

Principles and Experiences of Drawing Up ICH Inventories in Europe, Tallinn, Estonia

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As the present seminar analyses various problems concerning ICH inventories, my presentation will focus on some of the elements related to Romania's experience in this field. First of all, I should say that ICH has come more and more to experts' attention in the past few years. An important fact is that an old Romanian tradition named "Căluș" is widely known as it now is a part of World's Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Starting with 2007, Romania has a National Commission for Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage sub-ordered to the Ministry of Culture and Religious Affairs and formed by experts of different areas (for example, Ethnology, Musicology, Anthropology...). This Commission must contact any national institution which is in the possession of inventories (or any specialist/ person who may offer information for that matter) and also to take any actions needed in order to draw the national inventory. This proves to be a complex process which must take in account different aspects.

Before asking if the process is either top-down or bottom-up, we should note that experts who have recently met in New Delhi emphasized on the fact that there shouldn't be any question of hierarchy. Thus we would rather pay attention to the importance and impact that each element/individual has in the immediate area/community it belongs to.

Regarding the relation between local and national inventories, when local inventories exist they are drawn either by performers belonging to certain communities or/and by experts. The **OU 19/2007** contains a special chapter called Unconventional Archives that include gathering all types of data related to ICH, however the source or support they are registered on may be. The institutions involved in this process both at the local and the national level are **Regional Centers for Cultural Issues** in each administrative area of the country and also **The National Centre for Conservation and Promotion of Traditional Culture**, the latter being sub-ordered to the Ministry of Culture and collaborating to all the local centers.

As to the involvement of the community, contrary to all appearances this is not a problem very easy to deal with. Let alone the fact that community may not be very open to this process, there is the problem of intervention of experts or any institution which can alter or even make disappear the basic profile of the elements of ICH. There is a very shallow separation between conserving a certain element of ICH in close relation to its original environment and exposing it to public manifestation, a thing which may affect the quality and originality.

All the institution and experts involved in ICH inventories should take in account the role of the individuals and the human factor in general. For Romania, this is to be discussed in terms of mentality. The individuals are involved in all kinds of activities of the community and some of them become models, they are the "treasures" and the community is known also through them. Although the first idea is that community creates mentalities, in our case mentality created by these individuals changes community. Not only the external influences bring changes at different levels, but there is also an internal

mechanism specific to each human form of organization that determines each individual's reaction towards its own cultural, social and personal environment. This could be in fact the thing that triggers the necessity of safeguarding. At the same time, the role of individual is essential as an antidote to globalization and loss of traditional values.

With reference to a supposed contradiction of particularities and universalities on local to national and international level, we think the term "contradiction" should be clearly defined. Each community has evolved in a separate context. On one hand, this fact determined the appearance of a set of elements which are relevant on the local level, but not on universal level (for example, different ways of surviving or dealing with the natural environment, as it was the case of the so-called "bordei", a semi-buried cottage, built in remote places). On the other hand, there are elements which meet in, if we may say so, a determination area/substrate, significant to the entire humanity, in other words things that are common to most of the human communities (rituals of initiation, forms of ritual sacrifice).