sacred expression for the Qiang people of their ideal of harmony.

It begins in the early morning, in the fortress villages where the Qiang traditionally lived. The *shibi* (a priest) converses with the gods of the holy mountain, offering thanks and presenting petitions. At daybreak, he is joined by villagers from neighbouring fortress communities, clad in fine ceremonial costumes, who perform a ritual sacrifice of a goat. Festivities follow including traditional sheepskin-drum and *salang* dances, singing and the drinking of *zajiu* (wine). Amid the rejoicing the *shibi* chants traditional epics that encompass the soul of Qiang history and culture. At dusk, before eating the New Year meal, the head of each family offers sacrifices to the family gods, the god of fire and the ancestors to seek their protection in the coming year.

The Qiang New Year Festival is an occasion for the Qiang people to offer thanksgiving and prayers for the fertility of the land and prosperity. Traditions distilling history and cultural knowledge are renewed and diffused, and social cohesion and family harmony are reinforced. The festival is a compendium of their folk traditional culture and a vital channel for the transmission of Qiang culture.

The Qiang New Year Festival is celebrated in approximately twenty fortress villages, towns, townships and villages located in Sichuan Province. These include the fortress villages of

Luobo and Baduo as well as Qiangfeng and Buwa villages in Wenchuan County; the townships of Puxi and Taoping and the town of Xuecheng in Li County; the townships of Heihu, Qugu and Sanlong, and the towns of Diexi and Fengyi in Mao County; the township of Xiaoxing and Jin'an Town in Songpan County; the townships of Qingpian and Yuli in Beichuan County; the township of Suojiang and Doukou Town in Pingwu County. The Qiang people are concentrated in these communities.

The traditional New Year Festival was once performed by more than a hundred Qiang fortress villages. Despite a revival in the 1980s, numbers have decreased dramatically due to a number of factors. Globalization and external cultural influences have dramatically altered Qiang social life with increased out-migration of workers and declining interest among young people in traditional rituals. The continuity of the *shibi* culture, which is restricted to male members, has been considerably weakened as a result. An even more severe blow was dealt in 2008 by the 8.0 magnitude Wenchuan earthquake. Social and cultural venues used for the ritual sacrifice suffered considerable damage with the consequent loss of many objects, implements and costumes central to the ceremony. Archived material collected by inheritors and researchers was also lost. Worse, many of the key community practitioners of the festival's traditions died in the earthquake.

Following the development of a tourism industry in recent decades, certain villages had attempted to revive the traditions. However, in these cases,

A sacrifice to the mountain performed by the shibi priest is an essential component of the Qiang New Year festival.

understanding of traditional meanings and the level of participation has changed significantly. As a result transmission of the traditional New Year Festival is now severely threatened. Today, it survives in only about twenty fortress villages, which struggle to safeguard the traditions, venues, customs and language.

The Qiang New Year Festival was first inscribed on the Prefecture Intangible Cultural Heritage List in 2006, then included on the Provincial Intangible Cultural Heritage List in 2007. Only a few weeks after the earthquake, the Qiang New Year Festival was inscribed on the National Intangible Cultural Heritage List in June 2008. The cultural department of Sichuan Provincial Government organized experts to draft outlines for the safeguarding of Qiang Culture's living environment in an experimental area (inaugurated later that year) and for post-earthquake safeguarding and reconstruction of intangible cultural heritage. Qiang people with local government support undertook restoration and reconstruction of damaged sites and objects in time for the festival that year. In early 2009, the cultural departments of the counties of Wenchuan, Li, Mao and Beichuan drafted working plans for the reconstruction of venues for learning and transmitting Qiang New Year Festival traditions from 2010 to 2012.

Qiang communities, in cooperation with local cultural departments, also petitioned for the inclusion of the element on the Urgent Safeguarding List. Local Qiang populations supported the preparation of the nomination file by providing the necessary information and responding to interviews and surveys. Their efforts to ensure the continuation of the New Year Festival in 2008 also provided further documentation for the application. The work on the application received the support and approval of all the main inheritors and residents in the communities where the celebration of the festival is prevalent.

The Qiang perform the sheepskin-drum dance to pray for a fertile land, a prosperous population and a harmonious world.







Qiang people dance the salang (round dance) in a village plaza – the moment of communal rejoicing and conviviality to thank heaven for its blessings and to implore its protection.

A wide range of safeguarding measures is proposed, including annual subventions to support twenty representative inheritors nominated by the Qiang public. Reconstruction of the venues that are essential for the celebration will be undertaken by Qiang people skilled in traditional construction, in consultation with representative inheritors. Shibi priests will be invited to redecorate and restore the venues in traditional ways.

At the same time, local cultural departments will carry out field surveys using photography and video recordings to undertake a baseline registration and documentation of the festival and its major inheritors, so as to better understand its current viability situation. On the basis of this, the Sichuan Music and Dance Institute will set-up a database. The Intangible Cultural Heritage Safeguarding Centre of Sichuan Province will

gather papers, pictures and video and audio documentation from inheritors, the public and organizations. The materials collected will be kept in a Museum of Qiang New Year, to better communicate festival activities. A series of studies on the festival will be published by experts on Qiang culture.

Efforts will be undertaken to build up museums and venues for the transmitting of Qiang New Year traditions in the villages of Weizhou, Mianchi, Yanmen, Longxi, Keku, and Caopo in Wenchuan County; Puxi, Taoping and Xuecheng in Li County; Hehu, Qugu, Sanlong, Diexi, and Fengyi in Mao County and in the new site of Beichuan County. Training sessions will be periodically held for audiences of different ages with shibi priests and major inheritors invited to lecture. Living performances will also be organized, both for tourist audiences and for the Qiang themselves.

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed the Qiang New Year festival on the Urgent Safeguarding List as the nomination file satisfied all the selection criteria, as follows:

Definition of intangible cultural heritage

The Qiang New Year festival provides a crucial venue for community members to express respect and appreciation for the core transmitters of Qiang traditional culture, family elders and *shibi*, and for them in turn to teach youth about the central features of Qiang heritage; the collective feasting, music making, dancing and singing are ways for communities to develop solidarity and share common values.

State of viability

Despite the importance of this ritual as a symbol of Qiang identity, the festival's viability is seriously threatened by modernization and globalization of rural areas that has generated a large youth migration, aggravated by the 2008 Wenchuan earthquake where many shibis passed away, the stone villages and stone towers essential to the festival were destroyed or seriously damaged, and community life was severely disrupted.

Safeguarding measures

Safeguarding measures designed to sustain the festival include State financial assistance to representative inheritors, the shibis, to make it possible for them to transmit their traditional knowledge to young people, and the reconstruction of stone villages, stone towers and other traditional sites associated with the festival, linked to the transmission of the history and cultural heritage of the Qiang.

Community participation

National and provincial authorities have committed themselves to create favourable conditions to revitalize the Qiang New Year festival and have gained the enthusiastic support of Qiang communities, whose representatives provided free, prior and informed consent to the present nomination.

Inventory

In June 2008, upon approval of China's State Council, the Qiang New Year festival was included in the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage administered by the Department of Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Ministry of Culture, following its inclusion on the Prefectural Cultural Intangible Heritage List in 2006 and the Intangible Cultural Heritage List of Sichuan Province in 2007.

Traditional design and practices for building Chinese wooden arch bridges

The art of constructing Chinese wooden arch bridges dates back to the Song Dynasty (960-1279 CE). Found in Fujian Province and Zhejiang Province along China's south-east coast, these bridges exist in a variety of different arched structures, each designed according to local requirements. Many were built over streams flowing from villages or over valleys unreachable by road. The passageways can be of various styles including single eave, double eave, two-column, or four-column, in order to meet daily traffic needs. The bridges are also important gathering places for local residents – to meet, exchange information and reinforce relationships. They act as venues for traditional folk activities and a variety of cultural and religious ceremonies, with shrines forming a distinct part of every bridge.

Construction is entirely by hand, employing traditional architectural tools and craftsmanship. The distinctive core technology is 'beam-weaving', comprising two layers of beams. In the lower layer, three rows of wood are joined longitudinally into a 八-shaped arch. In the upper layer, five shorter rows of wood are joined longitudinally then intertwined with upper arch supports. Each beam is fixed in place using mortise and tenon joints. The carpentry is carried out by woodworkers directed by a woodworking master, who traditionally passes

on his knowledge through the teaching of apprentices or relatives within a clan. These clans play an irreplaceable role in building, maintaining and protecting the bridges.

The locations in which wooden arched bridges are found include Pingnan, Shouning, and Zhouning Counties of Ningde City in Fujian Province; and Qingyuan and Taishun Counties in Zhejiang Province.

The old craft of arch bridge building is traditionally passed on from woodworking masters to heirs who are willing and motivated to maintain the tradition. However, the social need for the craft is weakening, with the result that traditional heirs are now making their living as general carpenters. One reason is diminishing demand for the bridges, which are unable to carry vehicles or meet the demands of modern traffic. Secondly, the timber required for construction – thirty-year-old Chinese fir – is increasingly scarce. As such, local communities lack the motivation and the need to build such bridges. Moreover, advancement in bridge architecture has decreased the need for traditional arch bridge technology. The craft has thus become unattractive to new generations of woodworkers, threatening its survival.



An even more pressing problem is dearth of knowledge. At present, there are only four woodworking masters, the average age of whom is 75 years old. The number of active participants in the craft numbers only twenty. The craftsmanship necessary to build such bridges is traditionally passed on orally within a clan, and few woodworkers master the skill. As these woodworking masters disappear the craftsmanship risks becoming extinct.

Recognizing the importance of their unique local tradition, people in Pingnan and Shouning Counties have undertaken a number of safeguarding activities since 2006. Following an investigation into the status of existing bridges, ten were rebuilt and six were repaired. Evaluation and publication of artefacts in need of preservation will continue as part of an on-going five-year process.

Historical artefacts, tools records, clan trees, bridge contracts and so on relating to the craft have been collected, and file rooms established in four counties: Pingnan, Shouning, Qingyuan and Taishun. A number of dedicated exhibition spaces have been opened free of charge to the public in Fujian, Zhejiang and Pingnan Provinces. These will be used to display pictures, physical models, traditional tools, and the craftsmanship process. In

2008, five craftsmen were appointed as provincial representative practitioners. Meanwhile, traditional design and practices for building Chinese wooden arch bridges were entered on the inventory of protected intangible cultural heritage of the Chinese government.

Three international symposia on Chinese wooden arch bridges were held in 2005, 2007 and 2009 to provide theoretical instruction and academic support for protecting and perpetuating the craft, and a platform for exchanging craftsmanship and information. Publicity and promotion of the craft have been undertaken through mainstream media, as well as in schools through the production of a do-it-yourself model for teaching and practise.

When the time came to prepare the nomination for inscription of the element on the Urgent Safeguarding List, the local people cooperated enthusiastically. The heirs gave their full consent, and members of the inheriting clans provided clan records, arrangements for protecting the bridges, photos and traditional tools. They also cooperated in the production of a video.

Residents of the towns of Changqiao and Shuangxi and the village of Tangkou in Pingnan

Wan'an bridge in Pingnan County, registered as protected cultural heritage, demonstrates the traditional design and practices for building wooden arch bridges.

County, and the villages of Xiadang and Kengdi in Shouning County provided heirs and researchers with useful information and materials. Ciyun village in Changqiao town, Pingnan County went even further, collecting money to rebuild Shijin Bridge in order to demonstrate the entire bridge-building process. They also provided vital drawings, photos and videos for the inscription application, and produced a scale model of the arch bridge for the application.

The heirs and concerned communities are dedicated to hosting a variety of activities beneficial to perpetuating, protecting, promoting and publicizing the craft and its practices. The heirs intend to fulfil their vital roles by setting up practising sites, enrolling apprentices and teaching the craftsmanship involved. Plans also exist to rebuild Baixiang Bridge in Pingnan County and maintain Wan'an Bridge in Pingnan County and Yangmeizhou Bridge in Shouning County.

The covered passageway of the bridge will be used as a meeting place for entertainment and ceremonial events.

Carpenters lay the main passageway beam. The names of the woodworking masters and of highly-respected members of the community are written on the beams.







Builders lay the walking boards along the length of the bridge in an entirely handmade effort.

Thematic museums will be built in Pingnan and Shouning Counties in Fujian Province, while an exhibition room will be provided in the Ningde Municipal Museum. Funding proposals have been put forward for a dedicated archive room, database and website at the Ningde Municipal Art Museum and the Ningde Municipal Intangible Cultural Protection Centre.

An Association for the Traditional Design and Practices of Building Chinese Wooden Arch Bridges will be formed in Pingnan and Shouning Counties,

to exchange experiences, regulate techniques, protect the craftsmanship and promote its perpetuation. A protective fund for related traditional design and practices will be set up in Ningde city in Fujian Province, with increases in financial and medical assistance to the inheritors.

Lastly, research on design and the practices for building arch bridges will be compiled to provide a solid theoretical foundation for their protection and future maintenance.

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed the traditional design and practices for building Chinese wooden arch bridges on the Urgent Safeguarding List as the nomination file satisfied all the selection criteria, as follows:

Definition of intangible cultural heritage	The traditional design and practices for building Chinese wooden arch bridges involve a unique handwork technique to build wooden bridges whose social and cultural functions continue to be cherished by local residents, who have engaged themselves in preserving this example of their cultural identity, even as the bridges' practical traffic-bearing functions diminish.
State of viability	Although the craftsmen have regained esteem among community members who have awakened their interest for covered wooden bridges in the last decade, this exceptional technology is at risk of disappearing since the transmission process relies on few master bridge-building artisans who are aged, with little opportunity to pass on their 'secret knowledge' and experience to young carpenters orally and through apprenticeship.
Safeguarding measures	The safeguarding plan proposed, reflecting collaboration of local authorities, communities and the woodworking masters, is crucial to ensure the skill's revitalization by investing intensively in the education of young trainees to strengthen transmission from generation to generation.
Community participation	The nomination reveals that there was a wide involvement in the nomination by national authorities as well as local officials of Pingnan, Shouning, and Zhouning Counties in Fujian Province, Qingyuan and Taishun Counties in Zhejiang Province, and by local communities and the representatives of the clans that are heirs of the craft, whose free, prior and informed consent is demonstrated.
Inventory	After having been included in the heritage inventories of the various counties in which this tradition remains active, the design and practices of bridge building were included on the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage administered by the Department of Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Ministry of Culture.

Traditional Li textile techniques: spinning, dyeing, weaving and embroidering

The renowned textile techniques of the Li ethnic group of Hainan Island, China, have a long history. In the days before the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BCE), Li women developed an entire system of techniques comprising spinning, weaving, dyeing and embroidering. These were based on first-hand knowledge and experience of plants and natural dyestuffs, and were used to make cotton, hemp and other fibres into clothing and fabrics for daily necessities. Li women developed singular techniques such as warp ikat, double-face embroidery and single-face supplementary warp weaving, which were passed on from mother to daughter, along with traditional knowledge of designs and styles. In the absence of a written language, these patterns imaginatively record the history, legends, beliefs and traditions of Li culture, as well as distinguishing the island's five major spoken dialects.

Dragon quilts are the most elaborate example of Li textile techniques. Richly decorated and requiring great skill to produce, they embody a synthesis of Li textile techniques. Li textiles also play an indispensable part in religious rituals, festivals, funerals and weddings. Traditionally, a Li girl is married in a wedding dress made by her own hand, demonstrating her craft and skill in mastering local textile techniques. Such techniques and textiles are the carriers of Li culture, and constitute the basis of Li ethnic identification. As such they are an indispensable part of Li cultural heritage.

The traditional spinning, dyeing, weaving and embroidering techniques of Li women were formerly widely practised, with about 50,000 practitioners recorded in the 1950s. However, this figure had halved by the 1970s and dramatically decreased thereafter. Today, fewer than a thousand know the basic techniques, most of whom are over 70. Rarer still are the specialized skills: fewer than two hundred women have mastered the craft of warp ikat and no more than five still possess double-face embroidery skills. Currently, no one grasps the complete techniques for making dragon quilts.

Several factors are to blame. The development of modern agriculture and land use has increasingly replaced wild vegetation. Raw materials needed for dyeing hand-spun yarns are thus in short supply. Industrial chemical dyestuffs are replacing natural dyes, while manufactured textiles are supplanting hand-made Li textiles. Once daily necessities, traditional textiles are now seen mostly on ceremonial occasions, as people prefer to wear international dress. This shift is influenced by globalization, in particular, the arrival of tourism. The most significant threat, however, is the drop in transmission. Universal school education means that girls can no longer devote time to traditional crafts. Today, parts of Li textile techniques are mastered only by those living in mountain areas. Li textile techniques are transmitted through oral instruction and personal demonstration, so no records exist of patterns. With the passing of each

Li women work with a skein of indigo-dyed hemp. Dyestuffs mainly come from the roots, stems, bark and leaves of certain wild plants.





skilled practitioner, techniques handed down for centuries are increasingly at risk of disappearing completely.

In response to the decline in Li textile techniques, representatives of the Li ethnic group contacted the National People's Congress in 2000 to ask for state-level protection for traditional Li textile techniques. In 2006, they petitioned to include traditional Li textile techniques on the Urgent Safeguarding List. The main practitioners of this heritage and the village committees of the following communities supported this nomination: Nankai village, Nankai town, Li Autonomous County of Baisha; Fanmao village, Chongshan town, Wuzhishan city; Xifang village, Donghe town, Dongfang city; Hongnei village, Zhizhong town, Li Autonomous County of Ledong; and Fandao village, Baocheng town, Li-Miao Autonomous County of Baoting.

Following a local survey to establish the current status of the element, the communities – in cooperation with the Hainan Provincial Association of Ethnic Affairs, the Hainan Provincial Association of Intangible Cultural Heritage, the Hainan Provincial Research Institute of Ethnic Affairs and other related organizations – drafted a five-year plan for its protection. The communities also took on the tasks of building training centres, setting up craft villages to train practitioners to transmit their knowledge, and establishing raw material bases.

In 2006, following inscription of Li textile techniques among the first group of national intangible cultural heritage in China, the Hainan

Many of the women skilled at Li textile techniques are now over seventy years old, like this woman spinning on a foot-treadle wheel.



Rong Yamei (centre) is a master craftswoman recognized by China as a transmitter of the Li brocade technique.





The distinctive patterns and designs of double-face embroidery reflect the culture and beliefs of the Li ethnic group. Only five Li women master the craft today.

Provincial Centre for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage was founded to supervise transmission and protection of the element. A state-level representative practitioner was appointed, whose duty was to receive government subsidies and offer courses on Li textile techniques at newly-established training centres. In the follow-up to several major exhibitions on the element, many museums in Hainan Province set up permanent exhibitions dedicated to Li textile techniques. Competitions on Li textile techniques are regularly held, while some villagers have organized to manufacture Li textiles and impart the techniques involved.

A number of safeguarding measures are planned for the future. On the educational front, five training centres on Li textile techniques will be set up, with each of the five related counties or cities hosting an annual self-funded programme to disseminate the traditional knowledge on spinning, dyeing, weaving and embroidering. To promote the element among younger generations, primary and secondary schools in the related counties and cities will provide courses on Li textile knowledge.

Li woman prepare the hemp yarn before weaving, Hainan Island.



On the professional front, the provincial government will provide financial aid to improve practitioners' living and working conditions. Villages renowned for specific skills will be designated 'Villages of Li Textiles', while the individuals concerned will receive systematic training to ensure their proficiency in the techniques specific to their locality. The first group of villages will comprise Nankai village (to transmit double-face embroidery techniques); Xifang village (warp ikat techniques); Fanmao village (dress and adornment-making techniques); Hongnei village (hemp-spinning techniques); and Fandao village (cotton-spinning techniques). Governmental and non-governmental funding will be provided for the building-up of raw material

bases consisting of cotton, hemp and indigo plants to provide raw materials for Li textile production.

On the promotional front, an archive and databank of Li textile techniques will be set up to collect relevant information about the element. An official website, research institutes and exhibition venues will also be established to publicize the element, publish academic works and host academic conferences. Local laws and regulations will be introduced to protect this form of intangible cultural heritage.

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed traditional Li textile techniques: spinning, dyeing, weaving and embroidering on the Urgent Safeguarding List as the nomination file satisfied all the selection criteria, as follows:

Definition of intangible cultural heritage	Traditional Li textile techniques, transmitted from mothers to daughters, are skills essential to the personal identity of Li women and to the cultural identity of the Li ethnic group, employed to create cloth that is both practical and richly imbued with symbolic meaning.
State of viability	Widely practised as recently as three decades ago, the Li textile techniques are today mastered by fewer than a thousand women, mostly elderly, and certain techniques such as the double-face embroidery count only a handful of experts; industrialization brings mass-produced goods that displace the traditional textiles, tourism introduces new styles and tastes, and universal childhood education leaves little time for learning traditional skills.
Safeguarding measures	The State and textile artisans have together elaborated a set of safeguarding measures giving first priority to the transmission of textile skills, but including as well efforts to provide raw materials, to introduce legal protections, to raise awareness and to document the rich diversity of textile techniques and designs.
Community participation	Li artisans and civic leaders have taken the initiative to propose inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List and have participated actively in the preparation of the nomination, enlisting the support of national and local authorities for the nomination effort, and giving it their free, prior and informed consent.
Inventory	In response to initiatives from the authorities of Hainan Province, and by decision of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, Li textile techniques were included on the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage administered by the Department of Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Ministry of Culture.

U CURATU: PRETE CARLU - PAULU MARCONI
DI I PERELLI D'ALISCIANI
U CAPI - MAESTRU: MAESTRU GIJACUMU TADDEI
DI A SAMBUGA PISTOIESE

U CAMPANILE

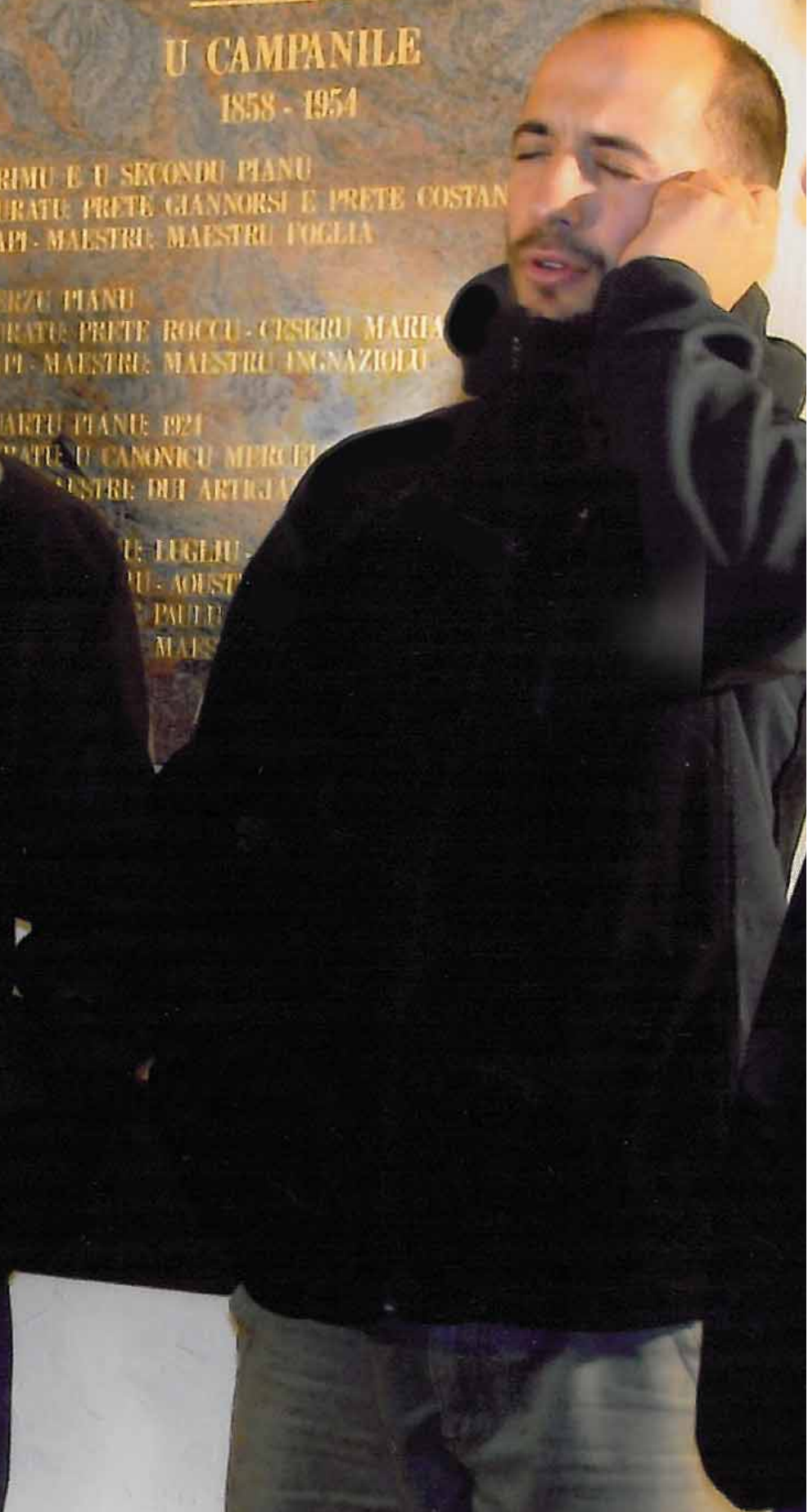
1858 - 1954

U PRIMU E U SECONDU PIANU
U CURATU: PRETE GIANNORSI E PRETE COSTAN
U CAPI - MAESTRU: MAESTRU FOGLIA

U TERZU PIANU
U CURATU: PRETE ROCCU - CESIRU MARIA
U CAPI - MAESTRU: MAESTRU IGNAZIOLU

U QUARTU PIANU 1924
U CURATU: U CANONICU MERCE
U CAPI - MAESTRU: DUT ARTIGIANU

U CAPI - MAESTRU: U FIGLIU -
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The Cantu in paghjella: a secular and liturgical oral tradition of Corsica

The Cantu in paghjella is the traditional unaccompanied chant of Corsican men. Sung in a variety of languages including Corsican, Sardinian, Latin and Greek, it has a distinctive harmonic process characterized by three overlapping vocal registers. Each chant commences with the principle voice, *a segonda*, that defines the pitch and carries the melody. The second, lower voice, *u bassu*, enters next and is followed by the highest, *a terza*. The voices shift scales continuously, with practitioners employing personalized forms of a *riccucata* ornament, a melodious inflexion that allows the other voices to enter into the chant. Each interpretation is known as a *versu*, with various *versi* being linked to specific places or families of cantors. Singers conform to a precise behavioural code: in place of metronomes or sheet music, for instance, the eye, ear and mouth function in close coordination. Singers chant in a circle – the shape most conducive to harmonies.

As an emblem of Corsican identity deeply rooted in its agro-pastoral culture, the Cantu in paghjella is essential to the transmission of local cultural knowledge, and is an integral part of the local social fabric. It forms part of both secular and liturgical oral traditions – secular *versi* are performed in bars, village squares and at fairs and gatherings, while liturgical *versi* are sung during church services, processions and at saint's day feasts. The principle mode of transmission is through observation, listening, imitation and immersion. Young boys are traditionally educated 'by ear' at secular feasts and weekly liturgical

services, then encouraged to join the Church choir at adolescence.

The Cantu in paghjella is traditionally found in rural and pastoral areas of northern Corsica: the regions of Bozziu, Castagniccia and of Tagliu Isulacciu. However, since the 1970s, the practice has extended to all regions of the island with certain *versi* spreading throughout the island territory. At present, thirty practitioners participate regularly in secular and religious Cantu in paghjella.

The number of practitioners of the Cantu in paghjella has diminished by two-thirds over two generations, a 2008 survey revealed. Very few practitioners have mastered its technique and currently practice the form, and most are between 45 and 80 years old. The principle cause of this reduced viability is a decrease in intergenerational contact, created by distance: half of the population, and four-fifths of those under 40, now live in the two principal towns located on the coast, Ajaccio and Bastia. This exodus from rural areas and small towns is largely a result of rapid urbanization. The majority of young singers become casual practitioners, while the rare practitioners aged between 18 and 45 only know at most two *versi*. This restricted knowledge weakens their performances and the acuity of their ear, and leads to a simplified technique of the Cantu in paghjella. The commercialization of Corsican music is accompanied by deformations apparent in the studio and in concert. Local participation and attendance have also decreased.

Petru Santu Guelfucci (R) and Filippu Rocchi (L), provide the u bassu (base voice), in Sermanu church, Corsica, France.

+

SERMANU
A CHIESA DI A NUNZZIATA
1827 - 1844

U CURATE PRETE CARLU - PAULU MARCHI
DI U PERELLI D'ALISGIANI
U CADI - MAESTRU MAESTRU GIACUMU TADDEI
DI A SAMBUGA PISTOIESE

U CAMPANILE
1858 - 1954

CONDU PIANU
E GIANNORSI E PRETE COSTANTINI
E MAESTRU FOGGIA

TE ROCCU - CESERU MARIANI DI SERMANU
E MAESTRU INGNAZIOLU

MERCILLU PARIGI D'ALANDU
STIANI MARIANI DI CORTE

STU 1953
I
DI TOCHISI
SU GIACOBBI DI SI
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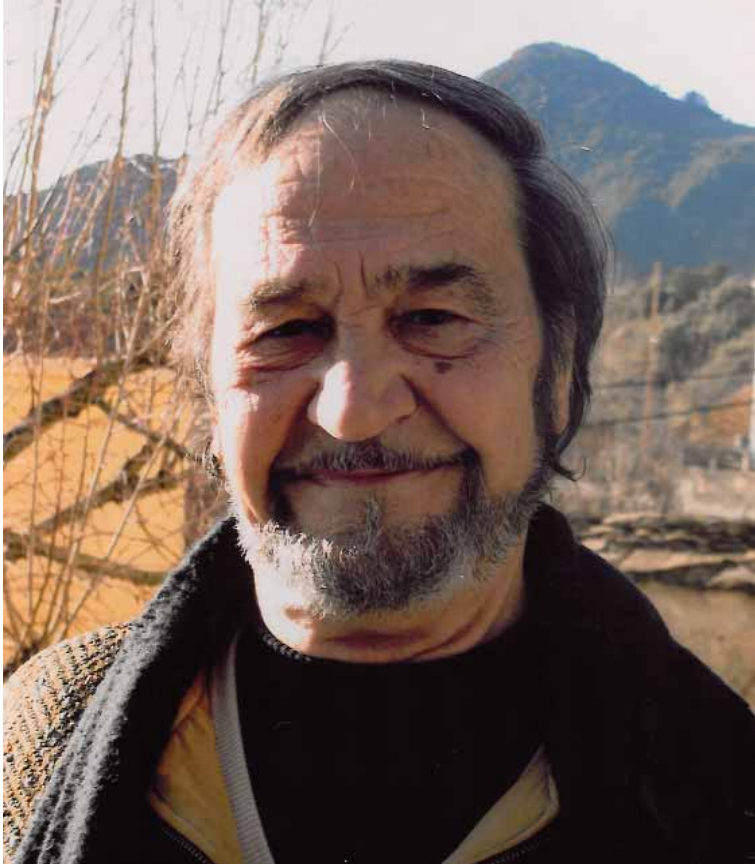


Sunday services are attended less and less often, while fairs coincide with the tourist period and school term. Today, only the secular versi of two villages (Rusiu and Orezza) are regularly performed, while only the liturgical repertory of Rusiu and Sermanu remain complete. In total, five practitioners remain who know how to lead all the secular and sacred versi. The Cantu in paghjella is in danger of disappearing in its present form, surviving only as a tourist attraction devoid of meaning.

Following a symposium in 2006 organized on the theme 'Can Traditional Corsican Polyphony Disappear?', practitioners and anthropologists native to Corsica proposed the creation of an association to ensure the safeguarding and transmission of the Cantu in paghjella. This was established and in 2008 a research team of five persons, together with community practitioners, established an inventory of active practices, noting the significant reduction in practitioners and the impoverishment of its repertory.

The request for the nomination of the Cantu in paghjella to the Urgent Safeguarding List was presented to the members of the Economic, Social and Cultural Council of Corsica (CESC) in 2008. At every stage of the nomination preparation (identification of communities, state of the threats and risks, safeguarding measures), the Association 'Cantu in Paghjella' involved the participation of the practitioner community. Thirty practitioners declared their approval of the principal of inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List and the associated safeguarding plan.

Cantu in paghjella of Corsica performed at Sermanu church: (left to right) the bassu Petru Santu Guelfucci and Filippu Rocchi, the seconda, Petru Guelfucci, and the terza, Dumè Leschi.



Paul Mariani, descended from a family of singers in Sermanu village, Corsica, France.

Even prior to the 2006 symposium and the creation of the Association 'Cantu in Paghjella', a number of younger practitioners began reviving the saint's day feasts and two fairs. A website www.paghjella.com was also launched to disseminate the heritage and allow listeners access to recordings. A number of future safeguarding measures have been proposed, focussing especially on the younger generation.

First, a 'paghjellaghji' network is proposed to further encourage the younger generation to practise and transmit the heritage. Members would receive an annual allocation in addition to their professional income, and be exonerated from income tax. Revival and maintenance of the transmission process would prioritize *in situ* performances, including listening and practical workshops in schools and colleges. The 'paghjellaghji' would also participate in activities to measure the state of degradation or improvement of transmission.

Second, five a seconda voices, five u bassu voices and five a terza voices would each train one voice in each category, over a two-year period. The a seconda voices who are the leaders should be trained in all versi, with the u bassu and a terza voices trained to follow the versi. Thirty apprentices

(fifteen every two years) should be selected and remunerated, and at the end of four years, could benefit from the statute of 'paghjellaghji'.

In addition, the newly created Association should build upon its previous research, which established close working relationships between practitioners, researchers and collectors, by establishing a jointly-prepared protocol agreement. Four researchers would be appointed to collect and analyse the evolution of the secular and liturgical repertory of lay brotherhoods over a four-year period. Their collections would be entrusted to the record library of the Museum of Corsica. Intellectual property protections should be adapted to ensure transmission of the heritage by facilitating access to existing recordings.

Special attention should be given to increasing public awareness of the Cantu tradition and appreciation of its importance. A partnership with the Education nationale should be initiated to raise awareness among pupils of the need to safeguard the heritage. Pupils would participate in evening gatherings and fairs and meet with practitioners, and a documentary should be filmed for the public at large. A partnership between the Museum of Anthropology of Corsica, Association researchers and the 'paghjellaghji' could create a permanent and an itinerant exhibition.

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed the Cantu in paghjella on the Urgent Safeguarding List as the nomination file satisfied all the selection criteria, as follows:

Definition of intangible cultural heritage	An emblem of Corsican identity deeply rooted in its agro-pastoral culture, the Cantu in paghjella is essential to the transmission of local cultural knowledge, an integral part of the social fabric of communities.
State of viability	While continuing to retain its character as an oral tradition and musical practice, and despite the persistence of traditional modes of transmission, the Cantu in paghjella is threatened by changes in the contexts of its performance and oral transmission, musical standardization and an impoverishment of its repertoire following commercialization and popularization, and the continuing demand for novelty from the tourist industry.
Safeguarding measures	An urgent safeguarding plan has been elaborated that underlines the priority of transmission, as well as activities of research, protection, promotion and raising awareness, demonstrating the will for an integrated intervention to benefit the viability of the Cantu in paghjella.
Community participation	The element has been nominated thanks to an active commitment and large participation of the community of practitioners, local officials and civil society during the process of elaborating the nomination file, based on the knowledge of several families of singers and supported by the awareness-raising of local media, and many practitioners have offered evidence of their free, prior and informed consent.
Inventory	The Cantu in paghjella is inscribed in the inventory of intangible cultural heritage present on the territory of France, managed and updated by the Direction for Architecture and Heritage of the Ministry of Culture.

Traditions and practices associated to the Kayas in the sacred forests of the Mijikenda

In the early sixteenth century the ancestors of the Mijikenda communities migrated to the south of present Kenya to escape ethnic conflict in what is now Somalia. They built fortified settlements, or Kayas, in the forests located along the Kenya coast. Today the Mijikenda are made up of nine Bantu-speaking ethnic groups of Kenya. Their identity is expressed through oral traditions and performing arts related to the sacred forests, which are also sources of valuable medicinal plants. The use of natural resources within the Kaya settlements is regulated by traditional knowledge and practices that have contributed to the conservation of their biodiversity.

The nine ethnic groups of the Mijikenda people (the Chonyi, Duruma, Digo, Giriama, Jibana, Kambe, Kauma, Rabai and Ribe) inhabit coastal forests found in southeastern Kenya along a strip stretching from the Tanzanian border to north of the Sabaki River. Over fifty Kaya settlements have been identified.

The Mijikenda established codes of ethics and governance systems, traditions, rituals and practices that sustained peaceful coexistence among all the communities in the Kayas. These practices include *Kuhasa Koma* (praying), *Kuzika Lulu/Nyulu* (burial rites), *Kurya chiraho* (oath-taking),

vingo (talismans), naming of the newly born, initiation, reconciliation, marriages and coronation rituals. The highest social and political organ in the community is the *Kambi*, a Council of Elders that formulates and regulates rules, taboos and myths by consensus and ensures indigenous knowledge transfer to young members of the community. These councils act as custodians of the Kayas and the cultural expressions that underscore the identity, continuity and cohesion of the Mijikenda communities.

There is a strong desire among the Mijikenda to safeguard their practices together with the associated cultural spaces. However, several factors have led to the diminished enactment of traditional practices related to the Kayas, making the communities vulnerable to social conflicts and the environment vulnerable to degradation. Over recent decades, a number of Kayas settlements have become part of private land holdings. Some Mijikenda have left the settlements to look for employment on commercial plantations, where they live as squatters cut off from their traditions, customs and cultural life.

Exposure to western lifestyles through formal education, travel and migration have led many young members of the community to consider

Kadzumba with spirit offerings at Kaya Giriama. The Kadzumba ka Mulungu or 'house of the spirits' is usually placed at a spot known as a Kiza or place of sacrifice, with offerings to ward off malevolent spirits.

NOTICE
KATA FUNGO
SPECIAL AGREEMENT
PROHIBITED



traditions and beliefs associated with Kayas as outdated or irrelevant. Moreover, some members of the community have converted to Christianity and Islam, causing them to discard former practices. Recruitment of younger elders into the Councils of Elders has correspondingly declined. As many of those who lead traditional ceremonies and rituals are elderly, there is a risk that their knowledge will be lost. Moreover, many of the materials necessary for ceremonial practices were traditionally contributed by the inhabitants. Many are presently unable to offer such contributions, partly because of increased living costs. Together, these social trends place the Mijikenda heritage, particularly its transmission to future generations, under serious threat.

In the 1990s, following the request of local communities, the Kenyan government started gazetting Kayas. By 2001, forty-two Kayas had become national monuments and forest reserves, offering opportunities for the protection and promotion of traditions and practices associated with these cultural spaces. Concerned community members soon realized that efforts to safeguard the intangible heritage required equal attention. Consultation meetings and workshops involving the Councils of Elders, Kaya conservation groups, women's groups and youth groups were organized to discuss safeguarding measures for the traditions and practices of the Mijikenda and the conservation of the Kaya forests.

National authorities recognized the role of the Councils of Elders and involved them in consultations pertaining to security and socio-cultural issues in Kaya communities. The Councils agreed to participate fully in activities related to the safeguarding of traditional practices and the conservation of the Kaya forests, strengthen their Councils by including new and younger practitioners, and report to local authorities any destructive activities occurring within the forests.

A dance drama at a burial site in Kaya Giriama, marked with carved wooden koma placed on the graves.







A burial site at Kaya Giriama marked by wooden memorial stakes called koma. Praying or Kuhasa Koma helps maintain the close relationship between the living, the dead and nature.

Representing the communities, the Council of Elders gave their full consent for elements of their traditional practices to be nominated for inclusion on the Urgent Safeguarding List.

Community Conservation and Development Groups have been formed to safeguard tangible and intangible heritage. Both the groups and the Councils of Elders have adopted traditional taboos and practices. Young community members have volunteered to undergo apprenticeship to gain knowledge and understanding of traditional practices in preparation to become future members of the Council of Elders. Several have also been pro-active in conserving the cultural space of the Kaya through the formation of environmental watch groups, providing alerts when these spaces are invaded.

Recently, the Kenya Music and Cultural Festival developed a category to promote the songs, narratives and dances of the Mijikenda Community. Community cultural centres in Chonyi and Kwale will be focal points for the development, promotion and protection of these traditions and practices. The Mijikenda people will be encouraged to organize more gatherings and cultural festivals to promote their traditions and practices to a wider audience.

Future safeguarding measures, including income-generating activities such as bee-keeping, eco-tourism and crafts, may be launched to provide communities with alternative income resources compatible with the operation of the Kayas. Such economic incentives will enable the Mijikenda people to continue living near the Kayas – a prerequisite for the viability and transmission of traditions and practices. Representatives of Mijikenda communities will be encouraged and facilitated to visit other's Kayas. Such visits provide an opportunity to discuss common challenges and ways to safeguard traditions and practices.

Youth and school-going children will be encouraged to learn the relevance and significance of Kaya traditions and practices. School visits to the Kayas will enable children to acquaint themselves with traditional practices, rituals, knowledge and festivals. Schools and colleges will also be encouraged to include cultural days within their calendar.

Lastly, practices and traditions associated with the Kayas of the Mijikenda should be documented to prevent their disappearance. Recording of various songs and dances would also give such cultural practices more visibility and contribute to the likelihood that they would continue to be performed in years to come.

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed the traditions and practices associated to the Kayas in the sacred forests of the Mijikenda on the Urgent Safeguarding List as the nomination file satisfied all the selection criteria, as follows:

Definition of intangible cultural heritage	A set of rituals, ceremonials, social practices, cultural values and traditional knowledge about nature, transmitted orally among the various ethnic groups in the Kaya cultural landscape in Mijikenda forest, strengthens community ties and reinforces their common identity, while promoting mutual respect and social justice and ensuring balanced protection of their forest environment.
State of viability	Despite legislation classifying the Kayas as national monuments and creating the forest reserve, leading to their inscription as cultural landscapes on the World Heritage List, and despite the continuing importance of the Kayas for burial and ritual practices, complex forces including modernization, emigration of community members to urban areas and changing land-use practices around the forest are putting the viability of the traditions and practices associated to the Kayas at risk.
Safeguarding measures	A safeguarding plan favours the interaction between the natural landscape and its associated socio-cultural traditions and practices, involves Mijikenda communities in all levels of its preparation and implementation, and promotes their social and economic development, thus strengthening environmental management and raising interest among young generations in order to secure the transmission of these traditions and practices.
Community participation	The nomination was prepared with due respect for customary practices governing the element and has resulted from a broad consultation within Mijikenda communities, represented by different social groups including women and youth, Kaya conservation groups and councils of elders whose representatives have given their prior and free consent to the project.
Inventory	The element is inventoried by the Kenyan Department of Culture under the Ministry of State for National Heritage and Culture.

Suiti cultural space



Carrying the small altar of the Gudenieki church is a task solely performed by women. The Suiti are a small Catholic group in predominantly Protestant western Latvia.

The Suiti are a small Catholic community in the Protestant part of western Latvia. While some of the traditions that characterize the Suiti culture predate the advent of Christianity in the region, for almost four centuries the Catholic Church has served as the main pillar of local identity. This synthesis of pre-Christian traditions and religious rituals has created a unique blend of intangible cultural heritage.

The vocal drone singing performed by Suiti women is a performance tradition thought to date back more than a millennium. The small community of two thousand people has produced a phenomenal number of folk songs – 52,000 including interpretations – while local folk groups

are in demand across Latvia to help enact small scenes from Suiti wedding rituals. Distinctive and bright traditional costumes are another hallmark of Suiti culture, with some articles of clothing being passed on through several generations. The Suiti cultural space has been preserved and constantly recreated by generations of Catholics in predominantly Protestant surroundings, for whom maintaining their unique intangible heritage and confessional distinctiveness provides a profound sense of shared identity. Many isolated, old farms have existed for centuries, commonly remaining in the same family. These represent cradles of Suiti cultural heritage where skills are transmitted from generation to generation. The Suiti have succeeded in preserving their identity in a small community closely interknit by family ties.

During the Soviet era (1940–1991), emigration, collectivization, deportation and nationalization of land and property all affected the Suiti community, while the role of the Church was severely reduced. The Suiti lifestyle was portrayed as backward and the numbers who actively practised Suiti customs decreased dramatically. Although the post-Soviet period saw the restoration of the Church and associated Suiti practices, lack of competitive employment and the need for further education caused a steady migration of young people to urban centres where they became disconnected from their traditions and cultural identity. The current population is only one fifth of what it was at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Today, only ten people possess substantial knowledge of one or more elements of Suiti



Suiti children play the recorder and the kokle zither, under the watchful eye of their teacher.





Transmission of traditions in the Alsunga weaving workshop. Traditionally, it is during weaving that young girls sing and learn about Suiti culture from older women.

intangible cultural heritage, and barely six good vocal drone singers survive. All are over 60. Artisanal skills such as the making of candles, jewellery, pottery and traditional musical instruments have disappeared. Although there is now a strong interest in recovering these skills through education, training and public events, urgent efforts are needed, as the loss of any senior member often means an irreversible loss of knowledge.

The Suiti language (a dialect of Latvian) is the most endangered element, facing extinction within twenty years. The language is passed on orally and the seven remaining speakers, all elderly, are hesitant to use it. Every year fewer families follow formerly traditional practices. Constant efforts and material resources are needed to enable this small community to withstand the pressures of assimilation posed by popular culture in order to safeguard its rich cultural heritage.

In 2001, some members of the Suiti community, together with municipalities, established the Ethnic Culture Centre Suiti Foundation to increase self-awareness among the Suiti community, and transmit, protect and develop Suiti intangible cultural heritage. In 2007, the Suitu Novads Foundation was established to raise the Suiti community's public profile and create an accessible online digital library about the Suiti Cultural Space.

Together, these two organizations began discussing a nomination of the Suiti cultural space for inclusion on the UNESCO Urgent Safeguarding List as early as 2007. To broaden participation, they organized a series of study trips with local opinion leaders, representatives of municipalities, and the local media. To involve other members of the Suiti community in the decision-making process, the Ethnic Culture Centre Suiti Foundation organized a special



Joy and merry-making mark Midsummer – an important celebration in the annual Suii calendar.

community meeting in August 2008. About seventy people from the community joined the meeting and unanimously agreed to the nomination process.

From the time it was established, the Foundation initiated educational and research activities to promote collection, preservation and transmission of Suii intangible cultural heritage. Summer schools for schoolchildren involving practitioners and local artisans were organized, focusing on vocal drone singing and playing the *kokle* plucked zither, and a small workshop was set up in 2008 to revive traditional weaving skills in the Suii community of Alsunga. Two drone singing festivals took place featuring practitioners from the Suii community. Seminars and presentations concerning Suii and other traditions were also organized.

The Suii community website developed a digital library containing articles on the Suii community, its life, history and intangible cultural heritage. A shorter English version is planned. And the Latvian National Commission for UNESCO, together with experts in education and intangible cultural heritage, developed a study guide to assist schoolchildren. Alsunga Secondary School is now studying Suii intangible cultural heritage over a three-year period.

A number of other safeguarding measures are also planned. On the educational front, the *kokle* zither will be introduced at preschools, with a new curriculum introducing traditional musical instruments such as the bagpipe and horns at Alsunga Music School. Suii culture will be integrated into existing curricula at community schools alongside a curriculum focusing on local life and intangible cultural heritage.

Suii children folk and dance groups will continue, with support for the activities of adult folk and dance groups. A band of traditional Suii musicians will be created and supported, and an annual Suii Folk Festival organized. Other proposed activities include training courses in local artisanal skills, the restoration of Midsummer and wedding traditions, and the making and wearing of Suii traditional costumes.

Studies and research to publicize the heritage will take place, and manifestations and practitioners will be inventoried. Data from old Suii church registers and recorded Suii folk songs will be digitized, and Suii place names will be recorded, compiled and mapped. On the media front, books in the Suii language and on Suii grammar will be prepared and published, alongside a monthly Suii-language publication. A television documentary will also be produced to demonstrate aspects of Suii intangible heritage.

In terms of tangible heritage, plans exist to restore Alsunga medieval castle to host a Suii Culture Research Centre, and to convert the farm birthplace of Suii writer Pēteris Upenieks into an open-air museum. Plans are also afoot to restore cultural centres and Suii religious buildings. Finally, there are proposals to develop a state-supported programme for the safeguarding of the Suii Cultural Space.

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed the Suiti cultural space on the Urgent Safeguarding List as the nomination file satisfied all the selection criteria, as follows:

Definition of intangible cultural heritage	The Suiti cultural space has been preserved and constantly recreated by generations of Catholics in predominantly Protestant surroundings, for whom maintaining their unique intangible heritage and confessional distinctiveness provides the two-thousand-strong Suiti community with a profound sense of valued identity.
State of viability	Although Suiti rituals and practices remain important in the life of the community, their viability is at risk due to the limited economic opportunities for generating income and sustaining the cohesion of the community, shrinking opportunities and resources for their practice and transmission, as well as their lack of prestige among the youth.
Safeguarding measures	Recent safeguarding measures include the establishment of the Suiti Ethnic Cultural Centre and creation of the community's website, while the safeguarding plan to ensure the viability of the element, developed jointly by community members and the relevant authorities, involves adjusting school curricula, supporting informal education and extra-curricular activities, revitalizing certain rituals, training to acquire traditional skills, promoting the Suiti language and inventorying manifestations of Suiti intangible heritage.
Community participation	Adequate documentation is provided to demonstrate that the three local community councils, as well as the active cultural organizations (Suitu Novads and the Suiti Ethnic Cultural Centre), gave their consent and wholehearted support to the nomination.
Inventory	The Suiti Cultural Space has been included by the State Party in 2008 in a 'List of Most Important Values of Latvian Culture' as one of thirteen distinctive expressions of intangible cultural heritage.



The Sanké mon: collective fishing rite of the Sanké

The Sanké mon is a festive ritual in San in the region of Ségou, Mali, celebrated annually on the second Thursday of the seventh lunar month. The Malinké, Bambara and Buwa groups participate in the collective fishing rite, which commemorates the foundation of the town more than six centuries ago and traditionally marks the beginning of the rainy season.

The day before the festival, a secret ritual takes place at the Sanké pond as the 'Priest of the Water Spirits' sacrifices cocks and goats and offers cowries contributed by neighbouring villages, begging the indulgence of the water spirits for the success of the fishing. The collective rite then begins in the afternoon as communities fish together using large and small mesh nets, demonstrating their knowledge and skills in the domain of fishing. The rite is followed by a masked dance on the public square where Buwa dancers from San and neighbouring villages dance to different drumbeats, wearing traditional costumes and hats decorated with cowrie shells and feathers and holding the tails of wild animals.

Allaye Daou, the 'Priest of the Water Spirits' of the Sanké pond. On the eve of the collective fishing, the priest makes sacrifices to the pond to beg the indulgence and benevolence of the water spirits.

Traditional fishing is widespread in the region, however, during Sanké mon the different communities and their diasporas come together to take part in this extraordinary collective practice. The Sanké mon rite thus strengthens social cohesion, demonstrating the religious tolerance of the region, and constitutes a celebration of communal unity through ethnic diversity.

The city of San has some 50,000 inhabitants. The Sanké pond where the Sanké mon ritual takes place is located 2 km outside the city, and is fed during the rainy season by floodwaters of the Bani, a tributary of the Niger River. The land occupied by the Malinkés, Bambara and Buwa communities that practise the rite is situated in the heart of the Bendougou, a cultural area at the crossroads of north and south Mali.

Two families assume the customary responsibilities for the Sanké mon collective fishing rite. The Traoré are the original founders of San and own the Sanké pond. The Daou are the holders of the Sanké Ritual; priests of the water spirits are traditionally drawn from this family.

Although the Sanké mon collective fishing rite continues to take place every year at the same time, the event is diminishing in intensity. There has been a progressive reduction in the level of interest from the inhabitants of San, combined with a lack of knowledge of the history of the event and its importance for the local economy and social cohesion. Various founding myths have been abandoned, and newer practices have been substituted by the younger generation and strangers – such as the organization of wild races the day before the feast. Inadequate attention to the older aspects of Sanké mon means that traditions surrounding the collective fishing rite are now at risk.

Another factor is the state of the Sanké itself. A recent diagnosis revealed threats to the pond, in

particular, decreased water level. This is a result of both natural and human factors: the urban development of the town of San combined with lack of rain has resulted in insufficient water supply to the pond that is now silting up.

The threats to the Sanké mon collective fishing rite are manageable if short and mid-term safeguarding and revitalization measures are taken to counter them. Hence, the importance of the inscription of Sanké mon on the Urgent Safeguarding List.

On 7 May 2001, Mali inscribed the collective fishing rite of Sanké mon on its national heritage inventory. Each year, the National Directorate for Cultural Heritage provides financial support to the town of San to support the organization of Sanké mon festivities.

Sanké mon benefits from cooperative frameworks between the National Directorate for Cultural Heritage, guardian communities and San inhabitants in Bamako. Following diagnosis of threats to its continuity, local communities and professional groups for the promotion of San and its culture requested the Ministry for Culture to increase efforts to safeguard the ritual. The communities also demonstrated their commitment to implementing awareness-raising activities to ensure the continuity of the rite.

In July 2008, fifty community representatives, comprising families, custodians of the Sanké mon rite, the village council of San and other notables, requested the establishment of a local management committee to ensure the perpetuation and transmission of Sanké mon. They also proposed its nomination for inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List. Both proposals were unanimously accepted.

Collective fishing at the Sanké pond brings together all of the diverse peoples of the north-east region of Mali.





Buwa dancers at the festival that follows the collective fishing at the Sanké pond.



A number of activities have been proposed to revitalize and safeguard the rite. The rehabilitation of Sanké pond is a priority and can be effected by clearing waterways obstructed by the impacts of human settlements. The ongoing construction of the Talo Dam could contribute towards this rehabilitation and provide the framework for implementing income-generating activities, such as the creation of a fish farm and market gardening round the pond.

The key to the survival of the Sanké mon ritual is its placement within a dynamic framework. This could be engendered through the creation and promotion of folklore (chants and dances) linked to the rite, but also through the promotion of cultural tourism.

Specific safeguarding measures to improve the viability of Sanké mon have been programmed over a four-year period beginning with inscription. These include the establishment of a structured management system, equipped with material and supplies, to bring together the various stakeholders. The objective is to ensure the enhancement and sustainable safeguarding of Sanké mon by collecting, conserving, promoting and diffusing cultural heritage linked to the ritual practices.

A database will be created to compile existing documentation on Sanké mon from libraries and document centres, followed by collection of field data in communities and grass-root cultural associations. The database will be made available to all actors concerned, along with an inventory report.

Awareness-raising sessions will be held to inform the populations of San of the importance of safeguarding and transmitting the practices and knowledge linked to the rite. Particular emphasis will be placed on educating the younger generation. A range of publicity materials relating to the festival will also be produced and distributed to local actors and tourist agencies.

The media will play an important part, with local radio stations and other media broadcasting information on activities and the importance of conserving and promoting the rite. Music and dances of different communities recorded during the festivities will also be disseminated, and photographic records of the festivals will be exhibited at educational establishments, to raise awareness among young pupils of the importance of safeguarding their cultural traditions.

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed the Sanké mon on the Urgent Safeguarding List as the nomination file satisfied all the selection criteria, as follows:

Definition of intangible cultural heritage	The Sanké mon, recognized by people of San as an important part of their cultural heritage, is a significant expression of traditional worldview that demonstrates the religious tolerance of the region and contributes to the transmission of traditional knowledge and practices; it celebrates the unity of this community through its ethnic diversity by bringing together different groups living within San to celebrate a shared history.
State of viability	Despite ongoing efforts of the traditional authorities to involve young people in the preparation of the festival as a means to pass on knowledge about the history of the community and promote respect for traditional cultural practices, and despite the efforts of local and national officials that led to the recognition of the festival as an important element of national cultural heritage, the transmission process is threatened by the loss of interest among young generations, their migration to urban areas and abroad, and environmental conditions that put the fragile ecosystem of the marsh at risk.
Safeguarding measures	Safeguarding measures including documentation and education of local residents and authorities will facilitate the transmission to young people of the community and encourage best practices that could contribute to protect the environmental health of the pond in the future.
Community participation	State authorities have worked closely with traditional authorities, local officials and the community at large to prepare the nomination project, which contains evidence of their free, prior and informed consent.
Inventory	The Sanké mon: collective fishing rite of the Sanké is inscribed in Mali's Inventory of Natural, Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Mongol Biyelgee:

Mongolian traditional folk dance



G. Tsend-Ayush demonstrating the Torguud Biyelgee dance 'Ereen Khavirga'. In addition to their body gestures, dancers express emotion through facial expression.

D. Usnee dressed in the richly coloured costume from Khoton in Uvs Province, performing the Khovoq dance.

Bearers and performers of the Mongolian folk dance Biyelgee typically live in remote areas of western Mongolia. The dance originated from the nomadic way of life and is regarded as the root and wellspring of all Mongolian national dances. Biyelgee is tightly linked to traditional Mongolian customs and expresses the mentality, lifestyle and languages of its various ethnic groups. Bearers and performers of Biyelgee are found among the Torguud, Zakhchin, Ould, Uriankhai and Myangad groups in Khovd Province and the Bayad, Durved and Khoton ethnic groups in Uvs Province. Each group has its own diverse cultural and customary characteristics, such as dialects, costumes and customs.

The movements found in Biyelgee were defined by the small living space of the *ger* nomadic house. Shrugging and shaking of the chest and shoulders is combined with swift and stiff movements of the arms and legs, hand gestures and facial expressions. Some dances are performed half-sitting or cross-legged. The dance is accompanied by instrumentation performed on the *morin khuur* (horse-head fiddle), *ikel khuur* (two-stringed fiddle), *tovshuur* (lute) and *tsuur* (end-blown flute). The clothing and accessories of Biyelgee dancers feature traditional craftsmanship, including embroidery, knitting and quilting techniques, leather and skin arts, and gold and silver jewellery. The combination of colours and patterns identifies the ethnic group and community of the dancer.

Biyelgee is performed at festive events including weddings, naadam festivities, and family and

community celebrations. It constitutes a peaceful expression of ethnicity and identity and promotes and strengthens mutual understanding among different Mongolian ethnic groups. Traditionally, Mongol Biyelgee is transmitted to younger generations through apprenticeships or home-tutoring within the family, clan or neighbourhood.

During most of the last century, traditional culture and arts, particularly folklore and performing arts, were suppressed in Mongolia because of their association with national identity. This had a substantial impact on the existence and survival of traditions such as Biyelgee. The number of bearers and performers were severely reduced, jeopardizing both the dance's core characteristics and the quality of performance.

Even after the political transformations at the end of the twentieth century, transmission of the traditional elements of Biyelgee continues to face a number of further challenges. Urbanization and globalization have wrought significant changes to the country, leading to the intensification of internal migration. Almost half the population now lives in the capital city Ulaanbaatar.

Biyelgee survives only among a small group of people in remote areas of the westward end of Mongolia. Bearers are isolated in distance from those interested in learning and maintaining the tradition. Furthermore, the current generation of heritage bearers is getting old, and the tradition







Accompanied by the morin khuur horse-head fiddle, M. Jalkh performs the Bayad Biyelgee dance 'Elkendeg'.

has to compete for the attention of practitioners with worldwide pop culture and arts.

Biyelgee is in danger of disappearing altogether. Just over twenty people from different ethnic groups can reproduce and display all its distinctive aspects. Its specific forms are becoming intermixed and elements are being forgotten. Unless action is taken to ensure its survival in its original state, natural environment and social settings, new generations will lose the opportunity to inherit and maintain the tradition.

In recent years, academic research on Mongol Biyelgee and its bearers was undertaken by scholars and researchers in the rural areas of Mongolia with the support of the Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO, the Mongolian Cultural Studies Association and the Association of Mongolian National Arts and Folk Dance. Researchers undertook extensive measures to document and digitize the intangible cultural heritage and its bearers, and map the spread of the heritage. Bearers voluntarily participated in registration and freely offered their consent, as well as their opinions, aspirations, proposals and advice. The principle opinion expressed by practitioners was the need for organized training, public awareness campaigns, research studies, and the strengthening of existing legal frameworks, and financial and administrative supports.

Reflecting this broad input from those concerned, the 'National Programme for Protection and Development of Mongol Biyelgee: Mongolian Traditional Folk Dance' has been approved by the Government of Mongolia. Its four-year training plan aims at teaching and ensuring the transmission of Biyelgee to at least eighty individuals over the next four years; enrolling Biyelgee bearers, dancers and dance instructors under relevant training to improve their skills; strengthening research and public-awareness



T. Khorloo performing the Zakhchin Biyelgee dance 'Khudulmur'.

activities; and encouraging bearers and improving the efficiency of related initiatives and activities.

Planned activities to achieve these goals include the creation of teams incorporating heritage bearers; the setting-up of monitoring schemes; and the development of draft legal frameworks and strengthening of existing legal frameworks. Researchers will carry out regional multi-ethnic surveys to identify the location of heritage bearers, and will create a database of Biyelgee dancers. This will be complemented by the organization of international academic conferences and the publication of proceedings, academic publications and articles.

Training plans and subject curricula will be developed, training and production centres will be established in local communities to specialize in the transmission of Biyelgee, and training manuals and guidelines will be published. Ethnic Biyelgee traditions will also be incorporated into the curricula of professional arts colleges, universities and general education schools.

A series of public-awareness campaigns will be instituted including television documentaries and the distribution of CDs and DVDs focusing on the Biyelgee of each ethnic group. Public meetings and events related to Biyelgee will be organized, including local and national Biyelgee festivals, open seminars and exhibitions featuring heritage bearers. Contacts and cooperation with international institutions, counterparts and scholars will be established, and heritage bearers will be encouraged to participate in international events.

Activities to support and encourage heritage bearers will include state awards and recognition for prominent senior Biyelgee bearers, support for young aspiring dancers to encourage them to enter professional arts schools, and incentives to bearers who actively transfer and learn original Biyelgee traditions. Assistance will be provided to senior Biyelgee masters to access social welfare services, and allowances provided to those who offer home-based training or apprenticeships.

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed the Mongol Biyelgee on the Urgent Safeguarding List as the nomination file satisfied all the selection criteria, as follows:

Definition of intangible cultural heritage

The Mongol Biyelgee includes a variety of dances performed by men and women of different Mongolian ethnic groups during important events of their communities, and reflecting in their movements the activities of nomadic life; it is passed on from generation to generation while constantly being re-imagined and recreated, its participatory aspect reinforcing social cohesion and promoting distinct local identities.

State of viability

Despite the importance of this traditional dance as a manifestation of the strong relationship of the Mongolians with their environment, socio-historical changes of the last decades, including migration and a shift in cultural values, have led to a weakening of the transmission cycle, and the Biyelgee finds itself threatened by the reduced number and advanced age of its practitioners as well as diminished interest among young generations.

Safeguarding measures

The safeguarding measures proposed not only include research and new legal protections, but also attempt to change people's perception of the Biyelgee and to support its primary tradition-bearers; by trying to change young people's attitudes towards the Biyelgee, the safeguarding plan can encourage them to embrace it and to recreate it as a marker of identity.

Community participation

Comments, recommendations and suggestions of Biyelgee bearers, individuals, organizations and researchers have been reflected in the nomination and safeguarding plan, which were prepared with the involvement and consent of a broad range of communal and individual tradition bearers.

Inventory

Biyelgee is listed on the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage in the territory of Mongolia and prioritized as Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.



Mongol Tuuli: Mongolian epic

The Mongolian Tuuli oral tradition recounts heroic epics from Mongolian history. Evolving over a span of many centuries to eulogize and immortalize Mongolian heroes, these epics constitute an oral encyclopaedia of national histories, myths, legends and folk songs. Epics can run from hundreds to thousands of lines, and combine different poetic narrative techniques and vocal improvisation. Epics are learnt by rote and transmitted from fathers to sons within kinship circles. Currently, there are only about ten epic performers living in the remote western region of Mongolia who maintain and transmit these Tuuli performing traditions.

Epic singers are renowned for their remarkable memory, imagination and commitment. Professional singers traditionally perform specific epics during social and public events, such as state affairs, wedding ceremonies, the *naadam* (a wrestling, archery and horseracing festival), a child's first haircut, hunting expeditions and the worship of sacred sites. In ordinary households, epics are traditionally performed at night-time. The singer performs by burning butter-candle: 'Erkh Nachin Khartsaga' for a family wishing to have a child; 'Bayan Tsagaan Uvgun' for wealth and long life. Mongolian heroic epics can last several hours and some are performed over several nights.

During the seventy years of the Mongolian People's Republic, traditional nomadic lifestyles and national culture were suppressed. In its aftermath, Mongolia experienced continued rapid urbanization against a backdrop of

increasing globalization. As a consequence, the Mongolian Tuuli epic lost its traditional place in the culture, and interest decreased correspondingly among the general public. The number and distribution of epic performances diminished drastically as a result. Mongolian Tuuli epics were once found across Mongolia. Today, they survive only in the western region, specifically Duut County in Khovd Province, Malchin and Naranbulag Counties in Uvs Province and in the capital city, Ulaanbaatar.

In today's Mongolia, traditional nomadic lifestyles continue to face pressure from increased internal migration and industrialization. Young people have less free time and increasingly prefer modern culture to the lengthy performances of heroic epics. An additional barrier is lack of understanding of the Uriankhai dialect and archaic lyrics common to heroic epics. Trained professional epic masters have decreased in number and the repertory of existing performers has diminished, with the few remaining epic performers increasingly performing only parts of epics, largely on specific social and ceremonial occasions.

While a recent expert study confirmed that the skills and talents of existing Tuuli performers are diminished compared to the singers of the past, safeguarding measures, if taken quickly, could revive the Mongolian epic. There is consequently an urgent need to strengthen and transmit the skills and techniques of the few existing traditional epic bearers to prevent its permanent loss.

Ya. Tsegeen, an ethnic Bayad epic performer, recites the 'Dunun nast huleg erdene' epic accompanied by the morin khuur, a Mongolian horse-head fiddle.



A Western Mongolian two-stringed lute called the tovshuur.

In recent years there have been a number of activities to promote and safeguard Mongolian Tuuli. Measures to identify and support epic bearers were initiated as part of a Mongolian 'Living Human Treasures' programme, while the Institute of Language and Literature of Mongolia has organized academic meetings and workshops on the safeguarding of traditional epics, and made available the texts of epics in its serial publication *Mongolian Folklore Session*. An international symposium on the 'Central Asian Epic' was organized in 1998, which not only enhanced public awareness, but also encouraged epic performers to exchange experiences and improve their skills. Meanwhile, on the educational front, certain popular epics have been incorporated into secondary and high-school curricula, and two Uriankhai epic singers are working as schoolteachers and training apprentices.

The nomination of Mongolian epic for the Urgent Safeguarding List received the widespread support and consent of the communities, groups and individuals concerned. They actively engaged with specialists from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, scholars and experts, local administrative bodies and NGOs to identify the spread of the epic and register surviving performers. They provided logistics and guidance for meetings between researchers and epic bearers in rural areas; appointed an expert for the field research team; supplied information, photography, audio and audio-visual recordings; and assisted with the elaboration of nomination documents.

Two epic singers from Duut County provided the field research team with important information on the current situation and future safeguarding, as well as facts on rituals and customs related to epic and learning traditions.

Khovd Province and Uvs Province provided transport and local herders and epic performers guided the team through areas during harsh winter weather. Epic singers gave their support by reciting epics and recounting stories on the origin and meaning of customs and rituals. They gave their consent for the usage of their epics for the publicity and development of the Mongol epic worldwide.

Further safeguarding measures and activities are planned as part of a four-year project to create a socio-cultural environment capable of ensuring the survival and viability of Mongolian traditional epics.

To ensure transmission, the traditional epic home-tutoring and apprenticeship method will be restored and developed. Each home-tutoring centre is to train two to three learners and transmit one to two epics along with the techniques of transmission. Mongolian epic training centres will be established at schools and theatres, involving the participation of practitioners and expert scholars, as well as the use of audio recordings to restore forgotten epics. Rituals and customs related to epic performance will also be restored – primarily, the tradition of reciting epics during public and family festive events and rituals.

The local dialects that function as the main vehicle for transmission of epic performances need to be safeguarded. Attempts will therefore be made to revive and recreate these without losing their unique features.

The legal and economic framework for the transmission and development of Mongolian epics needs to be improved to ensure the maintenance of bearers' livelihoods and to create an incentive system for bearers and learners.

Twenty-nine year old A. Baldandorj, an ethnic Uriankhai epic performer, playing a tovshuur (two-stringed lute) while reciting the 'Narankhuu Khaan' epic.





Young students reciting the 'Altain Maqtaal' epic. A good memory is one of the prerequisites of learning as Mongolian epics contain hundreds to thousands of lines.

Public awareness of Mongolian traditional epics will be increased through publications, radio and television, CDs, cassettes and other photographic, sound and audiovisual materials, as well as the promotion of Tuuli through formal and non-formal education systems. Further events related to Tuuli will be organized, including joint symposiums, workshops, epic performances, shows and exhibitions.

Throughout all of these efforts, local people in the current territory of the Mongolian traditional epic, including epic performers, trainers, descendants of old epic singers, folk artists, cultural heritage activists, governmental and non-governmental experts and researchers, will all be fully involved in activities for safeguarding Mongolian epics.

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed the Mongolian Tuuli on the Urgent Safeguarding List as the nomination file satisfied all the selection criteria, as follows:

Definition of intangible cultural heritage

A living oral expression that is crucial for the cultural identity of the Mongolian people and for the historical continuity of their nomadic lifestyle, the Mongol Tuuli epic plays an important role in the traditional education of younger people living in the communities where it is performed.

State of viability

Although Mongolian singers continue to attach great importance to performing the epic within traditional contexts and in sacred settings, and endeavour to transmit performing techniques to the younger generation in the manner learned from their ancestors, the epic is today at severe risk because of its shrinking social sphere, changing socioeconomic conditions and the weakening of nomadic practices, the difficulties for younger people to master the complex poetic language, and the increasing popularity of mass entertainment media.

Safeguarding measures

A safeguarding plan, developed from a careful analysis of urgent needs and long-term goals, emphasizes training young performers in order to sustain intergenerational transmission, while strengthening the status accorded to epics and their singers and revitalizing the traditional ritual contexts of performance.

Community participation

The nomination resulted from a wide-reaching consultative process that involved local communities and epic performers, whose views and aspirations are clearly reflected in the safeguarding measures proposed and whose free, prior and informed consent is demonstrated through letters.

Inventory

Mongolian Tuuli is listed in the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Territory of Mongolia, where it is prioritized as Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.

Traditional music of the Tsuur

Tsuur music, a combination of instrumental and vocal performance, is an ancient form of Mongolian music with a unique sound. Practitioners touch the mouthpiece of the wooden Tsuur flute to their front teeth and apply their throat, producing a clear whistling sound and an accompanying drone. The clear and gentle whistling sounds created are intended to imitate those found in the wild, such as waterfalls and streams, and were originally a form of nature worship.

Since the Hun dynasty, the Uriankhai Mongolians of the Altai Region in western Mongolia have related Tsuur music to the spirit of the Altai Mountains, and revered it as a force to ward off evil from a household. Although once performed at state occasions, Tsuur is today traditionally played on occasions such as weddings, hunts and other festivities, or to appeal for benign weather or safe journeys.

The Tsuur itself is a wooden end-blown flute with three finger holes. The first instruments were fashioned from plants, but these broke easily or wore out quickly. Nowadays, Tsuur are made from larch tree branches or the trunk of a white bush.

The forty known folk melodies and tunes that constitute the Tsuur repertoire are transmitted by memory and are currently preserved by descendants and apprentices of the ancient nomads that populated the northern and southern slopes of the Mongolian Altai Mountains. The traditional music of the Tsuur

forms an important part of the Uriankhai Mongolian's relationship with their natural environment and a critical element in assuring their survival within it. It accompanies daily activities and animal herding as well as religious ceremonies and rituals.

During the long period of Soviet rule, forms of national heritage were suppressed. But even into the 1950s, every Uriankhai family had a Tsuur of its own and the vast majority of Uriankhai Mongolian men could play the instrument. The numbers of practitioners and performances have since declined dramatically, causing an interruption in transmission of this intangible heritage. Ongoing processes of urbanization, industrialization and westernization have resulted in the irreversible breakdown of nomadic ways of life, with the younger generation increasingly attracted towards mass culture at the cost of traditional forms of heritage.

The last prominent Tsuur performer, the late Paarain Narantsogt of the Tsagaan Tug clan, passed away in 2003 at the age of 81, leaving the tradition at the brink of extinction. He was able to pass elements of the techniques of Tsuur and its performance to his offspring and apprentices, and at present, his followers are diligently learning to grasp the secrets of performance and the rich repertoire of their former master. However, the small number of apprentices, their incomplete emulation of Tsuur performance methods and techniques, and their limited repertoire mean that hope for the

Young Tsuur performer, B. Nemekhjargal, is the grandson of eminent performer, Paarain Narantsogt.





revival of Mongolian Tsuur remains faint and the threat of extinction is ever-present.

Traditionally found among members of the Uriankhai ethnic group of the Altai Region, the Tsuur and its traditions are preserved today largely by the descendants and apprentices of the late Paarain Narantsogt in Duut District, Khovd Province, in westernmost Mongolia. In 2007, members of this group, along with a number of art scholars and cultural activists, founded an NGO entitled the Hunnic Tsuur Performers' Association, aimed at preserving and reviving the traditions of Mongolian Tsuur. Led by Buyandelgeriin Naranbat, grandson of the late Narantsogt, this organization is dedicated to the cause of revival and promotion of this performing art. In addition to performing internationally, Naranbat has taught in a Tsuur course at the National Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage and organized a short-term basic Tsuur skills course in neighbouring Bayan Ulgij province.

The descendants of Narantsogt and the Hunnic Tsuur Performers' Association constitute, at present, the primary Tsuur community. Members have been active teaching pilot workshops on Tsuur preservation and inheritance and have vigorously promoted public awareness campaigns on Tsuur preservation, especially through broadcasting and mass media. The community also made enormous contributions to field surveys and the drafting of the nomination bid for inclusion of Mongolian Tsuur on the Urgent Safeguarding List.

The National Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage has recorded the repertoire of the late Paarain Narantsogt, thereby establishing an important database and indispensable learning material for future generations. The Centre also

conducted a field study of the state of the Tsuur tradition. The survey aimed to trace Tsuur traditions remaining extant, identify willing and potentially talented learners, and establish contact with local administrations and institutions, to explore the possibility of launching Tsuur training courses. Subsequently, experimental Tsuur courses were set up in Buyant Soum county of Bayan Ulgij province, Jargalant county of Khovd Province and Ulaanbaatar.

A series of further safeguarding measures have been proposed to revive Tsuur performance, repertoire and related popular customs, and set the basis for a systematic study of the art. These take the form of a nationwide five-year programme, in participation with the descendants and apprentices of Narantsogt and the Hunnic Tsuur Performers Association. In 2001, the Parliament of Mongolia adopted the Law on Cultural Heritage Protection, providing a legal foundation for researching, identifying, documenting, registering, reviving and promoting elements of intangible cultural heritage. This Law constitutes the legal basis and national commitment for Tsuur protection and promotion.

Concerts and festivals will be organized at the local and national level, and a system of allowances will be established for existing Tsuur practitioners. Training courses will be established to ensure the continuation of the heritage. Teacher training courses will be set up for the descendants of Narantsogt, and potentially talented youth will be enrolled in regional training centres, with the most promising selected for professional musical schools. Efforts will aim at reviving Tsuur traditions at the local level, in particular in households, so as to re-establish its connection to its livelihood and traditional customs.

Performer Kh. Chuluun is the grandson of eminent Tsuur master, Paarain Narantsogt of the Tsagaan Tug clan, whose members are keeping the music tradition alive.



Paarain Narantsogt, the eminent Tsuur performer, with his family.

Measures will also be undertaken to promote the revival of the traditional Mongolian Tsuur repertoire, through the recording and notation of known melodies, and research for forgotten melodies. Promotional activities will include the preparation and dissemination of study guides

based on video and audio documentation of the performance and repertoire of Narantsogt. Documentary series and CDs featuring Tsuur performances will be promoted on radio and television broadcasts. Academic conferences on Tsuur will also be organized.

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed the traditional music of the Tsuur on the Urgent Safeguarding List as the nomination file satisfied all the selection criteria, as follows:

Definition of intangible cultural heritage	Deeply rooted in the nomadic ways of life of the Uriankhai ethnic group of the Altai Mountains in north-western Mongolia, the traditional music of the Tsuur is an important part of the people's relationship with their natural environment and a critical element in assuring their survival within it, as it accompanies daily activities and animal herding as well as religious ceremonies and rituals.
State of viability	Despite a growing awareness and concern about local and regional traditional cultural forms, and the willingness and active commitment of apprentices to preserving the element, the tradition of the Tsuur is threatened by developments such as an ever-growing appeal of cosmopolitan lifestyles, migration to urban areas, processes of urbanization and industrialization, the loss of the cultural contexts for its practice and the passing of Tsuur performers.
Safeguarding measures	An ambitious set of safeguarding measures, including the support of performers and teachers, the identification of aspiring players, or the preparation of audio-visual training materials, while raising the legal status of the Tsuur, addresses essential needs and can be expected to have a lasting impact on the element's viability.
Community participation	The nomination has been elaborated with the active involvement of the Tsuur-playing community, in particular the Hunnic Tsuur Performers' Association, key Tsuur performers, and communities in several counties that have shown their willingness to safeguard Tsuur playing and have given their free, prior and informed consent to its nomination.
Inventory	The Uriankhai Mongolian Tsuur is inscribed on the National Urgent Safeguarding List of Elements of Intangible Cultural Heritage and the National Registrar of the Elements of Intangible Cultural Heritage kept by the Cultural Heritage Center under the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science of Mongolia.

Ca trù singing

Folk artist Nguyễn Phú Đe teaching the đàn đáy three-stringed lute to Phạm Thị Huệ who is a teacher of traditional instruments at the Viet Nam Conservatory of Music.

Ca trù is a sophisticated form of sung poetry found in the villages and urban areas of fourteen provinces and cities in the north of Viet Nam, as well as in Hồ Chí Minh city in the south. It emerged in the fifteenth century, and was originally performed as an accompaniment to worship (*hát thờ*). With time, highly skilful performances were also given at the royal palace on ceremonial occasions (*chúc hũ*), competitions were held (*hát thi*), and the art became a form of upper and middle class entertainment (*hát chơi*).

Ca trù groups are made up of three performers. The female singer employs a high register and a unique form of ornamentation known as *nảy hạt*. She guides herself on *phách* wooden or bamboo clappers, while two other musicians play the *đàn đáy* three-stringed lute and the *trống chũ* praise drum. The drummer uses particular drum patterns to express his appreciation or criticism of the performance. Ca trù has fifty-six different musical forms or melodies, each of which is known as *thể cách*. Some Ca trù performances also include *hát cửa đình* singing in communal houses accompanied by different forms of dances such as *bỏ bộ*, *tứ linh*, and *bài bông*, although this has declined with the loss of communal houses.

Ca trù singing embodies a range of musical and dance practices, as well as expertise and knowledge of poetry, constituting an identity marker of Vietnamese communities. It is transmitted by musicians and devotees dedicated to performing, teaching and

developing the tradition. Transmission formerly occurred within families, however, folk artists now teach any who wish to learn.

From 1945 to 1975, Ca trù cultural heritage fell into oblivion, largely because of insufficient awareness and partly because of a succession of wars. Since 1990, Ca trù has undergone a modest process of revival, as the government and society at large have become more aware of its value and importance. However, despite this renewal of interest, the survival of Ca trù remains under threat.

One factor is the loss of dedicated performance spaces. Those in royal palaces no longer exist. The same can be said for village communal houses. Furthermore, in spite of attempts at restoration, old Ca trù songs remain incomplete and few can compose new lyrics in the traditional pattern, or master the difficult Han Nom ideographic script.

Furthermore, research in 2008 revealed that of the twenty-one folk artists registered in 2004, four had passed away and five were so weak that they were unable to perform or teach Ca trù. Of those that remain, the youngest was in his late 70s and the oldest was 100 at the time of the survey. Despite efforts undertaken by these folk artists to transmit the Ca trù repertoire, the entire heritage may be lost within a few years unless they are given the necessary support and better conditions.

Since the late 1990s, a series of scientific conferences, workshops and discussions concerning Ca trù have taken place, featuring the participation of folk artists, musicologists,

Thái Hà Ca trù club, Hà Nội.







Ca trù Hát Chúc hô (singing in the royal palace) was performed on celebratory occasions, with only the most gifted singers and instrumentalists chosen to perform.

researchers and cultural managers. The aim of these events has been to assess the situation of Ca trù, promote its value, establish plans for research, documentation, restoration, transmission and preservation, and increase awareness and dissemination of the heritage.

Following the Vietnamese government's decision to submit a nomination file on Ca trù singing for the Urgent Safeguarding List, many local communities participated voluntarily in preparatory activities. They assisted with the inventory of Ca trù cultural heritage in their localities, while many Ca trù folk artists and family lines provided valuable documents and information relating to the appearance and specific characteristics of Ca trù heritage. Practitioners also enthusiastically re-performed Ca trù musical forms so that the Vietnamese Institute for Musicology could make audio and video recordings.

Folk artist Nguyễn Thị Vuon transmitting Ca trù to young people in Chanh Thôn village, Phú Xuyên district, Hà Nội.

During the preparation of the nomination file, local communities participated in conferences and workshops to present their viewpoints, helped to analyse and select priorities for urgent safeguarding, and proposed measures for revitalizing, safeguarding and disseminating the heritage. Recognizing the urgent situation and the challenges at hand, the communities committed themselves to carrying out short and long-term action plans for the preservation and dissemination of Ca trù. Finally, the communities undertook the final review of the nomination file.



An inventory of Ca trù singers was undertaken between 2004 and 2008, which influenced the founding of twenty-two Ca trù clubs established to preserve, perform and transmit the heritage to young performers. The revitalization and transmission of Ca trù are an on-going concern. Currently, introductory and specialized courses are being taught by folk artists in Ca trù clubs of



Folk artist Ngô Trọng Bình, born in 1927, Thanh Hóa city.

fourteen cities and provinces. In the specialized Ca trù classes practitioners transmit thirty musical forms and eight dances to younger singers. The introductory classes teach Ca trù songs and dances, as well as lute-playing.

The dissemination and popularization of Ca trù will spread to high schools and universities in 2010, through the organization of extra-curricular

activities. The aim is to encourage familiarization and study of the heritage. Materials on Ca trù suitable for all levels from high school to university will be compiled and printed.

Another current project concerns research and publication of books on Ca trù. Specific activities include the production of a training textbook for the National Academy of Music and Conservatories in Viet Nam, the translation and publication of 4,000 papers of Ca trù-related Han-Nom materials, and the production of a DVD. Earlier research is complemented by an inventory and systematization of Ca trù documentation including audio and video recordings – a three-year programme that will culminate in the establishment of a database at the Vietnamese Institute for Musicology.

Five festivals have also been organized to create new opportunities for the community to promote and disseminate Ca trù. These will continue with the creation of two national Ca trù festivals and one local Ca trù festival, alternating between regions.

Lastly, efforts will be undertaken as part of a ten-year programme to restore places of worship related to Ca trù. In the past, every year or in Spring and Autumn, those who practised Ca trù gathered in such places to perform ceremonies praising the ancestors.

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed Ca trù singing on the Urgent Safeguarding List as the nomination file satisfied all the selection criteria, as follows:

Definition of intangible cultural heritage	Ca trù singing embodies a range of musical and dance practices, as well as expertise and knowledge of poetry, constituting an identity marker of Vietnamese communities that is transmitted today by musicians and devotees dedicated to performing, teaching and developing the tradition.
State of viability	Ca trù has seen a revival of interest in recent years, creating an important base for developing a sustainable Ca trù culture in a modern context, yet the element's viability is still at risk due to the small number of musicians with sufficient competence, knowledge and skill to perform and teach Ca trù, a lack of financial resources necessary to sustain and develop the form, the loss of traditional performing places, and rapid processes of economic, social and cultural change.
Safeguarding measures	The proposed safeguarding measures are coherent and wide-ranging, supported by an ambitious and well-funded plan to safeguard Ca trù that can be expected to have a significant impact on the sustainability of the practice and transmission of Ca trù singing, while relying on the deep knowledge still existing in the participating communities.
Community participation	The element has been nominated with the free, prior and informed consent of communities, groups of musicians, their families, Ca trù clubs, and with the support of relevant Government departments, while the inscription and the proposed safeguarding measures will pay adequate respect for the customary practices and rules concerning various rituals, local beliefs and associated family matters.
Inventory	Ca trù singing is included in the inventory of Vietnamese musical heritage and performing arts held by the Vietnamese Institute for Musicology within the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism.

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Intangible Heritage of Humanity

List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding

The List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding is established in accordance with Article 17 of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Its primary objective is to mobilize concerted efforts of various stakeholders in order to safeguard particularly endangered intangible cultural heritage.



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