



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

**LIST OF INTANGIBLE
CULTURAL HERITAGE
IN NEED OF URGENT
SAFEGUARDING**

2010

2011





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Foreword

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DIRECTOR-GENERAL
OF UNESCO



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Our intangible cultural heritage is a bridge linking our past and our future. It is the way we understand the world and the means by which we shape it. It is rooted in our cultural identities and provides a foundation of wisdom and knowledge upon which to build sustainable development for all. Intangible cultural heritage is a precious asset for communities, groups and individuals across the world. Only they can safeguard it and pass it on to tomorrow's generations. The responsibility of international organizations and governments is to support these efforts in every way possible.

This is the role of UNESCO's 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, which provides a unique opportunity to discover and sustain living cultural expressions from across the world. The Convention serves as a tool for social cohesion and also helps to guide us in implementing practices that are vital for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The objectives of the Convention are clear: intangible cultural heritage should promote mutual respect among communities; it should support human, social and economic development; and it should be compatible with human rights. More than 140 States have rallied around these goals. We also know that intangible cultural heritage is vulnerable to the pressures of change. This makes safeguarding all the more vital.

The fifth and sixth sessions of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage were held in Nairobi (November 2010) and Bali (November 2011). These sessions saw new inscriptions on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding as well as the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. New programmes were also selected for inclusion in the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices. These inscriptions have generated tremendous enthusiasm among States and communities across the world, proud to see their cultural identities recognized at the international level.

For the first time, the Committee session in Bali examined the reports of five States on the Convention's implementation. This complex process begins with public planning and an appropriate legal framework. It involves identification and documentation, as well as support for practitioners, and encompasses a wide range of training and educational initiatives. Implementing the Convention carries responsibility over the long term.

Effective global capacity-building is an essential part of this responsibility. We must do everything to help States safeguard the intangible cultural heritage on their territories in close partnership with the relevant communities. The tenth anniversary of the Convention in 2013 is a chance to review progress and to consider the challenges and constraints – as well as the opportunities – relating to the Convention's implementation.

The present publication offers an insight into the great diversity of humanity's living heritage across the world. At a time of rapid and profound change, we must strengthen our common resolve and take action to safeguard this heritage for the benefit of future generations. This is the core message of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage on the eve of its first decade.

The Convention serves as a tool for social cohesion and also helps to guide us in implementing practices that are vital for achieving the Millennium Development Goals.



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, assisting its 195 Member States to build on their human and institutional capacities.

The Culture Sector, one of the Programme Sectors of UNESCO, has over the years been involved in the creation of seven international conventions in the field of culture,⁽¹⁾ for which it acts as secretariat. The Sector assists 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.

INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE CONVENTION

The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was adopted during the 2003 General Conference of UNESCO and entered into force in 2006. It 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 intangible cultural heritage at the 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, 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). Intangible heritage takes many forms, including oral expressions and traditions; performing arts; social practices, 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 are: the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005); the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003); the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (2001); the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972); the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Cultural Property (1970); the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954); and the Universal Copyright Convention (1952, 1971).

(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.
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 (...)

The 2003 Convention is governed by two statutory organs: the General Assembly, made up of signatory States to the Convention, which meets every two years to provide strategic orientations for the implementation of the Convention; and the twenty-four members of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (elected by the General Assembly), which meets 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 List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding and the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, as well as to select programmes, projects and activities that best reflect the principles and objectives of the Convention in order to create the Register of Best 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. The primary objective of the Urgent Safeguarding List is to mobilize the 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 confirm the commitment of the States Parties and the concerned communities towards their safeguarding efforts. The driving force for inscription and subsequent safeguarding is apparent in the ways and means deployed by the States Parties concerned to ensure that, once an element has been inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List, the safeguarding measures proposed in the nomination files meet with success.

In the case of endangered elements of intangible cultural heritage nominated by States Parties that are developing countries, the Committee and the international community may also provide 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 of implementing safeguarding measures ultimately lies with the nominating States Parties.

Intangible cultural heritage is a 'living' entity, 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 intangible cultural heritage in question is no longer endangered, the Committee can remove it from the List. Removal from the Urgent Safeguarding List can thus demonstrate 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 an awareness by States Parties of the presence of endangered intangible cultural heritage in their territories. Once the element is identified and the community concerned have provided their free, prior and informed consent to nominate their heritage to the Urgent Safeguarding List, the submitting State must complete and submit to UNESCO form ICH-01, available for download from the ICH Convention website (www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/forms). Based on the recommendations of appointed examiners, the Committee evaluates the nominated element and decides whether or not to inscribe it. It should be clearly noted that an unsuccessful nomination to the Urgent Safeguarding List does not, in any way, constitute a judgement about the element itself but reflects only the adequacy of the nomination file. 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 asked 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):

Criterion U.1 — The element constitutes intangible cultural heritage as defined in Article 2⁽²⁾ of the Convention.

- Criterion U.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 U.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 U.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 U.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 Articles 11⁽³⁾ and 12⁽⁴⁾ of the Convention.

Criterion U.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⁽⁵⁾ of the Convention.

(...) 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.

(5).

Article 17: List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding

- 1. With a view to taking appropriate safeguarding measures, the Committee shall establish, keep up to date and publish a List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding and shall inscribe such heritage on the List at the request of the State Party concerned.
- 2. The Committee shall draw up and submit to the General Assembly for approval the criteria for the establishment, updating and publication of this List.
- 3. In cases of extreme urgency - the objective criteria of which shall be approved by the General Assembly upon the proposal of the Committee - the Committee may inscribe an item of the heritage concerned on the List mentioned in paragraph 1, in consultation with the State Party concerned.

The 2003 Convention includes a provision for those intangible heritage elements in extreme need of safeguarding (see criteria U.2 and U.6). In cases of extreme urgency, the Committee may inscribe an item of the heritage concerned on the Urgent Safeguarding List on an expedited basis, in consultation with the State Party concerned. Developing countries can request preparatory assistance in completing the nomination file, a requisite component of which is close consultation between government officials and the communities concerned as well as photographic and film documentation. Developing countries wishing to 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/en/forms).

The present publication presents the fifteen intangible cultural heritage elements that constitute the Committee's 2010 and 2011 inscriptions on the Urgent Safeguarding List. It provides a description of all the elements and their communities, the threats and the planned safeguarding measures, as well as the Committee's decisions. We hope that it will give readers an insight into the determination shared both by the States and the communities to safeguard the inscribed endangered elements. More detailed information – including the nomination files, community consents, photographic and film documentation as well as any updates – is available for consultation on UNESCO's intangible heritage website (www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/lists).

While many of us show an interest in – and demonstrate a commitment towards – safeguarding intangible cultural heritage practices in the hope of protecting cultural diversity, 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 them, 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, complex nature of safeguarding as well as its own limited reach at the local level. Moreover, as an intergovernmental organization, UNESCO cannot single-handedly 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 those communities and States that demonstrate commitment and a willingness to safeguard their endangered intangible heritage, but require technical know-how or financial assistance, can receive assistance in order to carry out their safeguarding plans.



Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding 2010–2011



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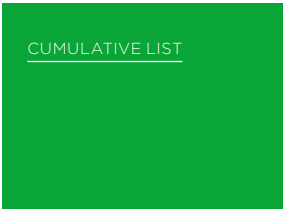


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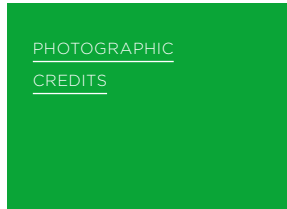
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Yaokwa, the Enawene Nawe people's ritual for the maintenance of social and cosmic order

The Enawene Nawe people live in the Juruena River basin in the southern Amazon rainforest, a transition zone between the Cerrado (Brazil's vast tropical savannah region) and the rainforest itself. The group's Indigenous Land encompasses part of their traditional territory located in the north-west of the state of Mato Grosso. At present, the Enawene Nawe comprise some 540 individuals, divided into clans. They have a vast knowledge of fish reproduction and migration, and organize great fishing expeditions using vegetable poisons, bows and arrows, cone-shaped traps and dams.

The Enawene Nawe recognize two distinct seasons: the drought season (Iokayti), associated with rituals in honour of the Yakairiti spirits, Yaokwa and Lerohi; and the rainy season (Onekiniwa), associated with rituals surrounding the Enore Nawe spirits, Salumã and Kateoko. The Yaokwa ritual is performed every year during the drought period to honour the Yakairiti spirits, thereby ensuring cosmic and social order for the various clans. It links biodiversity to a complex, symbolic cosmology that connects the different but inseparable domains of society, culture and nature and is an integral part of the Enawene Nawe's everyday activities and enhances their sense of identity.

Every year the village is divided (alternating between clans) between a group of men who act as hosts to the spirits and another group who go on a two-month fishing expedition to dams scattered throughout the traditional Enawene Nawe territory. The fishermen build the dams and catch, smoke and store the fish that will be taken back to the village. The hosts prepare to receive the spirits when the men return: they produce offerings of rock salt, make ritual costumes, clean the village courtyard and the path along which the spirits will come, organize the storage of manioc and keep up the stocks of firewood for the night bonfires. These numerous activities involve knowledge, skills, art and memory, in a strict sequence lasting seven months and which involves the entire community.

The Yaokwa ritual – practised by the Enawene Nawe since time immemorial – is dedicated to the spirits who own most of the natural resources and are the lords of death and misfortune. It aims to appease these spirits through the offerings of rock salt, fish, ritual food, dance and song and ward off potential dangers if the task is not fulfilled. The ritual combines a knowledge of agriculture, food processing, handicrafts (costumes, tools and musical instruments), construction (especially the House of Flutes and fishing dams), music and the performing arts. Singers are an essential part of the ritual: they are the drivers of the paths that lead Enawene Nawe society towards the spirits and they act as guardians of the collective memory.





**.../... Yaokwa, the Enawene Nawe people's ritual
for the maintenance of social and cosmic order**

The Juruena watershed, which supplies the rivers that flow into the Amazon and physically and symbolically feeds the many people who historically inhabit the region, is an extremely fragile ecosystem. Yaokwa – and the local biodiversity it celebrates – depends directly on the preservation of this ecosystem. However, it is seriously threatened by deforestation and invasive practices such as intensive mining and logging, extensive livestock activity, water pollution, unregulated urban settlement, road construction, the drainage and diversion of dams, the burning of forests, illegal fishing and the trade in wildlife.

In 1996 the Brazilian Government demarcated the Enawene Nawe's lands as an area of 742,088 ha. However, the Preto River region – part of their traditional territory – was excluded, which jeopardizes their future and that of Yaokwa. There is a major fishing dam on the riverbed and the river is one of the few places where Genipapo can be found for body painting, and black soil for corn planting. It is also home to macaws and parrots, whose feathers are used in the ritual costumes. Rock salt and the raw materials used to make baskets, ceremonial flutes and fish traps are all found there.

The Enawene Nawe have established a partnership with the NGO Native Amazon Operation (OPAN) to help them avoid the drastic depopulation registered in other indigenous groups. Yaokwa was recognized as Brazilian Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2010, and the following year, a four-year action plan specifically designed to preserve the ritual was drawn up. It has two specific goals: to monitor and protect the biodiversity that characterizes the region and is indispensable for the enactment of the ritual; and to support the logic governing the systems of production and the handing down of knowledge. The key areas covered by the plan are: environmental management; diffusion of the Enawene Nawe culture; support for the organization of the Enawene Nawe people; and measures to ensure food, health, education and income-generating opportunities.

Plans are being drawn up with the Brazilian Institute of Environment and Natural Resources (IBAMA) in the area of environmental management. The goals are to: ensure the Enawene Nawe people's continuity and sustainability; secure financial advantages from the environmental services provided by the Enawene Nawe in ensuring ecological balance and biodiversity; set up an executive council for the Juruena River basin; seek recognition for the importance of the Preto River in safeguarding Yaokwa; register the Juruena River basin as a Cultural Landscape site; draw up land-management plans, based on an inventory of the territory's natural resources; prepare a registry of the traditional knowledge associated with the use of biodiversity in order to ensure the continuity of rituals, ecological processes and the transmission of knowledge; and monitor the territory's water resources and ichthyofauna.

An effort will be made to raise public awareness of the Enawene Nawe by promoting a positive image of their cultural practices. With the support of the National Institute of Historical and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN), documentary materials will be prepared and Yaokwa will be promoted outside official contexts.

There are several measures designed to strengthen the Enawene Nawe's traditional organization: a permanent, multidisciplinary team of advisers will be approved by the community; improved communications among the Juruena Valley indigenous peoples will encourage their participation in political and institutional decision-making that directly affects them; Enawene Nawe Association managers will be trained in accordance with traditional forms of political organization; there will be close surveillance to protect the Enawene Nawe Indigenous Land; channels will be created for effective political dialogue at municipal, state and federal level; and relationships will be established with the media and the public. Lastly, several income-generation, food, health and education initiatives are planned, with the support of the National Foundation for Indigenous People (FUNAI) and the ministries of social development, health and education.

1

COUNTRY

BRAZIL

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2011

.../... **Yaokwa, the Enawene Nawe people's ritual for the maintenance of social and cosmic order**

The feasibility of the action plan depends on the involvement of government organizations such as the State Secretariat for the Education of Mato Grosso, the National Health Foundation and the ministries of education and health, together with NGOs such as IPHAN, OPAN and FUNAI. It will be managed and implemented by these institutions, under the leadership of the Enawene Nawe Association and supported by IPHAN and OPAN, which are already involved in the safeguarding process. The Enawene Nawe Association managers will be trained in accordance with traditional forms of political organization; there will be close surveillance to protect the Enawene Nawe Indigenous Land; channels will be created for effective political dialogue at municipal, state and federal level; and relationships will be established with the media and the public. Lastly, several income-generation, food, health and education initiatives are planned, with the support of the National Foundation for Indigenous People (FUNAI) and the ministries of social development, health and education.

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed the **Yaokwa, the Enawene Nawe people's ritual for the maintenance of social and cosmic order** on the Urgent Safeguarding List as the nomination file satisfied all the selection criteria, as follows:

Definition of intangible cultural heritage

The Yaokwa ritual constitutes a pillar of the life and universe of the Enawene Nawe people, and the entire society, including the youngest members, is involved in its practice and transmission.

State of viability

The submitting State has identified the threats to the viability of the Yaokwa ritual, particularly the threats to the territory and ecosystem of the Enawene Nawe people whose existence is necessary for expressing the intangible cultural heritage.

Safeguarding measures

The measures presented by the State aim on the one hand at strengthening the protection of the Enawene Nawe people's environment and on the other hand at strengthening their material, financial and organizational capacities in order to provide them with the means to manage and protect their land and to defend their interests with greater self-reliance.

Community participation

The Enawene Nawe community participated actively in the nomination process and provided evidence of its free, prior and informed consent.

Inventory

The Yaokwa ritual was recognized as Brazilian Intangible Cultural Heritage in November 2010 by the National Institute of Historical and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN), on the initiative of the Enawene Nawe people.



2

COUNTRY

CHINA

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2011

Hezhen Yimakan storytelling

The Hezhen people have long inhabited the ‘three rivers’ region in north-eastern China. With a population of approximately 4,600, they are one of China’s smallest ethnic minorities. Yimakan storytelling, which is performed in the Hezhen language and mixes verse and prose, is an oral genre that has existed for hundreds of years. It consists of many independent episodes celebrating heroic feats, tribal alliances and battles in defence of ethnic dignity and territorial integrity, including the defeat of monsters and invaders by Hezhen heroes. Other themes include beauty and bravery, love and wisdom, local knowledge and even daily chores. Yimakan also preserves the traditional knowledge of shamanic rituals, fishing and hunting, which are central to the Hezhen’s worldview.

The basic storyline tells how the *mergen*, or hero, becomes tribal chieftain after enduring many trials and tribulations and finally leads his people to a peaceful life in their homeland. One of the most ancient stories is the *Sirdalu Mergen*, which the Hezhen consider ‘the first heroic epic since the creation of the world’. Episodes of the *Mandu Mergen* may last anything up to nine hours. So far, about fifty episodes have been recorded.





Master storytellers, or *Yimakanqi mafa*, usually train in a master-apprentice relationship within their own clans and families, although nowadays outsiders are increasingly accepted as apprentices. The term '*Yimakanqi mafa*' refers to someone with a quick mind and an excellent command of the language. He is expected to improvise smoothly during a performance, while following the traditional storylines, motifs and formulaic diction.

The stories are performed without instrumental accompaniment, alternating between singing and speaking, and use different melodies – youth melodies, elderly melodies, female melodies, and so on – to represent the characters and plots. Although many facets of the singing and reciting are formulaic, improvisation is common.

2

COUNTRY

CHINA

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2011

.../... Hezhen Yimakan storytelling

Embedded within Hezhen society and culture, Yimakan storytelling has long been the most popular form of entertainment – it is enjoyed during hunting and fishing expeditions, at weddings and house-building ceremonies and during feasts and festivals, and particularly during the long, cold winters. Nowadays, it provides a vehicle for the younger generations to learn about their history and culture, while opening a window onto the Hezhen community for outsiders.

As the Hezhen language does not have a written script, Yimakan plays a key role in preserving the community’s mother tongue, religion, beliefs, folklore and customs – this time-honoured oral tradition is seen as the ‘living link’ between the Hezhen’s past and their present. Today, however, the art of Yimakan storytelling is under threat both from outside and within the community. In the past, it was intimately connected with the everyday life and productive activities of the Hezhen – each community had its own *Yimakanqi mafa*, who enjoyed universal respect. In the 1980s there were more than twenty ‘masters’; now there are only five – and they can perform only part of the repertoire.

Rapid globalization has brought profound changes to the Hezhen’s environment and lifestyle, threatening the social conditions and cultural contexts that sustain the Yimakan tradition. With modernization and the standardization of school education, a widespread language shift has occurred and the Hezhen’s mother tongue is on the verge of extinction. Possessing no writing system of their own, the Hezhen have handed down their cultural heritage orally from generation to generation. Nowadays, the family-based teaching and learning system, together with the community-based mechanism for transmitting culture, are in crisis.

The crisis has been aggravated by the deaths of veteran storytellers and the rural exodus of younger generations to cities in search of employment. Young people are increasingly adopting a modern lifestyle and learning the dominant language. Becoming a *Yimakanqi mafa* requires years of training: there are no short cuts. Today, as the result of new technology and widespread modern communications (such as e-books, the internet, television and other media), the traditional method of training is under threat.

Finally, the tourist boom has impacted negatively on the social conditions that maintain the Yimakan storytelling tradition – for example, there have been inappropriate adaptations of Yimakan performances for commercial exploitation.



2

COUNTRY

CHINA

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2011

.../... Hezhen Yimakan storytelling

Aware of the threats to their cultural heritage, the Hezhen are determined to hand down their legacy to the next generations. Recently, local associations, folk societies and other groups have introduced measures to promote the art of Yimakan storytelling and the departments of culture at all levels of Heilongjiang Province have organized training schemes to transmit Yimakan in the Hezhen areas. Both central government and the Heilongjiang provincial government are firmly committed to safeguarding activities. Since Yimakan was inscribed on the First List of National Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2006, the government has invested heavily in research projects.

With the involvement and full support of the Hezhen community at grass-roots level, a four-year action plan (2012–2015) has been drawn up. First, outstanding *Yimakanqi mafa* will be identified and given financial assistance, allowing them to devote themselves to handing down the tradition. Second, measures will be introduced to encourage young people to appreciate and learn Yimakan, to promote Hezhen mother-tongue fluency and to improve the facilities at Yimakan training centres. Radio and TV documentaries will feature live performances and Yimakan will be incorporated into the *Urgun* Festival pageants and on China Cultural Heritage Day. The overall aims are to incorporate folk culture into the school curriculum, increase young people's confidence in their local culture and oral traditions and enhance the Hezhen community's sense of pride in their own culture.

Third, research will be conducted into Yimakan oral traditions. The Hezhen Yimakan Storyteller Archives – a database with multimedia recordings – will be created and public access encouraged. Fourth, a Yimakan Museum will be created in Tongjiang City, with multimedia materials covering a wide range of oral and written texts, manuscripts, audio and video recordings, photographs, objects and artefacts. The museum will hold regular training classes for different age groups and invite qualified Yimakan storytellers as instructors and to give live performances. Fifth, subsidies will be provided to scholars, experts and local communities so that they can engage in research and publish their findings. All these activities will involve the full participation of Hezhen communities, village committees and individual practitioners, along with the younger generations.



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

Definition of intangible cultural heritage

The Yimakan contributes to the identity and cohesion of Hezhen people, constituting a vector of their history and values and providing them with a sense of continuity; it serves as collective memory, and functions as both for education and entertainment during major seasonal tasks and festive events.

State of viability

Despite the best efforts of the Hezhen, both at the individual and association levels, the viability of Yimakan storytelling is at risk, particularly the traditional system of oral transmission and apprenticeship, due to limited numbers of elder storytellers and lack of interest among younger generations.

Safeguarding measures

A four-year action plan has been drawn up to safeguard and promote this element, with clear objectives and budget, and with the consent of all actors concerned; the safeguarding measures seek to strengthen the viability of Yimakan storytelling and bolster its transmission, and are backed up with the necessary financial support to protect their land and to defend their interests with greater self-reliance.

Community participation

The participation of local communities and practitioners in the nomination process is evident, particularly from the careful attention paid to codes of conduct and the ethic of respect for customary practices, and their free, prior and informed consent is provided.

Inventory

Within China's multi-tiered inventorying system, Yimakan storytelling is included in inventories at the county, prefecture, province and State levels that are updated every two years; the State-level inventory is under the responsibility of the Department of Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Ministry of Culture.

3

COUNTRY

CHINA

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2010

Meshrep

Meshrep means ‘get-together’ or ‘venue’ in the Uygur language and denotes a cultural space for the practice of traditions, festive events and popular customs. It is widespread among the 5 million Uygurs in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region of China. A complete Meshrep event includes various traditions such as the Uygur *muqam*, folk songs and dances, story-singing and drama, oral literature, tournaments and games. In Xinjiang, Meshrep used to be held at least once a month. Today, due to rapid social change, this is no longer the case, with few people organizing Meshrep celebrations or participating in them. The viability of this intangible cultural heritage is at serious risk.

Meshrep expressions and forms vary according to the locality and the particular function. Meshrep can be held as part of seasonal festivities and wedding ceremonies. It may also serve as an occasion for moral education. On the one hand, it provides a ‘stage’ for performing folk artists to display their skills before an audience. On the other, it represents an important ‘moral forum’ or ‘court’ at which the host mediates conflicts and ensures that the moral standards of the community are upheld. The host plays a central role, ensuring that the rules are respected by the participants.

There are several different varieties of Meshrep. To give a few examples: the Kok (young crops) Meshrep is held in spring; the Huoxalik (festivity) Meshrep takes place at weddings, adulthood rites and other festivals; and the Keiyet (disciplinary) Meshrep is didactic and educational. Meshrep is thus one of the most important forms of Uygur cultural heritage, through which cultural traditions and identity are revitalized and community ties cemented.





.../... **Meshrep**

In recent times, Meshrep has mostly been held in villages in the countryside of Xinjiang Region. It continues to be an occasion for the Uyghurs to maintain their cultural identity and traditions. However, numerous factors endanger the viability of this heritage: social changes such as urbanization and industrialization, the urban migration of the youth, the influence of modern and foreign cultures on the younger generation, and a diminishing knowledge of the traditions and social functions of Meshrep.

Even in the countryside, the frequency of its occurrence and the number of people taking part are declining. The number of practitioners who fully understand Meshrep's traditional rules and rich content has fallen from hundreds to tens. These knowledgeable people, furthermore, are unevenly distributed across the region. In places close to urban centres, complete performances of Meshrep are infrequent, and in urban communities, Meshrep rarely takes place. If held, it is on a small scale at best – within the family circle, with friends or during weddings – and it is reduced to a dance spectacle without any *muqam*, devoid of the rich characteristics and unique cultural values of a complete Meshrep.

Faced with this situation, the inheritors of the Meshrep tradition, along with the Chinese Government, are now committed to safeguarding the heritage and have expressed their willingness to take part in implementing various safeguarding measures. In order to revive Meshrep traditions, measures have been adopted to expand the scope and frequency of relevant activities and to train young people to transmit the heritage. In 2006 a team was set up within the community to undertake such safeguarding measures to ensure the viability of Meshrep.

Three forms of Meshrep were inscribed on the National Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage between 2006 and 2007, and six other forms on the representative list at the autonomous region, district and county level. In addition, the four levels of government (the State, the autonomous region, districts and counties) have provided subsidies to over 100 bearers of Meshrep so as to improve their living conditions and enable them to work on its transmission. In support of the Uyghur communities, Meshrep events are frequently organized on traditional holidays by NGOs, under the patronage of the Department of Culture.

In addition, in 2008 the Xinjiang Intangible Cultural Heritage Safeguarding Research Centre conducted research on Meshrep as one of China's national research projects. The centre will continue its research in different areas of Xinjiang, documenting its practices. The results will be compiled and published so as to provide the basis for further research and dissemination.



3

COUNTRY

CHINA

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2010

.../... Meshrep

Public awareness of Meshrep has been raised by the participation of Xinjiang TV and other media. Between 2010 and 2012, the Department of Culture of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region is establishing a database and a website dedicated to its promotion. The department will also organize an annual Meshrep conference and exhibitions for the safeguarding of this heritage.

In order to maintain the environment and encourage the sustainable development of Meshrep, zones of cultural preservation and safeguarding agencies will be established in those areas where Meshrep is practised. Finally, postgraduates specializing in the subject will be recruited (with the costs covered by the local government from 2010 to 2012), to train as experts to work on the viability of this intangible cultural heritage.



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

Definition of intangible cultural heritage

Meshrep includes ritual practices, religious instruction, foodways, music and dance, games and jokes, and thrives as a living tradition providing local communities with a sense of identity and continuity.

State of viability

Meshrep's continuity is threatened because it is practised only in its simplified forms and there are few opportunities for young people to master its more elaborate arts and skills.

Safeguarding measures

A number of safeguarding measures have been drawn up, demonstrating the commitment of the community and the State. Although these do not include some important strategies, their feasibility and sufficiency cannot easily be ascertained.

Community participation

The nomination was drawn up with the support and approval of Uygur communities and Meshrep practitioners, and it includes expressions of the free, prior and informed consent of six representative inheritors.

Inventory

Several different forms of Meshrep were included in May 2005 and June 2008, upon approval of China's State Council, in the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage administered by the Department of Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Ministry of Culture.



4

COUNTRY

CHINA

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2010

The watertight-bulkhead technology of Chinese junks

The watertight-bulkhead technology of Chinese junks is a centuries'-old body of skills and knowledge used in the construction of ocean-going vessels. The use of watertight bulkheads has made a significant contribution to the safety of long-distance ocean sailing. The technology has played an important role in the history of navigation and international trade, and was adopted in the West in the late eighteenth century. Today, the skills and knowledge of Chinese junks are transmitted among practitioners in Fujian Province in southern China, yet that transmission is threatened by the declining number of bearers of this heritage.

Chinese junks are mainly constructed of camphor, pine and fir timber, and are assembled using traditional carpentry tools. The hull is partitioned into multiple watertight compartments, each with a limber hole to drain out water. Thus, even if one or two compartments are accidentally damaged during navigation, seawater will not flood into the other parts and the vessel will stay afloat. The key techniques used in the watertight bulkheads include rabbeting joints and caulking them with ramie fibre, lime and tung oil. The art has mainly been transmitted through the oral tradition from generation to generation, from master to apprentice, and among family members. A continuous line of transmission has been documented. A master craftsman designs a vessel and directs the entire construction process, with different tasks carried out by numerous craftspeople.





4

COUNTRY

CHINA

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2010

.../... The watertight-bulkhead technology of Chinese junks

Today, transmitters still treasure the art learned from their ancestors, but are confronted with the immediate problem of earning a living due to a decline in demand for wooden junks. With the advent of the modern ship-building industry, wooden vessels have been replaced by steel-hulled ships. The shortage of timber has caused the price of materials to soar. Rising production costs have made it even harder to construct Chinese junks. Although wooden vessels are still in use among coastal fishermen, the economic returns from ship construction are inadequate for the holders of this heritage, who are forced to abandon their craft in search of alternative sources of income. Prospects remain bleak for the continuation of the profession. There are few incentives for young people to acquire its specialized skills and knowledge and undertake the hard work demanded by this art. Today only three masters – with an average age of more than 50 – have full command of the watertight-bulkhead technology.

Faced with these threats, the communities concerned, together with the Chinese Government, have taken measures to safeguard this heritage. In 2005 Fujian Province promulgated and implemented the Regulations of Fujian Province for Protecting Ethnic Cultures and Folklore, intended to safeguard the area's intangible cultural heritage. Master craftspeople have been proclaimed as representative transmitters of the technique and have been granted subsidies so they can continue to exercise their profession. In order to further revive this heritage, several replicas of Chinese junks have been commissioned.





To generate public interest and promote the watertight-bulkhead technology, two boat museums have been opened in Quanzhou and Shenhu. In Jinjiang City, manuals on the watertight-bulkhead technology of Chinese junks have been published and specialist centres to train young people have been opened.

In addition, a study of the transmission of the technique has been conducted with the participation of the bearers of this heritage. All these initiatives have led to the technique being inscribed on China's intangible cultural heritage inventories at the local, national and international levels. To ensure effective transmission, representative bearers presented their comments and suggestions to local governments. Based on these initiatives, safeguarding measures were developed for the five years following the element's inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List.

The proposed measures – starting in 2011 and funded by the government and heritage organizations – include a series of activities aimed primarily at encouraging transmission and integrating this heritage into local development programmes. As an innovative transmission measure, the traditional watertight-bulkhead technique will be introduced to modern ship-building.

A foundation for the protection of the watertight-bulkhead technology is planned for 2013. Once established, the foundation will provide funds to help those transmitters in difficult economic circumstances and thus support the protection and transmission of the craft.

4

COUNTRY

CHINA

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2010

.../... The watertight-bulkhead technology of Chinese junks

The technique will also be documented in archives and a database, and on a dedicated webpage. The publication of an atlas and collected works is planned for 2014.

In order to promote the exchange of skills, and the transmission, protection and development of the craft, an association for the preservation of the watertight-bulkhead technology in Fujian Province will be established in 2012. The association will include shipbuilding craftspeople and supporters from the community, as well as experts and scholars, and will hold activities such as exhibitions funded by its members.

The training of young people is another important aspect of the safeguarding project. It will involve demonstrations in primary and secondary schools, for example, and the creation of a training centre that will also serve as an exhibition space to display the work of masters and apprentices.





The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed **The watertight-bulkhead technology of Chinese junks** on the Urgent Safeguarding List as the nomination file satisfied all the selection criteria, as follows:

Definition of intangible cultural heritage

The watertight-bulkhead technology of Chinese junks is recognized by coastal Chinese communities as a core traditional skill and transmitted orally through the generations from master to apprentice; reflecting their knowledge of nature and the universe, it is the focus both of community identity and of local ceremonies.

State of viability

Despite the historical importance of this shipbuilding technology, its continuity and viability are today at great risk because wooden ships are being replaced by steel-hulled vessels, while the timber for their construction is in increasingly short supply; apprentices are reluctant to devote the time necessary to master the trade and craftspeople have not managed to find supplementary uses for their carpentry skills.

Safeguarding measures

Safeguarding measures designed to sustain the shipbuilding tradition include State financial assistance to master builders, educational programmes to make it possible for them to transmit their traditional knowledge to young people, and the reconstruction of historical junks as a means to stimulate public awareness and provide employment.

Community participation

National and provincial authorities have committed themselves to create favourable conditions to support safeguarding of the watertight-bulkhead technology and the leading craftspeople have been involved in the nomination, having provided their free, prior and informed consent.

Inventory

In June 2008, upon approval of China's State Council, the watertight-bulkhead technology of Chinese junks was included in the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage administered by the Department of Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Ministry of Culture.

5

COUNTRY

CHINA

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2010

Wooden movable-type printing of China

The history of movable-type printing in China dates back to the mid-eleventh century. In the mid-twelfth century, improved wooden movable type appeared and was used for the printing of certain books. Even after the arrival of copper and tin type, wooden movable type has remained in use in China, due to its relative advantages – for example, its lower costs and the lightness of the type, which makes it easy to handle. The movable characters can also be re-used many times after the type-page has been dismantled. Today, wooden movable-type printing is used, in particular, for family and clan genealogies in some communities in Rui'an in Zhejiang Province.

Wooden movable-type printing is typically carried out within the family. Men do the tasks of tracing and engraving the Chinese characters, which are arranged on a type-page, inked and printed. Women carry out the work of paper cutting and binding until the printed genealogies are complete. Throughout the year, those engaged in wooden movable-type printing will carry the entire set of type and the printing equipment to halls of the ancestors, located at the centre of a community, where they arrange type and hand-print the genealogy of local clans. Once the genealogy is completed, a ceremony is held to mark the occasion, when those engaged in the printing place the genealogy in a locked box to preserve it.

Wooden movable-type printing is transmitted among families through oral instruction. However, the number of people engaged in the craft is decreasing rapidly. The profession requires hard work as well as specialist skills and a comprehensive knowledge of the entire movable-type printing technique. It takes at least two years for an apprentice to learn the brush handwriting of Chinese characters and the hand-operated engraving technique. Apprentices also need to acquaint themselves with Chinese history, the grammar of ancient Chinese and the old style of Chinese characters, which is more complicated than the simplified characters taught and used in China today. Few among the younger generation possess the necessary knowledge and skills, yet there is little interest in such training.



5

COUNTRY

CHINA

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2010





.../... Wooden movable-type printing of China

With the arrival of computer and high-tech printing, many communities have abandoned wooden movable-type printing as the technique is no longer economically viable. Today, its use is restricted to special cases such as family and clan genealogies.

Faced with this reality, the government, with the full participation of the community of practitioners, has enacted a series of measures to encourage the continuation and transmission of wooden movable-type printing. In 2004 the government of Rui'an organized an exhibition of the technique. Two years later, it supported the construction of a dedicated exhibition hall in the village of Xiqian.

In June 2008 wooden movable-type printing was inscribed in the second batch of the list of intangible cultural heritage at the national level, and eleven masters of movable-type printing were nominated as representative bearers. They receive financial assistance to improve their living conditions so that they can continue their profession while taking on apprentices. Efforts are also being made to improve transmission: since 2009, a training course for master artisans has been organized every two years. At the same time, a considerable amount of work has been undertaken to document wooden movable-type printing. Research has been conducted into its history, and relevant documentation prepared, with the participation of practitioners. In addition, a documentary film and several publications have helped to promote the technique.

5

COUNTRY

CHINA

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2010

.../... **Wooden movable-type printing of China**

In 2009 the Movable-Type Printing Association was established in Rui'an to encourage practitioners of wooden movable-type printing to take an active part in its protection and transmission.

Among the planned safeguarding measures, a film will document in detail all the processes of wooden movable-type printing. Videos will introduce a wider audience to all the intricate steps involved in the technique.

Furthermore, the government is committed to supporting various publications on wooden movable-type printing with a view to promoting the practice and raising public awareness. Finally, in order to increase the number of orders for wooden movable-type printing, the government will support the use of this technique for reprinting old books. All these initiatives are aimed at sustaining the practitioners of this traditional craft.

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed the **Wooden movable-type printing of China** on the Urgent Safeguarding List as the nomination file satisfied all the selection criteria, as follows:

Definition of intangible cultural heritage

The knowledge and skills of wooden movable-type printing have been handed down for many generations in Rui'an County, constituting a source of local pride and identity; the tradition maintains its viability through its association with clan genealogies that are themselves written repositories of community cultural memory.

State of viability

The complexity of the artisanal skills and the deep knowledge of Chinese history and language required to practise the tradition are daunting to younger generations, and the continuity and future transmission of the element are therefore threatened; competition from digital printing technologies further puts the wooden movable-type printing at serious risk.

Safeguarding measures

Safeguarding measures have been drawn up, focusing most urgently on strengthening transmission from elder master printers to younger people, and aiming to enable the community concerned to continue practising wooden movable-type printing in the future.

Community participation

The nomination resulted from close collaboration between State officials and the master practitioners of movable-type printing, and the latter have given their free, prior and informed consent.

Inventory

In June 2008, upon approval of China's State Council, wooden movable-type printing was included in the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage administered by the Department of Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Ministry of Culture.



6

COUNTRY

CROATIA

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2010

Ojkanje singing

Ojkanje two-part polyphonic singing is a widespread tradition in the Dalmatian hinterland of southern Croatia. It is performed by two or more singers (men or women) who use the special technique of singing ‘from the throat’. The lead singer usually sings the first line, while the second line is provided by a group of singers who sing the text (or just a vowel) with the characteristic trill. It lasts as long as the lead singer can hold his or her breath. The melodies are based on limited, mostly chromatic, tonal scales, and the lyrics evoke themes ranging from love to current social and political issues. Many of the verses transmitted to the present day entail expressions of pre-Slavic cultural characteristics. This intangible cultural heritage, narrating and communicating cultural values, has been an important part of the identity of local communities. However, the continuity of the heritage and its transmission within the community is now seriously threatened. Ojkanje singing has moved from its community setting to the sphere of stage performance.

Changes in the way of life are the main cause of the decline of Ojkanje singing. In earlier days, the people of the communities were able to learn the practice directly from older generations by way of oral tradition. Younger people mastered the tradition by listening and imitating their elders and then passed it down to the next generation. The transmission of Ojkanje singing, once an integral part of the community, now faces severe challenges: the social life of the community no longer encourages young people to learn this heritage. Today, most of the tradition-bearers who know this unique style of singing are elderly.

Certain genres have disappeared altogether, with a decline in the number of experienced singers; some genres have been replaced by more popular forms that are altering the context of Ojkanje singing. For instance, influences from Western music and its concept of musical structure have undermined the open-ended, improvisational genres and group singing. Thus, the full form of this musical tradition is seriously endangered.

Despite these threats, there are communities that hold Ojkanje singing in high esteem. Its importance has been granted official recognition through its inclusion in the Register of Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Croatia. The Croatian Government has taken steps to support the safeguarding and promotion of different forms of this heritage. Some safeguarding measures have been in place for several years, encouraging the survival of Ojkanje singing today. Numerous cultural and artistic associations were founded in the 1990s as the cultural revival gained momentum in the regions occupied during earlier conflicts. The main objective of these associations is to preserve and revive old repertoires and the typical performance styles of the local communities, while encouraging talented singers to give public performances.



6

COUNTRY

CROATIA

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2010

.../... Ojkanje singing

With the presence of these Ojkanje singing groups, local communities are also attempting to revive some of their social functions by organizing gatherings, events and festivals as meeting places where the traditional song and dance repertoire can be performed. Today, the traditional music is widely performed at such local, regional and national festivals. Dating back to the 1920s and 1930s, such festivals were organized to showcase rural traditions and folklore. They provide a major incentive to perpetuate the traditional songs and dances, and are considered a means of safeguarding traditional music such as Ojkanje singing. In recent years, local tourist offices have also begun to recognize the importance of intangible cultural heritage and are themselves organizing traditional singing festivals.

Local communities, in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture, are planning several projects to safeguard and promote Ojkanje singing. These projects, which will be implemented over the next five years, include restoration of the traditional forms of transmission and documentation of the heritage. In the search for effective safeguarding methods, efforts will also be made to compare the Croatian experience with that of other countries where similar forms of singing are found.

Priority will be given to training personnel who will then be responsible for implementing the proposed safeguarding measures. During the initial stage, bearers of this heritage will be identified so that their performance may serve as a model for the younger generations. At the same time, it is considered equally important to raise awareness among local communities about the need for well-planned local activities in order to perpetuate the cycle of transmission. These measures will be backed up by audio and video recordings of Ojkanje singing, which will be broadcast to the general public. Furthermore, subsidies will be given to local festivals where Ojkanje singing is performed. The Croatian Government also intends to provide financial support for the bearers of traditional Ojkanje singing so as to improve their living conditions. Other planned activities include establishing a centre for traditional singing, conducting singing workshops, organizing seminars and launching research projects.



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

Definition of intangible cultural heritage

Ojkanje singing is an ever-changing and constantly renewed form of sung poetry, recognized by its communities as the most important part of their intangible cultural heritage and an inseparable part of their cultural life.

State of viability

Changing social contexts and a history of ‘festivalization’ have both contributed to interruptions in the chain of traditional transmission and disruptions in the continuity of singing styles, and a lack of interest in Ojkanje singing among young people places it in a situation of serious endangerment.

Safeguarding measures

Safeguarding measures emphasize the reinforcement and reinvigoration of traditional means of transmitting Ojkanje singing from older to younger generations, complemented by research, documentation and international exchange among countries where similar singing genres are found.

Community participation

The participation of local communities in the nomination process and their readiness to cooperate in transmission programmes and documentation efforts is evident from the nomination, which also includes their free, prior and informed consent.

Inventory

Ojkanje singing was included in 2009 in the Register of Cultural Goods of the Republic of Croatia, maintained by the Ministry of Culture.

7

COUNTRY

INDONESIA

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2011

Saman dance

The Saman dance is a traditional performing art of the Gayo people in Aceh, northern Sumatra, and can be traced back to the thirteenth century. It is performed by boys and young men, always in odd numbers, sitting on their heels or kneeling in tight rows and performing synchronized movements. Players clap their hands, slap their chests, thighs and the ground, click their fingers, and make hand gestures as they sway and twist their bodies and heads backwards and forwards, left and right, in time with the complex rhythms. The movements symbolize nature, the environment and the daily lives of the Gayo people – leaves swaying in the wind, a buffalo bathing, digging in a rice paddy, and so on. The movements of the players sitting in odd positions are often the opposite of those sitting in even positions.

The *penangkat* (leader or teacher) leads the singing of the verses, which convey messages about traditions, development issues, religion, heroism, advice on daily life and even romance, and may be laced with satire and humour. Saman is in accord with sustainable development: the verses always contain positive messages, including some that encourage conservation of the environment. The motifs on the costumes symbolize flora, nature and noble values such as honesty, patience, togetherness, helping one another, the guidance of religious and traditional teachings, obedience, self-defence and improving one's life. The sprig of fragrant pandan leaves in the embroidered headbands is a fertility symbol.

Saman is traditionally performed in villages, underneath *manahs* (buildings for storing rice) and *mersahs* (dormitories where boys and young men live while receiving instruction in customs, tradition and religion, including Saman). It may also be performed on the borders of ricefields, on the backs of buffaloes and on riverbanks. Most people learn Saman informally from their fathers or grandfathers, under the *mersah* or from village friends.

Enjoyed by all segments of society, Saman is performed as entertainment, to celebrate national and religious holidays such as Independence Day and *Idul Fitri* and *Idul Adha*, to welcome honoured guests and on festive occasions such as weddings. It is also popular as a children's game. Villagers invite each other for Saman competitions, which encourages friendly relationships between them. Saman develops mutual respect among the players, who must display discipline, physical strength, quick reactions and a sense of cooperation. *Penangkats* need to have mastered all the verses and movements and be intelligent, responsive and capable of leading the group, especially in competitions. They frequently become leaders in society.



.../... Saman dance

Although Saman is an integral part of the Gayo people's cultural heritage, performances and competitions are becoming much less frequent; it is also becoming rarer as a children's game. Nowadays boys tend to live at home and many *mersahs* are empty; few of them teach Saman. Large numbers of young people are moving to towns and cities to further their education. The Gayo areas used to be remote and isolated, but urban culture is now penetrating the villages through TV and VCDs and replacing Saman as the entertainment of choice for all age groups. In 2009 the total number of active Saman players was estimated at around 1,460.

Many of the *penangkats* with a genuine knowledge of Saman are elderly and have no successors to whom they can pass on their skills. Overall, the knowledge of Saman is diminishing. This is compounded by the influence of globalization, the introduction of modern arts and western culture and the penetration of new cultures, including other kinds of ethnic music. Many modern imitations of Saman dance movements are incompatible with its true norms. Commercially oriented Saman performances have developed recently – these are not aimed at carrying on a tradition, and indicate a shift in meaning which could threaten the safeguarding of Saman culture if not balanced with efforts to transmit its true values.

Another factor is the lack of funds. Saman costumes are not cheap: a complete set of hand-embroidered costumes consists of eighteen items – hat, two throat cloths, shirt, traditional sarong, trousers and wrist cloths – and takes around two months to make. Performances, especially those on a large scale or which involve transportation to far-off places, are expensive. Inviting another village to a competition and providing hospitality over two days and two nights involves considerable expense for both parties.

There have been some community and government safeguarding efforts, including documenting and supporting Saman groups and organizing festivals and competitions. The 2010–2015 action plan to safeguard the Saman dance cultural heritage, however, includes a much wider range of activities. Many records were destroyed in the 2004 *tsunami*, so research will be undertaken to compile an inventory (with written records, photos, audio and video recordings, etc.) of all the movements and sung verses, especially as performed by elderly *penangkats*.



.../... Saman dance

The inventory will be used to train younger generations and a DVD will be issued. Saman will be included at all levels of the school curriculum and the relevant teaching materials prepared. Saman has been presented at Aceh Culture Week since 1972; an annual festival will now be organized at sub-district, district and provincial level. The two channels of transmission – informally, under the village *mersah* and formally through the education system – will be encouraged and the teaching standards of *penangkats* raised. A proposed Gayo Arts and Culture Centre will disseminate knowledge about Saman, both locally and internationally, offer training in Saman and related Gayo arts and provide suitable facilities. Finally, promotional materials will raise public awareness, particularly among young people.

The words of the 2010 Declaration of Saman Culture Enthusiasts (the Blangkejeren Declaration) are encouraging: ‘We, trainers, players and enthusiasts of the cultural heritage of Saman, state our respect and highest appreciation for our predecessors who have created and developed the movements, sung verses, and costume motifs of Saman, along with the cultural values associated with them, and passed them down to ourselves as cultural heritage. We hereby state our resolve to ... safeguard and develop the culture of Saman as one of the elements of cultural heritage of the Indonesian nation.’





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

Definition of intangible cultural heritage

Involving a community of not only players and trainers but also enthusiasts, prominent religious leaders, customary leaders, teachers and government officials, the Saman dance promotes friendship, fraternity and goodwill and strengthens awareness of the historical continuity of the Gayo people.

State of viability

The Saman dance faces weakening informal and formal modes of transmission due to reduced opportunities for performance and the disappearance of the cultural spaces where transmission takes place. Due to social, economic and political changes that include penetration of mass media and the rural-urban migration of the younger generations, knowledge of the element is diminishing and commercial activities are increasing, posing a threat to the continued significance of the Saman dance for its community.

Safeguarding measures

Ongoing local processes for safeguarding the Saman dance, promoted within the community as well as by the authorities, are complemented by a coherent and detailed safeguarding plan presented with the participation of the community, the local government, and national institutions, with objectives that clearly respond to the risks identified.

Community participation

The submitting State has established that the nomination resulted from a widely participatory process with the bearers and the community being involved at every stage and level; the free, prior and informed consent of trainers, players, enthusiasts, and community and government representatives has been clearly and unambiguously given.

Inventory

Despite the loss of important documentation on the Saman dance destroyed in the 2004 *tsunami*, the Office for Safeguarding of History and Cultural Values, Banda Aceh, submitted inventory data that was accepted in 2010 by the Directorate General of Cultural Values, Arts and Film of the Department of Culture and Tourism.

8

COUNTRY

IRAN (ISLAMIC
REPUBLIC OF)

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2011

Naqqāli, Iranian dramatic story-telling

Naqqāli, the oldest form of Iranian theatre, uses a variety of genres to tell a story, either historical or mythical. It is mostly performed by one person, sometimes up to three, either in verse or prose and accompanied by the appropriate gestures. Naqqāli goes back to the time of the Parthians (third century BCE to third century CE), when the *naqqāls*, or professional story-tellers, entertained both kings and the ordinary people. There are two main genres – in one, the *naqqāl* sings the story and accompanies himself on a stringed instrument; in the other, there is no instrumental accompaniment.

Two important innovations occurred during the Safavid period (sixteenth to eighteenth century): the establishment of coffee-houses, which became the exclusive venue for Naqqāli; and the introduction of the *parde*, a painted screen – here the *naqqāl* uses a *metrāq* (cane) to point to the section of the painting being mentioned.

Naqqāls are known by names derived from the type of repertory they recite. The *Shāhnāme-xāns*, for example, specialize in tales from the *Shāhnāme*, the great Persian epic by Ferdowsi. Only men of cultivated taste and with an excellent memory can become eminent *naqqāls*. They must be able to adapt the most famous ancient and modern stories to contemporary socio-political circumstances and quote the great poetic texts from memory; be acquainted with the local culture and with Iranian traditional music; perform a wide range of roles convincingly – kings, queens, warriors, princesses, beggars, and so on; and also produce sound effects such as galloping horses and fencing. Master *naqqāls* have a good knowledge of Iranian sports, such as wrestling and fencing. Thus, they function both as entertainers and as transmitters of Persian literature and culture, while encouraging a sense of national cohesion.

There are two types of *naqqāls*: professionals (now few in number), who earn their living from Naqqāli; and seasonal *naqqāls*, who have other occupations. Nowadays, professionals mostly perform at official functions whereas seasonal *naqqāls* perform at events like wedding parties, or even mourning ceremonies. Naqqāli is popular among a small community of female practitioners, who are allowed to perform for mixed audiences.

To be recognized as a *naqqāl*, a beginner must be trained by a *morshed*, or master *naqqāl*. *Naqqāls*, especially *morsheds*, wear costumes reminiscent of dervishes' clothes and may use ancient helmets or armoured jackets to create a convincing battle scene. The *metrāq* can represent a wide range of characters, including a beautiful beloved, a horse, a sword, and so on. *Naqqāls* are still found throughout the Islamic Republic of Iran – most live in villages or remote towns although a few live in big cities such as Tehran, Shiraz, Mashad and Isfahan. Their total number is estimated at not more than 200, most of whom are elderly.



Until several decades ago, *naqqāls* were hired by the great coffee-houses. However, the influence of western culture and modern media has led to a decline in the popularity of coffee-houses, and *naqqāls* have consequently lost their traditional audiences and venues; nowadays, there is greater interest among intellectuals and artists. There are no longer any specific venues for Naqqāli – even the design of coffee-houses has changed to accommodate TV sets, rather than live performances.

The other crucial factor is the importance of the oral training process, which relies on the face-to-face interaction of master and pupil. Today's *naqqāls* are mainly elderly and do not have the facilities to train the younger generations properly.

The main financial backing for efforts to preserve Naqqāli comes from government institutions, including the Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization (ICHHTO), the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance and the Iranian Academy of Art. The ICHHTO's Department of Traditional Arts collaborates with practitioners of Iranian traditional theatre, including *naqqāls*. It has identified over 100 *naqqāls* living in different parts of the Islamic Republic, archived relevant articles and books, and set up specialist meetings. There have been a number of outstanding recent research projects on Naqqāli.

8

COUNTRY

**IRAN (ISLAMIC
REPUBLIC OF)**

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2011

.../... Naqqāli, Iranian dramatic story-telling

The Dramatic Arts Association's biennial Festival of Ritual-Traditional Theatre devotes one of its main sections to the various forms of Naqqāli. The festival is an opportunity for Naqqāli to be presented properly and to raise public awareness at the national, regional and international levels.

In 2005 the Department of Traditional Arts ran a course on Iranian traditional theatre to introduce it to younger generations – Naqqāli was the most popular part of the course. The Iranian House of Theatre and the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance have organized training courses on Naqqāli and the Dramatic Arts Association, the Iranian Academy of Art, the Iranian Music Association and the Ferdowsi Foundation have run many seminars and conferences.



Future initiatives include: the official registration of *naqqāls* to provide them with financial support and training facilities for younger generations; a four-year plan to train 500 *naqqāls*, 20 coffee-house-painting artists and 10 traditional music instrument-makers; and the compiling, digitizing and publishing of records of the oral heritage related to Naqqāli, including the literature, the knowledge of traditional painting and instrument-making, and the performance conventions.

Three major schemes are currently being drawn up. First, Naqqāli Houses will be established in the north, south, west, east and centre of the country. Their three main roles are: research, including recording all the Naqqāli oral heritage; creating training programmes in the traditional master-pupil method; and providing conditions under which performances can be revived in coffee-houses and other suitable historical venues.

Second, a Naqqāli Foundation will be established whose main aim is to categorize, digitize and publish information from the Naqqāli Houses, both in print and on the foundation's website. Over a four-year period, the foundation will produce ten full-length documentaries, build up teams of experts, publish academic works and release CDs, VCDs and DVDs featuring all types of Naqqāli. A new Archive Centre will play an important role in preserving and popularizing Naqqāli.

Lastly, plans are being drawn up for a regular Naqqāli Festival with two sections: one for traditional performances and the other for modern performances inspired by the time-honoured conventions and narrations of Naqqāli – the latter could become an international event.

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed **Naqqāli: Iranian dramatic story-telling** on the Urgent Safeguarding List as the nomination file satisfied all the selection criteria, as follows:

Definition of intangible cultural heritage

A form of dramatic story-telling of historical or fictitious narratives, Naqqāli was the main keeper of folk tales, ethnic epics and popular music in Iran; its theatrical conventions continue to inspire Iranian artists in their performances and serve as a source of Iranian identity.

State of viability

Although a significant number of Naqqāli story-tellers as well as apprentices still exist, a rapid decrease in its popularity among young people and fewer opportunities to perform threaten the continuity of its transmission.

Safeguarding measures

Safeguarding measures covering a wide variety of aspects involved in this element aim at strengthening Naqqāli transmission and performance; these measures are based on the participation of various parties, including the *naqqāls*, researchers, local authorities and State offices.

Community participation

The joint work of researchers and officials over several years has made possible the wide participation of the story-telling community in the nomination process and its free, prior and informed consent has been given.

Inventory

Naqqāli was included in 2009 in the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, administered by the Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization.

9

COUNTRY

**IRAN (ISLAMIC
REPUBLIC OF)**

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2011

Traditional skills of building and sailing Iranian Lenj boats in the Persian Gulf

The inhabitants of the northern coast of the Persian Gulf have traditionally built a handmade wooden vessel called a Lenj, a craft that has remained relatively unchanged for centuries. The vessels were originally used on commercial voyages to Basra in Iraq, the southern coasts of the Gulf and even more distant destinations such as India and Africa and could undertake journeys of up to one year. The principal goods carried included dates, sandalwood, pottery, coconut and fruit.

Each component of the Lenj uses a different type of wood, depending on its function. The ships were particularly appreciated for their large cargo capacity and their ability to withstand heavy storms. Before the compass and the introduction of modern positioning systems, navigators could ascertain a ship's bearings according to the position of the sun, the moon and the stars – the *moallem* (teacher; guide) was responsible for this. Navigators had special formulae to measure latitude and longitude, as well as the depth of the water. Sailors would time their voyages according to the seasonal north-south winds that blow every six months – each wind had a local name.





Most of the region's inhabitants earn their living from the sea and there are many customs, ceremonies and festivities associated with the traditional skills of building and sailing Iranian Lenj boats. Oral traditions include stories, poems and sailing terminology in Iranian languages and regional dialects. Specific music and rhythms are an inseparable part of sailing in the Gulf and sailors would sing special songs while they worked. In Hormozgan province, three musical traditions are still popular with the locals: *Livā*, *Rezif* and *Azvā*. The songs recount a sea voyage, to the accompaniment of the *neyanbān* (bagpipes). The ritualistic movements symbolize tasks such as hoisting the sails, rowing, hauling in the nets and sorting the fish.

9

COUNTRY

**IRAN (ISLAMIC
REPUBLIC OF)**

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2011

.../... Traditional skills of building and sailing Iranian Lenj boats in the Persian Gulf

The Lenj was designed for far-off destinations and severe sea conditions. There has been a drastic decrease in the demand for long-haul voyages, however, and the modern Lenj is only used for short journeys, fishing and pearl diving. Young people are still being trained by experienced captains, and the training method continues to be oral, but the compass is being replaced by GPS and the younger generation prefers to work with modern equipment. Although the elderly captains, sailors and fishermen still use their accumulated knowledge of particular winds, the colour of the water or the height of the waves to forecast the weather, sailors now tend to rely on the forecasts broadcast by the port authorities.

Many of the old ceremonies are in danger of disappearing. Nowruz-e-Sayyād (Fisherman's New Year), once a popular event on the northern coast of the Persian Gulf in Bushehr, Hormozgan and Khuzestan provinces, is now only celebrated in Salakh village, on the island of Qeshm. Bādebān-Keshi (Setting the Sail) is another endangered ceremony: as there are no more long voyages by traditional vessels, it is only performed symbolically on the coast, six times a year, by a group of forty seafarers. Most of the participants in these ceremonies are not fully aware of their rich philosophy and history.

The community of Lenj seafarers is extremely small and mainly elderly. Only the old Lenj-builders, *nākhodas* (captains), *jāshoos* (sailors), fishermen and pearl divers still try to use the traditional craft and there is little interest among their offspring. With the fundamental changes of lifestyle in the region, people are abandoning their traditional livelihoods. Lenj-builders are unaware of the philosophy, the ritual background and the complete form of the traditional knowledge of sailing in the Persian Gulf. As a result, the practice has become a one-dimensional phenomenon, lacking in context.

Wooden Lenjes are being replaced by fibreglass substitutes, which are cheaper and less time-consuming to construct. Consequently, the number of fibreglass workshops is growing and the wooden Lenj construction workshops are gradually being turned into repair facilities for the older Lenjes. There are very few traditionally managed Lenj construction workshops left. Today very highly skilled Lenj-builders are only found in Pey-posht village on Qeshm. With the drop in demand, the traditional knowledge pertaining to this craft is rapidly disappearing. Lenj-builders have no guild or union to represent them, they only work ten days a month and their earnings are low. There is no motivation for the younger generation to follow in their footsteps.



9

COUNTRY

**IRAN (ISLAMIC
REPUBLIC OF)**

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2011

.../... Traditional skills of building and sailing Iranian Lenj boats in the Persian Gulf

Plans are underway for a specialist research institute and a cultural centre, which will be involved in a wide range of activities, including research, training, publications, performances, support and financial assistance for Lenj-makers, and cooperation with government organizations and NGOs. A museum (traditional or virtual) will display sailing vessels, instruments and documents.

Academic syllabuses disregard the time-honoured methods of sailing, navigation and training in favour of western methods and there is widespread ignorance among the general public. It is now proposed that the traditional skills of building and sailing Iranian Lenj boats in the Persian Gulf be taught at state schools and universities, at least in Bushehr, Hormozgan, Khuzestan, Sistan and Baluchestan.

Nowadays most people who take part in the sailing ceremonies, festivals and carnivals are unaware of the underlying philosophy and history. There should be greater emphasis on preserving the spirit of these ceremonies and explaining their origins, particularly in Bushehr, Hormozgan and Khuzestan. The research institute and cultural centre will produce documentaries; devise revitalization projects to attract more young people; and increase public awareness by organizing events such as short, educational Lenj trips.

Well-equipped Lenj-building workshops will be established in Bushehr, Hormozgan and Khuzestan. They will be supervised by the research institute and cultural centre, to ensure that the traditional craftsmanship conforms to present-day safety standards. This is the main fund-raising part of the programme and will enable the centre to become financially independent. The workshops will employ the most experienced local Lenj-building masters to construct the ships and train young technicians. The centre can sell or lease the vessels to local captains.

Close cooperation between the research institute and cultural centre, on the one hand, and the government and NGOs, on the other, is essential. The centre will liaise with the media, especially Iranian radio and television, in broadcasting documentaries and training programmes to stimulate interest among the general public. The traditional skills of building and sailing Lenj boats in the Persian Gulf are still highly respected by the community of seafarers, who have given their wholehearted support to all the safeguarding initiatives.



The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed the **Traditional skills of building and sailing Iranian Lenj boats in the Persian Gulf** on the Urgent Safeguarding List as the nomination file satisfied all the selection criteria, as follows:

Definition of intangible cultural heritage

The construction and use of traditional Iranian boats require a broad set of skills in the areas of craftsmanship and knowledge of nature and the universe, along with their respective technical vocabularies, and contribute to the identity of the Iranian people and the various communities concerned.

State of viability

The diminishing number of practitioners, economic changes, adoption of cheaper manufacturing technologies, and introduction of modern navigation methods combine to threaten the viability of the element; knowledge of it is compartmentalized among different groups, who are not aware of the philosophy, ritual background and complete form of the tradition.

Safeguarding measures

The submitting State has proposed a wide-ranging set of relevant safeguarding measures, including a capacity-building programme, although the provision of financial support to the tradition-bearers and a number of details such as a complete timetable would have been welcomed.

Community participation

The submitting State has provided evidence of collaboration between key stakeholders who have been involved in drawing up the nomination and have provided their free, prior and informed consent.

Inventory

The element was included in 2009 in the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, administered by the Iranian Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization.

Secret society of the Kôrêdugaw, the rite of wisdom in Mali

The secret society of the Kôrêdugaw is an essential feature of the cultural identity of the Bambara, Malinké, Senufo and Samogo peoples, who live mainly in the regions of Koulikoro, Sikasso and Ségou. Among the many social practices, rituals and cultural traditions found in these communities, those relating to the secret society are the richest and most diverse. Its main objective is to educate, train and prepare children to cope with life and deal with social problems, while providing guidance for others. The initiation journey (lasting forty-two or forty-nine years) aims to raise individuals up spiritually towards the conquest of wisdom and immortality before they embark upon catering for the spiritual needs of their community.

The word 'Kôrêduga' – derived from 'Kôrê' (a secret society whose aim is to form a rounded individual, at one with the universe) and 'duga' (vulture) – means 'vulture of the Kôrê'. The Kôrêdugaw are a group of initiates whose role is to provoke laughter through behaviour characterized by gluttony and caustic humour. Thanks to their esoteric knowledge and the power of their humour, the secret society of the Kôrêdugaw is present throughout all areas of social life.

Dressed in ragged coats and adorned with red bean necklaces and large quantities of miscellaneous items, the Kôrêdugaw celebrate the greatness of humankind while warning against all forms of violence. They symbolize how the world works and display wit, intelligence and a knowledge of the universe. Their buffoon-like behaviour has a serious purpose, however: it allows them to act as social mediators in conflicts within and between communities and in family feuds and misunderstandings, thus becoming the catalyst for peace, dialogue and social cohesion.

The Kôrêdugaw also have a ritual function. Members pay tribute to God the Creator and Protector and to the deities on three important occasions: the sowing festival, the harvest festival and during initiation rites. They are present at births, weddings and when new chiefs are enthroned, and they invoke supernatural forces by telling funny stories. They cure illnesses with herbal remedies, ward off bad luck, treat childless women and impart blessings to invoke abundant rainfall and a good harvest. A symbol of tolerance, inoffensiveness, the mastery of knowledge and the power of the sage, they embody the knowledge and rules of conduct that they impose: adultery, stealing and lying are forbidden.

The Kôrêdugaw are both animists and practitioners of religious syncretism (animism, Islam and Christianity). They come from all social and professional groups, irrespective of ethnicity, gender or religion. One becomes a Kôrêduga by inherited status, instruction by the spirits or training with a master. The criteria for becoming a Kôrêduga are discretion and the ability to make people laugh.



10

COUNTRY

MALI

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2011

.../... Secret society of the Kôrêdugaw, the rite of wisdom in Mali

With the introduction of new sociocultural and religious values, some of these practices have almost disappeared and the very existence of the society is under threat. The annual initiation ceremonies can no longer always be held at the start of the locust-bean harvest or the onset of the rainy season due to poor rainfall, recurrent drought and poverty; some of the rituals are no longer performed correctly or appropriately; and young people are increasingly drawn to modern lifestyles.

Artefacts associated with Kôrêduga costumes are increasingly made from modern materials. Nor is it unusual to meet young Kôrêdugaw who are unaware of the full significance and symbolism of the items associated with the costume they are wearing; the important thing for them is their reward (usually money) for making people laugh. Thus the secret society of Kôrêdugaw – the rite of wisdom – is turning from a socializing practice into a money-making one.



However, the presence of ‘living human treasures’ in the communities – embodying the highest level of competence in the practice, knowledge and know-how of the secret society of the Kôrêdugaw – is an encouraging sign. These ‘living human treasures’ have expressed their firm desire to hand down their knowledge: they see it as part of their duty to educate society and build social harmony and dialogue between generations.

The biennial festival of Koumantou – organized by the communities and their representatives, hosted mainly by the Kôrêdugaw and with financial support from the government – provides an opportunity to see parades, traditional costumes, dances and rhythms, laughter and feasting and the array of ornaments sported by the Kôrêdugaw. It has given fresh impetus to the secret society and helped raise awareness.



.../... Secret society of the Kôrêdugaw, the rite of wisdom in Mali

The communities and their representatives have recently formed associations in several localities where the secret society of the Kôrêdugaw has a significant presence. As a result, safeguarding associations have emerged across Mali, particularly in Sikasso and Ségou, and are helping to bolster social cohesion and forge links within and between communities.

Since independence in 1960, Mali's cultural policy has been geared towards a constant effort to preserve, revitalize and promote the national cultural heritage. Over a four-year period (2012–2015), a series of safeguarding measures are planned, all designed to preserve the secret society of the Kôrêdugaw and provide better protection for its cultural practices and testimony. Local people, including policy-makers, will be made aware of its social and cultural importance through information and awareness campaigns. Studies, research and the collection of documentary evidence will all involve the grassroots community. Protection associations and 'living human treasures' will be trained in the conservation and management of intangible cultural heritage. The secret society will be promoted nationally and internationally as a means of encouraging social harmony, dialogue, solidarity and cohesion and young people will be educated about its values.

The communities and initiates are the key to the successful implementation of the safeguarding measures and will be involved at all stages. They will be reassured that the measures will in no way damage or lead to the dissemination of any of the society's hidden, esoteric aspects.

The secret society of the Kôrêdugaw is an integral part of the life of these communities, providing them with a sense of identity and continuity. It is hoped that the safeguarding measures will help to consolidate, conserve and hand it down to future generations, in view of its importance to traditional education, social mediation and the promotion of peace and dialogue between generations and cultures.



The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed the **Secret society of the Kôrêdugaw, the rite of wisdom in Mali** on the Urgent Safeguarding List as the nomination file satisfied all the selection criteria, as follows:

Definition of intangible cultural heritage

The Kôrêdugaw play an important role as cultural mediators of social conflict, thus acting as instruments of socialization that contribute to the harmony and continuity of society, and to the maintenance of dialogue and amicable relations.

State of viability

The viability of the Kôrêdugaw tradition is threatened by social transformations touching all aspects of life in Mali, particularly the reduction in the number of practitioners and the loss of its ritual function in favour of entertainment and profit, contrary to its philosophy.

Safeguarding measures

The safeguarding measures proposed by the State Party, which include legislative measures, awareness-raising and documentation, will widely enhance the visibility of the element, including the revitalization and practice of its ritual and social functions.

Community participation

The submitting State has involved the community through extensive consultations while drawing up the nomination which includes the free, prior and informed consent of the Kôrêdugaw practitioner associations.

Inventory

Kôrêdugaw was included in 2010 on the inventory of national cultural heritage, administered by the National Directorate of Cultural Heritage in the Ministry of Culture.

Moorish epic T'heydinn

The Moorish epic, the T'heydinn, whose origins go back to the seventeenth century, is composed of dozens of poems celebrating the glorious feats of Moorish emirs and sultans. It recounts the high points of Mauritanian culture and the ancestral values underpinning the current way of life of the Moorish community. The epic is also a reminder of the intermingling of the two main elements within Moorish society – the Beni Hassan, who are the direct descendants of the Beni Hilal after their long migration from the Arabian peninsula, and the Sanhaja, the ancient Berber inhabitants of Mauritania.

The T'heydinn is performed by griots in the refined language of Hassaniya (a local dialect) and is accompanied on traditional instruments: the five- or six-stringed *tidnit* (lute), the thirteen-stringed *ardin* (harp) and the *tbal* (kettle-drum, or talking drum), together with ululation, hand-clapping and *tberbir* (lip vibrations). Griots – travelling poets, musicians and storytellers – live in all regions of Mauritania and currently number over 1,000. Belonging to families who have traditionally made up a musical caste within society, they preserve the collective memory and popularize cultural values. Griots hand down their knowledge from father to child: this entails learning to use the instruments correctly, followed by an introduction to the skills relating to the music and its subtleties and lastly a general introduction to poetry, culminating in an initiation into the art of the T'heydinn through recitation and mastery of the family's own heritage.

The T'heydinn has traditionally been divided between families, with each family maintaining its own distinct part of the epic. A griot who possesses the entire T'heydinn epic is respected by all the other families and by Mauritanian society in general.

Traditionally performed on numerous social occasions, including weddings, reconciliation ceremonies and festivals, the T'heydinn embodies the ancestral values of courage, honour, bravery, fairness, generosity, honesty and solidarity – values with which all sections of Mauritanian society can identify. At the same time, it is a literary and artistic repository of the Hassaniya language, for which it serves as the point of reference.

The T'heydinn has traditionally been an effective means of strengthening social ties between griots and their communities and between the various communities themselves. The festive occasions on which it is performed are an opportunity for regional, tribal and family reunions that promote a culture of social peace and mutual assistance. At a T'heydinn ceremony, for example, the community may resolve a land dispute or decide to take care of the sick.





11

COUNTRY

MAURITANIA

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2011

.../... Moorish epic T'heydinn

In traditional Moorish society, the griot was supported by his tribe through a *gabdh*, a sort of lifelong annual pension, but today this is no longer the case. Griots who are masters of the art of the T'heydinn are now elderly and few in number and the full epic is seldom performed. Moreover, the demand for performances is not sufficient to produce an adequate income, and few young griots can recite the full repertoire. In the past, a griot would not have been termed a 'bearer of the T'heydinn epic' if he was unable to perform it in its entirety. Today's young griots tend to perform it in parts or an abridged form, thus threatening its viability. There is a risk that the T'heydinn's original musical form (*faghu*) may be supplanted by so-called light forms (*liyyinn*), entailing a destruction of its musical basis.

Industrialization and internal migration have brought profound changes to the way of life in Mauritania. For example, a performance of the T'heydinn would traditionally last far into the night or even several nights in succession – today this is no longer viable. Added to this is the fact that the ancestral values embodied in the T'heydinn are not a key concern of today's young people.

Despite these constraints, griots attach a high value to their T'heydinn family repertoires, which are seen an important part of their heritage and, above all, as preserving the essential values of Mauritanian culture. The two griot associations – the Mauritanian Office for the Promotion of Music and the National Office of Mauritanian Musicians – are working closely with the relevant government institutions on a comprehensive safeguarding and promotion strategy, the Project to Promote and Safeguard the Moorish epic T'heydinn. All the project's activities will be entrusted to the associations' members, some of whom have been declared 'living human treasures'.

The government has recently implemented a number of measures to safeguard and promote the T'heydinn epic: a national system of 'living human treasures' has been instituted; two of its leading practitioners have been decorated; the epic is listed as national heritage; and griot associations are to be officially recognized as in the public interest. These efforts have been bolstered by the creation of a cultural fund, part of which is to be used to safeguard and promote the intangible heritage, particularly the T'heydinn epic. The recently established Mauritanian Institute of Music will encourage the teaching of music in schools and introduce an action plan to safeguard and promote the T'heydinn heritage. A national festival for the T'heydinn epic will be created; and spin-off products and income-generating activities will benefit its practitioners.

Work has already started on the collection, transcription and promotion of the main works of the T'heydinn, which are being recorded on audiovisual media and published, all under the supervision of the griots who are its bearers. Through promotion and outreach activities, the epic is being introduced both to younger generations and to the national and international community. All families maintaining any of the epic's episodes will be helped to record their repertoire. A number of young griots are being trained in the T'heydinn while being offered a decent livelihood. All the trainers and supervisors are griots who are bearers of the T'heydinn, and the young people selected for training come exclusively from families who are bearers of the epic.

All these measures are aimed at revitalizing the T'heydinn epic as a cornerstone of Mauritanian cultural heritage, and one which encourages the universal values of tolerance and solidarity.

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed the **Moorish epic T'heydinn** on the Urgent Safeguarding List as the nomination file satisfied all the selection criteria, as follows:

Definition of intangible cultural heritage

The T'heydinn epic serves an important function in Mauritanian society as a repository of cultural memory, transmitted from generation to generation among the griots who are its masters.

State of viability

Changing socio-economic contexts, particularly the disruption of the system of artistic patronage by royal families, affect the modes of transmission and the social spaces where performances occur, placing the element at risk because it is performed only occasionally and in much-shortened forms.

Safeguarding measures

A number of safeguarding measures have been drawn up, aiming specifically at research and documentation of the T'heydinn epic, and at formalizing transmission within the communities of tradition-bearers.

Community participation

Griot associations and masters participated actively in drawing up the nomination, and it includes the free, prior and informed consent of two practitioner organizations that bring together griots, poets and composers.

Inventory

The T'heydinn epic is included in the national inventory of cultural heritage maintained by the Department of Cultural Heritage of the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport.

12

COUNTRY

MONGOLIA

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2011

Folk long song performance technique of Limbe performances – circular breathing

Playing the Limbe – an ancient side-blown wind instrument of the nomadic Mongolians – involves the unique and highly sophisticated technique of circular breathing. Mongolians describe things that are invisible to the human eye as *bituu*, or ‘hidden’: *bituu amisгаа* means ‘hidden circle of breathing’. Using this technique, the performer inhales through the nose while simultaneously exhaling through the mouth, using the air stored in the cheeks to play without interruption. Circular breathing on the Limbe is particularly suited as accompaniment to the Mongolian folk ‘long song’, which may continue uninterrupted for up to twenty-five minutes. The long song is traditionally accompanied by the Limbe and the Morin Khuur (horse-head fiddle).

Through its many centuries of continuous development, circular breathing on the Limbe has come to be considered an art form. Its origins derive from the skilled techniques of early Mongolian gold- and silversmiths, who used circular breathing to make decorative and ornamental items, including valuable jewellery. This involved blowing a flame continuously through a pipe with a small hole in order to melt or soften the metal.





12

COUNTRY

MONGOLIA

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2011

.../... Folk long song performance technique of Limbe performances – circular breathing

Currently, there are only fourteen practitioners of the art, whose existence is seriously threatened. The last renowned ‘master’ was Luvsandorj Tserendorj, who died in 1989. Due to the unstinting efforts of maestros such as Tserendorj, Maamand and Dorj and their apprentices, however, there is now a new generation who both teach and perform, though their numbers are small.

Among the factors threatening the Folk long song performance technique of Limbe performances – circular breathing are changes to the traditional repertoire and the way it is taught, as western contemporary training methods have been introduced. Mongolia’s rapid modernization and urbanization have also led to a decline in appreciation of the intangible cultural heritage among the general public, particularly among young people. Nowadays there are very few traditional Limbe contests or performances, hardly any new compositions displaying the magic of circular breathing have been produced and research into the repertoire is far from adequate.





There are very few Limbe performers compared to those on other instruments and only a handful of performers have mastered the technique of circular breathing, which includes practices such as continuously blowing at a candle or a flame without extinguishing it and blowing into a glass of water through a straw. The traditional method of learning the simultaneous act of inhaling and exhaling involves a precise number of stages, ranging from elementary to advanced – most students fail to reach the advanced stage.

Other factors endangering the technique include the vast geographical distances separating the handful of performers, making it difficult to adopt a concerted strategy; and the fact that performances have become divorced from their traditional setting and associated customs and rituals and nowadays tend to be staged events.

Recently, however, there have been some positive developments. In 2007 the Mongolian Association of Limbe Performers was established, with the enthusiastic support of scholars, cultural activists and the apprentices and descendants of Maestro Tserendorj. In collaboration with government organizations and NGOs, the association aims to conduct scholarly research, identify amateur performers and train them in the technique of circular breathing, and develop and improve the craftsmanship of Limbe-players in general. It also hopes to popularize and raise awareness of the art form among the general public as broad public involvement is crucial in safeguarding the tradition.

Since 1993 several national contests have been organized – they have made a significant contribution towards identifying and promoting young Limbe players who have learned the circular-breathing technique and introducing them to the public. An Action Plan has been approved by the Mongolian Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and enjoys the support of the Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO, the Centre of Cultural Heritage and several NGOs, as well as business organizations. It will involve the participation of Limbe performers, craftsmen, folk artists, cultural activists, scholars, experts and researchers.

.../... Folk long song performance technique of Limbe performances – circular breathing

Over a four-year period, various measures are to be implemented in order to safeguard, revitalize and promote the Folk long song performance technique of Limbe performances – circular breathing. First, it will be encouraged in its time-honoured settings: weddings and other festivities, the ceremony of cutting a child's hair for the first time, Naadam (the 'festival of three manly sports'), state events, inauguration ceremonies and public festivals. Second, the apprenticeship system will be revived and expanded, with distance training where appropriate. Once skilled teachers have been identified, talented, willing apprentices will be allocated to them. In this way, it is hoped to increase the number of skilled performers who have mastered circular breathing by two or three each year. It is vital to involve the few remaining master Limbe performers and give them a major role in safeguarding activities, including formal teaching methods and a revival of the home-tutoring apprenticeship scheme. Third, regional training courses will be established and activities will be organized in secondary schools, professional theatres and youth centres in each of Mongolia's provinces. Fourth, skilled performers will be granted an allowance so that they can enjoy a decent standard of living. Fifth, various publications, DVDs, CDs and video lessons are planned, together with a documentary film and a TV series. This exposure via the mass media is vital in order to raise public awareness of the importance of safeguarding the technique. Sixth, regular contests, seminars, symposia, exhibitions and performances will be held. And finally, academic research by scholars and practitioners will be encouraged.

Mongolia now has a favourable legal basis for researching, identifying, documenting, reviving and promoting its intangible cultural heritage. In 2001 the Great Khurai (Parliament) adopted the new Law for the Protection of the Cultural Heritage and in 2003 it ratified the 2003 International Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. The Folk long song performance technique of Limbe performances – circular breathing comes under the category 'Rare and Outstanding Cultural Heritage', as stated in Mongolia's Law on Cultural Heritage Protection. It is also included in the National List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding. The relevant documents, audiovisual materials, photographs and other resource materials are held in the National Registration and Information Database Fund of Mongolia's Centre of Cultural Heritage.



The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed the **Folk long song performance technique of Limbe performances – circular breathing** on the Urgent Safeguarding List as the nomination file satisfied all the selection criteria, as follows:

Definition of intangible cultural heritage

The technique of performing the Limbe during the folk long song provides a sense of identity to the community of Limbe players.

State of viability

Although tenacious elders continue to convey their expertise and a large number of skilled flute players exists among whom the circular-breathing technique can potentially be spread, the technique of Limbe performance to accompany the folk long song is not widely encountered.

Safeguarding measures

The safeguarding measures proposed, including transmission and teaching, are well formulated and benefit from solid institutional support.

Community participation

All the interested parties have participated in the nomination process and have accordingly provided their free, prior and informed consent.

Inventory

The element has been included in the Urgent Safeguarding List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Mongolia, maintained by the Cultural Heritage Centre in the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.

Eshuva, Harákmbut sung prayers of Peru's Huachipaire people

Eshuva is a central element in the social life and belief system of the Huachipaire, an indigenous population from the Harákmbut linguistic family who live in Peru's southern Amazonian forest. Huachipaire communities have inhabited this tropical region since time immemorial, organized in groups led by community leaders. Their particular worldview and lifestyle are linked to hunting, small-scale agriculture and fishing. At present, there are only two Huachipaire settlements, Queros and Santa Rosa de Huacaria, whose total population numbers a few hundreds.

According to oral tradition, the Eshuva sung prayers were learned directly from the forest's animals; they are used to invoke the aid and protection of supernatural beings and the spirits of nature such as plants and animals. The themes derive from the myths of origin that sustain the Huachipaire worldview and guide their beliefs, thoughts and actions. In order of importance, these narratives can be classified as follows: myths of the *wanamey* tree, concerning the origins of life; myths of the divine entity, Atunto; myths of the evil entity, Tóto; myths of the forest; myths of the aquatic world; myths of the celestial world; myths of agriculture; myths of the gift; myths of the origin of the sung prayers; and myths of the *amiko*, or white people.

Eshuva has social, ritual and festive uses and is performed in both ceremonial contexts and everyday situations. Every prayer has a specific purpose, such as ensuring good health or personal well-being. For example, Eshuva is commonly performed if a member of the community suffers some discomfort or has fallen ill; it is also used to ward off negative forces. Eshuva is also a central element of the Huachipaire's main traditional ceremonies, such as the *embatare*, or drinking of *masato* (a traditional beverage made of fermented manioc), and in the initiation ceremony of the new Eshuva singers.

The prayers are sung without musical accompaniment as the rhythms and melodies are based solely on the human voice. Thus any member of the Huachipaire ethnic group can perform them without special training. Eshuva is handed down orally, with apprentices learning by listening to practitioners who explain the specific function of each prayer. Transmission may occur in an ordinary setting such as a sick person's home or in one of the ritual spaces used for community ceremonies.



As Eshuva is sung only in the Harákmbut language, it is an important element in safeguarding the language. It also instils in Huachipaire community members a sense of collective identity in relation to external cultural factors.

The demographic decline of the Huachipaire, coupled with internal migration, the influence and assimilation of foreign cultural elements and young people's lack of interest in Eshuva, means that the practice is seriously endangered. There are only twelve known singers – all of whom are elderly – yet it is these elders who can hand down this crucial cultural element to the new generations, on the basis of a comprehensive plan for the recovery of their intangible cultural heritage.

There is an express intention on the part of the Huachipaire to hand down Eshuva to the next generations. In collaboration with the Cuzco Regional Bureau of Culture, the communities of Santa Rosa and Queros have drawn up a Safeguarding Plan designed to increase and consolidate the interest of young Huachipaire in learning Eshuva and encourage its sustainability. A Huachipaire ethno-development plan, aimed at the recuperation, appraisal and conservation of the main elements of their culture, has also been drawn up; under the plan, Eshuva prayers are being identified and registered and some of the key performers have been recognized. In March 2010 the Eshuva sung prayers of the Huachipaire were declared 'Cultural Heritage of the Nation'.

13

COUNTRY

PERU

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2011

.../... Eshuva, Harákmbut sung prayers of Peru's Huachipaire people

To ensure the continuity of Eshuva as a central cultural element of the Huachipaire ethnic group – specifically of their collective identity – it is vital to empower the Huachipaire community and involve them as the principal actors and managers in the safeguarding process. A Council for the Protection of Eshuva is to be created and *malocas*, or houses of memory, set up. The *malocas* will provide a performance space for Eshuva and a place for the elderly to transmit to young people other expressions of their intangible cultural heritage such as myths, songs and legends as well as explanations of their beliefs, values and ways of behaviour.

A digital database is being drawn up, in collaboration with the Huachipaire, thus empowering them by allowing them to exercise control of their own images and over the repository of their intangible cultural heritage. It is hoped that a continuously updated copy of the database will be kept at the *malocas*. The use of multimedia digital technology might attract Huachipaire youth to the *malocas* and encourage them to learn about their culture.



Initiatives designed to promote and disseminate Eshuva include the production of a CD-ROM with maps, illustrations and informative text; a CD-ROM with Eshuva songs selected and performed by the Huachipaire, accompanied by an explanatory booklet; and a DVD documentary.

Several other activities are planned: a sociocultural profile of the two Huachipaire communities, with in-depth interviews and focus groups involving the main practitioners of Eshuva; workshops for researchers and practitioners; and community assemblies.

All these activities are merely the first steps in a much more comprehensive programme involving not only State bodies, but also international institutions. The programme's main aim is to preserve and revitalize all the cultural elements of the Huachipaire ethnic group and use them to improve the quality of life of its communities. A draft development plan for the Huachipaire ethnic group has been submitted to the Inter-American Culture and Development Foundation (ICDF) of the Inter-American Development Bank.

The Huachipaire aim not only to preserve Eshuva as an important element of their own culture, but also to disseminate it among the international community as a practice that embodies the harmonious relationship between human beings and nature.

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed **Eshuva, Harákmbut sung prayers of Peru's Huachipaire people** on the Urgent Safeguarding List as the nomination file satisfied all the selection criteria, as follows:

Definition of intangible cultural heritage

The Eshuva prayers, sung in the Harákmbut language, are a fundamental expression of the Huachipaire community's worldview and have been handed down from generation to generation, serving to maintain their mother tongue.

State of viability

Changes in the socio-economic structure of the community, emigration of young people, and an interruption in the chain of transmission of the knowledge associated with these sung prayers combine to threaten its continuity.

Safeguarding measures

Ongoing safeguarding efforts will be strengthened by the elders' transmission of the element to the youth through performances of their myths and songs in the *malocas* and their knowledge of other expressions. This will be complemented by research and registration. The community's contribution will also be secured by validating the information at community assemblies and participatory workshops.

Community participation

All the interested parties have participated in the nomination process and have accordingly provided their free, prior and informed consent.

Inventory

The element was declared in March 2010 to be Cultural Heritage of the Nation by the Ministry of Culture's Directorate of Registration and Studies of Culture in Contemporary Peru.

14

COUNTRY

**UNITED ARAB
EMIRATES**

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2011

Al Sadu, traditional weaving skills in the United Arab Emirates

Al Sadu is the highly skilled traditional Bedouin craft of hand-weaving – the term ‘Al Sadu’ refers to the loom, the weaving process and the woven products. It is now mainly found among the more remote communities in the interior of Abu Dhabi. The practitioners are mainly women, though men perform a few specific tasks such as sheep shearing and collecting camel hair. The skills involved include cleaning and preparing the wool (which comes from sheep, goats and camels), spinning, dyeing and weaving.

Nowadays, the woven fabric is mainly used as soft furnishings in traditional houses, decorative elements in camel racing and for national heritage celebrations. The distinctive patterns – usually narrow vertical or horizontal bands of geometric designs – are in the traditional colours of black, white, brown, beige and red. Although chemical dyes have virtually supplanted natural dyes, these traditional colour schemes have been maintained. All the patterns, motifs and associated symbolism and meanings are learnt and handed down through observation and participation.

This very intricate craft is normally acquired through a long apprenticeship within the family, with the girls learning from the older women. Al Sadu weaving is a social activity, linked to the oral transmission of heritage. The women work together in small groups to spin wool, set up the loom and weave. At the same time, they chat, exchange family news and stories, and occasionally chant and recite folk tales and poetry. These collective work gatherings, involving girls and women from different age groups, are also ways in which folk tales and proverbs are passed down through the generations. In this way, Al Sadu plays an important role in strengthening the community and enhancing a sense of identity.

Al Sadu is recognized as an integral component of the cultural heritage of the UAE. The craft products, with their distinctive colours and patterns, are artistic visual representations which symbolize traditional desert Bedouin culture, and are closely linked with the identity and culture of the citizens.

Traditionally, the highly skilled Al Sadu weavers were greatly respected in their local communities; however, the advent of oil wealth and the country’s rapid economic development, with the ensuing social transformation, have resulted in the dispersal and urban resettlement of the Bedouin communities. The past few decades have seen a rapid decline in the numbers of women still practising Al Sadu: estimates vary between 150 and 200 weavers, nearly all aged between 50 and 70.



14

COUNTRY

**UNITED ARAB
EMIRATES**

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2011



.../... Al Sadu, traditional weaving skills in the United Arab Emirates

The main threat to Al Sadu is the younger generation's lack of interest in learning traditional skills. The craft is time-consuming, and the financial rewards are not commensurate with those in other sectors of the economy. With today's wider educational and employment opportunities, young women are increasingly attracted to other professions. The second threat is that cheaper, mass-produced furniture and soft furnishings are now more popular than hand-woven Al Sadu items. Weavers find it increasingly difficult to compete with modern industrialized textile production.

Unless measures are taken to make Al Sadu attractive to younger women, the practice will eventually die out. This would be an irreparable loss in terms of economic, artistic and intangible heritage values. It would also reduce the opportunity for multi-generational gatherings of women, when intangible culture elements such as folk tales, poetry and recitation are handed down. Initiatives aimed at the preservation, promotion, enhancement and transmission of Al Sadu, particularly through formal and non-formal education, are urgently required.

Concern about the rapid decline in the numbers of Al Sadu weavers, as well as their increasing age, has led to various community and state initiatives to try and reverse this trend. Al Sadu practitioners and their communities have shown a high level of commitment to safeguarding their heritage. They participate actively in schemes designed to transmit the relevant skills and knowledge to the younger generation. Both federal and local governments, and several NGOs, are also firmly committed to safeguarding Al Sadu and ensuring its viability.

The wide range of initiatives designed to safeguard the Al Sadu heritage include: programmes to teach handicraft skills; field visits to Al Sadu weavers and their communities; summer camps for teaching the craft; seminars, training courses and workshops.

The Al Sadu heritage of the Abu Dhabi Emirate is being collected, classified, documented and archived by the Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage (ADACH) and various publications are planned. Al Sadu is included in the *National Cultural Encyclopaedia*; it is promoted and marketed at national Heritage Festivals; a dedicated website has been set up; and several cultural and handicraft centres have been established, many of which are involved in training programmes for women. A federal Law for the Preservation of Intangible Cultural Heritage has been enacted, and local legislation is in the pipeline.

14

COUNTRY

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2011

.../... Al Sadu, traditional weaving skills in the United Arab Emirates

Of particular importance is the provision of financial support for Al Sadu practitioners, mainly through their products being purchased for resale. Within community groups, expert weavers (mainly elderly women) are encouraged to impart their skills in a more formal way to the younger generation and also to continue weaving as an income-generating activity: this enables them to remain in their community and promotes its economic development.

A marketing and retail strategy to support Emirati handicrafts has been introduced. Local community women's groups have been formed to promote and market Al Sadu craft products, which are sold at Heritage Festivals. The product range has been extended to include a wider choice of articles, using the traditional colours and patterns. Al Sadu products are also sold to tourists and at camel races, an increasingly popular sport. Settled families of Bedouin origin buy Al Sadu furnishings for their homes and also for their tents when they spend the winter vacation camping in the desert.

Future planned activities include: introducing Al Sadu in the school curriculum; creating an Annual Awards programme; identifying several Al Sadu weavers as 'National Treasures'; establishing Heritage Villages, regional training centres and annual traditional heritage exhibitions; expanding ADACH's Al Sadu archive and database; and launching a programme to teach traditional handicraft skills, including Al Sadu, to Emirati youth.

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed **Al Sadu, traditional weaving skills in the United Arab Emirates** on the Urgent Safeguarding List as the nomination file satisfied all the selection criteria, as follows:

Definition of intangible cultural heritage

Developed by Bedouin women as an integral part of their nomadic life in the desert, the Al Sadu weaving skills have been transmitted through generations and recreated according to the community's current needs.

State of viability

The decline of the pastoral mode of life, the decreasing number of practitioners, limited local economic opportunities for generating income and a lack of interest in learning traditional skills among the younger generation of women threaten the viability of the element.

Safeguarding measures

The safeguarding measures correspond with the needs identified and can contribute to sustainable development and awareness of the element while improving the economic situation of the bearers; activities include regional and local training centres, government and NGO funds, awards and promotion activities, education and capacity building, and intellectual property protection.

Community participation

A number of documents have been provided, expressing the free, prior and informed consent of important actors and organizations involved in drawing up the nomination.

Inventory

Al Sadu weaving has been included in the Intangible Cultural Heritage Inventory of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, maintained by the Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage (ADACH).



Xoan singing of Phú Thọ Province, Viet Nam

Xoan singing is an ancient vocal art form practised in Viet Nam's northern province of Phú Thọ and going back to the time of the Hùng kings (2879–258 BCE). Performed during the first two months of the lunar year, it is related to rituals and beliefs linked to love and is accompanied by dance and musical instruments. There are three forms of Xoan singing: worship singing, which commemorates the Hùng kings, the guardian spirits of the village, the ancestors and revered national figures; ritual singing in which fourteen different melodies express admiration for nature, human beings and the life of the community, together with historical tales; and festive singing, which alternates vocal and instrumental music. The audience can participate in the festive singing, which expresses love and dreams about happiness, prayers for good crops, good luck and good health, and so on.

The worship- and ritual-singing phases are often accompanied by dance. The dancers form the shape of a petal or a flower, moving upwards and downwards counter-clockwise in sequences such as *Đố huê* (Asking to Guess Flowers) and *Xếp huê* (Arranging Flowers). Twenty out of the thirty-one ancient Xoan repertoires are accompanied by dance.

Xoan music has a sparse structure with few ornamental notes and often uses a three- or four-note scale with simple rhythms. It is characterized by the modulation between singers and instrumentalists at the perfect fourth interval. The instrumental accompaniment is provided by bamboo clappers, which guide the singing and dancing; small drums, which are responsible for time-keeping; and big drums, which are played during the worship-singing phase. The deep, resonating sound of the big drums stirs people's emotions, creating an awareness of the sacred and encouraging audience participation.

Xoan folk artists are organized into guilds known as *Phường*. Every guild is headed by a leader, or *trùm*, who has mastered all the facets of Xoan singing and is responsible for training instrumentalists and singers. Male instrumentalists are called *kép* and female singers, *đào*. Members of the guilds often perform during the spring festival. In the past, Xoan performers were farmers, but nowadays they may also be retired people, teachers, pupils or artists. The practices, customs and taboos, together with the techniques of singing, dancing and playing the drums and clappers, are handed down orally. Xoan singing is performed in sacred spaces such as temples, shrines and the communal house found in every village.



15

COUNTRY

VIET NAM

YEAR OF INSCRIPTION

2011

.../... Xoan singing of Phú Thọ Province, Viet Nam

From the end of the nineteenth to the early twentieth century, Xoan singing was practised quite regularly, but it was neglected between 1945 and 1975, both because of the long war and because of a lack of understanding of its role in the life of the community. Many singers are now very elderly and among those who used to perform before 1945, only seven can remember twenty-five of the full thirty-one Xoan repertoires. Some of the dances and songs in praise of the gods and kings have not been performed for a long time and are in danger of being lost.

With the urbanization and industrialization of Phú Thọ Province, farmers are becoming workers, officials, businessmen and service suppliers. Fewer people appreciate Xoan singing than in the past and most young people prefer modern music. Students only practise the easy parts of the repertoire and have not yet mastered the full range of singing styles.

Xoan singing never disappeared completely, however, and the Department of Culture and Information (now the Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism), in collaboration with thirty-one folk artists who performed before 1945, have been reviving this art form since 1987. The four original Xoan guilds were re-established in 2005 and three Xoan teams and twelve Xoan clubs have recently been set up. Their members have been systematically studying, reviving and performing Xoan singing at their localities or at provincial folk-song festivals. Although the guild members are elderly, they are actively transmitting their knowledge to the next generations. Many invite young students to their own homes to hand down the tradition orally, free of charge.

The Association of Vietnamese Folklorists – in collaboration with the Vietnamese Institute for Musicology, the Viet Nam Institute of Culture and Arts Studies and the Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Phú Thọ Province – has played a leading role in researching, restoring and transmitting Xoan singing. Between 1991 and 2010, eleven of the thirty communal houses were recognized as cultural relics: as a result, sacrificial practices have returned, creating the conditions for a revival of Xoan singing. Recent surveys show that Xoan singing is now performed in eighteen communes, including the thirty communal houses, and is attracting wide public interest. Today, the guilds, teams and clubs perform at conferences and festivals, although the tradition of performing at the communal houses during the spring festival has not yet been revived. There have been several conferences on Xoan singing at local, national and international level, and programmes on national and local radio and TV have introduced it to a wider audience.



.../... Xoan singing of Phú Thọ Province, Viet Nam

The safeguarding initiatives planned for 2011–2015 have three main aims: to restore Xoan singing while the last remaining master folk artists are still alive; to enable it to be practised properly in contemporary Phú Thọ society; and to popularize it among the youth. All thirty-one Xoan repertoires, performed in the correct manner, will be collected and handed down to the younger generations. Xoan singing at the communal houses will be revived, its values will be promoted widely on national and provincial television and it will be included in the provincial school curriculum. Performances will be organized in appropriate surroundings to attract cultural tourism.

Xoan repertoires, dances and customs performed by elderly folk artists will be recorded and archive materials restored. The communities will be directly involved in collecting and researching the customs and repertoires so that the existing ancient Xoan songs and dances can be preserved and transmitted accurately. CDs and VCDs will be produced for secondary schools, art colleges and national and local radio and television – the aim is to help young people understand and appreciate Xoan singing so that they can practise and enjoy it as their ancestors used to do.

The communities of Phú Thọ acknowledge that the unique performance art of Xoan singing is an integral part of their spiritual and daily life. They are giving top priority to the restoration of the ancient repertoires in order to preserve the authentic original versions and make them relevant to contemporary life.





The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage inscribed **Xoan singing of Phú Thọ Province, Viet Nam** on the Urgent Safeguarding List as the nomination file satisfied all the selection criteria, as follows:

Definition of intangible cultural heritage

The residents of Phú Thọ Province recognize Xoan singing as part of their intangible cultural heritage that defines them as a community and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity.

State of viability

Transmission is weakened because of a lack of resources and particularly due to the lengthy time needed to master the songs; the bearers are all elderly and young people migrate away from the province, while industrialization and changes in lifestyle and occupations contribute to a lack of interest.

Safeguarding measures

Practical measures have been taken by the communities and submitting State to strengthen the viability of Xoan singing, and viable and realistic plans are proposed for the next four years; both the communities and the State have demonstrated their commitment, with the State leading the effort.

Community participation

The communities concerned, practitioners and institutions participated fully in the nomination process, taking an active role in the planning and implementation of safeguarding measures and committing themselves to respect and protect the sacred aspects of the element. They gave their free, prior and informed consent.

Inventory

Xoan singing is included in the inventories of the Vietnamese Institute for Musicology within the Vietnamese National Academy of Music, of the Viet Nam Institute of Culture and Arts Studies within the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, and of the Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Phú Thọ Province.

Cumulative list of elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List

BELARUS

- Rite of the Kalyady Tsars (Christmas Tsars) (2009)

BRAZIL

- Yaokwa, the Enawene Nawe people's ritual for the maintenance of social and cosmic order (2011)

CHINA

- Hezhen Yimakan storytelling (2011)
- Meshrep (2010)
- The watertight-bulkhead technology of Chinese junks (2010)
- Wooden movable-type printing of China (2010)
- Qiang New Year festival (2009)
- Traditional design and practices for building Chinese wooden arch bridges (2009)
- Traditional Li textile techniques: spinning, dyeing, weaving and embroidering (2009)

CROATIA

- Ojkanje singing (2010)

FRANCE

- The Cantu in paghjella: a secular and liturgical oral tradition of Corsica (2009)

INDONESIA

- Saman dance (2011)

IRAN (ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF)

- Naqqāli, Iranian dramatic story-telling (2011)
- Traditional skills of building and sailing Iranian Lenj boats in the Persian Gulf (2011)

KENYA

- Traditions and practices associated to the Kayas in the sacred forests of the Mijikenda (2009)

LATVIA

- Suiti cultural space (2009)

MALI

- Secret society of the Kôrêdugaw, the rite of wisdom in Mali (2011)
- The Sanké mon: collective fishing rite of the Sanké (2009)

MAURITANIA

- Moorish epic T'heydinn (2011)

MONGOLIA

- Folk long song performance technique of Limbe performances – circular breathing (2011)
- Mongol Biyelgee: Mongolian traditional folk dance (2009)
- Mongol Tuuli: Mongolian epic (2009)
- Traditional music of the Tsuur (2009)

PERU

- Eshuva, Harákmbut sung prayers of Peru's Huachipaire people (2011)

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

- Al Sadu, traditional weaving skills in the United Arab Emirates (2011)

VIET NAM

- Xoan singing of Phú Thọ Province, Viet Nam (2011)
- Ca trù singing (2009)

Photographic credits

BRAZIL

- 1 **Yaokwa, the Enawene Nawe people's ritual for the maintenance of social and cosmic order**
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CHINA

- 2 **Hezhen Yimakan storytelling**
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- 3 **Meshrep**
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CROATIA

- 6 **Ojkanje singing**
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INDONESIA

- 7 **Saman dance**
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IRAN (ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF)

- 8 **Naqqāli, Iranian dramatic story-telling**
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- 9 **Traditional skills of building and sailing Iranian Lenj boats in the Persian Gulf**
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MALI

- 10 **Secret society of the Kôrêdugaw, the rite of wisdom in Mali**
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MAURITANIA

- 11 **Moorish epic T'heydinn**
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MONGOLIA

- 12 **Folk long song performance technique of Limbe performances – circular breathing**
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- 15 **Xoan singing of Phú Thọ Province, Viet Nam**
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Intangible
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LIST OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN NEED OF URGENT SAFEGUARDING 2010–2011

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.

Published in 2012 by UNESCO
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